

Committee Report

Item No: 2

Reference: DC/19/00881

Case Officers: Steven Stroud
Vincent Pearce

Ward: Brantham

Ward Member: Cllr Alastair McCraw

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE RESERVED MATTERS

Application Description

Submission of details under Outline Planning Permission B/15/00263: Appearance, Landscaping, Layout, and Scale for 288 dwellings, public open space and associated infrastructure.

Location

Land South of Brooklands Road, Brantham

Parish: Brantham

Site Area: c.9.5ha (23 acres)

Application Type: Reserved Matters

Development Type: Residential; large-scale Major

Planning Permission: (ref: B/15/00263) 'Hybrid application for regeneration of existing industrial estate and development of adjoining land. Outline: Mixed use development to comprise approximately 320 dwellings; approximately 44,123 sqm of Class B1, B2 and B8 employment uses; approximately 720sqm of Class A1, A3, A4 and A5 retail uses and Class D1 community uses; provision of public open space and new playing pitches (Class D2). Full: Proposed new access from Brooklands Road; improvements to Factory Lane; new on-site road network and structural landscaping; and foul and storm water drainage infrastructure.'

Applicant: Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd

Agent: Boyer Planning

Received: 21st February 2019

Expiry: 21st June 2019

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

1. The application is referred to committee for the following reason:
 - The application provides for the development of more than 15 dwellings.

PART TWO – BACKGROUND AND APPLICATION DETAILS

Site and Surroundings

2. The site is located to the south of Brantham village abutting its settlement boundary, between Brooklands Road to the north, and Factory Lane to the south. The services and facilities of Brantham are within walking distance to the west and north, and Manningtree railway station is approximately 2km to the south-west.
3. The site amounts to approximately 9.5 hectares, comprising a small number of fields that were historically used for agriculture, but more recently have been used for informal recreation. Trees and hedgerows partly bound the site and its constituent fields, with significant specimen trees lined through the centre of the site including a veteran oak to the south. The topography is challenging, with a steep north-south gradient across a differential of approximately 20m.
4. Residential development bounds the site to the north and west (Brooklands Road and Temple Pattle, respectively) and the Brantham Regeneration Area Allocation for employment uses is adjacent to the south, across Factory Lane with the River Stour estuary beyond. To the east lies a water feature commonly known as the “Decoy Pond” with surrounding woodland and open space. That land is designated as being public open space within the allocating policy (CS10 of the Core Strategy) and has been secured as such under the planning permission to which this reserved matters application now responds.
5. The site is not within or adjacent to a conservation area and no designated heritage assets would be materially affected by the proposals subject to this application. The site abuts a Flood Zone 2 area, but this benefits from flood defences with further mitigation having been secured and is also covered by this application (including the provision of a significant flood “bund” along the Factory Lane boundary). The Environment Agency are satisfied that the residential development will be “*above the worst case 0.1% (1 in 1000) annual probability allowance plus the allowance for*

climate change". They are therefore satisfied with the application and raise no objection.

6. The western boundary of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB currently terminates east of the land around the Decoy Pond. However, it is understood that an order to vary the extent of that designation now rests for sign-off with the Secretary of State. It is reasonably foreseeable that the order will be approved and the consequence of that will be for the AONB to have its boundaries extended such that the Decoy Pond land would fall within the designated area. Therefore, and whilst the red-lined area subject to this application would continue to sit outside of the AONB, the potential impact of the reserved matters detail upon the setting of the existing and proposed AONB area has been considered carefully notwithstanding that planning permission has already been granted. The AONB officer has been involved in the application and is satisfied with the proposals.

Relevant Planning History / Application Background and Details

7. Planning permission for a "hybrid" planning application regarding the Brantham Regeneration Area Allocation development was granted by the Council in November 2016 (Ref: B/15/00263). It was, and remains, a major mixed-use development, described as set out on the cover of this report, but with two distinct areas being bisected by Factory Lane: the residential development subject to this application to the north; and the employment regeneration area to the south.
8. "Hybrid" is a misnomer as it is not an application type formally recognised under the planning Acts. The original application was effectively an application for outline planning permission that fixed the nature and extent of the development applied for, with varying levels of supporting detail and matters being reserved for later consideration. For example, "full" details – i.e. setting out all of the details of the relevant development – were provided and approved in respect of points of access, improvements to Factory Lane, and the on-site road network and foul/storm water drainage infrastructure within the regeneration area.
9. The land subject to this application was designated as "Proviso D" under the lead policy (CS10) in the Core Strategy. This recognised that the particular viability issues associated with the significant costs to be incurred through the regeneration and delivery of the employment land required priming through the disposal of the "Proviso D" land for residential development. Outline permission was therefore granted within that area for a residential development of up to 320 dwellings, with matters of scale, landscaping, layout, and appearance reserved for later determination. Hence, the application that is now before the Council. Members will

note, however, that the application provides for a lesser number of dwellings (288 no.) than were approved. This is entirely within the scope of the permission and results in a significantly lower density (a development of 30 dwellings per hectare) than was permitted.

10. In addition, the planning permission fixed a number of parameters to control the development and included requirements for how the reserved matters are to be presented.
11. In respect of those parameters, which have specifically informed the residential reserved matters, these are set out as follows:
 - i. Land Use Plan;
 - ii. Movement Framework Plan;
 - iii. Green Infrastructure Plan;
 - iv. Building Heights Parameters Plan.
12. The submitted reserved matters details accord with those parameters.
13. As noted, the Applicant seeks reserved matters consent for 288 no. new dwellings providing a variety of house types, as well as providing for areas of open space within the development, and associated infrastructure such as internal circulation routes etc.
14. It should be borne in mind that as well as providing various areas of open space and related green/blue corridors across the site (amounting to some 1.8ha or c.19% of the total site area). The site itself should also be viewed in relation to its surrounding context; notably with regard to its relationship to the extensive land surrounding the Decoy Pond (c.10ha), which was also secured as public open space under the planning permission. As will be discussed later in this report, the Applicant has, taking into account pre-application comments and advice of the local RIBA Design Review Panel, sought to emphasise the positive relationship between the site and its neighbouring context in order to encourage and maximise movement between those land parcels.
15. The housing mix itself, of predominantly two and three-bedroom units, is set out as follows:
 - 42 no. 2-bedroomed dwellings
 - 191no. 3 bed
 - 41no. 4 bed

- 14 no. 5 bed.

16. Information has also been submitted concurrently with this reserved matters application in relation to the discharge of further relevant conditions. These are discussed where particularly relevant.
17. This application represents a crucial step forward in the life of a long-standing and significant strategic allocation within the development plan. An approval of this reserved matters and subsequent land disposal to Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd (as the applicant and developer) will not only realise the plan-led delivery of needed homes, but also secure the funding required to expedite the delivery of the Brantham Regeneration Area, making it feasible and attractive to potential future occupiers. In other words, it is the progression of this residential land (Proviso D) that enables the regeneration of the employment land.
18. The applications, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant (including consultation responses and third-party representations) can be viewed online at: <https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/>. Alternatively, copies are available to view at the Council offices¹.

PART THREE – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Planning Policy Context

19. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications under the Planning Acts be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Strictly speaking, that direction is more appurtenant to the determination of applications for planning permission; however, it is considered appropriate that the development plan be the starting point in determining the appropriateness of the reserved matters detail that has been submitted and is no less relevant in that respect.

Development Plan

20. Relevant to the submitted application, the development plan comprises the following:

¹ Details of addresses and opening times are available at: <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/contact-us>

- Babergh Core Strategy (2014)
- Saved policies from the Babergh Local Plan (2006).

21. Within the current development plan, those policies considered to be most important for the determination of the reserved matters application and its associated details are as follows:

- CS1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development in Babergh
- CS10: Brantham Regeneration Area Allocation
- CS12: Sustainable Design and Construction Standards
- CS13: Renewable/Low Carbon Energy
- CS14: Green Infrastructure
- CS15: Implementing Sustainable Development in Babergh
- CN01: Design Standards
- CN04: Design and Crime Prevention
- CR07: Landscaping Schemes
- HS31: Public Open Space
- TP15: Parking Standards – New Development

22. The Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Joint Local Plan with the Mid Suffolk District Council. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and their degree of consistency with national policies. The plan-making process in this instance is at a very early stage and is therefore not weighed as a determinative consideration in this instance.

The National Planning Policy Framework

23. The NPPF of February 2019 contains the Government's planning policies for England and sets out how these are expected to be applied. The policies contained within the NPPF are a material consideration and should be taken into account for decision-taking purposes.

24. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At paragraph 8, this is defined as meaning that there are three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways: economic,

social, and environmental. The NPPF goes on to state, however, that they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged (para. 9).

Other Considerations

25. The following documents are also considered as material and especially applicable to this proposal by officers:
 - Suffolk County Council - Suffolk Guidance for Parking (2014), adopted 2015.
26. On the 6th March 2014, a number of Ministerial planning circulars were cancelled by central Government and were replaced by the Government's online national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The guidance provided is advice on procedure rather than explicit policy; however, it has been taken into account in reaching the recommendation made on this application.
27. The PPG is an online reference as 'living document' and is available at the following internet address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>.
28. The relevant policies referred to above can be viewed online. Please see the notes attached to the Schedule.

Consultations and Representations

29. A Statement of Community Involvement has been submitted in support of the application, identifying that pre-application consultation with a range of interested stakeholders occurred in order to help shape the submitted reserved matters detail.
30. That engagement has also involved an ongoing dialogue with your officers and officers from the Suffolk County Council. As part of the pre-application process the Applicant also made use of the local RIBA Design Review Panel to help inform the approach that has been taken, noting the particularly challenging nature of the site which has required a careful treatment in respect of layout among other matters. The impact that this has posed upon the final layout of the scheme is discussed later in this report.
31. After the registration of the application in February 2019 and following the outcome of the initial round of public consultation, as an iterative process the Applicant has made various amendments and/or provided amplifications to the scheme in order to address the range of views that have been received. This has culminated in there

being no technical objections from consultees in relation to the specific reserved matters detail. It is appreciated, however, that the application (and the status of the wider regeneration area) remains a significant issue at a local level.

32. All of those most recent or relevant responses received prior to the completion of this report are summarised or directly quoted below, which includes public representations and consultation responses. Nevertheless, all responses received are available to view on the Council's website and at its offices as detailed above. Given the lengthy/technical nature of some of the responses received, Members are directed to consider the original copies of those documents, including the views expressed by the Brantham Parish Council.

33. Any further responses or representations will be reported through the late papers "Addendum" function and/or verbally to Members at Planning Committee.

34. Brantham Parish Council

- 'Brantham Parish Council recognises the alterations being offered in response to the earlier comments... and which must remain our comments pending a decision.
- Brantham Parish Council would however advise that it looks to BDC to fully interrogate the resubmitted proposals and details with a view to establishing that all requirements of the other statutory consultees have been fully addressed and preferably resolved.'

35. Suffolk County Council

- Highways – No objection; gradient of major access road is still a concern; however, with the proposed speed tables vehicle speed will be managed. Road surfaces will need to be approved by SCC to be adopted. Recommend waiting restrictions introduced on bends and major junctions; 20mph speed limit across the development; unilateral undertaking to create traffic regulation order.
- Floods – No objection; 'from the perspective of the reserved matters application, the proposed landscaping details are now in a position that we can move forward and the applicant can submit an application or applications to see a discharge of conditions relating to surface water drainage.'
- Development Contributions – No comments to make.
- Travel Plan – No comments to make.
- Rights of Way – No comments to make.

36. Environment Agency

- No objection.

37. Suffolk Constabulary – Design-out Crime Officer

- All concerns have been addressed; no objection.
- 'The developers should be commended for their willingness to amend the original plans and assist in designing measures that will assist in reducing the risk of crime to occur'.

38. Suffolk Wildlife Trust

- No objection; essential that ecological mitigation is carried through.

[Officer comment: No further comments have been received following the latest application amendments. However, it is noted that the Council's ecology consultant has treated that submission favourably.]

39. Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

- Improvements to the scheme welcome, conditions in relation to site boundary treatments will be required alongside a more detailed planting specification.

40. Place Services – Ecology (Council's appointed consultant)

- 'We have reviewed the additional information submitted Landscape Masterplan Drg No P18-1007-01 Rev F (Pegasus Design, 23 May 2019) and note the inclusion of embedded biodiversity enhancements into the design layout eg wildflower meadow, flowering lawn, seasonally wet ditch and log pile/hibernacula.

We are therefore satisfied that this provides the detailed information sought by the recommendation for a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy in our previous response.'

41. Place Services – Landscape (Council's appointed consultant)

- No objection but further recommendations to be secured by condition; hard/soft landscaping and detailed planting mix.

42. BDC – Heritage

- Have no comments to make.

43. BDC – Environmental Health (Noise, Light, other Emissions)

- No objection; conditions remain to be discharged.

44. BDC – Environmental Health (Land Contamination)

- No objection/comments to make.

45. BDC – Sustainability Officer

- No objection.

46. BDC – Public Realm

- No objection; recommend condition for detailing areas of play.

47. BDC – Arboricultural Officer

- No objection.

48. BDC – Strategic Housing

- No objection; however disappointed in the mix provided.

[Officer comment: The Applicant has provided justification for the mix proposed, and the Strategic Housing lead recognises that housing mix is not a reserved matter and there were no controls applied to the host planning permission in that respect.]

49. BDC – Waste Services

- No objection but seek confirmation that dustcarts can adequately navigate highways and turning heads.

[Officer comment: further tracking drawings were subsequently provided satisfying this request]

50. BDC – Planning Policy

- No objection; 'In principle, the proposal is unlikely to significantly undermine the emerging local plan led approach. Advise that the case officer ensures a full assessment of the proposals harms and benefits of the proposal.'

[Officer comment: The proposal would not undermine the plan-led approach and Members will note that the reserved matters application follows a planning permission that is entirely consistent with the current development plan in force (Policy CS10). A full assessment of the proposal has been undertaken in relation to the submitted reserved matters application noting that planning permission has already been granted with the harms and benefits of the proposal having already been taken into account then that decision was taken.]

51. River Stour Trust

- No comments to make.

52. RSPB

- Share the observations of the Council's ecologist, would like to see bird boxes integrated into the development [which the applicant is happy to facilitate].

53. Anglian Water

- No objection; conditions remain to be discharged, advise that the views of the lead local flood authority/EA are sought.

[Officer comment: The lead local flood authority and EA raise no objection to the reserved matters application].

54. NHS

- No objection; infrastructural needs addressed by CIL.

55. Those public representations received are summarised as follows:

Highways/Access

- Increase in traffic;
- Brooklands Road is a narrow residential street;
- Create significant additional traffic on the A137 and B1070 including at the notorious railway crossing at Manningtree rail station;
- Both access points are of concern;
- Train station parking issues;
- Limited parking for overflow vehicles or tradesmen and inadequate road width for manoeuvring;
- Footpath on B1070 at Cattawade roundabout needs improving;
- inadequate parking;
- Cars will have to reverse out of driveways, increasing danger for accidents;
- Presumed dedication of public rights of way across the field, residents encouraged to apply for PROW.

Layout

- Overcrowded, should have lower density;
- Volume and density of the development is completely out of scale with the rest of the village;
- Lack of open green spaces and no provision for playgrounds and play areas;
- Clear separation between the new development and existing housing, in the form of footpaths along the boundary;
- Should include bungalows;
- Proximity of proposed dwellings to resident's boundary (Grimwade Close) - refers to the inclusion of a buffer zone in the original plans.
- Overdevelopment of the area behind Grimwade Close. Requests confirmation that the properties will be built at the same level as 33 Grimwade Close.
- Garden size should be increased;
- Safety concerns with properties directly on pavement / without a front garden gate;
- Plots 194 – 197 all appear to have a dormer overlooking Grimwade Close;
- Too many 4/5 bed properties proposed, should be more first homes and 2/3 bed houses.

Flood risk/drainage

- Concern regarding increased flooding on the site;
- No explanation dashed line from 29 Grimwade Cl to the decoy pond.

- Recent dig found sewer in garden of no 35;
- Factory Lane has not been surveyed, the ground is predominantly wet;
- In October diggers demolished two pumping stations / removal of concrete foundations / cleared the site / now two flowing artesian wells;
- North west of site not suitable due to saturated ground;
- Concerns with drainage strategy, and position of proposed swales.

Infrastructure

- Sheer scale of the development is going to cause some considerable problems to the local Infrastructure;
- Brooklands Primary school is already fully subscribed;
- Doctors/dentists;
- Lack of affordable housing;
- Local services already struggling.

Design

- The design of the proposed housing stock is very disappointing, consisting of highly uniform, soulless and bland architecture.

Ecology/Landscape

- SFG removed the screen of trees and foliage along the length of factory lane and the footpath at the south of the site that hid the factory site for the existing (and future) residents;
- Removal of hedgerow has caused a reduction in wildlife;
- Need clarification on pond being used as a public space;
- Decoy pond should be protected.

Other Objections

- Gradient change and damp course from houses to factory lane, no information how land prevented from collapsing;
- New underground supply 1m below ground, this means when access built the power lines will be above the surface of the road;
- Rail lines need firm and solid ground, not saturated ground;
- Detrimental effect on character of the neighbourhood;
- Loss of views from neighbouring properties.

Other Comments

- Welcome idea of providing new homes in Brantham;
- Cannot submit objective comments until BPC meeting with regard to the extended consultation period;
- Suggested that development will also come forward to the right (open space area);
- requirement that developers must disclose that dwellings accessed by private roads;
- designed for maximum profit;
- similar issues TW Admirals Quarter Holbrook;
- rights of householder to enter adjoining land for basic preservation works, and footpath required to have access to fences.

56. All consultee responses and representations received to date have been noted and have been taken into account when reaching the recommendations as set out below.

PART FOUR – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

Decision-Taking Context

57. The development benefits from outline planning permission. The present application for approval of reserved matters, and the decision to be taken by Members in respect of this application, cannot undo that position nor can the scale of development or its inherent nature be altered.
58. With the acceptable principle and nature of development that has therefore already been established, the matters now before Members relate to certain items that had been “reserved” for a later determination i.e. the scale, layout, appearance, and landscaping of the residential site (the Proviso D land), in addition to any other matters reserved for determination at this stage e.g. energy efficiency, or access where relevant.
59. Article 2(1) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 includes definitions which provide the basis for determining what can and cannot be considered at the reserved matters stage. Bearing in mind that as noted, the principle of development has already been

established and which set very clear parameters in respect of the extent of the permission granted. That is the context against which the decisions on the reserved matters applications must be taken.

60. Whilst the ongoing concerns of some parties is noted, it must be made clear that permission has already been granted, with the scope of assessment now limited purely to those matters as defined (or considerations related to such matters), or any requirements defined under the conditions of the outline permission which apply to the reserved matters.
61. The definitions provided by the Order are set out as follows:
62. "Access", in relation to reserved matters, means the accessibility to and within the site, for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network.
63. The term "scale" is defined as 'the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings'.
64. "Layout" should be interpreted to mean 'the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development'.
65. "Appearance" means 'the aspects of a building or place within the development which determines the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture'.
66. "Landscaping" means 'the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes:
 - a) screening by fences, walls or other means;
 - b) the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass;
 - c) the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks;
 - d) the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and
 - e) the provision of other amenity features.'
67. Following the grant of outline planning permission, the key question for Members has now moved to whether the detailed form of the development proposed is

acceptable in respect of: access (where still relevant but points of access into the site are already fixed); scale; layout; appearance; and landscaping. Through the grant of planning permission, it is implicit that there must be at least one acceptable form of reserved matters arising out of that permission. As noted, the scope/parameters of such an acceptable presentation was set by the outline planning permission to which these reserved matters accord. Of itself this is an important consideration and, in that respect, a 'Statement of Conformity' has been provided by the Applicant and officers agree with its findings.

68. This is important because the extent and nature of the planning permission that has been granted has set an "envelope" of assessments and judgements about the development to be carried through to the reserved matters and the implementation of the scheme. This reflects good planning practice and it is commonplace for outline planning proposals/permissions to set very clear parameters for the development to be brought forward under that permission. This gives confidence in the robustness of assessments already made and a degree of certainty in respect of what is to be brought forward. As the development under the host planning permission was considered to be EIA development i.e. that it was likely to pose significant environmental effects, compliance in that regard is particularly important.
69. At the outline planning stage the suitability of the site for housing, as set within the aforementioned parameters, was tested to understand the likely landscape and visual effects. As the composition of the reserved matters is in accordance with the outline parameters, the conclusions drawn within the original Environmental Statement (which informed the EIA) remain appropriate and no different or unexpected landscape and visual effects are anticipated as a result of the details now submitted for approval.
70. In light of the above and acknowledging the background and policy context which underpin the application, this report will now move on to assess the reserved matters, taking each matter in turn. Where particular planning considerations cross reserved matters (residential amenity being affected by scale, layout, and appearance, for example) this will be treated under its own sub heading.
71. It should be noted that whilst access was agreed at outline stage in so far as entry and egress into the site, this report will look at the detail that has now been submitted in relation to those access points. It will also look at general estate highway layout which was not agreed at outline stage, and which forms part of the definition of access as a reserved matter.

Access

72. The new development benefits from two wide, bell-mouth vehicular points of entry/egress (Brooklands Road and Factory Lane) and this represents a suitable arrangement for a development comprising, as this does, more than 150 dwellings. This means that occupiers, visitors and emergency vehicles have an alternative option in the event that one or other access is temporarily obstructed. SCC as the local highway authority supports this flexibility. Those points of access accord with the movement parameters fixed by the planning permission.
73. The site topography is challenging and slopes significantly from north to south; a differential of approximately 20m (which was known when granting permission and accepting the in-principal suitability of residential development for the site). The applicant's highway engineers have worked with SCC to ensure that this gradient is not an impediment to safe highway design.
74. The two access points are connected by a central spine road serving a series of side roads that branch out across the estate until eventually shared surfaces serve small clusters of units: much like rivers have increasingly narrower tributaries the further they are from the wider stretches that carry the main flow with the greatest catchment. The main spine road will be constructed to a maximum gradient of 1 in 15 which conforms to SCC's highway gradient standards.
75. There is a speed table mid-way along the main road, creating a flat platform with a further level sections along the route with a slackening pitch at the foot of the slope where the spine road meets Factory Lane. These represent a further safety feature as they will allow pedestrians to cross the spine road on a flat surface. They will also function as traffic calming features as well as disrupting the slope. Some regrading of contours is required to achieve the uniform 1 in 15 gradient. This will be achieved through a combination of cut and fill (i.e. using existing material on site and simply moving it about) and by importing some material [discussed later]. The spine road incorporates a series of gentle bends which will also help to slow vehicles.
76. It is recognised that local residents within the area have lingering concerns about the increase in traffic that the development will generate and in relation to cumulative effects, the state of the local highway network etc. As noted above, planning permission has been granted and with the extent of the approval permitting up to 320 dwellings. Traffic-related impacts were considered at that stage, alongside the acceptability of having access points at Brooklands Road and Factory Lane.

Permeability

77. A key feature of the highway [roads & paths] layout is the extent to which it has been designed around good urban design principles and a strong desire to create a stimulating and safe place. This is a good example of close and effective collaboration between engineers and designers on all sides.
78. A central feature of the overall design is the way that the estate layout has been arranged to create a series of unobstructed vistas directed at the Decoy Pond as a focal point. This design objective is reinforced by much of the estate road layout. The layout is also designed in such a way for permeability to support good connectivity. Those particular tenets, seeking to reinforce a west-east emphasis that makes the most of the Decoy Pond land, have evolved following engagement with the local RIBA Design Review Panel and other stakeholders.

Connectivity

79. Achieving high levels of connectivity has been a priority in the design process, resulting in a commendable presentation offering walkable blocks through and around the site with shared surfaces and cycle routes. This will allow residents of the new development to easily access existing networks in the village and afford existing local residents on the Brooklands Road estate purpose-built paths to the east and south. In that respect existing residents can already, and do, make such trips across the field, but the proposed layout formalises and improves that situation.
80. Bearing in mind the relationship to the regeneration area to the south, the layout provides suitable linkages in that respect also. Members will be provided with visual representations at Committee as a part of the officer presentation.

Parking

81. Off-street parking provision is satisfactory. Suffolk County Council's view as local highway authority has evolved over time to reflect the iterative and collaborative process entered into. They no longer raise an objection to the application on that basis. It should be noted that regard will be given to their comments in respect of speed table design in so far as the Council will ensure that the material to be used will have a roughly textured surface to improve stopping performance in the event of a vehicle having to brake whilst on the table.

Scale and Layout

82. As previously stated, the outline planning permission is for up to 320 units. The reserved matters details are for 288 dwellings spread across the site. Whilst the total

number of units is some 10% less than the upper limit accepted “in principle” the resultant layout is one that works well in townscape terms and in the sense of creating an attractive place with a character that can be said to sensitively make the most of the site’s natural assets. Officers consider that it is a layout that represents a raising of the design bar within the District when compared to many other modern housing estates.

83. The undeveloped and open spaces within the development amount to approximately 19% of the overall site area, far in excess of policy requirements and partly resulting from the reduced quantum of housing from 320 to 288 dwellings. This is notwithstanding the opportunities that have been taken to capture clear accessibility through to the significant land around the Decoy Pond which has also been secured under the host planning permission. Taken together, there is a heavy tilt towards the ‘natural’ rather than the ‘built’ form within the land north of the employment regeneration area.
84. Whilst the site, being on a slope, is open to views largely from the south (and long views from across the Stour) the scale of development in terms of heights and the disposition of units is considered sensitive; certainly when set against the existing foreground south of Factory Lane.
85. All-important views from within the AONB are naturally limited and softened by intervening mature woodland. In conjunction with careful treatments of scale and in respect of the materials palette agreed, officers are satisfied that the setting of the AONB (even if and when extended) can be appropriately preserved.
86. The general layout has already been described in some detail under the previous headings of this report. However, it is worth noting that save for the principal spine road that runs broadly north to south, the majority of dwellings off that corridor are arranged in a series of roughly west to east rows taking advantage of the natural contours of the site and maximising the benefits of orientation towards the sun as it tracks east to west throughout the day.
87. The centre piece of the layout [other than the orientation of vistas towards the Decoy Pond] is the retention of a magnificent row of mature oaks in heart of the site. These have been incorporated into an area of open space with buildings arranged on both of the longest flanks [northern edge and southern edge] to create what amounts to a new formal urban green square. Running longitudinally through the middle of the site [north to south] is a pedestrian/cycle friendly corridor within a natural belt of retained and enhanced planting. Within the layout are groups of detached, semi-

detached and terraced units which create a visually interesting frieze that frames a lively interplay with the various spaces within the scheme.

88. The “crown jewel” within the Allocation/permission is of course the Decoy Pond and the land around it, all of which will become public open space. Not only is it of heritage value as one of but a few surviving examples, it also offers ecological interest and recreational opportunity. The ability to navigate through the proposed estate using notable features has also been designed-in, offering positive legibility and which encourages movement towards the Decoy Pond land.

Residential Amenity

89. The site abuts existing residential development on two sides. The northern edge is defined by pre-dominantly two-storey dwellings with an occasional bungalow. Rear gardens of varying sizes and depths back onto the site. Some natural hedgerow remains, but this is not consistent. The proposed layout incorporates a belt of landscaped open space of varying width along this boundary and rear gardens which should, in combination, ensure that there are no significant overlooking infringements or overshadowing issues. Conditions applied to the reserved matters approval will ensure that the final design/appearance of boundary treatment is appropriate in order to safeguard visual amenity and privacy.
90. The relationship between the development and existing properties to the west has also been considered carefully and as above the final boundary treatments would be secured by condition and which will require justification informed by local engagement. Uniformity in that respect will be very important.
91. The properties to the west also form part of relatively-modern estates comprising two-storey homes. Again, garden sizes vary. Back-to-back distances between those properties and those proposed are considered to be acceptable, in excess of 20m. That distance would be sufficient to avoid significant overlooking infringements such that would warrant refusal.
92. It is intended that a redirected ditch will run close to the western site boundary and this may offer an opportunity to introduce some [not too rampant] field edge species hedgerow planting to further soften the development edge. Where landscaping is a reserved matter, additional planning conditions can ensure appropriate treatment over and above the submitted detail supporting the application.

Appearance

93. Materials selected for use have been the subject of ongoing negotiation and now include stock bricks of traditional colours and textures with traditionally-styled tiles. Within the palette are soft red [and red multi] and cream bricks, clay plain tiles and Marley 'Eternit Rivendale' artificial slates with dressed edges which are non-concrete and are made from crushed slate. They have an authentic size, profile, texture and colour, preferable to concrete variants. This agreed materials schedule will add significant character to the overall development and will make a genuine contribution to local distinctiveness.
94. Detailing includes incorporating window reveals, brick arches above windows, quoins, external glazing bars, diaper brickwork porches, elegant plan forms and more. Window proportions and styles are acceptable.
95. The Committee presentation will include a full demonstration of house types and will show how all the components of good urban design have come together in this scheme as described cumulatively in earlier sections.

Landscape

96. The submitted landscape masterplan provides sufficient detail for the strategic landscaping framework upon which details of individual species will be added via the submission of further details to be understood.
97. The area adjacent to the Decoy Pond will retain and enhance the current natural organic aspect that will complement its setting as well as helping to soften views back towards the development from within what will become public open space.
98. Within the site itself the most important mature trees will be retained, protected and incorporated into new urban green squares. New planting will line the new long vistas being created within the layout and the swales incorporated as a part of the SuDS strategy will offer net gains for biodiversity as well as attractive green spaces which can also be used for informal recreation.
99. Dense planting will be implemented along the site's southern boundary in order to create a strong green edge between the new residential development and the industrial land to its immediate south.

Other Matters

Energy Efficiency

100. Condition 16 of the planning permission requires the submission and written agreement of an energy statement that demonstrates how the scheme will achieve 10% of its agreed predicted energy use from renewable sources.
101. Policy CS13 requires development within the strategic allocations (as well as other large-scale development proposals) to use on-site renewable, decentralised, or low carbon energy sources with the aim of achieving a 10% reduction in the predicted carbon dioxide emissions of the development.
102. Those two requirements serve the same purpose, but are achieved by slightly different means. The Applicant has nevertheless sought to address both and the revised energy statement provided by them has been accepted by the Council's Sustainability Officer.
103. The applicant has also committed to providing car-charging utilities within the garages of the dwellings as well as taking an innovative approach in laying ducting to provide for charging capabilities in open parking areas. Such a strategy is commendable.

Surface Water Drainage

104. In accordance with the overall surface drainage water strategy approved at outline, there is to be no on-site storage of surface water within the residential development. The surface water from this area is to be positively drained to a series of SUDS features within the commercial development on the south side of Factory Lane. There is a series of new ditches created within the residential parcel which will collect any overland flows and convey this water towards the Decoy Pond.
105. The Suffolk County Council as the lead local flood authority raise no objection to the development and in respect of the drainage strategy proposed. The specific surface water drainage details remain to be agreed but are covered by planning conditions (in addition to storm and foul water matters which are largely issues of implementation) attached to the host planning permission.
106. Such conditions are clear that until they have been addressed development cannot commence. However, such considerations are not reserved matters. Works necessary to satisfy those conditions may impact upon the layout, but that does not preclude determining the reserved matters on the basis of the submitted details and

officers fully expect that those outstanding items can be satisfactorily treated, especially where the County Council raise no objection.

Levels (inc. "cut and fill")

107. As previously mentioned, some regrading of levels is required to achieve appropriate gradients for the spine road and to achieve suitable relationships between properties particularly on the west-east axes.

108. Taylor Wimpey have provided a cut-fill banding drawing that details the levels of the plots backing onto Grimwade Close which are to be set within 500mm of the existing levels in this area to negate the issue of overlooking. Also, due to the root protection zones for the trees along this boundary it is not possible to build the levels up high. Section A on the Indicative Site Boundary Sections drawing shows the proposed levels with a conservatively low existing property on Grimwade Close. Short of an actual survey of the existing plots and back gardens Taylor Wimpey have taken the site boundary level as the conservative FFL of the existing plots.

109. As part of the construction process, material will be transferred from the top of the site to the lower half where it will be used to reduce the overall gradient and create a more uniform ground level.

110. It is important to understand what this means for relative ground levels between existing dwellings alongside the site and the new properties that will adjoin them – as well as garden levels and respective fence heights. It is also vital that fill does not occur around trees to be retained if they are to thrive in the future.

111. This has been considered and is shown on the boundary sections drawings as previously commented.

112. Taylor Wimpey has noted that tree roots are to be protected and not built over. The cut-fill drawing is not a detailed drawing but is taken from a small number of spot levels, some of which have bridged over to make it look worse than it is but the overall design will ensure that Taylor Wimpey are not building up over existing tree roots.

Importation of "fill" material

113. Whilst cut and fill will provide part of the sustainable solution to regrading parts of the site, some material (uncontaminated) will need to be brought onto the site from

elsewhere. The Applicant has estimated that some 30,000 m³ (10,595 tonnes) of additional material will be required.

114. It is not unusual for material to be imported onto sites where development is being planned on a slope. Here the Applicant, as the developer, has sought to use cut and fill techniques, but some residual need for material is evident. It is normal in such cases to expand the construction management condition(s) previously applied to the host planning permission in order to require the agreement of a Construction Method Statement to ensure, amongst other things, that the importation of fill material can be controlled to minimise disruption to residents. The Applicant is happy to agree such details.

Delivery

115. It is the Government's intention to significantly boost the supply of new homes. That cannot displace the primacy of the development plan. However, it is a material consideration for Members to take into account, alongside the policies contained within the NPPF, when considering the principle of new housing applications. Further, the thrust of governmental policy and supporting guidance is aimed at ensuring that sites are brought forward as quickly as possible and that it is incumbent to demonstrate that this can be achieved.

116. Officers have agreed a Statement of Common Ground (SCG) with Taylor Wimpey in order to understand their anticipated lead-in and build-out rates for the site and for the purposes of compiling the 'clear evidence' of delivery necessary to support housing land supply projections in accordance with the NPPF and supporting PPG.

117. The SCG identifies that in the event that the reserved matters are approved, housing completions are first expected from April 2020 at a rate of 50 dwellings per annum (above the 40dpa generally considered by officers to be the average). Given the track record of the Applicant within this district and neighbouring Mid Suffolk, this higher figure is considered achievable. Implementation and preparatory site works for construction would begin this Autumn.

118. Whilst not a consideration that is held up as being material to the determination of this application, it is nevertheless helpful to note that the applicant is committed to the delivery of the Proviso D land, and at an expeditious rate such that it would make a meaningful contribution to the housing land supply of the district within the five-year period. Notwithstanding, of course, that a further imperative for progression of the Proviso D land relates to the regeneration of the employment land to the south of Factory Lane.

PART FIVE – CONCLUSION

119. This application represents a crucial step forward in the life of a long-standing and significant strategic allocation. An approval of the reserved matters and subsequent land disposal to Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd (as the applicant and developer) will not only realise the plan-led delivery of needed homes, but will also secure the funding required to expedite the delivery of the Brantham Regeneration Area, making it feasible and attractive to potential future occupiers. In other words, it is the progression of this residential land that enables the regeneration of the employment land.
120. In granting outline planning permission, it has to be accepted that there is at least one form of development that would be acceptable at the reserved matters stage. Furthermore, the parameters and principles of such a development have been set, and this reserved matters application does not deviate from that scope. Purely and simply, it addresses the reserved matters of the development that falls within the applicable red-lined area. The likely environmental effects of the development, in respect of the reserved matters detail submitted, continue to be known.
121. Officers have undertaken to review the merits of the reserved matters detail framed against the entirety of the development plan and in respect of those policies which are most important for the determination of the application. After careful assessment, your officers consider that the application responds positively to the policies of the development plan. Notwithstanding the development plan, the proposed reserved matters detail is nevertheless considered to align with the planning policies contained within the NPPF and is acceptable in all respects.
122. In the absence of any justifiable or demonstrable material consideration indicating otherwise, it is considered that the proposals are therefore acceptable in planning terms and that there are no material considerations which would give rise to unacceptable harm.
123. A positive recommendation to Members is therefore given below.

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RECOMMENDATION

That Members resolve to:

(1) Grant approval of the reserved matters (under application reference DC/19/00881) subject to planning conditions, drafted to the satisfaction of the Acting Chief Planning Officer, including:

- Approved Plans and Details
- Car charging details inc. ducting for shared areas.
- Further detailed hard and soft landscaping plans and treatments including areas of play.
- Agreement of dog waste/bin locations.
- Site boundary treatments informed by public engagement.
- Expanded construction management details for materials importation.
- As required by SCC, where necessary.