

Committee Report

Item 7A

Reference: DC/19/03486

Case Officer: Vincent Pearce

Report: Vincent Pearce & Katherine Hale

Ward: Thurston.

Ward Members: Cllr Harold Richardson. Cllr Wendy Turner.

Note:

Part of the overall application site sits within West Suffolk District - the site straddling as it does the district boundary between Mid Suffolk and West Suffolk. MSDC has formally consulted WSDC and adjacent parishes within WSDC and this report will set out all relevant responses along with such action/s as has/have been taken by WSDC to determine that part of the development proposal that sits within their jurisdiction. Officers from both Councils have been working together collaboratively and transparently in the interest of proper planning and in the spirit of the duty to co-operate.

Summary recommendation:

GRANT OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION subject to:

1. The satisfactory and prior completion of a S106 Agreement to secure the linking of the development to applications DC/19/03486 [MSDC] & DC/19/1519/OUT [WSDC] along with the delivery of the matters set out in the recommendation section of this report along with relevant conditions and such updates as may have been presented by officers in any additional papers prior to or at the meeting

Details of Development

Description of Development

Outline Planning Application - Erection of up to 210 dwellings, means of access, open space and associated infrastructure, including junction improvements. Members are advised that this outline application requires the principle of the proposed residential use to be considered along with proposed access arrangements [access to the site will not form reserved matters in the event that outline planning permission is ultimately granted].

Consequently, the remaining four aspects of development potentially determinable at outline stage – Layout, Scale, Appearance, & Landscaping all fall to be determined as reserved matters in the event that outline planning permission is first granted. They are not matters to be determined here.

This is an outline planning application that straddles two local authority boundaries

All of the proposed development is located within Mid Suffolk District with the exception of proposed highway improvements to Fishwick Corner which sit within West Suffolk District. At the time of writing this report WSDC has not delegated authority to MSDC to determine all the proposed development, including that part within WSDC. [procedurally WSDC delegating responsibility for determining an application is permitted subject to mutual agreement]. Therefore, currently this Committee [MSDC] will be responsible for considering the merits of the entirety of the proposal albeit issuing a planning decision for that part which sits within the District. WSDC will determine the proposed Fishwick Corner improvement works which form a separate planning application reference DC/19/1519/OUT.

Figure 1 below illustrates how the wider proposal sits in relation to both districts.

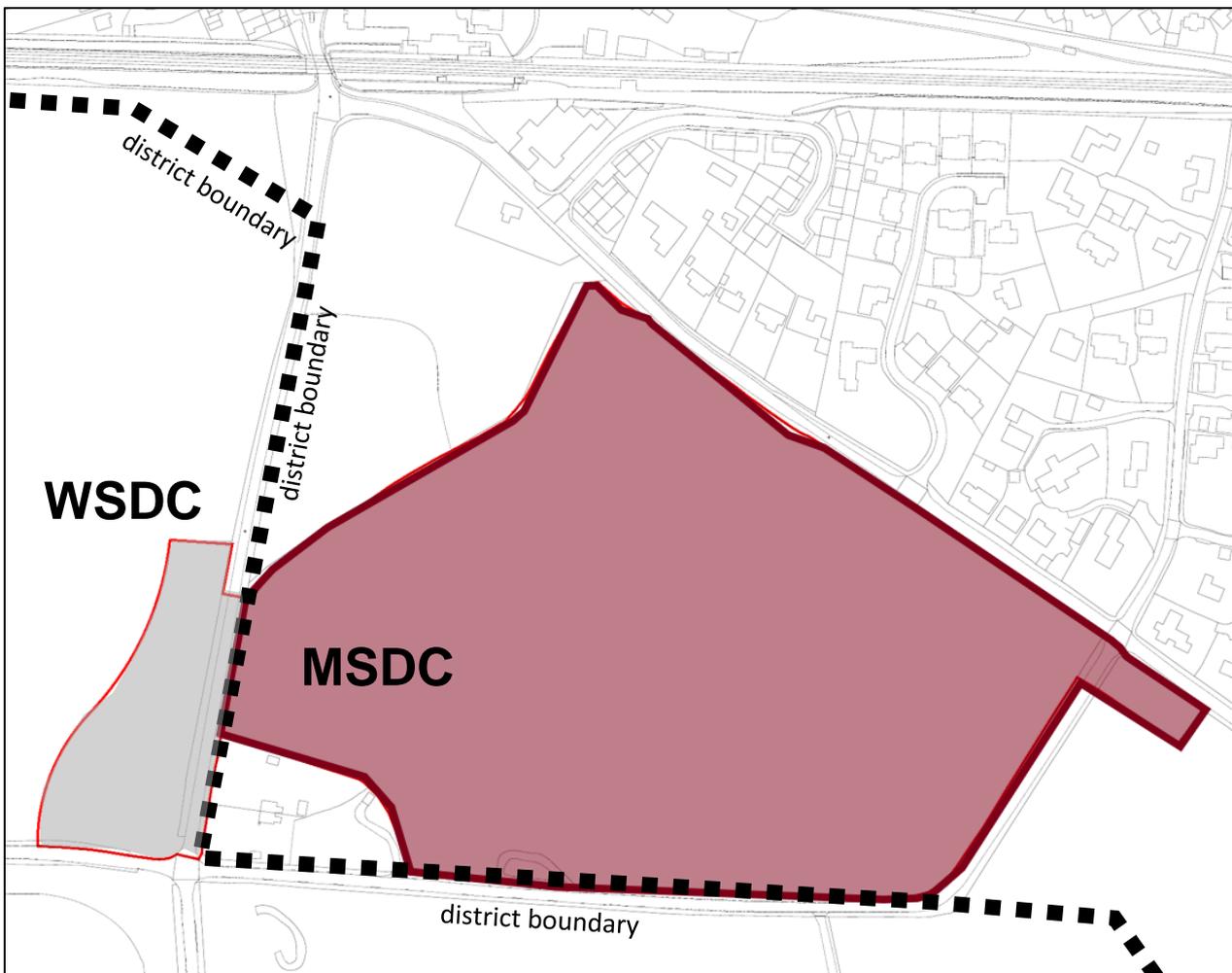


Figure 1: The cross-boundary extent of the application

Officers from both authorities have been liaising closely and MSDC and WSDC officers have undertaken a number of joint meetings and negotiations with the applicant for the obvious reason that there is a strong physical and functional interdependence between the two parts of the overall proposal; the acceptability of the development is contingent upon the delivery of the highway improvement works located within West Suffolk.

Location

Land South West Of, Beyton Road, Thurston, Suffolk

Expiry Date: Extension of time agreed

Application Type: OUT - Outline Planning Application

Development Type: Major Large Scale - Dwellings

Applicant: Bloor Homes and Sir George A. Agnew

Agent: Mr Sam Hollingworth

Parish: Thurston

Site Area: 8.87 hectares

Density of Development:

Gross Density (Total Site): 23.7dph [dwellings per hectare]

Built form : Open space: approx. 5.5ha : 3.4ha

Details of Previous Committee

This application has not been considered previously by the Committee. No member site visit

Has a Committee Call In request been received from a Council Member ? No

Has a Committee site visit been undertaken? No request

Has the application been subject to Pre-Application Advice: Yes [Planning Performance Agreement(PPA)]

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reasons:

- ❖ It is a “Major” application for a residential development for more than 15 dwellings [therefore outside of the formal scheme of delegation [within the Constitution] to The Chief Planning Officer; and,
- ❖ The Chief Planning Officer is of the opinion that the application raises [i] planning issues of a controversial nature and [ii] the proposed development straddles the district boundary with West Suffolk District Council and therefore any assessment and discussion of the merits of the proposal need to be in the public arena, with the Planning Committee taking the planning decision.

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework
Thurston Neighbourhood Plan

Core Strategy [2008]

CS01 - Settlement Hierarchy
CS02 - Development in the Countryside & Countryside Villages
CS03 - Reduce Contributions to Climate Change
CS04 - Adapting to Climate Change
CS05 - Mid Suffolk's Environment
CS06 - Services and Infrastructure
CS09 - Density and Mix

Core Strategy Focused Review [2012]

FC01 - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
FC01_1 - Mid Suffolk Approach To Delivering Sustainable Development
FC02 - Provision And Distribution Of Housing

Local Plan [1998]

GP01 - Design and layout of development
H04- Proportion of Affordable Housing
H02 - Housing development in towns
H03 - Housing development in villages
H07 - Restricting housing development unrelated to needs of countryside
H13 - Design and layout of housing development
H14 - A range of house types to meet different accommodation needs
H15 - Development to reflect local characteristics
H16 - Protecting existing residential amenity
H17 - Keeping residential development away from pollution
T09 - Parking Standards
T10 - Highway Considerations in Development
CL08 - Protecting wildlife habitats

Neighbourhood Plan Status

This application site is within a Neighbourhood Plan Area.

The Neighbourhood Plan is currently at:- Stage 7: Adoption by LPA [October 2019]

Accordingly, the Neighbourhood Plan has statutory weight and alongside the rest of the development plan it is the starting point for decision-taking purposes.

Of particular relevance to the consideration of the merits of this proposal are Neighbourhood Plan policies:

- Policy 1 Thurston Spatial Strategy
- Policy 2 Meeting Thurston's Housing Needs
- Policy 4 Retaining and Enhancing Thurston Character Through Residential Design
- Policy 5 Community Facilities
- Policy 6 Key Movement Routes
- Policy 7 Highway Capacity at Key Road Junctions
- Policy 8 Parking Provision
- Policy 9 Landscaping and Environmental Features
- Policy 11 Provision for Wildlife in New Development

Status of Adopted Local Plan Core Strategy and Core Strategy Focused Review

A number of policies within the Plan have now been held to be 'out-of-date' as a result of recent planning appeal decisions on the basis of Inspectors declaring them to be inconsistent with the NPPF [2019]. On this basis the tilted balance required by paragraph 11 of the is brought into play where those policies are, in the round, considered to be those most important for the determination of the application in this instance noting the key issues; principally, policies CS1, CS2, and H7.

Status of Draft Joint Local Plan [2019]

The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan is currently in Regulation 18 phase with the consultation period for comments now finished. Within the Draft Joint Local Plan the application site forms part of the proposed site allocations ref: LA087. The allocation policy is set out as follows:

LA087 – Allocation: Land south of Beyton Road, Thurston

Site Size - 7.9ha

Approximately 200 dwellings (with associated infrastructure)

The development shall be expected to comply with the following:

- I. The relevant policies of the Joint Local Plan;**
- II. On-site open space is retained or an alternative provision of equal or greater quality, accessibility and quantity is provided as part of the scheme;**
- III. An ecological survey, and any necessary mitigation measures are provided;**
- IV. Contributions to the satisfaction of the LPA, towards provision of pre-school, primary school and secondary school provision;**
- V. Contributions to the satisfaction of the LPA, towards healthcare provision;**
- VI. Provision of a new footway links to the village;**
- VII. Transport Assessment required to assess the impact on highway under the railway bridge;**
- VIII. Mitigation measures at crossways junction near the site; and**
- IX. Contributions may be required, to the satisfaction of the LPA, towards accessibility improvements at Thurston railway station.**

In respect of the allocation, is it right to conclude that the Councils own evidence at the time of the Reg.18 was aware of and accepted that that improvements/mitigation required to support this

allocation and others were considered to be deliverable in the sense that Bloor Homes did and does have control of the necessary land via co-operation with the land owner.

An assessment of this application against that allocation Policy is included within this report where it will be demonstrated that the terms of that policy, albeit only in draft, have been met.

As the Draft Joint Local Plan is only at Regulation 18 Stage it has limited weight afforded to it when making decisions and therefore the existing adopted Local Plan and the NPPF hold more weight along with the Neighbourhood Plan which is a part of the development plan. Nevertheless, the emerging Plan does provide an indication of the intended 'direction of travel' with regard to the Council's approach to sustainable growth within The District and within Thurston in order to meet continuing needs locally and within the District. That the Council has already set out its intent to allocate the site for development is an important one and it is important for Members to consider the consistency of that decision given the individual circumstances of this application.

Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement [5YHLS]

The Council is currently able to demonstrate that it has a 5YHLS.

However, as above, the Council's housing policies (e.g. CS2, H7) are out of date. Furthermore, it should be recognised that the Council's current land supply position contains a significant proportion of sites that are otherwise contrary to those housing policies i.e. of themselves and in the absence of any other "harm", that a proposed site falls out of a defined settlement boundary should not automatically preclude a grant of permission. Naturally, this accords with the s38(6) statutory duty which requires Members to not only consider the development plan but to also consider other material considerations (e.g. the NPPF and the emerging JLP). That is to say these sites were knowingly chosen outside of a defined settlement boundary. They were approved on the basis that falling outside of a defined settlement boundary should not automatically preclude a grant of planning permission, with sites considered in accordance with the NPPF and other applicable material considerations.

Consultations and Representations

During the course of the application Consultation and Representations from third parties have been received. These are summarised below.

A: Summary of Consultations

Town/Parish Council

Thurston Parish Council

The Parish Council, having considered this application at an extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on 28th August 2019, would like to confirm that it objects to this application in its entirety with particular concerns raised as below.

Whilst it acknowledges that the applicant has actively engaged with the Parish Council on a number of concerns raised at pre-application and post submission stage, and should be commended on its ecological report which was detailed and thorough, overall it was felt that the proposal failed to take full regard of the policies contained within the Thurston Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) which, having passed examination stage, is due to be put to a referendum vote on 12th September 2019. The Examiner concluded that, subject to amendments as highlighted by the examiner, and which do not significantly or substantially alter the intention or nature of the Draft Plan, the NDP as submitted meets the Basic Conditions and should proceed

to Referendum. It was felt by the examiner that the Thurston NDP will provide a strong practical framework against which decisions on development can be made and as such the Parish Council contends that it is to be regarded as a material consideration in the determination of this application.

1. As has been mentioned by the Parish Council on similar applications for new dwellings outside of the settlement boundary, since 15th November 2017 it has been asked to consider a number of planning applications for new dwellings outside of the Settlement Boundary of Thurston. This application on land to the south west of Beyton Road is outside of the amended built-up area boundary and as such is contrary to not only policies within the Mid Suffolk Local Plan but also the post examination Thurston Neighbourhood Development Plan POLICY 1: THURSTON SPATIAL STRATEGY which states that all new development in Thurston parish shall be focused within the settlement boundary of Thurston village as defined within the Policies Maps on pages 76-77 of the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan.

2. As the proposed development is outside of the current defined settlement boundary allocated by Mid Suffolk District Council for Thurston, it is also contrary to the spatial strategy in Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy. Being in conflict with Policy CS1 would also bring it in conflict with Policies FC1 and FC1.1 of the Core Strategy Focused Review (Adopted December 2012). The conflict with the development plan would therefore be an adverse impact of the proposed development.

3. The general approach in the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan, fully supported by the Parish Council is that growth will be focused on the 5 significant sites which were granted planning permission as of 2017 (which are located within the settlement boundary as amended by the Neighbourhood Plan) and on small scale infill sites within the settlement boundary. As these sites are expected to provide high quality schemes which generally enhance the public realm and improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, it is felt that this proposal will neither enhance nor protect the village facilities given its location outside of the settlement boundary.

Officer comment [points 1-3]

These points are directly addressed elsewhere in this report. It is officers opinion that the extension of the settlement boundary to reflect the Thurston Five planning permissions does not meet the test required by paragraph 14 b of the NPPF [as shall be explained later] in that the Neighbourhood Plan fails to address the housing requirement for Thurston identified by MSDC. The Joint Local Plan Preferred Options document identifies this site as being appropriate for residential development. Whilst it currently sits in what is defined as countryside [Adopted Local Plan] it clearly adjoins a highly sustainable village in a highly sustainable location. This fact cannot be ignored as cannot the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4. The granting of planning permission on 5 sites in late 2017 has meant that there are over 1,000 dwellings in the planning pipeline for Thurston, i.e. with planning permission but not yet built or occupied. Given the levels of growth in the planning pipeline; the previously raised fundamental concerns of the Suffolk County Council Highways Team about highway capacity; and the need to deliver major new education infrastructure in the form of a larger primary school on a new site, the Parish Council contends that Thurston should not be expected to accommodate any additional growth outside of the settlement boundary as revised.

Officer comment:

The Thurston Five applications have provided a site for a new primary school on Norton Road and funding to build that school¹, with the funding proportionate to each individual scheme. Suffolk County Council has requested that in the event of planning permission being granted for this outline application then a S106 be entered into to secure more than another £1m for additional new places. The new primary school site is ultimately capable [in the event of substantial local population expansion] of accommodating a 630-place school [3 forms of entry – In the site is big enough to facilitate future expansion unlike the existing school site].

Members are advised that this proposal does not trigger the need for the 630-place school and there are currently no plans for a 630-place school as the demand is not there. Obviously, any proposal to expand the school will be the subject of a future planning application and that will as always be judged on its own merits. The current applicant is not required to model the impact of a 630-place school as that is not the new school proposal.

Thurston Community College is also capable of expanding. There is no reason to believe SCC will not ensure school place provision in Thurston keeps up with demand. The new primary school is expected to be built soon.

5. Thurston Spatial Strategy provides a provision for the support of development proposals outside of the settlement boundary to come forward that meet specialist housing and care needs on sites where it can be demonstrated that no available and deliverable site exists within the settlement boundary. The proposal submitted by the applicant has failed to offer any such proposals but has merely sought to reflect the mix already being offered by the five significant planning applications granted approval in 2017 for 818 dwellings.

6. Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges that the proposal compromises market and affordable housing and in part conforms to the Thurston NDP Policy 2: Meeting Thurston's Housing Needs, it fails to take into account that the parish of Thurston already has over 1,000 approved dwellings in the pipeline with 35% of these being affordable and a number being provided as shared ownership which will be of particular benefit to younger people wishing to access the housing market. The Parish Council therefore contends that this proposal offers nothing further to the parish in terms of provision.

Officer comment:

Members will be familiar with the pressing need for new affordable homes across the District to deal with the significant numbers of people on the housing register. Affordable housing can be provided across the District and those in greatest housing need can be offered accommodation in any part of the District. The Council is always keen to ensure that affordable housing is provided in sustainable locations as this offers the greatest opportunity for those in housing need in terms of jobs, services, public transport and support. As a key service centre Thurston is such a location and is expected to provide for more than a local need.

Based on evidence of need set out in the Ipswich Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which covers the Ipswich Housing Market Area (of which Mid Suffolk is part), the Joint

¹ Now subject of planning application. Discharge of Conditions Application for 5070/16 - Condition 12 (Written scheme of Investigation), Condition 24 (Surface Water Drainage Scheme) and Condition 26 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan) Land On The North Side Of Norton Road Thurston Suffolk
Application. No: DC/19/03795 | Received: Fri 09 Aug 2019 | Validated: Fri 09 Aug 2019 | Status: Awaiting decision

Local Plan (JLP) seeks to deliver 127 affordable dwellings in Mid Suffolk per annum, between 2018 and 2036.

The most recent Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for Mid Suffolk shows that, between April 2014 and April 2019, a total of 361 affordable dwellings have been delivered at an average of 72 per annum; significantly below the target in the emerging JLP.

As the gap between need and provision increases the situation becomes cumulatively less supportive for those in housing need across the District.

The Council's Homes and Housing Strategy [2019-2036] includes within its strategic objectives:

- “ 1. The housing market functions effectively, providing homes which are as affordable as possible; to meet the needs of residents and support the local economy”***
- 2. There is a wide and varied choice of good quality, sustainable homes of different sizes, types, and tenures, to meet the needs of a wide range of different households.***
- 5. Homes are in high quality sustainable environments, served by jobs and community facilities, appropriate green space, effective transport links and other necessary infrastructure***
- 8. Everyone has a suitable home, and residents are able to live as healthily, safely, independently as possible within sustainable communities***
- 9. Both Councils have strong relationships with residents, developers and other partners that enable us to deliver housing, infrastructure and services effectively, and to innovate where appropriate”***

Delivering as it will 35% affordable housing the proposal if approved will help the address the pressing housing need and will help to meet the strategic objectives described above.

7. Acknowledging that the proposal may well include bungalows (with the precise number and nature of these being determined under a reserve matters application), the Parish Council is concerned at the lack of detail on the number to be included within the proposal and would comment that in order to be in conformity with Policy 2 Part E more than 12 bungalows (as indicated at the meeting with representatives from Bloor Homes on 23rd August 2019) should be included within any such proposal.

Officer comment:

The illustrative layout currently suggests the inclusion of bungalows although a specific number is not quoted. Much of the proposed Beyton Road frontage will it is indicated be populated with bungalows for urban design and amenity reasons. There is no reason why the Committee could not indicate that as part of the reserved matters submission it would wish to see the inclusion of at least 12 bungalows on the basis of ensuring reasonable provision for older people, downsizers and those with mobility challenges. This may

however be unnecessary because as can be seen from the Housing Strategy Team's comments at least 14 bungalows will be needed to satisfy affordable housing [rented] need.

8. The applicant has also failed to respond to the consultative findings of the Thurston NDP which reflected residents desire and support for houses in groups of no more than 50 dwellings and there is a general concern over the indicative house types, in particular the size of the smaller dwellings, and would request that all future applications for housing in not only Thurston, but also Mid Suffolk, have a requirement that all properties are to be built to current Nationally Described Space Standards as published March 2015.

Officer comment:

Whilst the desire of the Parish Council to see 100% compliance with NDSS achieved Member's will be aware that the Council currently has no policy to enforce this. Officers seek to encourage voluntary take up. Fortunately, Bloor Homes has been receptive to requests and it is confirmed that 100% of all affordable housing and some 90% of all open market units will achieve or surpass NDSS. This is welcome and is another example of Bloor Homes looking to work with the Council to raise the quality of new housing in the District. The applicant is to be commended.

9. As has been mentioned by the Parish Council on previous occasions, it was considered that approval of 818 dwellings at the Mid Suffolk Planning Referrals Committee Meeting on 1st November 2017 was a level of development that was of such a strategic scale that a cumulative approach was required through the planning process to provide improvements to mitigate against any severe impacts to ensure that they did not result in unsustainable growth of the village. The Parish Council is concerned that additional growth such as that now being considered, is unsustainable, unsafe and will have a severe impact on the Highway Network in and around Thurston.

Officer comment:

The Bloor Homes application provides a raft a highway improvements south of Thurston Station Railway Bridge that are considered an important precursor to any further growth by the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan. Only Bloor can deliver these because they have specifically sought to include sufficient land outside of the public highway to effect significant junction improvements following pre-application consultation with SCC and the identified need to deal with residual cumulative impacts resulting from the committed developments. SCC as local highway authority is not currently in a position to deliver such improvements. The previous Thurston Five permissions also could not deliver these, as identified through the extensive application /negotiation process for the 'Thurston Five' sites.

The application has been submitted with a Transport Assessment with considers the cumulative impact from the Five sites alongside movements from this proposal and the Gladman scheme to the north to ensure all known potential growth is considered. This demonstrates that with the mitigation proposed, there will not be a severe impact on the highway network as a result of the proposal.

Suffolk County Council as local highway authority has raised no objection to this proposal on the basis that it solves a number of existing highway issues south of the railway bridge and actually effects significant improvement to highway safety; not only would such works mitigate the impacts of this development, they would provide wider benefit, too.

10. Thurston Parish Council objects to this application on the grounds that, to date, SCC Highways Authority have not indicated as to whether there are any further mitigation measures that have been identified that will provide solutions to the severe negative impact that additional growth will have on the Highway Network and draws reference to the letter submitted by SCC Highways (Steve Merry (SCC) to Ben Elvin (MSDC) 13 Oct 2017) who raised concerns that, following mitigation measures being implemented (for those planning applications approved at the meeting of 1st November 2017), the roads in and around Thurston will be operating at capacity if all the developments go ahead. In his letter it is stated:

"Any future development in Thurston must, in the Highway Authorities opinion, address the following constraints;

- . No further capacity can be provided at the A 143 Bury Road / Thurston junction within the existing highway boundary for traffic traveling to / from the Thurston area.
- . The C692 / C693 Thurston Road (Fishwick Corner) cannot be improved further in terms of either road safety or capacity due to the highway boundary constraints.
- . Any significant future development is likely result in the C560 Bey ton Road / C692 Thurston Road / U4920 Thedwastre Road (Pokeriage Corner) junction reaching its theoretical capacity. This work has not investigated the potential for mitigation, but the site has similar highway boundary constraints as the other junctions.
- . The C291 Barton Road under the rail bridge is at capacity and without mitigation this may restrict future development in the area."

Officer comment:

See above and detailed highway section of this report. From the outset of discussions related to this development all of the above issues and pre-existing conditions have been discussed with the applicants. Members will note elsewhere in this report that AECOM [acting for SCC Highways] and SCC Highways have both accepted that additional capacity can be created at the Bunbury Arms junction through the incorporation of MOVA² technology and as a result of it being likely that certain manoeuvres will be easier after signalisation. It should also be noted that additional land was brought into the submission proposal specifically to deal with improvements to Pokeriage Corner and the land added for enhancement of Fishwick Corner was deliberately generous to facilitate safeguarding for a possible future segregated cycle way.

11. The position stated above has been referenced in the letter submitted by SCC Highways (Samantha Harvey (SCC) to Vincent Pearce (MSDC) which has confirmed that the improvements planned for the permitted developments north of the railway line were only to a level to mitigate their harm and had little, if any, residual capacity in terms of congestion and road safety. The letter further identifies that a suite of improvements, in the opinion of the Local Highways Authority, mitigated the harm of these five developments but took the infrastructure to its maximum in terms of safety and capacity.

Officer comment:

² Real time traffic management [signal] management [described elsewhere in this report

It is in light of the comments made by SCC and the evidence produced at the time of the 5 sites that in early discussions with the Authorities, the need was stressed to explore solutions that would deliver mitigation to satisfy the further impact of this development. In respect of Fishwick Corner this would necessitate looking beyond the land controlled by SCC as Highway Authority.

12. Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges that the applicant has provided details of proposed infrastructure to be secured through planning obligations as part of the proposed development:

- . Highway junction improvements at Fishwick Corner.
- . Highway junction improvements at Pokeridge Corner.
- . Highway junction improvements at Bey ton Road / Barton Road.
- . Widening of footway under the railway bridge and realignment of the carriageway; together with alteration to the Station Road / Barton Road roundabout to account for this realignment.
- . Traffic calming on Bey ton Road.
- . Reduced speed limit of 30mph on Mount Road East to Fishwick Corner

it has overall concerns at the impact these proposals will have on highway safety for all users of the highway network.

13. The Parish Council would request that consultation be had with Suffolk County Highways on the solution being proposed by the applicant for highway junction improvements at Fishwick Corner which involve the utilisation of land outside of highways land to deliver an improvement in the form of the realignment of New Road/Barton Road to create a staggered junction. It is concerned that this staggered junction will result in any vehicles leaving the village to access the A14 for BSE/Cambridge at the slip road by Rougham Hall Nurseries having to turn left and then wait in the middle of Mount Road to turn right. he proposed. On-coming traffic will therefore be approaching from around a blind bend where accidents regularly occur (statistics are available). With the addition of the proposed southern access to the Bloor site onto Mount Road, the Parish Council is concerned at the overall impact this will have on highway safety at one of the most dangerous junctions in the village. There is a further concern that the proposal being offered will effectively release the adjacent field to the West of New Road/Barton Road for further development.

Officer comment:

SCC has since responded in full to the application, having carried out its own detailed assessment with consultant support. It is satisfied that the improvements offered do not result in a severe residual cumulative impact in terms of both safety and capacity. Existing accident records have been reviewed and taken into account.

The new improvement at Fishwick Corner that has been sought and approved by SCC fully aware as identified above that the junction has a poor safety record. The SCC response and reasoning is provided later.

Land to the west lies within West Suffolk. This field has not, it would appear, been identified in any emerging Local Plan evidence [WSDC] to date. This highway improvement does not facilitate access to a future development.

The new improvement at Fishwick Corner that has been sought and approved by SCC fully aware as identified above that the junction has a poor safety record. The SCC response and reasoning is provided later.

14. Whilst the reduction of the speed limit of 30mph on Mount Road East to Fishwick Corner is to be supported, given that the proposal has a southern access point along this route the comments made under 13 above are of equal importance.

15. In addition, the decision taken by Suffolk County Council to implement changes to its School Travel and Post-16 Travel Policy by only providing children aged 4-16 years old with transport to their nearest school with an available place (phasing in the policy from September 2019) will impact on the Thurston Community College which has a wide catchment area. Evidence has shown that a significant number of parents have continued to support their school choice and as such there will be a negative impact on the rural infrastructure with the increase in the numbers travelling to and from school via car. No account of the increase in traffic movement has been given weight by the applicant and the Parish Council would request that the applicant be required to fully address the cumulative impact of this development on Highway Safety.

Officer comment:

The concern of the Parish Council is understood. Thurston has one of [if not the] largest school catchment areas of anywhere in Suffolk. Its reach extends predominantly up towards the Norfolk border and to a lesser degree to the south. A significant number of pupils have traditionally arrived in Thurston from home in the morning and left in the afternoon by school transport. There are therefore peak periods during the school day when large numbers of coaches/buses are travelling through the village as well as parking up at the college. On some occasions this causes localised congestion for short periods and makes navigating the Ixworth Road / Norton Road junction [particularly for pedestrians] more difficult. With the changes to school transport policy introduced by Suffolk County Council whereby eligibility for free school transport is to be restricted going forward the Parish Council is concerned that coach trips will be replaced by significantly more car trips as parents and careers use their own vehicles and that this has not been factored into traffic calculations.

This has been addressed in discussions with SCC Education and Highways and evidence of the impacts was considered at the time SCC took this decision. The comments are discussed later in this report.

The New SCC School Transport Policy

*“You can apply for school travel for any one of the following **four** reasons:*

1. Distance

Your child can only get Suffolk County Council funded school travel if they attend their nearest suitable school for the school year (2020/2021) and meet the criteria below:

- over 8 years old and live over 3 miles from the school using the shortest available walking route*
- under 8 years old and live over 2 miles from the school using the shortest available walking route*

A walking route can include public rights of way and footpaths that a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk to and from school with reasonable safety.

2. Income

3. **Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND)**

4. **Safety**

Predicted impact on new development in Thurston on school trips

Currently it is not possible with any real certainty to calculate the impact of these changes on the likely numbers of pupils attending Thurston schools from other locations [and thereby what the impact on coach and car trips will be]

What is however known is that school places in Thurston are being expanded in direct response to the fact that another 818 dwellings have been approved [The Thurston 5]. The uplift in places to 1500 reflects committed and planned [JLP] expansion in Thurston. That said and in any event if the current outline application from Bloor Homes is approved additional S106 funding will be secured to deliver appropriate spaces. From a practical point of view it would appear inevitable that the children of new residents will want to attend a school in Thurston and therefore the number of local children in attendance is likely to increase as the SCC school transport policy begins to bite. [with its emphasis on attending the closest school to your home location]. Until the policy has been in operation for some years and until the new developments and new school places have been delivered this must to some degree remain supposition as indeed is the Parish Council's suggestion that traffic from outside the area will continue to increase in relation to school journeys.

Another factor that needs to be considered is the fact that new schools are being built across Suffolk as new development is delivered in towns and villages across it. Bury St Edmunds [WSDC] has seen significant new residential development in recent years and this is being accompanied by new school provision at Sybil Andrew Academy at Moreton Hall. The cumulative impact of all the above is, on the balance of probability, a reduction in pressure for 'out of area' attendance at Thurston schools.

16. The applicant has also failed to take into account and sought to mitigate the cumulative impact its development will have on the areas mentioned in 10 and 12 and has relied on the findings of the AECOM report produced in 2017. The Parish Council would expect to see further transport assessment on all of the junctions named above also taking into account the change in the Suffolk County Council School Travel and Post-16 Travel Policy, the proposed expansion of the Thurston Community College (in response to growth in its catchment area) and to provide sufficient information to allow the impact of the additional traffic from the development on the highway network as a whole.

17. Of equal concern is also the failure by the applicant to consider the main access route for those from the south of the village to the current and future location of the Thurston Primary Academy. This access route is via the priority system on Thedwastre Road over the railway bridge which has no footpath for pedestrians. The increase of vulnerable persons - pedestrians and cyclists - along this route has not been considered by the applicant and the Parish Council is concerned that no measures have been proposed that will provide mitigation measures that will ensure that the highway safety for all users, not least the most vulnerable, is not severely impacted.

Officer comment:

Included in the package of improvements is modification of the footway on Thedwastre Road at the railway bridge and this has been discussed with SCC who have acknowledged this point.

18. Thurston NDP Policy 6 expects that all new developments must ensure safe pedestrian and cycle access to link up with existing pavements and cycle infrastructure that directly connect with the Key Movement Routes as identified on the Policies Maps on pages 75-76 of the Thurston NDP. Such routes should also ensure that access by disabled users and users of mobility scooters is secured. The Parish Council considers that the proposal to widen the footway under the railway bridge by realigning the carriageway, together with an alteration to the Station Road/Barton Road roundabout to account for this realignment with a further mini roundabout to the south of the railway bridge will severely compromise the safety of cyclists using the route to gain access to the facilities of the village and overall will fail to alleviate capacity improvements. Thurston is a rural village and traffic assessments most suited for towns instead of villages gives optimistic trip movements and therefore fail to realistically reflect the true movement of traffic in a rural village.

Officer comment:

SCC has considered the proposed improvement and has accepted it does improve capacity and safety. The evidence has been sought from the Applicants and subject to detailed review by SCC. No evidence has been provided to the contrary. The carriageway width under the ridge has not been reduced. The increase width in the footway has been achieved by the realignment of the road under the bridge. The situation for cyclists is unchanged from the existing situation. SCC has confirmed that trip rates match those used in rural village assessments and are not specifically urban. The presentation that will accompany this item at the Committee meeting will explore in detail the nature of the proposed alterations and will describe how increasing footway width and adjusting road alignment effect safety important improvements.

19. Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges that the proposal has traffic calming measures on Beyton Road by installing a raised table to slow traffic, the Parish Council, as has been stated on previous applications, maintains that such tables provide confusion for all users of the Highway and in particular those most vulnerable users. Furthermore the installation of an uncontrolled (ie without traffic lights) pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of Pokeriage Corner will impact on vulnerable and disabled users and will fail to provide safety for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists alike. The Parish Council would request that further assessment on the cumulative capacity of this junction from approved and pending applications (taking into consideration comments above) is carried out to ensure that capacity levels are not exceeded, and the impact is not now considered to be severe.

Officer comment:

SCC has since carried out their own assessment and confirmed acceptance of the proposal. The crossing will now be a formal zebra crossing, there is no requirement for this to be signal controlled. The applicant's co-operation in delivering this feature is acknowledged and it is recognised that it will form part of a wider chain of related improvements that have been a direct response to local concern

20. Given the desire to promote sustainable travel further, the proposal fails to consider the impact on passenger safety on the Thurston Level Crossing at the railway station as the proposal is likely to increase the numbers using the railway station which will negatively impact the risk to users of the railway. The Parish Council draws reference on the email submitted on 30th August 2019 from Nick Donoghue of Network Rail which has stated that the proposal for 210 new dwellings is likely to increase the amount of level crossing users increasing the risk to the operational railway. The Parish Council contends that no proposals have been provided that will allow those to the south of the railway line to access the railway station in a manner that is deemed to be safe for all users. The Parish Council notes that the detailed assessment of the cumulative risk to users of the railway station has not been updated since 2017 and seeks reassurance that the Local Planning Authority will undertake measures to ensure that the most up-to-date information on the cumulative impact on the railway station from development planned for Thurston is obtained from Network Rail.

Officer comment:

Bloor Homes is making a financial contribution towards a feasibility study to identify workable platform improvements with Network Rail and the District Council [with possible support from CIL funds]

21. The application also fails to demonstrate that it has taken into account the impact on primary educational infrastructure. It was agreed that, to provide an adequate educational infrastructure for not only the five significant applications of 2017, but also the applications currently in the planning system (as at 2017) that a new school would be required with a capacity of 420. The current school has a pan number for 2019/20 of 30 giving a potential roll of 210. Using Suffolk County Council matrix for approvals within the planning system a further 211 places are required. This proposal will give rise to a potential further 53 pupils which is not taken into account in the determination of the size of school being built. Whilst Suffolk County Council Schools Infrastructure Team have confirmed that the County has 'master planned' the new school site for future expansion, if it were required, to 630 primary places there are no detailed plans of what the accommodation would comprise, and plans are underway to build a school with a capacity of 420 only.

22. As Mid Suffolk District Council has recently provided evidence that it has a five-year supply of deliverable housing land available, which includes a 20% buffer, the Parish Council contends that the benefits of the development, taken cumulatively, do not outweigh the harm that has been identified above.

Officer comment: [16-21] & picking up subsequent issues raised by TPC with the case officer.

To what extent has modelling reflected growth on the east side of Bury St Edmunds

The agent advises:

“The Transport Assessment (TA) includes allowance for background traffic growth, committed developments in Thurston and a sensitivity assessment for the proposed Gladman development in addition to the traffic from the proposed Bloor development.

It is considered that the Moreton Hall development by Taylor Wimpey Homes of 500 dwellings that was subject of a planning application in 2014 and has since commenced on site should be included in the background traffic growth. Some of the dwellings were

occupied at the time of the traffic surveys in 2018 and any traffic would have been included.

That development at the time was linked in Policy to the provision of the Eastern Relief Road. The ERR provides significant infrastructure improvement for the distribution of traffic movements on from the east side of Bury St Edmunds including access to the A14.

As with the general traffic distribution observed from Thurston dominated to the south and then east and west, the expectation is that minimal traffic from Moreton Hall would access the village, or pass through the junctions at Fishwick Corner and Pokeriage Corner.

It is also reasonable to assume that the new High School at Moreton Hall would reduce the movements from Morton Hall to the Thurston Community College. The catchment areas for schools in Bury St Edmunds were altered with the provision of the Sybil Andrew Academy.

In terms of the SHEELA site, this has no status currently and is not included. However, the same comments would apply as to the Taylor Wimpey site”

To what extent will pedestrian trips change as a result of the new primary school and has this been factored in?

The agent responds:

“The improvement proposed at the Pokeriage Corner junction includes improvement to visibility from Thedwestre Road that improves safety and capacity, as well as improvement to the width of the footway at the junction and a formal zebra crossing of Beyton Road.

Discussions with SCC have focused on the need for improvement to the existing pedestrian facility crossing the Thedwestre Road rail bridge. If such improvement to the existing priority system and footway is deemed necessary a contribution or physical works will be considered.”

The Highway Authority has required the bridge works and these when combined with the new crossing on Beyton Road [and the Pokeriage Corner improvements will all contribute to safer travel by foot.

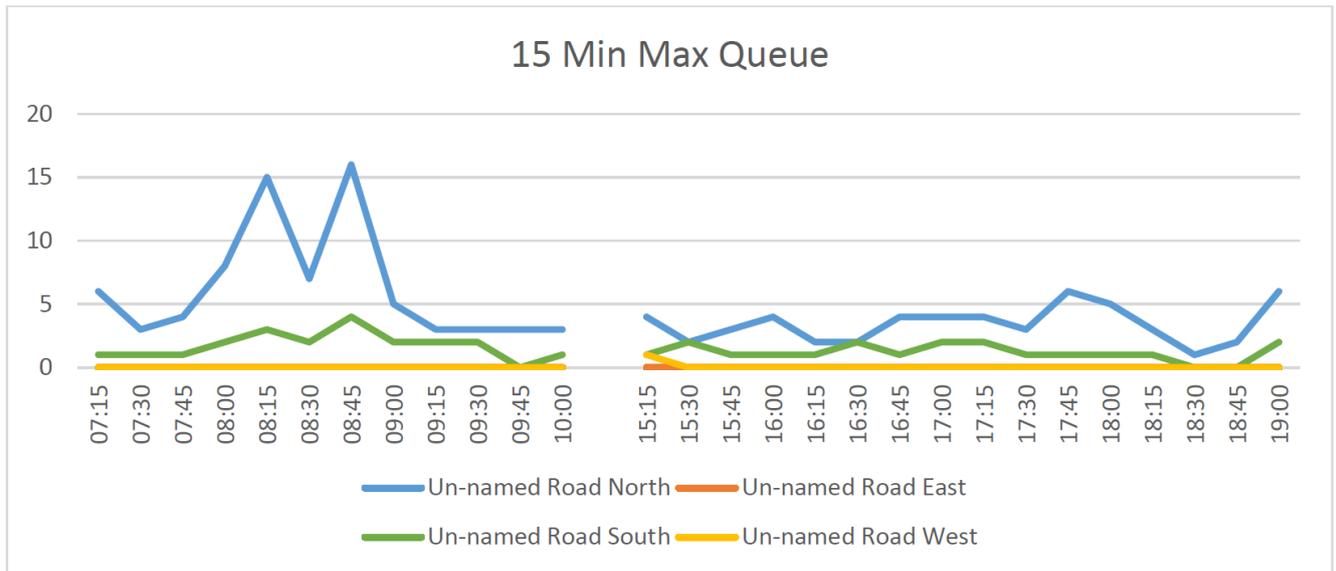
TPC reports that the submitted Traffic Assessment has under played the queue lengths for traffic in New Road between Mount Road and the Railway Bridge.

Anecdotally some parish councillors have reported to the case officer that traffic is known to queue the entire length of New Road at peak times from between the New Road / Mount Road junction [Fishwick Corner] and under Thurston Railway Bridge. The suggestion being that current congestion levels are being misreported.

The agent has responded by saying:

“The TA included survey information related to the existing operation of the Fishwick Corner junction.

The recorded queues from the survey are shown below.



The maximum observed was 16 vehicles over a short period of time. This would equate to some 96m and is around a quarter of the distance between Fishwick Corner and the railway bridge which is 395m. As such the queues have not been observed to queue back to the railway bridge.

The recorded traffic flows on this arm of the Fishwick Corner junction over a week were consistent in the peak period and as such we would expect the recorded queues to be similarly consistent.”

Trip distribution

The likely trip distribution expected from this development has been extrapolated from the research presented with the Thurston Five applications which clearly demonstrated that the majority of Thurston trips are to the south rather than to the north. This distribution is not expected to change as a result of the Beyton Road development because the majority of attractors/destinations wanting to be accessed by Thurston folk are on the whole to the south and not to the north. It is this fact that makes securing the raft of highway works south of the railway so important for easing traffic movement around Thurston.

The Parish Council would like to state it considers that this application and the one recently submitted by Gladman Developments Ltd are tipping points with no consideration of strategic planning for rapidity of growth and no understanding as to how to assimilate change. Further major changes such as these should be planned properly through further engagement with the neighbourhood plan and the local development plan in order to ensure that they do not result in

unsustainable growth of the village and cause considerable harm. The Parish Council expects that prior to further developments such as these being approved for Thurston, an overall study of the total impact on the community, not just in terms of road infrastructure and education, be commissioned to ensure that any further development for Thurston is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

In summary, the Parish Council contends that this application should not be supported as it fails to adhere to the main policies in the Thurston NDP. The Parish Council requests that the desires of the community, which were clearly expressed through engagement in the production of the Thurston NDP, are respected and that sites coming forward should demonstrate that they are in conformity with the Thurston NDP.

Rushbrooke with Rougham Parish Council

I trust you will be able to consider this consultation response re the above PA, as, unfortunately I had cited the correct day, but the incorrect date. We held our PC Meeting yesterday evening when the above PA was considered.

Members unanimously agreed that, whilst safety has to be improved at Fishwick Corner, it is considered that a roundabout (rather than a staggered junction) would be far more effective. We trust you will take this recommendation into account when determining the PA.

Great Barton Parish Council

No comments to make

West Suffolk District Council

WSDC Development Control Committee considered application ref: DC/19/1519/OUT [Fishwick Corner highway works] at their meeting of 4 December 2019. The Committee resolved to defer consideration of the application pending determination of DC/19/03486 by MSDC.

MSDC PLANNING POLICY / INFRASTRUCTURE

“1. Policy position

The site in question is allocated within the emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP) (July 2019) referenced as LA087. Therefore, up-to-date evidence supports the site and the proposal does not cause any significant undermining conflict with the emerging JLP. Therefore, there is not considered to be any significant conflict with paragraph 49 National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019). The principle of the site is encouraged for development in accordance with emerging JLP allocation policy LA087. It is understood the proposal is to provide some significant benefits to Thurston as a whole. Which the case officer will need to balance out the sustainable benefits against the adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan (October 2019).

In theory there is considered conflict between the proposal and the adopted Thurston Neighbourhood plan because the application site is outside of the Neighbourhood plan settlement boundary. However, in looking at Figure 13 inset map of detailed locations within the Neighbourhood plan. It is apparent the only sites allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan are those with planning permission, which does not allocate anything new. Technically, it

could be argued there is some conflict with paragraph 29 of the NPPF (Feb 2019) insofar as ... 'Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies'. It is also noted the site in question was included within the emerging JLP as part of the August 2017 formal consultation document. Therefore, for some time it has been recognised as an emerging suitable and needed site to meet housing needs. It should also be highlighted even though the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan (October 2019) is recently adopted it also requires current review as the emerging JLP is gaining weight and strategic plan-led direction and is a material consideration in this case in accordance with Section 38(6) PCPA 2004 that states: 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.

When the benefits of the proposal and the progressive plan-led approach in this settlement are weighted and balanced and considered against the adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan there is considered limited conflict. The application in principle is supported by the strategic planning policy team.

1. Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) position

The IDP (July 2019) sets out both Babergh and Mid Suffolk's infrastructure requirements and priorities. It was published on the 22nd July 2019 as evidence which supports the Joint Local Plan and is an iterative document which will change over time dependent on changing infrastructure capacity, requirements and priorities.

The application site is part of the proposed site allocations of the emerging Joint Local Plan, policy reference LA087. For the purpose of this response, and to understand the impact on infrastructure capacity, the content of the IDP has been considered together with the existing planning permissions and responses from infrastructure providers.

Set out below are the current planning applications (over 10 dwellings) and emerging Joint Local Plan land allocations in Thurston:

Existing permissions

- 3181/13, 2613/11 Thurston Granary, Station Hill - Full permission for 97 dwellings (under construction)
- DC/18/01376, 5010/16 Highfield, Norton Road - Full permission for 175 dwellings (under construction)
- DC/19/01602, 5070/16, Land at Norton Road - Full permission for 200 dwellings (under construction)
- DC/18/03547, 4963/16, Land west of Ixworth Road - Full permission for 250 dwellings (under construction), emerging Joint Local Plan site allocations reference LA088
- DC/17/02232, Land on the West Side of Barton Road - Full permission for 129 dwellings, emerging Joint Local Plan site allocations reference LA090
- 4942/16, Land at Meadow Lane - Full permission for 64 dwellings, emerging Joint Local Plan site allocations reference LA084

Planning applications awaiting determination (other than this application)

- DC/19/02090, Land to the east of Ixworth Road, Outline application for 210 dwellings, emerging Joint Local Plan site allocations reference LA089

Other emerging Joint Local Plan site allocations

- LA085 Land to the East of Church Road and South of Old Post Office Lane - 25 dwellings
- LA086 Land South of Heath Road – 110 dwellings

There are several essential infrastructure needs for Thurston that were identified in our response of the 15/08/2019:

- Education

The IDP states that within Thurston a new pre school setting for 30 places is needed at the relocated new primary school in Thurston. A new primary school is also to be provided in Thurston. This is identified as a 420 places school, which includes the relocation of the existing 210 place primary school. This new primary school would have the potential to provide for this development together with the committed growth and other Joint Local Plan proposed allocations. For the secondary school provision, the expansion of Thurston Community College from 1940 to 2190 places is planned, to provide for this development together with committed and planned growth of the Joint Local Plan. In their response of the 30/07/2019, the County Council have provided the developer contributions expected for both the new provision of primary and pre-school as s106 and for the expansion of the Thurston Community College as CIL contributions.

- Transport

The IDP states that within Thurston, contributions towards new footway links and traffic calming measures would be required as well as several highway and railway mitigation measures. Specific site details and required contributions are provided through the County Council Highway response. The IDP also refers to developer contributions through CIL which would be required in relation to the Thurston railway station passenger level crossing improvements.

The local junction improvements proposed as part of the scheme for Beyton Road, Pokeridge Corner, Barton Road and Fishwick Corner are essential to the safety and sustainability of the development, as well as for the cumulative impact of the growth in the area, which are supported by the County Council in their response of the 07/01/2020.

- Health

The nearest practice is Woolpit Health Centre, where the IDP refers to expansion of the practice and CIL contributions would be required. The response from the West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group of the 12/08/2019 also specifies that developer contributions via CIL are required to meet the cost of additional capital funding for health service provision arising.

2. Summary

It will be essential that the above points are considered in conjunction with the current application process and infrastructure needs must be satisfactorily addressed in accordance with the respective infrastructure providers consultation replies and the IDP.

There is general conformity with elements of the emerging Joint Local Plan land allocation policy LA087 and position of the Neighbourhood Plan is set out above.

In terms of the infrastructure proposed through this development, the identified needs of the IDP are met, primarily in terms of highways mitigation which are identified as essential infrastructure for the delivery for the planned growth of the emerging Joint Local Plan. The scheme contributes to the delivery of key infrastructure required to enable the sustainable growth of the area, such as local junction improvements proposed as well as contributions towards education and health. The highway mitigation measures of this proposal also enables to mitigate the harm of other development proposed such as planning application DC/19/02090, also for 210 dwellings.

The scheme is therefore supported by the Strategic Planning Team.”

Officer comment: Thurston NDP does not allocate any sites against any identified need; it is not considered that NPPF paragraph 14 can be engaged as a result and the development would not prejudice the focus for development to be located within the settlement boundary of the NDP. The development would meet the infrastructural requirements of the NDP at Policy 5 and in that respect it is a compliant development.

National Consultee

Natural England/

No comments to make

Historic England

Thank you for your letter of 25 July 2019 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we do not wish to offer any comments. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers, as relevant. It is not necessary for us to be consulted on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals. However, if you would like detailed advice from us, please contact us to explain your request.

The Environment Agency

We have received the attached chase emails. However the consultations are considered inappropriate and do not fall into our remit. If this is incorrect please contact us using the attached checklist to advise why we were consulted.

Network Rail

Although originally concerned at potential safety issues associated with rail passengers having to use the existing alarmed barrow crossing to access opposite platforms [as a result of the possible increased usage of the station arising from the proposed development] Network Rail has recently engaged in a series of meetings with the Council and Applicants to explore potential solutions to enhancing rail user safety at the station. Member's will be provided with a verbal update on progress with those discussions. The Council's informal offer to explore the release of reasonable CIL funding to facilitate access improvements at the Station has resulted in Network Rail becoming more actively engaged in working to facilitate improvements. It is expected that Network Rail will support the proposed improvements underneath the rail bridge. Network Rail is currently exploring whether a ramp/lift can be installed on the south side of the station as a future access enhancement using contributions from CIL funding.

Bloor Homes has offered to contribute £30,000 [S106] towards commissioning a feasibility/design study to achieve this solution. This is welcomed as CIL funding cannot be used for such purposes. This is another example of Bloor Homes commitment to collaborative working and their support for encouraging sustainable transport options.

Anglian Water

ASSETS

Section 1 - Assets Affected

There are assets owned by Anglian Water or those subject to an adoption agreement within or close to the development boundary that may affect the layout of the site. Anglian Water would ask that the following text be included within your Notice should permission be granted.

Anglian Water has assets close to or crossing this site or there are assets subject to an adoption agreement. Therefore the site layout should take this into account and accommodate those assets within either prospectively adoptable highways or public open space. If this is not practicable then the sewers will need to be diverted at the developers cost under Section 185 of the Water Industry Act 1991. or, in the case of apparatus under an adoption agreement, liaise with the owners of the apparatus. It should be noted that the diversion works should normally be completed before development can commence.

WASTEWATER SERVICES

Section 2 - Wastewater Treatment

The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Thurston Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows

Section 3 - Used Water Network

This response has been based on the following submitted documents: FRA and drainage strategy. The sewerage system at present has available capacity for these flows. If the developer wishes to connect to our sewerage network they should serve notice under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991. We will then advise them of the most suitable point of connection. It is noted that a pumped regime is required, we therefore ask that the pumped discharge rate/rising main size is agreed at Section 106 stage. (1) INFORMATIVE - Notification of intention to connect to the public sewer under S1 06 of the Water Industry Act Approval and consent will be required by Anglian Water, under the Water Industry Act 1991. Contact Development Services Team 03456066087. (2) INFORMATIVE - Notification of intention to connect to the public sewer under S1 06 of the Water Industry Act Approval and consent will be required by Anglian Water, under the Water Industry Act 1991. Contact Development Services Team 03456066087. (3) INFORMATIVE - Protection of existing assets - A public sewer is shown on record plans within the land identified for the proposed development. It appears that development proposals will affect existing public sewers. It is recommended that the applicant contacts Anglian Water Development Services Team for further advice on this matter. Building over existing public sewers will not be permitted (without agreement) from Anglian Water. (4) INFORMATIVE - Building near to a public sewer - No building will be permitted within the statutory easement width of 3 metres from the pipeline without agreement from Anglian Water. Please contact Development Services Team on 03456066087. (5) INFORMATIVE: The developer should note that the site drainage details submitted have not been approved for the purposes of adoption. If the developer wishes to have the sewers included in a sewer adoption agreement with Anglian Water (under Sections 104 of the Water Industry Act 1991), they should contact our Development Services Team on 0345 606 6087 at the earliest opportunity. Sewers intended for adoption should be designed and constructed in accordance

with Sewers for Adoption guide for developers, as supplemented by Anglian Water's requirements

Section 4 - Surface Water Disposal

The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option. Building Regulations (part H) on Drainage and Waste Disposal for England includes a surface water drainage hierarchy, with infiltration on site as the preferred disposal option, followed by discharge to watercourse and then connection to a sewer.

From the details submitted to support the planning application the proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water operated assets. As such, we are unable to provide comments on the suitability of the surface water management. The Local Planning Authority should seek the advice of the Lead Local Flood Authority or the Internal Drainage Board. The Environment Agency should be consulted if the drainage system directly or indirectly involves the discharge of water into a watercourse. Should the proposed method of surface water management change to include interaction with Anglian Water operated assets, we would wish to be re-consulted to ensure that an effective surface water drainage strategy is prepared and implemented.

NHS England (50+ Dwellings/C2/Care or Nursing Homes)

1. I refer to your consultation letter on the above planning application and advise that, following a review of the applicants' submission the following comments are with regard to the primary healthcare provision on behalf of NHS England Midlands and East (East) (NHSE), incorporating West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Background

2. The proposal comprises a development of up to 210 residential dwellings, which is likely to have an impact of the NHS funding programme for the delivery of primary healthcare provision within this area and specifically within the health catchment of the development. NHS England would therefore expect these impacts to be fully assessed and mitigated by way of a developer contribution secured through the Community Infrastructure levy (CIL).

Review of Planning Application

3. There are no GP practices within a 2km radius of the proposed development, there is a GP practice closest to the proposed development and this is within circa 6km. This practice does not have sufficient capacity for the additional growth resulting from this development and cumulative development growth in the area. Therefore a developer contribution, via CIL processes, towards the capital funding to increase capacity within the GP Catchment Area would be sought to mitigate the impact.

Healthcare Impact Assessment

4. The intention of NHS England is to promote Primary Healthcare Hubs with co-ordinated mixed professionals. This is encapsulated in the strategy document: The NHS Five Year Forward View.
5. The primary healthcare services directly impacted by the proposed development and the current capacity position is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of capacity position for healthcare services closest to the proposed development.

Premises	Weighted List Size 1	NIA (m2)2	Capacity 3	Spare Capacity (NIA m2) 4
Woolpit Health Centre	14,460	705.00	10,281	-299
Total	14,460	705.00	10,281	-299

1. The weighted list size of the GP Practice based on the Carr-Hill formula, this figure more accurately reflects the need of a practice in terms of resource and space and may be slightly lower or higher than the actual patient list.

2. Current Net Internal Area occupied by the Practice.

3. Based on 120m² per 1750 patients (this is considered the current optimal list size for a single GP within the East DCO) Space requirement aligned to DH guidance within "Health Building Note 11-01: facilities for Primary and Community Care Services"

4. Based on existing weighted list size.

6. This development is not of a size and nature that would attract a specific Section 106 planning obligation. Therefore, a proportion of the required funding for the provision of increased capacity by way of extension, refurbishment or reconfiguration at Woolpit Health Centre, servicing the residents of this development, would be sought from the CIL contributions collected by the District Council.

7. Although, due to the unknown quantities associated with CIL, it is difficult to identify an exact allocation of funding, it is anticipated that any funds received as a result of this development will be utilised to extend the above mentioned surgery. Should the level of growth in this area prove this to be unviable, the relocation of services would be considered and funds would contribute towards the cost of new premises, thereby increasing the capacity and service provisions for the local community.

Developer Contribution required to meet the Cost of Additional Capital Funding for Health Service Provision Arising

8. In line with the Government's presumption for the planning system to deliver sustainable development and specific advice within the National Planning Policy Framework and the CIL Regulations, which provide for development contributions to be secured to mitigate a development's impact, a financial contribution is sought.

9. Assuming the above is considered in conjunction with the current application process, NHS England would not wish to raise an objection to the proposed development.

10. NHS England is satisfied that the basis of a request for CIL contributions is consistent with the Regulation 123 list produced by Mid Suffolk District Council.

County Council Responses

SCC Highways Authority [response dated 7 January 2020]

"Notice is hereby given that the County Council as Highway Authority recommends that any permission which that Planning Authority may give should include the conditions shown below:

1. Background Information

Following the receipt of five major planning applications for Thurston received in 2017 totalling 827 dwellings, SCC and BMSDC commissioned AECOM to provide a cumulative impact assessment to determine any mitigation required due to the additional traffic generated from the sites. The assessment used the peak hours 8.00 to 9.00 and 17.00 to 18.00hrs (derived for traffic survey evidence). Junctions were modelled to calculate the capacity and queue lengths for future years with the developments and required mitigation measures regarding capacity are:

- Introduction of Traffic signals at A143 Bury Road/Thurston Road junction (locally known as Bunbury Arms Junction) with introduction of 30mph speed limit on commencement of works.
- Change in priorities on C692/C693 Thurston Roads (known as Fishwicks Corner) and introduction of a 40mph speed limit at the junction.

Other mitigation measures requested where safety was a consideration are:

- Improvements to footway network within the village
- Contributions to pedestrian crossings at key junctions and locations
- Extension of 30mph speeds limits on Ixworth Road, Barton Road and Norton Road.
- Improvements to the PROW footpath network; contribution of £126,500

In our 2017 response we identified constraints at Bunbury Arms Junction, Fishwicks Corner, Pokeriage Corner and Barton Road under the Rail Bridge which needed to be addressed by any future development. Each location will need to be improved with regard to both capacity and safety and we highlighted that future mitigation was limited by the restricted land available within highway boundary.

2. Highway Assessment of 2019 Applications

In 2019 a further 2 major applications for Thurston were received proposing up to 420 dwellings (210 for each site) bringing the total of 1247 dwellings for 7 sites. AECOM were commissioned by SCC to update the report on the cumulative impact from the 5 original sites (plus The Granary site) to include the 2 new sites for future year 2024. TEMPRO was used to derive the local growth factors for the area. The trip generation applied were those set out in the 2017 transport assessment 0.67 (two-way traffic) giving additional 846 trips in the AM peak and 832 trips in the PM peak from all 7 developments.

The indicative locations of all the development sites and the junctions assessed are shown below:



Locations of Developments



Junction Locations

The junctions assessed are as follows:

- Barton Road/Station Hill mini roundabout
- Pokeriage Corner
- Fishwick Corner
- Station Hill/Ixworth Road/Norton Road junction
- Barton Road/Norton Road junction
- Bunbury Arms junction

By applying the trips from the developments to the existing highway layout, the Ratio of Flow to Capacity (RFC) and Queue lengths (Q) were calculated on the key junctions for future year 2024. Note If the RFC value is 0.85 or less, this indicates the junction is nearing but operating within capacity; 1 being at capacity.

By applying the committed sites, with growth and new trips from the proposed developments, the following table gave a summary of the Junction Capacity Assessments:

	Junction	2024 Base		2024 With Dev (T1 – T6)		2024 With Dev (T1 – T7)		2024 With Dev (T1 – T6 & T8)		2024 With Dev (T1 – T8)	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
J1	C691 Barton Road / C562 Station Hill Three Arm Mini Roundabout	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	<i>Proposed Mitigation Scheme</i>	Grey	Grey	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green
J2	C560 Beyton Road / C692 Thurston Road / U4920 Thedwastre Road Crossroads (Pokeriage Corner)	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green
	<i>Proposed Mitigation Scheme</i>	Grey	Grey	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
J3	C693 Thurston Road / C692 Thurston Road Crossroads (Fishwick Corner)	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green
	<i>Proposed Mitigation Scheme</i>	Grey	Grey	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
J4	C559 Norton Road / C562 Ixworth Road / C562 Station Hill staggered Crossroads	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
J5	C691 Barton Road / C559 Norton Road 'T' Junction	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
J6	A143 / C691 Thurston Road Crossroads	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
	<i>Proposed Mitigation Scheme</i>	Grey	Grey	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green

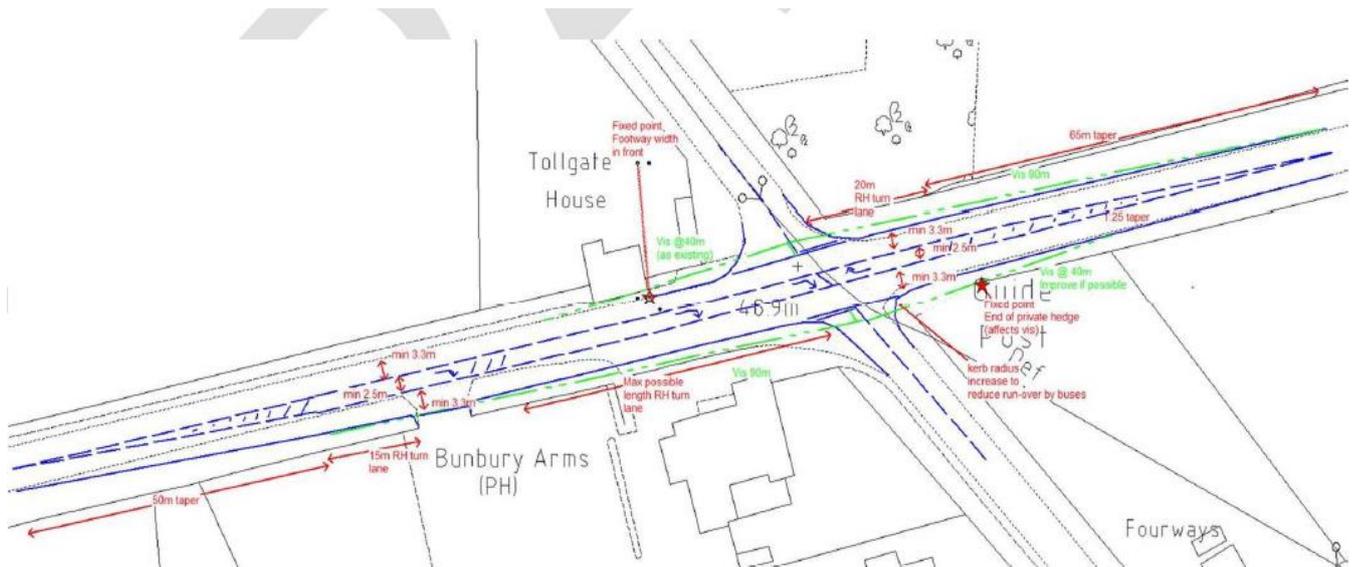
- within theoretical capacity – less than 0.85
- near capacity – between 0.85 and 1.00
- over capacity – over 1.00

The report concluded that the 2 developments shows Barton Road/Station Hill mini roundabout, Fishwick Corner and Pokeriage Corner junctions would all be close to or over capacity. With proposed mitigation from the Beyton Road development, these junctions all operate within desired capacity limits for future year 2024.

The detailed designs of the junctions will be designed to current specifications and standards. A Stage 2 Safety Audit has also been completed on the junctions with the proposed mitigation measures. The audit did not identify major problems and minor items raised can be detailed during the s278 process during our technical approval process.

3. Junction Analysis and Evaluation of the Proposed Mitigation

A143/C691 Bunbury Arms junction

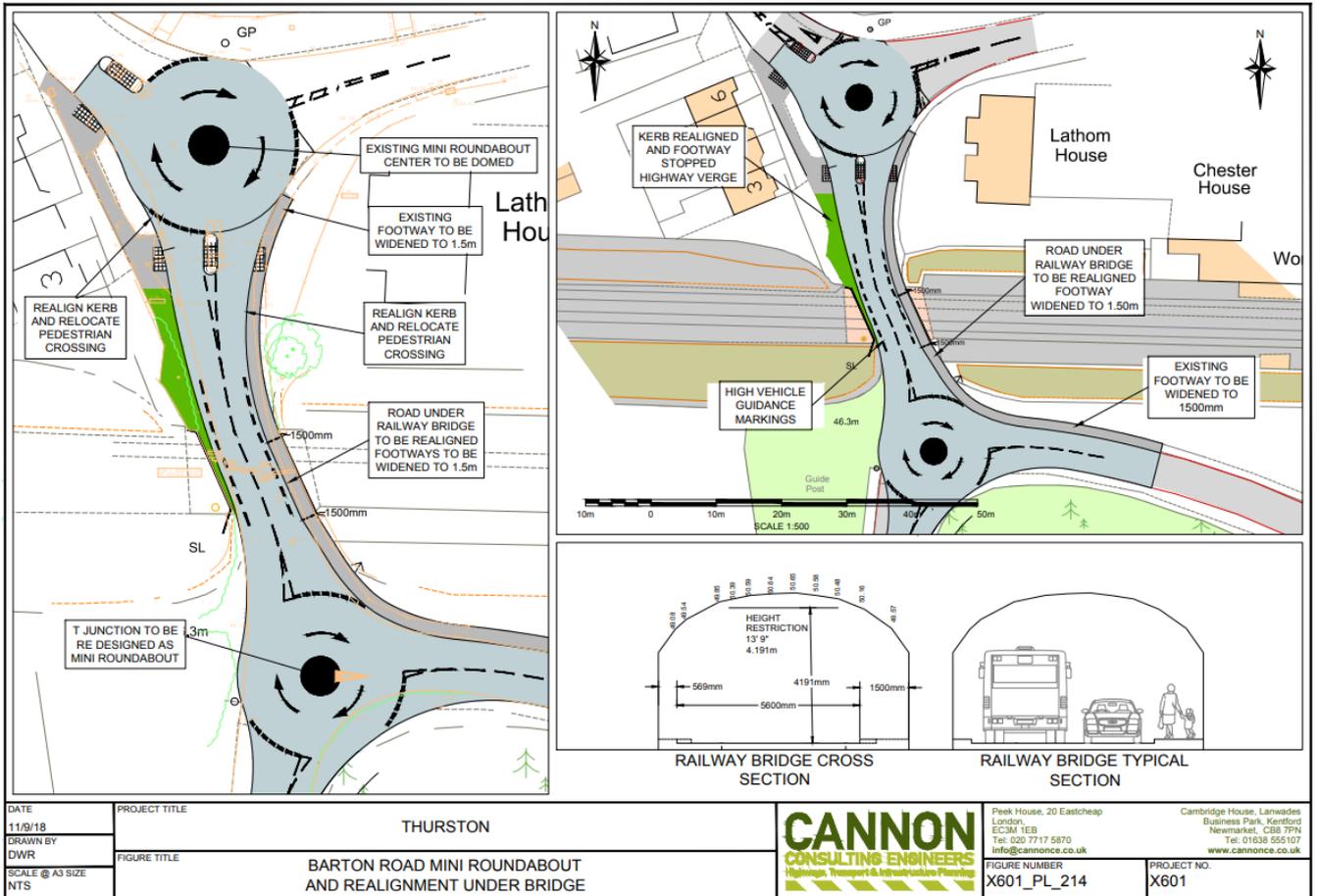


Existing situation	Proposed mitigation
<p>The mitigation from the 2017 developments included signalling the junction. The junction will be at capacity on two arms in the AM peak hour for the granted applications. This was accepted as the developments had mitigated their impact, but it was not possible to fully mitigate the background growth due to space constraints.</p>	<p>The proposed mitigation with contributions from the previous 5 applications, the 2019 AECOM indicates that the one arm of the junction will be over capacity during the AM peak hour and at capacity on two arms. On further assessment of the model data, we believe there is scope to improve the proposed preliminary design of the signals using better software and monitoring systems to improve capacity. However, no further mitigation, in terms of highway layout, is considered possible within the highway boundary.</p>

The impact on this junction is minimal from this development’s traffic as the dominate movement is south or west; towards the A14. Modelling in the applicant’s Transport Assessment shows the junction percentage impact from this site would be less than 1%. It has been assumed that the direction of trips can be based on census data showing their destination. Also, due to its location south of the railway line, it is likely that drivers are more likely to travel via the A14 to reach destinations West and North of Bury St Edmunds and trips via the Bunbury Arms Junction will be less than anticipated.

We also believe that the provision of a signal junction at the A143 junction will potentially result in a redistribution of traffic due to the additional delay for left turn out movements. The signals could also increase the right turn movements from Thurston, as it becomes more attractive manoeuvre no longer being directly opposed.

Barton Road Mini Roundabout and Rail Bridge/Beyton Road junction



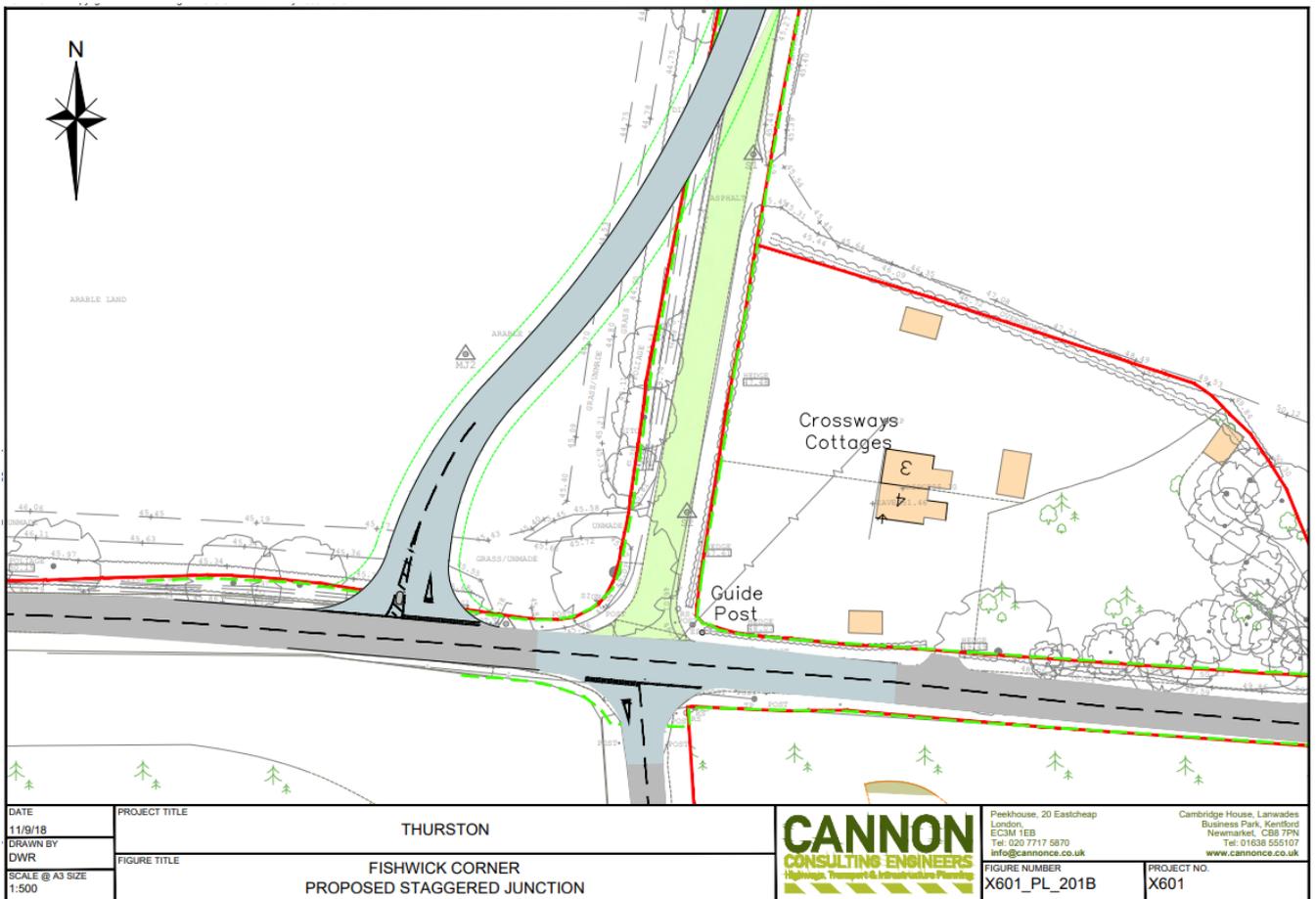
Existing situation	Proposed mitigation
<p>Barton Road under the railway bridge has sufficient carriageway width to allow 2 cars to pass. However, with the arch of the bridge, high-sided vehicles have to use the centre of the carriageway to use the maximum height of the bridge, therefore no other vehicles can pass large vehicles except cyclists. Due to the height restriction of the bridge, use by high sided vehicles is restricted (single deck buses can use this route). The footways under the bridge are narrow; where the west footway terminates adjacent to the south-west bridge abutment 490mm wide and the other has a pinch point of 750mm.</p> <p>The carriageway is not parallel with the bridge abutments which restricts the forward visibility from Beyton Road junction under the bridge to 24.5m.</p>	<p>By introducing improvements to the existing mini-roundabout and a new mini-roundabout on the Barton Road/ Beyton Road junction, this improves the RFC for Base + Committed Development + the Development from 1.00 to 0.85 and reducing delays by approx. 60 seconds therefore, improving capacity. By realigning the carriageway parallel with the bridge abutments, will improve the inter-visibility between the junctions on each side of the bridge. Removing the footway on the west side enables the footway on the east to be widened to 1.5m enabling safer passage for pedestrians making an acceptable walking route for existing and new residents. Access for cyclist remains poor as the footway is too narrow restricting them to the road and hence potential conflict with vehicles.</p>

Barton Road Rail Bridge: Straightening of the road will improve sight lines for drivers and provide a 1.5m wide footway on the east side. While the width of footway is less than desirable, particularly next to a busy road we have considered that on balance we would not consider it so unsafe as to recommend refusal.

However, this is a judgement made on the likely number of pedestrians from this development and any additional pedestrian use, particularly if it involves vulnerable users, would need to be reassessed. The problem of higher vehicles having to use the middle of the road to avoid the low arch remains a hazard as does the limited capacity albeit with a degree of improvement to the flow by the proposed mini roundabout south of the bridge. Balancing the improvements in footway, better sight lines and alignment against the remaining limited capacity we consider that on balance This is regarded as a benefit in highway terms sufficient for this development.

Proposals have been suggested by Network Rail and others to provide an underpass to provide a safer link to access either side of the railway line. While promoted as a measure to allow closure of the 'barrow' crossing between the station platforms this would also be of significant benefit to this development by providing a more desirable route remote from vehicles particularly for cyclists. This would be of significant benefit to non-motorised users and would support such a scheme. This proposal is at an early stage and it would be disproportionate to expect a single development to fund it all. However, we consider a contribution towards developing this scheme is reasonable based on the impact of the additional rail users coming from this development on the safety of the station crossing.

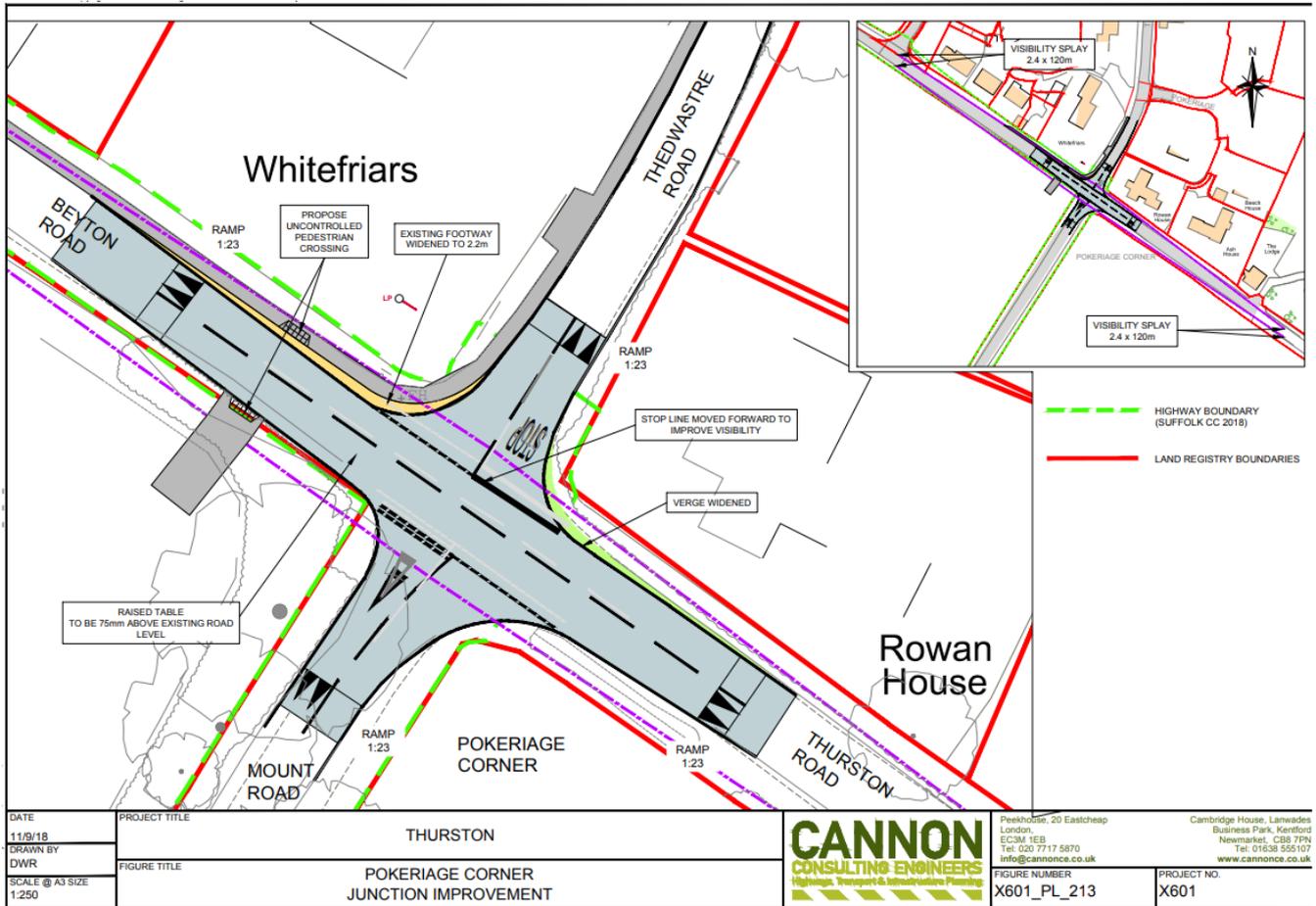
C693 Thurston Road/C692 Thurston Road junction (Fishwicks Corner)



Existing situation	Proposed mitigation
<p>At Fishwicks Corner the primary cause for congestion is due to limited visibility at the junction. Being a crossroads with four-way movements also reduces capacity and adds to delays. The junction is an accident cluster site with 13 recorded injury accidents; 11 of which were drivers failing to look properly on the minor arms of the crossroads due to poor forward visibility. As part of the mitigation for the 2017 developments, a 40mph speed limit is being introduced with a change in the junction priority and altering the give-way scenario to Stop lines on the side roads. The predicted RFC with the 2017 developments following the revised layout of the junction was calculated as 0.93 in the PM peak.</p>	<p>The land to the north west of the junction is within the developers control so the highway boundary is no longer a constraint for further highway improvements to improve safety and capacity of the junction. The dominant turning movement in the AM peak is from Thurston Road (north arm) turning right to Bury St. Edmunds and in the PM peak, from Bury St Edmunds turning left into Thurston Road (north arm). By introducing a staggered junction, this improves the RFC for Base + Committed Development + the Development from 1.10 t(unmodified) o 0.58 and reducing delays by approx. 3 minutes therefore, improving capacity. Also, staggered junctions will provide the required visibility for the speed of road (40mph) and this type of layout has been shown to reduce accidents by some 60% compared to a crossroads. Recently, a preservation order has been applied to trees next to the existing junction but these are unaffected by the proposed new junction</p>

The question of a roundabout in this location has been raised by councillors. While an acceptable solution it is not concerned proportionate to the scale of the development as the proposal for a staggered junction delivers sufficient mitigation. Also, a roundabout would require a large area of land, are less safe for cyclists than to any other kind of road layout and there would be a need to remove more trees. possibly those recently protected. SCC have also requested additional area of land to be secured to allow for a future cycle/footway scheme if that is considered necessary.

C560 Beyton Road/C692 Thurston Road/U4920 Thedwastre Road Crossroads (Pokeriage Corner)



Existing situation	Proposed mitigation
<p>Pokeriage Corner is also a crossroads where the primary cause of congestion is the lack of visibility from the side arms of the junction. It was considered the traffic impacts of the 2017 applications did not affect this junction to a point where mitigation was required.</p> <p>There were 3 accidents at this junction where drivers failed to look properly and overshoot the give way lines.</p>	<p>With the committed and proposed development, the results indicate the predicted maximum RFC in the AM peak period operates above the desirable capacity limits; RFC 0.93 and Q length of 8 vehicles on the Thedwastre Road arm. This in isolation is not considered severe and the Beyton Road development would have minimal impact in terms of capacity at this junction. However, the nature of the crashes at this junction show that altering the layout to improved visibility and installing raised junction to reduce vehicle speeds will improve safety. There are also capacity benefits improving the RFC to 0.65 and reducing the queue to 2 vehicles.</p>
Existing situation	Proposed mitigation
<p>The bridge over the rail track on Thedwastre Road has a vehicle priority system with a single lane road and a painted footway. The parish council has raised concerns on the pedestrian safety at the bridge due to the increase in traffic and pedestrian movements associated with this</p>	<p>Both the developer and the LHA recognise that further improvements can be made for pedestrians. Inclusion as an obligation within the S106 agreement will enable options to be considered in consultation with the LPA and Parish Council</p>

development. There has been no recorded crashes resulting in injury at this location and the visibility is good for all road users.	
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While the LHA's preference would have been to split the Pokeriage Corner junction into two three arm priority junctions as at Fishwick Corner this is difficult at this location due to the restricted land available. While other forms of improvement would provide greater benefits that proposed mitigates the developments impact on this junction. It also enables some improvements to highway drainage and crossing points for pedestrians.

Accesses for the Site

The Suffolk Design Guide states that there should be 2 access points for developments with over 150 dwellings. The proposal gives 2 access points with required visibility; one to the south and one to the north allowing alternative routes for vehicles and reducing the impact on junctions.

4. Sustainable access to and from the Development

To promote, encourage and support the principles of sustainable transport as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, safe and suitable access is required for bus services, pedestrians and cyclists to and from the site:

- The rail station is within the village and is approx. 500m from the centre of the site
- The closest bus stop is 500m from the centre of the site with good bus service
- The primary school is 1200m (15 minute walk) and the secondary school is 850m from the site both schools are within walking distance.
- With the proposal to improve the footway under the rail bridge, an acceptable pedestrian link is created to facilities in the village including the schools.
- A number of pedestrian crossing points are to be created along Beyton Road
- Details of improvements on Threwastre Road to be finalised as a S106 contribution
- National Rail, BMSDC and SCC and in talks regarding the existing pedestrian safety and accessibility within the station.
- Land has been safeguarded between Fishwick Corner and the rail bridge for the eventuality that a cycle route can be developed from Thurston towards Rougham as alternative to Heath Lane.

5. Discussion

When considering this application, we have been careful to balance the negative impacts of the development against the positive impacts of some of the mitigation to provide a balanced recommendation to the Planning Authority.

Capacity - The mitigation proposed for the 2017 was acceptable for that level of development at that time but did not allow headroom for future development. An additional 210 dwellings from this development will place additional strain on the road network around Thurston, specifically in the Bunbury Arms, Fishwick Corner and Pokeriage junctions and the road under the rail bridge. While we consider that this development has a significant impact in terms of capacity we do not consider that it is severe and would therefore justify a recommendation to refuse the application on highway grounds

Road Safety - in 2017 we expressed concerns regarding the impact of development in terms of road safety at the same junctions. The mitigations proposed for the 2017 applications were sufficient to mitigate their harm but not that of other future developments. This development places additional strain on the highway network in terms of road safety, in cases beyond that mitigated by the 2017 schemes. However, this application contains a number of improvements that address these road safety concerns. In particular the realignment of Fishwick Corner is a significant improvement. Improvements to the footway under the rail bridge, along Beyton Road and Pokeriage Corner are, while not the optimal solutions, beneficial in terms of road safety.

Existing Pedestrian and Cycle Links - there are two realistic links from this site to the village infrastructure. In their current form all have significant limitations,

- Barton Road: The footway under the rail bridge narrows to around 700mm and is less than that considered a safe width to allow passage of pedestrians or cyclists.
- Thedwastre Road: There is no formal footway over the rail bridge pedestrians sharing the road with vehicles within a single lane priority system
- Beyton Road: There is no current crossing point for pedestrians to cross the road to access the site.

The options of crossing the railway line at Church Road and Barrell's Road are discounted due to their distance from the site and lack of footways on the roads leading to them. The development includes improvements to footways or crossing points at all three locations. While not optimal these proposals are considered proportionate to the scale of development.

School Transport - concerns have been raised by the Parish Council and residents regarding the removal of subsidised places on school buses and the impact on travel patterns. Pupils from the proposed development could reasonably be expected to walk or cycle to both the primary and secondary schools and the applicant is expected to provide high quality footways and cycleways to enable this. However, Thurston Academy has a large, predominately rural catchment area the changes to school transport are likely to generate additional car trips from these areas for non-eligible pupils. As the policy is phased in and only started in September 2019 it is difficult at this point to assess the transport impact. It is clear that any impacts will be greatest (but not exclusively) at the Ixworth Road / Norton Road and Norton Road / Barton Road junctions. We are aware that Thurston Community College (TCC) are keen to continue to support bus travel to school and each year survey families of potential new year 7 students to see if there is enough demand to make a school-led bus option financially viable.

The Highway Authority's main concern is the impact on road safety although congestion and inconsiderate parking also have to be considered. While it is not reasonable in planning terms to expect this development to mitigate the additional school traffic it is a matter that we consider should be included in the Planning Authorities weighing up of the application.

6. Conclusion

The National Planning Performance Framework states that 'development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe'.

As the Highways Authority we have examined this application and the supporting information in detail. The additional development will lead to more vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists using the highway network around Thurston in addition to that from the permitted developments. Without mitigation, we consider that the cumulative impacts are severe in highway terms. However, with the proposed mitigation we considered that, while

some significant negative factors remain the overall impact, when balanced, the impact is no longer severe nor is there an unacceptable impact on road safety. For these reasons we advise that we do not recommend that this application is refused specifically on highway grounds.

CONDITIONS

Should the Planning Authority be minded to grant planning approval the Highway Authority in Suffolk would recommend they include the following conditions and obligations:

V 1 - Condition: Before the access into the site is first used, visibility splays shall be provided as drawing Nos X601_PL_ 200 and 200B and thereafter retained in the specified form.

Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 2 Class A of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no obstruction over 0.6 metres high shall be erected, constructed, planted or permitted to grow within the areas of the visibility splays.

HW 1 - Condition: Prior to commencement of any works (save for site clearance and technical investigations) details of the highway improvements and mitigation (including layout, levels, gradients, surfacing and means of surface water drainage), shall be submitted to and approved in writing to the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Local Highway Authority. The details as agreed shall be delivered in accordance with a timetable for improvement which shall have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the LPA concurrent with the said details.

Reason: To ensure that design highway improvements/footways are constructed to an acceptable standard.

ER 1 - Condition: Prior to commencement of any works, (save for site clearance and technical investigations) details of the estate roads and footpaths, (including layout, levels, gradients, surfacing and means of surface water drainage), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads/footways are constructed to an acceptable standard.

ER 2 - Condition: No dwelling shall be occupied until the carriageways and footways serving that dwelling have been constructed to at least Binder course level or better in accordance with the approved details except with the written agreement of the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Local Highway Authority.

L1 - Condition: Before the development hereby permitted is commenced a Lighting design shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety to avoid the hazard caused by disability or discomfort glare for motorists.

P 2 - Condition: Before the development is commenced details of the areas to be provided for the [LOADING, UNLOADING,] manoeuvring and parking of vehicles including electric vehicle charging units and secure cycle storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To enable vehicles to enter and exit the public highway in forward gear in the interests of highway safety.

B 2 - Condition: Before the development is commenced details of the areas to be provided for storage and presentation of Refuse/Recycling bins shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The approved scheme shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that refuse recycling bins are not stored on the highway causing obstruction and dangers for other users.

TP1 - Condition: Prior to the occupation of any dwelling details of the travel arrangements to and from the site for residents of the dwellings, in the form of a Travel Plan in accordance with the mitigation measures identified in the submitted Transport Assessment shall be submitted for the approval in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with the highway authority. No dwelling within the site shall be occupied until the Travel Plan has been agreed. The approved Travel Plan measures shall be implemented in accordance with a timetable that shall be included in the Travel Plan and shall thereafter adhered to in accordance with the approved Travel Plan.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, policies CS7 and CS8 of the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy and Strategic Objectives SO3 and SO6 of the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2008) and Core Strategy Focused Review (2012).

TP2 - Condition: Within one month of the first occupation of any dwelling, the occupiers of each of the dwellings shall be provided with a Residents Travel Pack (RTP). Not less than 3 months prior to the first occupation of any dwelling, the contents of the RTP shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and shall include walking, cycling and bus maps, latest relevant bus and rail timetable information, car sharing information, personalised Travel Planning and a multi-modal travel voucher.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, and Strategic Objectives SO3 and SO6 of the Mid Suffolk Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2008) and Core Strategy Focused Review (2012).

HGV CONSTRUCTION - Condition: Before the development hereby permitted is commenced a Construction Management Plan shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Construction of the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plan. The Construction Management Plan shall include the following matters:

- haul routes for construction traffic on the highway network and monitoring and review mechanisms.
- provision of boundary hoarding and lighting
- details of proposed means of dust suppression
- details of measures to prevent mud from vehicles leaving the site during construction
- details of deliveries times to the site during construction phase
- details of provision to ensure pedestrian and cycle safety
- programme of works (including measures for traffic management and operating hours)
- parking and turning for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors
- loading and unloading of plant and materials
- storage of plant and materials
- maintain a register of complaints and record of actions taken to deal with such complaints at the site office as specified in the Plan throughout the period of occupation of the site.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety to avoid the hazard caused by mud on the highway and to ensure minimal adverse impact on the public highway during the construction phase.

S106 CONTRIBUTION

Travel Plan

As Suffolk County Council (as Highway Authority) have been identified as a key stakeholder in the Travel Plan process, a £1,000 per annum Travel Plan Evaluation and Support Contribution payable prior to occupation of the 100th dwelling to provide Suffolk County Council suitable resource to engage with the Travel Plan Coordinator appointed by the applicant. As this is a discretionary function of the County Council, this is chargeable under Section 93 of the 2003 Local Government Act and Section 3 of the 2011 Localism Act. This will need to be secured through a Section 106 Agreement or separate Unilateral Undertaking. If the contribution is not secured Suffolk County Council are unlikely to have the resource to provide the assistance which is identified in the Travel Plan, which is likely to result in the Travel Plan failing. Further guidance and justification of this contribution can be found in the Suffolk County Council Travel Plan Guidance (www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/Roads-and-transport/public-transport-and-transport-planning/Local-Links/26444-Suffolk-Travel-Plan-Guidance-V5-Printable-Version-LR.pdf).

Alternatively, Suffolk County Council can produce the Resident Travel Packs and deliver the Travel Plan on behalf of the developer if a suitable contribution can be agreed and secured through a Section 106 Agreement or separate Unilateral Undertaking prior to the determination of this application. If this is of interest to the developer, they can contact the Suffolk County Council Travel Plan Team at travelplans@suffolk.gov.uk to obtain a quote. Further information on this service can be found on www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/Travel-Plan-Delivery-offer-to-LPAs-and-developers-2.pdf.

Public Transport

Creation of pair of raised bus stops at the southern end of New Road, with a pedestrian access into the site at that point. These works can be completed under s278 or a contribution of £6,000 for the construction.

NOTES

The Local Planning Authority recommends that developers of housing estates should enter into formal agreement with the Highway Authority under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 relating to the construction and subsequent adoption of Estate Roads.

The works within the public highway will be required to be designed and constructed in accordance with the County Council's specification. The applicant will also be required to enter into a legal agreement under the provisions of Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 relating to the construction and subsequent adoption of the highway improvements. Amongst other things the Agreement will cover the specification of the highway works, safety audit procedures, construction and supervision and inspection of the works, bonding arrangements, indemnity of the County Council regarding noise insulation and land compensation claims, commuted sums, and changes to the existing street lighting and signing.

Travel Plan Comments

On reviewing the Framework Travel Plan (dated July 2019) the Travel Planning Officer raised a number of points; regarding provision of bus stops and multi-modal voucher and a need to liaise with other Travel Plans for Thurston Applications. Also, details were highlighted on what is required in the Travel Plan. These are to be addressed with the officer."

SCC - Travel Plan Co-ordinator

Thank you for consulting me on the proposed residential development at Land South West of Beyton Road in Thurston. I will be submitting some comments on the submitted Travel Plan and

the proposed sustainable transport measures, however this will form part of the formal Suffolk County Council Highways response that Sam Harvey is leading on to comply with internal protocol.

SCC - Flood & Water Management

We have reviewed the following submitted documents and we recommend approval of this application subject to conditions:

- . Illustrative Masterplan ref 19.2012/SL-101 Rev E
- . Location Plan ref 19-2012-0-01 rev D
- . Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy Ref 1707-020 June 2019

1. Concurrent with the first reserved matters application(s) a surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The scheme shall be in accordance with the approved FRA and include:

- a. Dimensioned plans and drawings of the surface water drainage scheme;
- b. Further infiltration testing on the site in accordance with BRE 365 and the use of infiltration as the means of drainage if the infiltration rates and groundwater levels show it to be possible;
- c. If the use of infiltration is not possible then modelling shall be submitted to demonstrate that the surface water runoff will be restricted to Q_{bar} or 2l/s/ha for all events up to the critical 1 in 100 year rainfall events including climate change as specified in the FRA;
- d. Modelling of the surface water drainage scheme to show that the attenuation/infiltration features will contain the 1 in 100 year rainfall event including climate change;
- e. Modelling of the surface water conveyance network in the 1 in 30 year rainfall event to show no above ground flooding, and modelling of the volumes of any above ground flooding from the pipe network in a 1 in 100 year climate change rainfall event, along with topographic plans showing where the water will flow and be stored to ensure no flooding of buildings or offsite flows;
- f. Topographical plans depicting all exceedance flow paths and demonstration that the flows would not flood buildings or flow offsite, and if they are to be directed to the surface water drainage system then the potential additional rates and volumes of surface water must be included within the modelling of the surface water system;
- g. Details of a Construction Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP) detailing how surface water and storm water will be managed on the site during construction (including demolition and site clearance operations) is submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The CSWMP shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan for the duration of construction. The approved CSWMP and shall include:
 - i. Method statements, scaled and dimensioned plans and drawings detailing surface water
 1. Temporary drainage systems
 2. Measures for managing pollution / water quality and protecting controlled waters and watercourses
 3. Measures for managing any on or offsite flood risk associated with construction
- h. Details of the maintenance and management of the surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The scheme shall be fully implemented as approved.

Reasons: To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage and disposal of surface water from the site for the lifetime of the development. To ensure the development does not cause increased flood risk, or pollution of watercourses or groundwater. To ensure clear arrangements are in place for ongoing operation and maintenance of the disposal of surface water drainage. <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/guidance-on-development-and-flood-risk/construction-surface-water-management-plan/>

2. Within 28 days of completion of the final dwelling details of all Sustainable Urban Drainage System components and piped networks shall be submitted, in an approved form, to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for inclusion on the Lead Local Flood Authority's Flood Risk Asset Register.

Reason: To ensure that the Sustainable Drainage System has been implemented as permitted and that all flood risk assets and their owners are recorded onto the LLFA's statutory flood risk asset register as per s21 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in order to enable the proper management of flood risk with the county of Suffolk <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-asset-register/>

Informatives

- . Any works to a watercourse may require consent under section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991
- . Any discharge to a watercourse or groundwater needs to comply with the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017
- . Any discharge of surface water to a watercourse that drains into an Internal Drainage Board catchment may be subject to payment of a surface water developer contribution
- . Any works to lay new surface water drainage pipes underneath the public highway will need a section 50 license under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- . Any works to a main river may require an environmental permit

SCC Archaeological Service

Policy Framework (Paragraph 199), any permission granted should be the subject of a planning condition to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset before it is damaged or destroyed.

In this case the following two conditions would be appropriate:

NOTE: Since receiving this comment the WSI has been approved.

The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

2. No building shall be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Condition 1 and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.

SCC - Fire & Rescue

Access and Fire Fighting Facilities:

Access to buildings for fire appliances and firefighters must meet with the requirements specified in Building Regulations Approved Document B, (Fire Safety), 2006 Edition, incorporating 2010 and 2013 amendments Volume 1 - Part B5, Section 11 dwelling houses, and, similarly, Volume 2, Part B5, Sections 16 and 17 in the case of buildings other than dwelling houses. These requirements may be satisfied with other equivalent standards relating to access for fire fighting, in which case those standards should be quoted in correspondence.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service also requires a minimum carrying capacity for hard standing for pumping/high reach appliances of 15/26 tonnes, not 12.5 tonnes as detailed in the Building Regulations 2000 Approved Document B, 2006 Edition, incorporating 2010 and 2013 amendments.

Water Supplies:

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service recommends that fire hydrants be installed within this development on a suitable route for laying hose, i.e. avoiding obstructions. However, it is not possible, at this time, to determine the number of fire hydrants required for fire fighting purposes. The requirement will be determined at the water planning stage when site plans have been submitted by the water companies.

Sprinklers Advised:

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service recommends that proper consideration be given to the potential life safety, economic, environmental and social benefits derived from the provision of an automatic fire sprinkler system.

Consultation should be made with the Water Authorities to determine flow rates in all cases.

Should you need any further advice or information on access and fire fighting facilities, you are advised to contact your local Building Control in the first instance. For further advice and information regarding water supplies, please contact the Water Officer.

SCC Development Contributions Manager

CIL	Education	
	- Secondary school expansion	£841,306
	- sixth form expansion	£181,904
CIL	Libraries improvement	£45,360
CIL	Waste infrastructure	£23,100
S106	Education	
	- new primary school land cost	£67,288
	- new primary school build cost	£1,019,772
S106	New early years build cost	£372,609

Suffolk Police Design Out Crime Officers

No response received

Internal Consultee Responses

Communities (Major Development)

The Design and Access Statement does not appear to reference any significant community facilities as part of the application although it does give some indicative open space provision, which requires more detail to be able to considered.

The Parish Council have referenced their open space, sport and community provision priorities within their neighbourhood plan, which should be considered as part of this application.

There is also current consideration as to the potential for more sporting provision at Thurston Community College and its 6th form site in Beyton. These are key sites that warrant financial contributions to support their community and wider community reach.

Strategic Housing (Affordable/Major Dwel/G+T)

This site is a S106 planning obligation site so the affordable housing will be allocated on a district wide basis. The housing register shows a district wide housing need with a majority of 1 and 2 bedroom homes followed by 3 beds with a much smaller need for 4+ bedrooms.

Current local plan policy looks to deliver an approximate 25% shared ownership and 75 % affordable rented unit split in the first instance, to meet housing need and affordability.

We recommend a majority of 1 and 2 bedroom affordable dwellings (including bungalows) with a smaller element of 3+. The following mix is recommended:

Affordable rented dwellings = 54

8 x 1b 2p flats @ 50sqm minimum
6 x 1b 2p bungalows @ 50sqm minimum
8 x 2b 4p bungalows @ 70sqm minimum
22 x 2b 4p houses @ 79sqm minimum
9 x 3b 6p houses @ 102sqm minimum
1 x 4b 8p houses @ 124sqm minimum

Shared Ownership dwellings = 19

13 x 2b 4p house @ 79sqm
6 x 3b 5p house @ 93sqm

5. Other requirements for affordable homes:

Properties must be built to the Housing Standards Technical guidance March 2015.

- S106 affordable dwellings should be delivered grant free.

- The council is granted 100% nomination rights to all the affordable units on first lets and minimum of 75% of relets in perpetuity.
- For all shared ownership dwellings applicants must be registered with the Suffolk Homebuy agency.
- Initial share purchases for shared ownership dwellings to be capped at 70%.
- The affordable units to be constructed 'tenure blind' and must not be in clusters of more than 15 dwellings. The affordable homes should be distributed across the different phases of the development.
- All flats must be in separate blocks and capable of freehold transfer to an RP. The flatted blocks must provide bicycle storage and bin store areas.
- Adequate parking provision is made for the affordable housing units and cycle storage/sheds.

Public Realm

The Public Realm team note the provision of indicative open space within the proposed development, though at this stage no detail has been provided.

It would be expected that with a development of this size, that suitable play provision is included within the public open spaces. The Team would welcome the provision of public open spaces that reflect the rural nature on three sides of this site. We would welcome the inclusion of wildflower meadows and enhancements to benefit local wildlife in the more detailed landscape designs that will follow.

Environmental Health - Sustainability Issues

Many thanks for your request for comments in relation to the above application. We have no objection to this application subject to the comments below. We are very pleased to see the applicant committing to an energy and carbon reduction beyond Part L. The Energy Strategy Statement does refer to Mid Suffolk District Core Strategy, Policy CS3 - Reduce Contributions to Climate Change and there is consideration of various forms of low carbon techniques and renewable energy measures. However we cannot find reference to electric vehicle charging, as per Suffolk CC parking guidance all residential property must have access to charging facilities, we suggest that all plots have the appropriate wiring, trunking, fuses etc installed during construction to allow the connection of a charge point in the future.

Environmental Health - Noise/Odour/Light/Smoke

The reserved matters application(s) relating to design and layout of residential dwellings shall include a detailed acoustic assessment and Acoustic Design Statement (that includes evaluation and selection of mitigation methods, PROPG), produced by a competent person, which provides details of the noise exposure at the facade of residential dwellings, internal noise levels in habitable rooms and noise levels in all associated amenity spaces. The design and layout should avoid exposure of habitable rooms to noise levels that exceed the following criteria:

- . 60dB LAeq 16 hours (daytime, 07:00-23:00, outside)
- . 55dB LAeq 8 hours (night, 23:00-07:00, outside)

As required to meet the above, acoustic barriers and site design, including building orientation and internal layout of dwellings, shall be used to minimise noise exposure to habitable rooms and reduce the need to rely on closed windows.

Where the facade noise levels outside of habitable rooms do not exceed those stated above, but the internal noise levels stated in the current version of BS8233 are exceeded with windows open, enhanced passive ventilation with appropriate sound insulating properties shall be

provided to ensure compliance with the current version of BS8233 with windows closed and that maximum internal noise levels at night do not exceed 45dBA on more than 10 occasions a night.

If exposure exceeds the noise levels stated above, significantly enhanced ventilation will be required, and will need to be proposed, with any reliance upon building envelope insulation with closed windows to be justified in supporting documents that cross reference the mitigation measures used and the evaluation of different designs, layouts and sound reduction methods (including barriers) considered during the design process.

In addition, noise levels in external amenity spaces shall not exceed 55dBAeq 16 hours, daytime. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with any details approved, and shall be retained in accordance with these details thereafter.

2. Finally as the site is in proximity to existing dwellings, it is essential that a Construction Management Plan be in place to minimise loss of amenity arising from construction of the development as follows:

- No development shall commence until a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), to cover both the site clearance and construction phases of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The CEMP shall be undertaken in accordance with best practice guidelines and BS:5228:2009 + A1:2014 (and any revisions thereof). The plan shall include details of: operating hours, (recommended and acceptable are 0800-1800 Mon-Fri, 0900-1300 Sat with no working on Sundays or bank holidays) scheduled timing/phasing of development for the overall construction period, means of access, traffic routes, vehicle parking and manoeuvring areas (site operatives and visitors), loading and unloading of plant and materials, location and management of wheel washing facilities, external lighting, location and nature of compounds and storage areas (including maximum storage heights), waste removal, location and nature of temporary buildings and boundary treatments, dust management, noise management (both in terms of workers and local residents, and to include noise limit at the nearest sensitive residential property, or agreed representative accessible monitoring point) and waste/litter management during the construction phases of the development. Thereafter, the approved construction plan shall be fully implemented and adhered to during the construction phases of the development hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Note: the Construction Management Plan shall be submitted in phases for each phase of construction so as to take account of protection measures for both newly constructed (and occupier) dwellings as well as those dwellings which existed prior to commencement!

3. No burning shall take place on site during the site clearance/demolition or construction phases of the development.

MSDC - Waste Manager (Major Developments)

Ensure that the development is suitable for a 32 tonne Refuse Collection Vehicle (RCV) to manoeuvre around attached are the vehicle specifications. The road surface and construction must be suitable for an RCV to drive on. The presentation points for the waste and recycling bins for each property the points must be at the edge of the curtilage and plotted on a map for approval.

Place Services Ecology

No objection subject to securing biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures.

Summary

We have reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Southern Ecological Solutions Ltd, July 2018) and the Phase 2 Ecology Survey (Southern Ecological Solutions Ltd, Southern Ecological Solutions Ltd 2019), submitted by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, Protected & Priority species.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination.

This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on Protected and Priority species/habitats and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable.

However, we note that the two Grey Partridge were recorded during the Breeding Bird Survey. Therefore, to compensate the loss of habitat used by this Priority Species and Red list species, it is recommended that a buffer strip should be provided on offsite in nearby agricultural land to provide nesting cover for this species. This buffer strip should be undertaken following agri-environmental scheme: SW1'4m to 6m buffer strip on cultivated land' and should be secured for a period of 10 years.

Overall, we support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements, which have been recommended to secure measurable net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 170d of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. However, it is recommended that details and aftercare of the Biodiversity Enhancements measures should be included within the proposed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006.

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013.

Submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.

Recommended conditions:

1. ACTION REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS

"All mitigation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Phase 2 Ecology Survey (Southern Ecological Solutions Ltd, Southern Ecological Solutions Ltd 2019) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW,) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details."

Reason: To conserve and enhance Protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the UK Habitats Regulations, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

2. PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT: FARMLAND BIRD MITIGATION STRATEGY

"A Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority to compensate the loss of Grey Partridge Habitat. This shall include provision of a buffer strip, to be secured by legal agreement or a condition of any consent, in nearby agricultural land, prior to commencement.

The content of the Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed Buffer Strip;
- b) detailed methodology following Agri-Environment Scheme option: 'SW1: 4m to 6m buffer strip on cultivated land';
- c) locations of the compensation by appropriate maps and/or plans;
- d) persons responsible for implementing the compensation measure.

The Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all features shall be retained for a minimum period of 10 years."

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

3. PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

"A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to, and be approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior occupation of the development.

The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
- c) Aims and objectives of management.
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- e) Prescriptions for management actions.
- f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
- g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
- h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details."

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the UK Habitats Regulations 2017, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

4. PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: WILDLIFE SENSITIVE LIGHTING DESIGN SCHEME

"A lighting design scheme for biodiversity shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall identify those features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance along important routes used for

foraging; and show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans, Isolux drawings and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent bats using their territory. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority."

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the UK Habitats Regulations 2017, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species)

Place Services Landscaping

Thank you for consulting us on the Outline Planning Application (some matters reserved - access to be considered) for the erection of up to 210 dwellings, means of access, open space and associated infrastructure, including junction improvements (with all proposed development located within Mid Suffolk District, with the exception of proposed improvements to Fishwick Corner being within West Suffolk). This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the planning application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Review of submitted information

The Site is located to the south of Beyton Road in Thurston. It consists of a broadly rectangular shaped parcel of arable land, 7.72ha in size and bounded along all sides by minor roads and mature woodland (Twenty Acre Wood) and established tree cover on southern and north western boundaries.

In terms of landscape impact, the proposal will inevitably have an impact on the existing rural character of the edge of Thurston. However, Thurston is classed as a Key Service Centre, which means it has been classed as the main focus for development outside of the towns. Therefore the priority is ensuring that any development that comes forward maintains and enhances the natural environment. Policy CS5 of the Mid Suffolk District Council Core Strategy states that "The Council will protect and conserve landscape qualities taking into account the natural environment and the historical dimension of the landscape" and "protecting the District's most important components and encourage development that is consistent with conserving its overall character." A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) (Ref. Ref: 18-2379) was submitted as part of the application, The assessment was undertaken using methodology guided by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3) and concluded that "the proposed development can be accommodated within this setting without resulting in significant, long term, adverse impact upon the character of the Site, its immediate context, and the wider landscape context". We agree with the assessment findings, as long as mitigation measures are provided and managed in perpetuity. This includes new landscape planting to the Site boundaries to provide visual containment and a naturalistic approach to ensure a sense of rurality is retained and in turn the impact on the character of the wider countryside is minimised.

The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment defines the site and the surrounding area as part of the Plateau Estate Farmlands landscape character type (LCT). This is a flat or gently rolling landscape that is a relatively "new" landscape. In respect of visual impact the nature of this landscape means that it does have more potential capacity to accept development than other LCTs due to its simpler and more modern land cover pattern. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) demonstrates how a detailed analysis has been undertaken to ensure the developed proposal is sympathetic to the local context. It includes a landscape strategy that shows how an

integrated landscape approach has been taken that provides a comprehensive green infrastructure network of different landscape character.

Moving forward I recommend that the following landscape and design thoughts are considered as part of the detailed design:

The site is bounded by hedgerows and trees but there is scope to enhance these by positive management and new infill planting. Therefore the planting design and species mixes proposed should be carefully chosen. Where possible, infill and structural planting should be carried out in advance of development construction.

Plot boundaries that face onto the public realm should be brick walls rather than close board fencing.

Private gardens should be usable rectangular garden shapes.

Long garden access alleys should be avoided. Instead, we would suggest terraced properties have internal passageways (ginnels).

Landscape surface treatments should be sympathetic to the rural character of the Site.

Ensure the indicative drainage pond area is sufficient for its purpose and is easily accessed for long term management. Properties will need to overlook the space and site boundaries.

The proposed equipped area of play should have a natural character, with primarily timber equipment and natural features (boulders and logs).

All tree stock should have a minimum girth of 10-12cm to provide visual interest at time of implementation. We would also recommend a number of larger stock trees (16-18cm) are also implemented to provide structure and a sense of maturity to the scheme.

We would also recommend the following reserved matters conditions are considered:

1. ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a landscape management plan for a minimum of 10 years. Both new and existing planting will be required to be included in the plan.

2. ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: LANDSCAPING SCHEME.

No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment for the site, which shall include any proposed changes in ground levels and also accurately identify spread, girth and species of all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows on the site and indicate any to be retained, together with measures for their protection which shall comply with the recommendations set out in the British Standards Institute publication BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. The soft landscaping plan should include plant species, quantity, location and sizes of the proposed planting. The plans should clearly show the position of new fencing and gates in relation to existing and proposed planting. Tree pit details will also need to be provided for the different planting environments proposed i.e. planted in hard landscaping, close to road boundaries and within the public open space (POS).

3. ACTION REQUIRED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEM (SUDS) DETAILS

Prior to the commencement of the construction of the dwellings details of SuDS shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This should include; detailed topographical plans, a timetable for their implementation and a management and maintenance plan.

Heritage Team

This is an outline application for the erection of up to 210 dwellings within the wider setting of several designated and non-designated heritage assets. The heritage concern relates to the impact of the proposed development on the settings of the heritage assets which contribute to their significance. Only the principle of development and the matter of access is considered.

Several designated heritage assets are located in the vicinity of the application site; the Grade II listed Railway Bridge, The Gatehouse (Thurston Place) and The Round House (located in St Edmundsbury district). Other assets, such as the Railway Station, the Fox and Hounds Public House, Thedwastre White House, Thurston House and Pepper Cottage have also been identified in surrounding area, however they are unlikely to be affected by the proposed development. The Heritage Statement included with the application contains a thorough assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on the designated assets, however the Heritage Team has also identified a non-designated heritage asset whose setting could be affected by the proposal: Crossways Cottages.

The Railway Bridge is located to the north of the application site. It was built in 1846 by Frederick Barnes of Ipswich to carry the railway line from Ipswich to Bury St Edmunds over Station Road. Its architectural and historic significance is augmented by its connection to the Railway Station and the association to a regionally important architect. The application site is located beyond the densely wooded area at the junction of Beyton Road and Station Road. Because of this separation the site does not contribute to the setting of the Bridge.

The Lodge House at Thurston Place is an early-C19 single-storey lodge building to the estate of Thurston House, located to the east of the application site. Its significance is informed by its architectural interest, as well as its association with Thurston House and Thurston Place (historically known as Thurston Cottage, not listed). Due to the distance between them, the application site makes a limited contribution to the wider setting of the Lodge.

The Round House is located across the district line in St Edmundsbury, to the west of the site. It is a distinctive former lodge building with walls of random flint, built circa 1840 as a lodge to Rougham Hall. Despite this distinctive form, it is not a prominent building in the streetscape, as it is surrounded by dense woodland to the west, south and east. Similarly to the lodge at Thurston Place, its significance is informed by its architectural interest and its connection to the estate of Rougham, however its secluded, informal landscape setting also contributes positively to its significance. The application site only forms a part of the wider setting of the listed building, and they are not read in the same context. The application site therefore does not contribute to the setting of the listed building.

Crossway Cottages are a pair of semi-detached late-C19 cottages. Due to their architectural and aesthetic quality they would be considered non-designated heritage assets. The cottages are located within a generous plot adjacent to the south-western boundary of the application site. Currently their setting is pre-dominantly rural, and they are not experienced in the context of Thurston. The application site provides this separation from the village and therefore contributes positive to the setting of the non-designated heritage assets.

As the application site does not contribute tangibly to the setting of the Railway Bridge, the Lodge at Thurston Place or the Round House, residential development on this site would not likely cause harm to their significance.

The proposed development would connect Crossway Cottages to the built-up area of Thurston, changing the character of its setting. The indicative layout does appear to show that an undeveloped buffer would remain to the north of the cottages, and that the site boundaries would include soft landscaping. This would reduce the impact of the development on the area immediately surrounding the Cottages. However, there would still be a level of harm associated with the development as it would reduce the open countryside setting of the Cottages.

In conclusion, the Heritage Team considers that the development of the application site would likely not be considered to cause harm to the surrounding designated heritage assets. The proposed development would, however, likely be considered to cause a low to medium level of less than substantial harm to the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, because it would detract from its historically isolated rural setting.

B: Representations

At the time of writing this report at least 40 letters/emails/online comments have been received. It is the officer opinion that this represents 37 objections, 1 support and 2 general comment. A verbal update shall be provided as necessary.

Views are summarised below:-

37 objections have been received based on the following grounds (summarised)

- *Local infrastructure impacts
- *Cumulative impact of other approved developments
- * Lack of health services in Thurston as it is
- *Unsafe vehicle junctions would be exacerbated
- *Inadequate pedestrian/cyclist/pushchair/wheelchair/mobility scooter movement through the bridge.
- *Construction related amenity impacts
- *Light pollution
- *Biodiversity impacts
- *Property devaluation
- *Boundary Issues
- *Conflict with local plan
- *Design
- *Drainage
- *Health & Safety
- *Inadequate public transport provisions
- *Landscape Impact
- *Loss of Open Space
- *Loss of Outlook
- *Out of Character with the Area
- *Sustainability

2 Neutral comments have been received based on the following grounds (summarised)

No large developments should be put forward until a "Climate Emergency Plan" is in place
Bloor's wish to build zero carbo homes with enhanced biodiversity plans are welcomed
No objection to proposed development but rail and highway safety risks are a concern

1 comment support has been received based on the following grounds (summarised)

Traffic problems would be infrequent and limited to a few times a day
 Much needed housing

(Note: All individual representations are counted and considered. Repeated and/or additional communication from a single individual will be counted as one representation.)

PLANNING HISTORY

DC/19/1519/OUT [WSDC]: valid 23 July 2019: YET TO BE DETERMINED

Outline Planning Application (means of access to be considered) - (i) proposed improvement to Fishwick Corner in West Suffolk Council and (ii) 210no. dwellings means of access, open space and associated infrastructure, including junction improvements with all proposed development located within Mid Suffolk District Council

[these are the Fishwick Corner highway improvements component of the larger proposal all of which except this small but very important element sits in MSDC]

DC/19/02090. Gladman Land east of Ixworth Road

Outline application for 210 dwellings YET TO BE DETERMINED [also on toady’s agenda]

NP site ref	Number of dwellings	Relevant pp	Location and [expected developer]
A	Up to 200	Outline approved 1070/16 Phase 1 RM approved DC/19/ 01602	Land north of Norton Road [Linden Homes] S278 close to signing
B	250	Outline approved 4963/16 RM approved DC/18/03547	Land west of Ixworth Road [Persimmon Homes] S278 about to be signed
C	175	Appeal allowed: Outline 5010/16 [Ref] RM approved DC/18/01376	Land south of Norton Road [Hopkins Homes] S278 close to signing
D	64	Full approved 4942/16	Land at Meadow Lane [Laurence Homes] No commencement no S278.
E	129	Full approved DC/17/02232	Land west side of Barton Road [Bovis Homes] S278 being drafted
TOTAL	818		

The ‘Thurston Five’ planning permissions

PART THREE- ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1. The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1. The site comprises relatively flat agricultural land situated to the south west of Beyton Road. The site is accessed via Beyton Road which serves a number of dwellings on the northern side. There is are areas of woodland located directly to the north/north west and south of the site, both of which are outside the site boundary.
- 1.2. The site is located within a Flood Zone 1. There are few constraints on the site as it does not lie within a Conservation Area or Special Landscape Area and there are no listed buildings within the site area; the site is not considered to be particularly sensitive in landscape terms and is a relatively contained site. Within the southwestern corner of the site is a large mature tree, this tree and others are now subject to a Tree Protection Order (TPO) and is situated within part of the site which lies within land that falls within West Suffolk. The application site is 8.87 hectares.



Figure 2: **The Site**

2. The Proposal

- 2.1. The application to be considered is for outline planning permission for the erection of up to 210 dwellings. Access is to be considered as part of this outline application with all other matters reserved.
- 2.2. As this is an outline application only with all matters (save for access) reserved, the design and layout details are not for consideration at this stage although the indicative site plan does demonstrate that the plot is large enough to accommodate up to 210 dwellings, and acceptably so.
- 2.3. Planning Officers have worked extensively with the Developer/Agents and whilst the designs and layout are not for consideration it can be assured that these have been worked up and explored over extensive meetings and that the submitted plans in front of you will form part of the later reserved matters application.
- 2.4 The applicants have undertaken their own discussions and meetings with Thurston Parish Council [summarised below from information provided by Bloor Homes]. On some occasions the case officer has also attended. The case officer has also met independently with the Parish Council and joined Parish Council reps. on a 2½hr. walkabout to look at application related issues. The case officer has visited the site a number of times of his own at different times of the day and has also joined the SCC highway case officer to observe traffic conditions at peak periods.
- 2.5 Officers have also met and liaised with Thurston Parish Council during the lifetime of this application. Thurston Parish Council also attended a round table meeting with the applicants, MSDC Council officers and Network Rail. A summary of engagement exercises involving the Applicant is set out below. It should be noted this does not include all meetings with MSDC and WSDC and concentrates on meetings with the local community and Highways.

Date	Bloor meeting with?	Purpose of meeting
17 th May 2019	Thurston Parish Council	Bloor introduce their proposals.
17 th May 2019	Public exhibition	Invites sent to residents, Parish Council and Ward Members.
4 th June 2019	SCC Highways, MSDC	Principally to discuss the off-site highways works proposed alongside the transport modelling being prepared and access into the site.
3 rd July 2019	Councillor Wendy Turner, Vincent Pearce	To describe their proposals with Cllr Turner. Cannon also attended to explain the off-site highway improvements and how Bloor has considered and developed these in the context of the

		committed schemes. Cllr Turner did not discuss the merits of the proposal or indicate her own views
5 th July 2019	Thurston Parish Council	To discuss the proposals and how aspects have changed since the last meeting. Cannon also attended to update on the off-site highway works and respond to queries.
20 th August 2019	SCC Highways, MSDC, WSDC	To discuss the proposals and off-site highway works.
23 rd August 2019	Thurston Parish Council	Catch up on the proposals, particularly the off-site highway works with Cannon in attendance.
24 th September 2019	SCC Infrastructure, MSDC	To discuss infrastructure capacity and potential need arising from the proposal and contributions.
4 th October 2019	Network Rail, SCC and MSDC	To discuss the barrow crossing at Thurston Railway Station. Gladman also in attendance.
12 th November 2019	SCC, MSDC, WSDC	Update on the proposals and off-site highways works.
9 th January 2020	MSDC, WSDC, SCC	To discuss SCC highway response to consultation

Figure 3: **Meetings between Bloor and Thurston P.C. and/or SCC Highways**



Figure 4: **Illustrative layout**

3. The DETAILED OFFICER ASSESSMENT of the planning merits of the proposal

3.1 Overarching policy context

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. That direction continues to be relevant to the determination of this application.

The current Development Plan comprises the following:

- Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998
- Mid Suffolk Core Strategy 2008
- Mid Suffolk Focused Review Core Strategy 2012
- Thurston Neighbourhood Plan 2019

3.2 Consideration of the acceptability or not of the principle of residential use. [This is a matter to be determined at this outline application stage]

3.3 How many dwellings is the Committee being asked to consider?

Members will note that this outline application is described as being for 'up to 210' dwellings but what does that actually mean?

3.3.1 'Up to' implies that 210 represents a possible upper limit or ceiling of what may be possible and this sets the envelope of assessment that has been carried out; it is a parameter that fixes the nature of the development and what could be brought forward at the reserved matters where the final number of dwellings would be known.

3.3.2 Members are advised that they should not assume 'up to' could mean anywhere between 1 and 210 and that the Committee cannot reasonably exert effective control over total numbers at Reserved Matters if the principle is found to be acceptable and no objection is raised now to 210 units. If 210 dwellings was thought to be inappropriate/unacceptable and that position can reasonably be justified in policy terms then the Committee should either seek amendment of the proposal by reducing numbers or it should be refused. It is disingenuous to suggest that any developer would be happy to readily accept a scheme that comprised fewer numbers when it came to the submission of reserved matters. If not conditioned at outline stage matters such as mix, density*, and tenure cannot reasonably be controlled retrospectively by the local planning authority unless conditioned at outline stage. [* particularly where the applicant has given a ceiling number of units within the description of development.]

3.3.3 Members should look at the proposal as if it were an application for 210 dwellings as that is what any developer will argue they have permission for if an application described as 'up to 210' is approved. The applicants have provided an illustrative layout that makes provision for 210 dwellings. They are satisfied the site can appropriately accommodate that many units. Whilst the illustrative layout may not formally comprise part of the submission documents its purpose is to show that the upper limit of development in terms of dwellings numbers is realistically achievable. [and satisfies relevant Council amenity standards, parking requirements and so on].

3.4 **The principle**

3.4.1 Much of this report will, of necessity, explore the extent to which the very principle of residential development on this site is or is not acceptable. Charting a course that will provide answers is made more difficult on this occasion by a complex interplay of material planning policy considerations that on the face of it appear to produce some diametrically opposed paths to a recommendation [approve or refuse]. We are required to consider a number of documents and to ascertain whether despite initial appearances to the contrary there is a consistent approach between them or if not how much weight do we need to give each compared to the other when trying to resolve the question – “Is the development unacceptable or acceptable in principle?”

As with many things in planning this ultimately will come down to questions of policy interpretation, an examination of the hard evidence, applying appropriate weight, undertaking a careful balance and finally exercising one’s own reasoned judgement after taking account of material planning considerations.

3.4.2 The key documents we will now consider in detail are:

- ❖ Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan [Oct 2019]
- ❖ Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan ‘Preferred Options Document [July 2019]
- ❖ Mid Suffolk Core Strategy [2008]
- ❖ Mid Suffolk Focused Review Core Strategy [2012]
- ❖ Mid Suffolk Local Plan [1998]
- ❖ National Planning Policy Framework [June 2019]

3.4.3 Increasingly as more Neighbourhood Plans are adopted and as the Joint Local Plan progresses to adoption these types of difficult ‘policy-dominated’ applications will become more common place simply as a matter of odds. Consequently, Neighbourhood Plans are going to be subjected to ever increasing scrutiny to ensure that they continue to meet the requirements expected of them in the NPPF [2019]. Some may find that they fall short as changes are brought in. Some will be very robust.

3.5 **Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan 2019 & Draft Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan ‘Preferred Options’ Document 2019**

3.5.1 Thurston has an Adopted Neighbourhood Plan [October 2019]. This is an ‘up-to-date’ Plan that now forms part of the Council’s Adopted Development Plan for Mid Suffolk and as such it now benefits from the statutory presumption of s38(6); it must be the starting point for decision taking. The weight to be attributed to that document must however, as always, be balanced with and against all other material planning considerations.

3.5.2 The spatial strategy for Thurston is described in S1 of the Neighbourhood Plan where it states the aim as being:

“To develop and sustain the key service centre status of Thurston by ensuring any future development is sustainable and supports a range of employment, services and housing.”

3.5.3 The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges that there are “over 1,000 dwellings in the planning pipeline for Thurston, ie: with planning permission but not yet built or occupied” It is this that leads the Neighbourhood Plan to conclude that:

“..it is not expected that significant additional growth will need to be planned for in Thurston to support the emerging Joint Local Plan.³ [para 4.2 page 10] .

3.5.4 **That said the Neighbourhood Plan does recognise that:**

“It is for the Joint Local Plan to ultimately address the objectively assessed housing need of the two districts over the period to 2036 and also to determine Thurston’s contribution to that.”

3.5.5 The Adopted Neighbourhood Plan is therefore predicated on the presumption that additional sites were not required to be allocated at that stage to deliver further growth in Thurston. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies sites that already had planning permission at the time it was produced but it does not allocate any sites for development.

3.5.6 The site being promoted by Bloor Homes by way of the outline application currently before the Committee is not allocated for development of any sort within ‘figure 12: Locations with the parish⁴’ or ‘figure 13: Inset map: detailed locations⁵’

3.5.7 In the context of the Neighbourhood Plan, ‘**Policy 1: Thurston Spatial Strategy**⁶’ therein provides the policy support for this position. It states:

A. New development in Thurston parish shall be focused within the settlement boundary of Thurston village as defined on the Policies Maps (pages 75-76).

Officer Comment:

The application site is outside the defined village settlement boundary and is not included as an allocation on the policy maps referred to. It should however be noted that the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate new sites for development but rather reflects the likely status quo arising from extant planning permissions. The Plan appears not to make any reference to the number of dwellings that are considered to be required within the plan period and nor does it suggest how the extended settlement boundary to include sites with extant planning permissions will or won’t meet a predicted requirement up to 2036. This position will be explored in greater detail shortly within this report

B. Development proposals within the settlement boundary (as defined on the Policies Maps pages 75- 76) will be supported subject to compliance with the other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Officer comment:

³ at paragraph 4.2 on page 10 [TNP 2018-2036]

⁴ page 75 [THP 2018-2036]

⁵ page 76 [THP 2018-2036]

⁶ page 32 [THP 2018-2036]

This criteria is not relevant as the site lies outside of the defined settlement boundary shown in the Neighbourhood Plan.

- C. All new housing proposals will be expected to address the following key matters:
- A. Ensure they address the evidence-based needs of the Thurston Neighbourhood area in accordance with Policy 2; and

Officer comment:

It is clear that there is a critical difference of opinion between the Parish Council and the District Council based on evidence as to how much development is required to be accommodated in Thurston during the Plan Period 2018-2036. It is this fundamental difference that sits at the heart of discussion around the merits of the current proposal. Ultimately Members will need to pick their way through the evidence and apply their own judgement.

Of relevance to this debate is the fact that whilst the site is not allocated for development in the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan it is allocated for residential development in the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Preferred Options document of July 2019⁷

As an expression of the Council's intended strategic direction the JLPPO document was agreed by Full Council and to that extent the proposed allocations need to be seen as this Council's latest advancing expression of identified housing requirement and preferred strategic distribution for that requirement. The significance of this will be discussed more fully later on in this report.

- B. In accordance with the statutory tests in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, contribute towards education infrastructure and other key infrastructure which shall include health, transport and movement, community facilities, utilities and public realm improvements, through direct provision and/or developer contributions (including Community Infrastructure Levy and/or Section 106) and.

Officer comment:

The development will provide infrastructure or make the necessary financial contributions towards education, highways, local open space/play and sustainable travel by way of a S106 Agreement [if members are minded to approve the proposal] and other infrastructure needs will be eligible for funding from the CIL contributions attracted by the development.

- C. Design high quality buildings and deliver them in layouts with high quality natural landscaping in order to retain the rural character and physical structure of Thurston.

⁷ LA087- Allocation: Land south of Beyton Road, Thurston. BMSJLPO 2019. page 426 approx. 200 dwellings

Officer comment:

The supporting illustrative layout, house types, materials and landscaping all suggest that the proposed development will achieve a high design standard. Members are reminded that this application is submitted in Outline however, if the Committee believes the indicative drawings do provide a high degree of confidence around design quality and if Members are minded to grant permission subsequent reserved matters can be conditioned to conform substantially with the illustrative details. A Design Statement has been submitted to reflect ongoing discussions with MSDC and provide an indication of the design of the houses.

- D Development proposals to meet specialist housing and care needs on sites that are outside the settlement boundary will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that no available and deliverable site exists within the settlement boundary.

Officer comment:

The housing being proposed by Bloor Homes does not fall into the category of specialist and care needs housing. It is general housing. Consequently, it cannot draw on this policy support for specialist residential use outside of the defined settlement boundary.

- E. Where development uses best and most versatile agricultural land, it must be clearly demonstrated that the remaining parts of any fields remain economically viable for commercial farming.

Officer comment:

The land is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land on the Natural England - Agricultural Land Classification [ALC] maps⁸. Included with Grade 3 are two sub-categories as follows:

Grade 3a: Good quality agricultural land capable of producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops or moderate yields of a wider range of crops.

Grade 3b: Moderate quality agricultural land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops or lower yields of a wider range of crops.

The site is therefore not identified as

- 1 Excellent quality agricultural land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use.***
- 2 Very good quality agricultural land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivation or harvesting***
- 4 Poor quality agricultural land with severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops and/or level of yields.***
- 5 Very poor quality agricultural land with very severe limitations which restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.***

⁸ The limitations of the ALC Maps need to be recognised in so far as follow-up analysis is recommended because within the broad bands of classification much diversity can exist. It is therefore a crude analysis but of some value as a first point of general reference

On this basis it does not represent the highest quality of most versatile land but could fall within the spectrum of land considered to represent best and most versatile if it was proved to be Grade 3a.

As the site represents an entire field [bounded as it is on all sides by highway] it must be concluded that within the test set by criteria E of Policy 1 Thurston Spatial Strategy that no awkward unfarmable parcel will remain. It should also be noted that as the site area is only 8.87 ha it falls below the 20ha threshold prescribed by the Government [NPPG] for formal consultation with DEFRA. The objective being to consult on the loss of high quality agricultural that may have strategic implications for farming in a locality. Clearly that cannot be said to apply here. The site will continue to be surrounded by viable commercial farmland to the west, south and east.

Members will of course be familiar with the Government's main plank of planning direction which is the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF [2019] and how different parts of it must be brought into play depending on what particular circumstances prevail. This application raises issues that require careful analysis of paragraph 14 which considers *inter alia* the interplay between the "tilted balance" and adopted Neighbourhood Plans.

Whilst Thurston now has an Adopted Neighbourhood Plan paragraph 14 [b] suggests that in the case of the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan the Council should carefully consider the weight to be given to it in the decision making process for this application.

Paragraph 14 states:

"In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided all of the following apply

- a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan two years or less before the date on which the decision is made;

Officer comment:

This applies

- b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement;

Officer comment:

The Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan does not meet its identified housing need as now expressed in the Draft Joint Local Plan Preferred Options Document of 2019. On this basis further careful consideration needs to be given to the extent to which the presumption against approving development that is contrary to an up to date Neighbourhood Plan can be applied especially where the Neighbourhood Plan does not of itself identify a minimum housing requirement.

It is therefore critical to fully analyse this situation because the Parish Council, and many villagers understandably believe that large scale new development such as

this can now be resisted [ie refused] on the basis that the site is not allocated in the Adopted Neighbourhood Plan. Having been adopted as recently as October 2019 any challenge to the of the Neighbourhood Plan is likely not to be well received locally. In such circumstances it would be easy to understand the local reaction “Well what was the point of us going through the Neighbourhood Plan process if we cannot rely on it to protect us from development to which we object?” Generally there would be considerable sympathy for that expression of exasperation and disbelief. Members of the Committee however know from experience that planning never stays still for long and it is clear from paragraph 14 that the Government continues to drive housing delivery and that Neighbourhood Plans are not immune from that direction if they fail to allocate sufficient sites to meet the ongoing housing requirement as identified by the District Council as local plan making authority. The Government reiterates this at NPPF para 59 where a key planning objective is to significantly boost the supply of new homes. The extent to which the Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan does or does not meet that requirement is considered further below.

c) the local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites (against its five year housing supply requirement, including the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 73);

Officer comment:

This applies

and

d) the local planning authority's housing delivery was at least 45% of that required over the previous three years.

Officer comment:

This applies

3.6 Neighbourhood Plan & Draft Joint Local Plan identified housing requirement

3.6.1 In the light of the above let's now analyse the likely housing numbers to be delivered as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and compare these to the current housing requirement numbers in the Draft JLP Preferred Options Document. Members are reminded that the Draft Joint Local Plan Preferred Options Document currently carries limited weight as a document as it has yet to achieve sufficient statutory advancement to garner greater weight. The trajectory of its progress is however forwards and that the Council has already set out its intent to allocate the site for development, alongside setting out minimum housing requirements for neighbourhood plan areas, is an important one. The needs for Thurston in the next plan period are identified as being 1468 dwellings; the housing figures within the existing district plan documents have expired by virtue of their age. The number represented by the "Thurston 5" is 818 dwellings.

3.6.2 The Draft JLP Preferred Options Document is an expression of how the Council would prefer to meet its overall housing requirement in terms of spatial strategy and

geographic distribution of new housing. To that extent it does highlight an agreed direction of travel and it follows that where planning decisions [refusals] prevent new houses on sites considered to be preferred' then those numbers will need to be found elsewhere either in different locations within allocated settlements or in other settlements where additional numbers will be required to be taken to offset the shortfall. It should be remembered that the overall housing requirement over the plan period will still be required to be met, so if development is not permitted on preferred sites then it could lead to speculative development coming forward on less favourable sites. in this case, in preferred sites in Thurston.

3.6.3 This therefore prompts the obvious and critically important question **“Does the Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan identify sufficient sites to accommodate [or exceed] the requirement identified by the Council?”**

3.6.4 Helpfully the NPPG provides some help is assessing what is expected by the Government when it comes to planning for identified housing requirements; It states:

“Where a qualifying body wants to benefit from the protection of paragraph 14, why is it important that they should include policies and allocations in their neighbourhood plan?

Allocating sites and producing housing policies demonstrates that the neighbourhood plan is planning positively for new homes, and provides greater certainty for developers, infrastructure providers and the community. In turn this also contributes to the local authorities' housing land supply, ensuring that the right homes are delivered in the right places.”

Paragraph: 096 Reference ID: 41-096-20190509

“In the context of paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework, what does ‘policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement’ mean for neighbourhood plans?

In order for a neighbourhood plan to meet the criteria set in paragraph 14b of the Framework, the ‘policies and allocations’ in the plan should meet the identified housing requirement in full, whether it is derived from the housing figure for the neighbourhood area set out in the relevant strategic policies, an indicative figure provided by the local planning authority, or where it has exceptionally been determined by the neighbourhood planning body. For example, a neighbourhood housing requirement of 50 units could be met through 2 sites allocated for 20 housing units each and a policy for a windfall allowance of 10 units. However, a policy on a windfall allowance alone would not be sufficient.

Policies and allocations within other development plan documents, for example strategic site allocations or windfall development set out in a local plan or spatial development strategy, will not meet criterion 14b of the National Planning Policy Framework.”

Paragraph: 097 Reference ID: 41-097-20190509

Member’s attention is drawn to the need to ‘meet the identified housing requirement in full’ as set out in paragraph 097 of the NPPG above.

3.7 Mid Suffolk District Council's identified requirement for Thurston

3.7.1 The identified requirement as set out in Table 04 – Minimum housing requirement for NP Areas Mid Suffolk on page 41 of the Draft Joint Local Plan Preferred Options Document for Thurston up to 2036 is: **1468 dwellings**.

3.8 Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan expected housing delivery numbers through extant planning permissions [extended settlement boundary to reflect the current status quo]

3.8.1 Figures 12 and 13 in the Neighbourhood Plan respectively show that with the Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan the previous settlement boundary is now extended to include five major sites all of which benefit from planning permission. By doing this The Neighbourhood Plan is effectively saying that these five sites [some of which are now under construction] will satisfy the identified requirement for Thurston. That being the proposition let's take a detailed look at what is expected to be the overall product in terms of new dwellings from these five sites.

NP ref	site	Number of dwellings	Relevant pp	Location and [expected developer]
A		Up to 200	Outline approved 1070/16 Phase 1 RM approved DC/19/ 01602	Land north of Norton Road [Linden Homes] S278 close to signing
B		250	Outline approved 4963/16 RM approved DC/18/03547	Land west of Ixworth Road [Persimmon Homes] S278 about to be signed
C		175	Appeal allowed: Outline 5010/16 RM approved DC/18/01376	Land south of Norton Road [Hopkins Homes] S278 close to signing
D		64	Full approved 4942/16	Land at Meadow Lane [Laurence Homes] No commencement no S278.
E		129	Full approved DC/17/02232	Land west side of Barton Road [Bovis Homes] S278 being drafted
TOTAL		818		

Figure 4: The 'Thurston Five' permissions

3.8.2 On this basis there appears to be a shortfall of sites identified within the Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan to meet the current requirement of 1468 dwellings identified by Mid Suffolk District Council within Thurston in the period up to 2036. The shortfall equates to some 650 dwellings.

3.8.3 This shortfall is not negligible or even modest – it is significant. The Adopted Neighbourhood Plan appears therefore to have made reference to sites for only 55.7%

of the identified requirement. In such circumstances it is reasonable to question whether the village can rely on its Neighbourhood Plan to resist the principle of more residential development as the situation runs counter to that expected by paragraph 14 [b] of the NPPF [2019] if the presumption in favour of refusal is to be applicable.

- 3.8.4 This is a fundamental point and cannot be dismissed. Whilst the status of the Draft JLP Preferred Options Document can be questioned the massive difference between the housing requirement in it for Thurston and that now in the Adopted Neighbourhood Plan draws attention to a serious conflict in approach. As set out in the NPPF, a Neighbourhood Plan should conform with the strategic plan and meet the identified housing need for the area. As the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites to meet the identified housing need, paragraph 14 of the NPPF does not apply and the site not being allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan does not in itself represent an adverse impact that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits
- 3.8.5 Not all adopted neighbourhood plans within the District have potentially under-allocated residential sites. For example the Adopted Eye Neighbourhood Plan [2019] identifies sufficient sites to ensure that the identified requirement for Eye as set out in the Draft Joint Local Plan 'Preferred Options' Document is easily met. This has meant that an application for 126 houses on a site that falls outside of the Neighbourhood Plan allocations can be refused confident in the knowledge that the Plan complies fully with all four requirements of neighbourhood plans as set out in paragraph 14 of the NPPF. Eye's neighbourhood plan group chose as a minimum to meet the Council's [MSDC] identified requirement and exceed it themselves by c.30%. They may now be in a stronger position to rely on their plans to resist development of unallocated sites than those who did not.
- 3.8.6 As Members will be aware the NPPF [2019] continues to have a presumption in favour of sustainable development alongside a general thrust for securing development that is sustainable and significantly boosting housing supply and as you might expect this report will consider the extent to which the proposed development can be said to be sustainable in economic, social and environmental terms.
- 3.8.7 It needs to be acknowledged that this site is allocated within the Draft Joint Local Plan Preferred Options Document for residential development under the reference LA087 on the Thurston Inset Map [page 428].
- 3.8.8 The equivalent draft policy states:

"LA087 – Allocation:

Land south of Beyton Road, Thurston

Site Size - 7.9ha Approximately 200 dwellings (with associated infrastructure)

The development shall be expected to comply with the following:

- I. The relevant policies of the Joint Local Plan;

Officer comment:

It does alongside meeting the requirements of the current development plan, save for its siting outside of an existing settlement boundary.

- II. On-site open space is retained or an alternative provision of equal or greater quality, accessibility and quantity is provided as part of the scheme;

Officer comment:

It is. Approximately 38.6% of the overall site is effectively given over to open-space

- III. An ecological survey, and any necessary mitigation measures are provided;

Officer comment:

It was and it does

- IV. Contributions to the satisfaction of the LPA, towards provision of pre-school, primary school and secondary school provision;

Officer comment:

It does to the tune of some £1,459,669 [additional S106 required by SCC]

- V. Contributions to the satisfaction of the LPA, towards healthcare provision;

Officer comment:

The Council previously decided to use money collected under CIL to improve healthcare provision. Bloor Homes will make CIL payments and the NHS have advised they will make a bid to the Council for some of this money to improve healthcare provision. The scheme therefore provides a suitable healthcare provision

- VI. Provision of a new footway links to the village;

Officer comment:

The proposed development provides a raft of improvements as will be detailed later in this report

- VII. Transport Assessment required to assess the impact on highway under the railway bridge;

Officer comment:

This proposal provides a solution to delivery of a safer corridor for pedestrian underneath Thurston Station Railway Bridge as will be described later in this report

- VIII. Mitigation measures at crossways junction near the site; and

Officer comment:

The proposal if approved will deliver major highway improvements at not just Fishwick Corner but also Pokeriage Corner, Beyton Road, Thedwastre Road railway bridge, Beyton Road and the Beyton Road/Norton Road junction. Many of these improvements could not be secured at the time of determination of the 5 major Thurston sites because land was not available within the control of the respective applicants or the Highways authority. In many ways it is this proposed development that can unlock all the necessary highway improvements needed south of the railway to improve traffic flow around the entire village and for all the village road users. [or at the least the majority who travel southwards to destinations rather than northwards] and have not seen such improvements as being achievable until now.

- IX. Contributions may be required, to the satisfaction of the LPA, towards accessibility improvements at Thurston railway station.

Officer comment:

The improvement works underneath the bridge will improve accessibility but the applicant has also agreed to support the Council's informal commitment to help fund platform improvements from CIL contributions in Thurston by contributing £30,000 towards a feasibility study to deliver a ramp/lift solution on the south side platform that will enable passengers to access each platform without having to directly cross the railways lines via a signalled barrow crossing.

- 3.8.9 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan's strategy for growth is predicated on it all being within the expanded settlement boundary [that includes the five major sites and 818 dwellings] we also need to look at Neighbourhood Plan policy 2. That states:

"POLICY 2: MEETING THURSTON'S HOUSING NEEDS

- A. Proposals for new residential development must contribute towards Thurston's role as a Key Service Centre/Core Village. This means addressing both the needs of the wider Housing Market Area and the needs of Thurston as a rural community.
- B. Within the context of Thurston's needs, all housing proposals of five or more units must reflect the need across all tenures for smaller units specifically designed to address the need of older people (for downsizing) and younger people (first time buyers).
- C. An alternative dwelling mix will only be permitted where evidence is brought forward with an application that clearly demonstrates the need for a different mix.
- D. In order to address the needs of younger people in Thurston, development that provides housing specifically designed to address their needs will be supported.
- E. In order to address the needs of older people in Thurston, development that provides housing specifically designed to address their needs will be supported. This includes the provision of sheltered housing."

- 3.8.10 One of the principle concerns within the village is seen as the potentially rapid growth in population engendered by the recent approval of the five major planning applications

that will boost housing numbers by 818 units. Assimilating this level of growth in a short period is seen as difficult particularly if infrastructure provision is unable to keep pace to support that growth.

3.8.11 Head of the concerns for many is what is perceived as the likely strain on the local highway network and whilst the Thurston five proposals will contribute nearly £1 million pounds of highway improvements [£989,000] they will not deliver the suite of improvements south of the railway identified as necessary in the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan and accepted by SCC & MSDC as being crucial to improving ease of circulation and safety.

3.8.12 The previously secured improvements include:

T1	A143 Bury Road / C691 Thurston Road/ C649 Brand Road	Junction Improvements (Capacity)
T2	C693 Thurston Road / C692 Thurston Road / C693 New Road	Junction improvements (Road Safety). Re-route road through new development to create two 3 way priority junctions. Interim 40mph speed limit
Note no T3 T4	Ixworth Road	Extend speed limit to Thurston Rugby Club
T5	Norton Road (east)	Extension of speed limit
T6	Barton Road	Extension of speed limit west of Mill Lane
T7	Norton Road (east)	Pedestrian Crossing between Meadow Lane and Station Hill / Ixworth Road (uncontrolled)
T8	Ixworth Road	Footway on west side between Norton Road and Persimmon site
T9	Ixworth Road	Footway link to Thurston Rugby Club
T10	Norton Road / Station Hill / Ixworth Road	Pedestrian crossing facilities (zebra on Norton Rd east and Station Hill?)
T11	Norton Road (east)	

		Footway on north side from Meadow Lane east towards Church Lane
T12	Norton Road (east)	Crossing between Hopkins site and Pigeon site (un-controlled)
T13	Church Road	Provide metalled footway
T14	Church Road	Street lighting
T15	Sandpit Lane	2 no pedestrian crossing (uncontrolled) south of Cloverfields and north of Sandpit Drive
T16	Barton Road	Extension of footway along Barton Road
T17	Norton Road	Bus stops east of Rylands Close
T18	Meadow Lane	Modify to improve cycle / pedestrian facilities (and maintain access to properties)
T19	Ixworth Road to Meadow Lane	Improve PROW 001 (un metalled?)
T20	Ixworth Road to Mill Lane	Improve PROW 018 (un metalled)
T21	Barton Road to Heath Road	New PROW along southern boundary to Heath Road and Cycle Route 51
T23	Norton Road to Church Road	Improve PROW 006 (metalled)
T24	North of Meadow Lane	Improve PROW 007 (un metalled)

3.8.13 That said these are seen locally as maintaining the status quo and not satisfactorily dealing with issues that include Fishwick Corner being seen as dangerous and prone to congestion, accessibility under Thurston Station bridge being dangerous and the Bunbury Arms junction being at capacity.

- 3.8.14 The signalisation of the Bunbury Arms junction [paid for the by five major sites] is expected locally not to resolve current capacity problems but to merely ensure that the 818 dwellings create sufficient new capacity not to worsen the current problem. Locally it is believed that once the Bunbury Arms junction has been improved through signalisation no additional capacity can be created as no other options will be implementable within the highway. This is seen as being a brake on any further new development of housing in Thurston. Whilst it is suggested that the Gladman's proposal can deliver further capacity improvements officers are not recommending that Bloor Homes need to make similar contributions because as previously discussed they are providing much needed improvements south of the railway bridge. The majority of trips in Thurston are to the south and so the improvements being undertaken by Bloor [if permission is granted and development ultimately proceeds] will have significant benefits to the majority of village occupants. Occupiers of the Bloor development will not put significant pressure on the Bunbury Arms junction
- 3.8.15 Consequently, it is vital to understand to what extent that is true and that is something we shall explore in the highway section of this report.
- 3.8.16 For the sake of completeness and transparency we need to acknowledge that the site is not allocated for development in the current Adopted Local Plan [1998] and therefore is classified as countryside where the presumption is against largescale residential development. Members are now well versed in the fact that the Council's Policy CS2 is out-of-date' as it is not compliant with the NPPF [2019] insofar as it [policy CS2] effectively precludes sustainable development on the edge of or adjacent to sustainable settlements and is therefore contrary to the Government's intention that sustainable development will be supported.
- 3.8.17 Thurston is defined in the Core Strategy 2008 as a Local Service Centre – that means it is 'the main focus for development outside of the towns.'
- 3.8.18 That suggests Thurston is by definition a sustainable location and this is supported by the fact that it contains:
- **a railway station:**
a connecting line linking the London to Norwich intercity route and London to Cambridge, Peterborough and Kings Lyn routes via Elmswell, Thurston, Bury St Edmunds
 - **a secondary school**
 - **a primary school**
 - **shops [incl co-op supermarket]**
 - **post office**
 - **pubs**
 - **restaurant**
 - **community centre [New Green]**
 - **fuel filling station with shop**
 - **sport**
Thurston Rugby Club
Thurston Sports Education Centre [operated by Abbeycroft]
Thurston Football Club

- 3.8.19 Residents of Thurston do not have a GP practice within the village and are obliged to travel to Woolpit Health Centre or beyond.
- 3.8.20 The proposed settlement hierarchy in the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan 'Preferred Options' Document 2019 defines Thurston as a 'Core Village' [the definition of local service centre having been dropped from definitions]. A Core Village is defined as being a focus for development along with Mid Suffolk Ipswich Fringe settlements and Market Towns/Urban Areas. Consequently it continues to occupy a position in the settlement hierarchy that is by definition a sustainable location. Therefore, while conflict with policy CS2 is noted, notwithstanding its inconsistency with the NPPF the significance of that conflict is in any event very limited bearing in mind its underlying aims have nevertheless been met i.e. being sited well-connected to a Key Service Centre, a sequentially-preferable location for new housing.

3.9 **Five Year Housing Land Supply**

- 3.9.1 Mid Suffolk District Council is able to demonstrate that it has in excess of a 5YHLS. The question that naturally arises within the village is therefore likely to sound like –

“If the Neighbourhood Plan has allocated sites for some 818 new dwellings [all with permission] and the Council is able to demonstrate that it has a 5YHLS surely there is no immediate imperative for the village to accommodate any more development. If that is the case, then why is more potentially being forced on us”

- 3.9.2 It is here that the question does the Neighbourhood Plan satisfactorily address the identified housing requirement for Thurston highly relevant and the ramifications are explored in detail in this report.

- 3.10 **Mid Suffolk Core Strategy [2008] & Mid Suffolk Focused Review Core Strategy [2012]**

National Planning Policy Framework [2019]

- 3.10.1 In view of much of the Adopted Development Plan for Mid Suffolk being 'out-of-date' and the Council having been advised through appeal decisions that certain of its policies [some of which are relevant to the application at hand] are no longer consistent with the NPPF the Framework must now form a significant material planning consideration. To that end we need to explore which of the Framework policies are relevant to the discussion of the acceptability or not of the principle of residential use on this site.
- 3.10.2 What is however clear is that as the Council can demonstrate that it has a 5YHLS it is not required to skew consideration of the merits to enable unallocated land to be brought forward where a proposed development is sustainable for the purpose of rapidly closing the 5YHLS gap.
- 3.10.3 That said Members are advised that the 'Tilted Balance' described in paragraph 11 of the NPPF [2019] is triggered by the fact that some of the Council's relevant adopted planning policies are 'out-of-date' and the fact that the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan [2019] fails to satisfy the requirement contained in paragraph 14b of the NPPF [2019]. The latter meaning the Neighbourhood Plan cannot in itself be relied on to resist sustainable development outside of the defined settlement boundary for reasons

previously discussed. This will without doubt frustrate and anger many in Thurston. Just as with many other aspects of planning policy and guidance Neighbourhood Plan goal-posts are moved by the Government to ensure that housing delivery continues to be driven hard⁹.

- Paragraph 11: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole...

For **decision-taking** this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

- Paragraph 12.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date¹⁰ development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

- Paragraph 13.

The application of the presumption has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

- Paragraph 14.

⁹ As evidenced by paragraphs 73, 74, 75 & 76 of the ‘Maintaining Supply and Delivery’ section of Part 5 - ‘Delivering a sufficient supply of homes’ of the NPPF [2019]

¹⁰ Members are advised that ‘up-to-date’ does not necessarily refer per se to the age of a document. Whilst it may be assumed the more recently a document is adopted the higher the likelihood that it will comply with the latest NPPF requirements it does not necessarily follow that [i] an ‘old’ document will just because of its age be NPPF non-compliant and [ii] a ‘new’ [up-to-date] document will have necessarily appropriately embraced changing NPPF requirements.

In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided all of the following apply:

- a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan two years or less before the date on which the decision is made;
- b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement;
- c) the local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites (against its five year housing supply requirement, including the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 73); and
- d) the local planning authority's housing delivery was at least 45% of that required⁹ over the previous three years.

- Paragraph 29.

Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies¹⁶.

- Paragraph 47.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

- Paragraph 48.

Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

- Paragraph 49.

However, in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:

a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and

b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

- Paragraph 65.

Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need retesting at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.

3.10.4 This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of NPPF paragraphs relevant to all the matters at hand and others will be brought in as necessary as certain aspects of the proposed development are considered. These references are considering to include some of those most relevant to the consideration of the acceptability of the principle of development that is being undertaken within this section of the report.

3.11 **Cumulative Impact**

3.11.1 With the Thurston Five

3.11.2 The Thurston Five applications were approved as acceptable in terms of use and each provided its own appropriate levels of impact mitigation via S106 Agreement and CIL payments.

3.11.3 In terms of use the Beyton Road proposal comes with its own extensive package of mitigation sufficient to offset its own impacts. It should be noted that the application includes a raft of highway works south of Thurston Railway Station bridge that can be said to provide village wide benefits of a nature that help to mitigate the impact of not just existing traffic but also that to be generated by the Thurston Five. It delivers the suite of highway improvements considered vital by the Parish Council and as identified in the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan. Only this developer can provide these works because of their land ownership portfolio. Securing these improvements represents a significant gain. Failure to secure these will mean the problems associated with traffic south of the railway bridge will continue unabated.

3.11.4 With the Gladman's development [east of Ixworth Road]

3.11.5 If approved the Gladman proposal will mitigate its own impacts and the proposed additional benefits to the Bunbury Arms junction will benefit all of the village.

3.11.6 Cumulatively it is considered that impacts are suitably mitigated and in some cases results in village wide benefits not easily achievable by any other means.

3.12 Principle of the Use: Conclusions

- 3.12.1 **The proposed use is considered acceptable for reasons that include:**
- It helps to achieve delivery of dwellings identified as required in the emerging Joint Local Plan and within the context of needing to significantly boost the supply of new homes.
 - Conflict with policies CS2 and H7 is deemed to be of little significance where the development is in a sustainable and preferable location having regard to the underlying aims of those policies and the settlement hierarchy.
 - It represents highly sustainable development
 - It delivers a raft of highway improvements required in the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan
 - It provides significant construction jobs
 - It will deliver 35% much needed affordable dwellings which could equate to 74 units [at 210 dwellings overall]
 - It will result in ecological enhancement
 - It delivers a high quality scheme

3.13 Consideration of the merits of the proposed access & highway impacts and other matters raised by the proposed development.

3.13.1 [Access **is** a matter to be determined at this outline application stage]. Members are advised that the application includes a raft of highway improvements that should be secured by way of S106 Agreement in the event that Members are ultimately minded to grant planning permission. [these improvements will be described in detail shortly]

3.14 Proposed access

3.14.1 It is proposed to service the site from two new vehicular access points:

1. Main entrance

Bellmouth junction approximately mid-way along the site's northern edge on Beyton Road

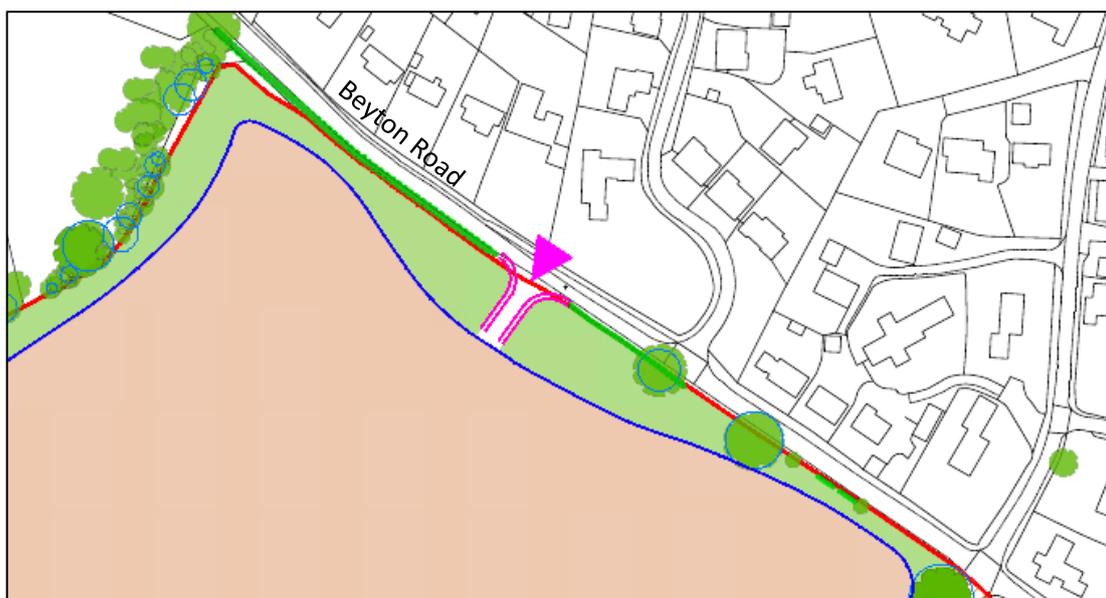


Figure 5: **Proposed access point – Beyton Road**

2. Secondary entrance

Bellmouth junction approximately mid-way along the site's southern edge on Mount Road

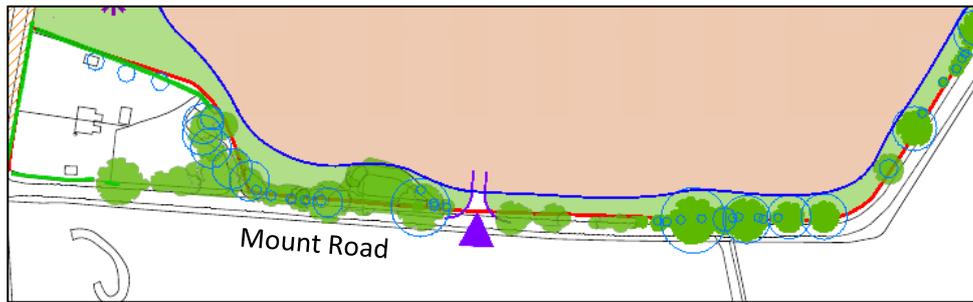


Figure 6: **Proposed access point – Mount Road**

3.14.2 SCC Highways is satisfied that the access arrangements are safe and are appropriate. The estate layout has been carefully designed to avoid the internal spine road becoming an attractive rat-run to avoid parts of New Road and/or Mount Road and to avoid using Fishwick Corner and/or Pokeriage Corner. This is a good thing from a residential amenity point of view within the new development. With improvements proposed there would be no benefit in travelling through the development. The southern access also enables southbound traffic from the development for Bury St Edmunds and the A14 west to access these routes without affecting either Beyton Road or its junctions with Pokeriage Corner or Station Road. This has been intentional to reduce impacts.

3.15 **Other highway impacts & matters**

3.15.1 All of the previously approved 'Thurston Five' sites are on the north side of Thurston and so north of the railway line that bisects the village in a west east direction. The majority of the extensive package of highway improvements secured at the time focussed on resolving highway issues north of the railway in large part because [i] none of the five applicants owned any of the land south of the railway necessary to effect meaningful highway improvements thereabouts and [ii] it didn't prove possible at that time to agree a programme of highway improvements under the railway bridge with Network Rail.

3.15.2 That said within the overall package was funding to introduce a change of traffic priority at Fishwick Corner. Currently traffic running west to east [and vice versa] along Mount Road has priority over traffic travelling north to south [and vice versa] along New Road. As funding becomes available from the implementation of the 'Thurston Five' Suffolk County Council will undertake works to reverse that priority as indicated in the sketch below. The works effectively leave the existing carriageway geometry unaltered.

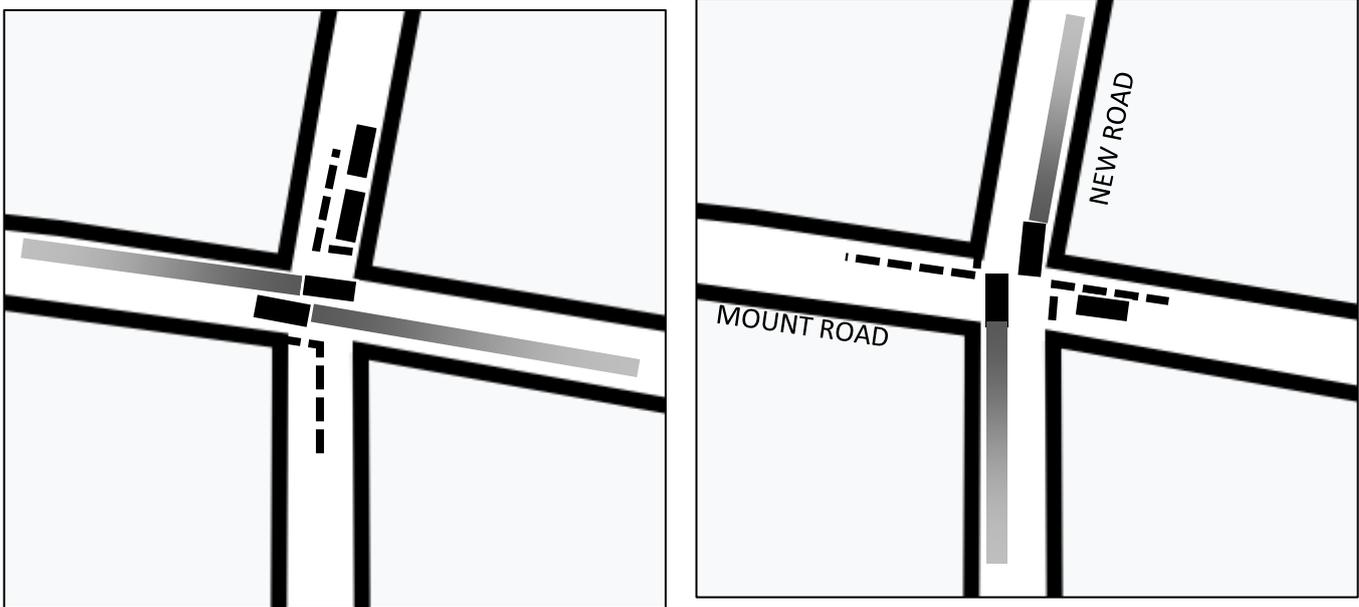


Figure 7: Fishwick Corner Junction [left as is] [right as proposed after]

3.15.3 So what are the currently unresolved highway issues south of the Thurston Railway Bridge that continue to cause concern within the village?

Helpfully The Thurston Neighbourhood Plan dedicates much of its content to addressing the multiplicity of highway issues identified by local people as existing within the village.

Chapter 2: Vision and Objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of these:

“Challenges for Thurston

1.1 Overall, the key challenge facing Thurston is to provide appropriate sustainable development and an infrastructure that supports it while retaining the quality of current village life. Thurston is under continuing pressure that may result in the residents of Thurston living in a non-sustainable community with severe consequences for their wellbeing, safety and lifestyle.

1.2 More specifically, the individual challenges which are part of this are:

[please note that for the purpose of this section of the report the list has been edited to include highway/movement related issues only]

- Railway station safety – passengers have to cross the tracks to access the westbound platform. The growth in the population will increase passenger numbers and therefore

increase the risks. There appears to be no ready solution to the problem that is acceptable.

- A lack of parking serving users of the railway station.
- Roads leading to surrounding villages (in particular Ixworth Road and Norton Road), and Bury St Edmunds (Mount Road) are winding and narrow for the traffic carried
- The narrow road underneath the rail bridge between New Road and Barton Road has inadequate pavements, yet is a main route used in the village.
- Various road junctions either have a significant number of accidents and/or are at capacity.
- Thurston Community College serves a wide area, with many children being brought to school either by coach or car. This puts additional pressure on the local roads.

Transport and Movement

3.48 Access to the westbound platform is via the Barrow Foot Crossing over the two rail lines. Network Rail acknowledges that there is a need to mitigate passenger risk but to date a solution has not been found. The approved development in late 2017 will move the cumulative passenger risk into a higher category and the Parish Council is of the view that mitigation measures should be in place prior to any further development, above that already permitted, being allowed. However, in recognising that the crossing needs improvement and that the calculation of risk at the railway crossing is not simple, MSDC has taken the view that there is not sufficient justification at present for this being used as a reason for refusing planning applications.

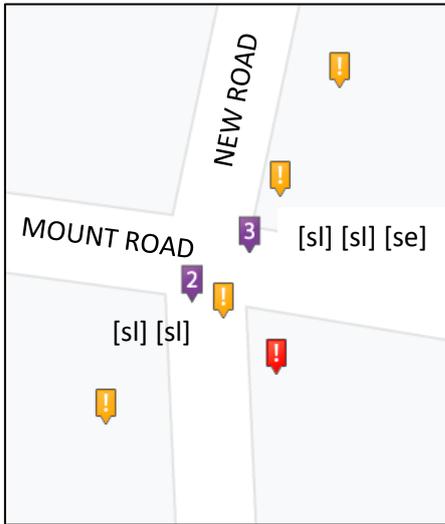
Thurston Neighbourhood Plan [2019] Policy 7: 'HIGHWAY CAPACITY AT KEY ROAD JUNCTIONS' draws strong attention to the junctions that are seen in the village as an impediment to further development. It states:

- A. Where a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement is required, this should address the transport impacts on road junctions, particularly including the following junctions on the Policies Maps:
- a. Fishwick Corner;
 - b. Pokeriage Corner;
 - c. Junction of Beyton Road and New Road;
 - d. The railway bridge/junction of Barton Road and Station Hill.

Paragraphs 7.29, 7.30 and 7.31 of the Plan provide background justification for Policy 7 and underpinning it are concerns about the impact that 'pinch points' associated with these 'problem junctions' have on safety. The supportive text refers to accident records and dangers associated with a number of the junctions.

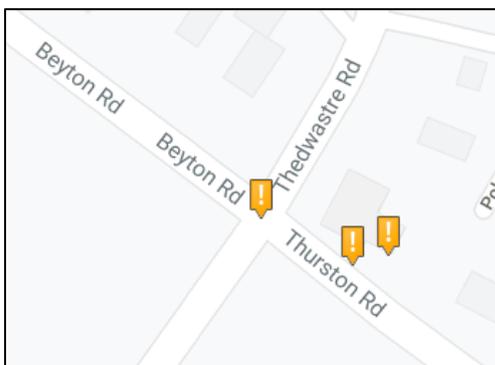
Reference to 'Crash Map'¹¹ data [2014/15/16/17 &18, incl] supports this concern.

¹¹ <https://www.crashmap.co.uk/>



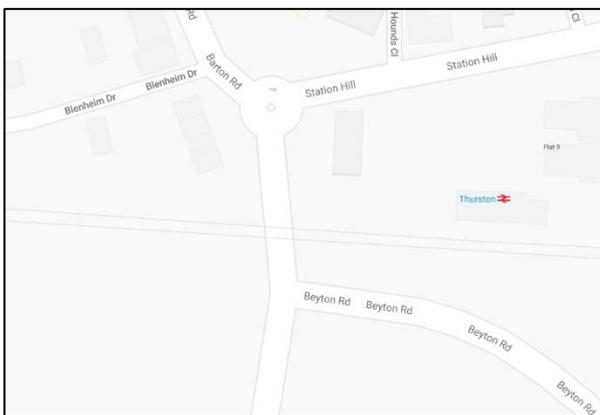
1. Fishwick Corner

-  fatal [f]
-  serious [se]
-  Slight [sl]
-  Multiple [number refers to frequency]



2. Pokeriage Corner

-  fatal [f]
-  serious [se]
-  Slight [sl]
-  Multiple [number refers to frequency]



3. Thurston Bridge & Beyton Road

-  fatal [f]
-  serious [se]
-  Slight [sl]
-  Multiple [number refers to frequency]

Figures 8: Relevant Crash Map data

- 3.15.4 It is accepted that the crash map data under reports incidents because it is based on incidents being reported to the police and therefore if an incident, minor bumps and scrapes with no injury and/or near miss goes un-reported it will not appear in the statistics.
- 3.15.5 Bloor Homes mindful of these concerns worked with their highway consultants 'Cannons' to set about developing a proposal for this site that responded positively to

the issues identified above and in what is now Policy 7 in the Neighbourhood Plan by identifying solutions to the problems. Bloor Homes has one big advantage over the applicants associated with the Thurston 5 and that is their ownership and control of land outside the public highway necessary to design and implement meaningful improvements. No other applicant could achieve this in terms of *all four* of the locations identified above, and that includes Suffolk County Council as local highway authority. Therefore, in some ways Bloor Homes is able to effect junction improvements that will not only potentially facilitate their proposed development but also benefit most of the existing residents of Thurston who currently use these junctions by car. [pedestrian safety benefits also arise as will be discussed later]

3.16 So what main highway / movement improvements are included within the application?

1. Realignment of road under Thurston Railway Bridge to improve driver visibility through the bridge; and
2. Realignment of footway under Thurston Railway Bridge to enable footpath on east side to be significantly widened thereby improving pedestrian safety and providing pedestrians with greater protection; and,
3. Introduction on a mini roundabout south of Thurston Railway to replace the existing T-junction [Beyton Road/ Barton Road [New Road] to improve visibility and improve traffic flow; and,
4. Introduction of uncontrolled crossing points along Beyton Road to improve ease of movement; and,
5. Introduction of a controlled pedestrian crossing just to the west of Pokeriage Corner; and,
6. Highway drainage improvements at Pokeriage Corner to eliminate localised highway flooding during periods of heavy rain; and,
7. Changed geometry at Pokeriage Corner involving pulling the Thedwastre junction [north side of Pokeriage Corner] slightly further south improve driver visibility and therefore highway safety. This will bring the junction forward of an existing garden hedge that obscures vision; and,
8. Closure of the junction on the north side of Mount Road where it is joined by New Road to form the northern arm of the existing crossroads thereby leaving a T-junction;
9. Construction of a new road junction on the north side of Mount Road to the east of the existing New Road junction [latter to be closed under 8 above]. This then creates a new and safer staggered junction to replace the current risky cross-road; and,
10. Subsequent re-alignment of New Road north of the new staggered junction to provide anew connection with the northern half of New Road. [the older lower half subsequently being severed to prevent through access to motor vehicles.
11. Footway improvements on Thedwastre Bridge
12. Safeguarded land for cycle route
13. New footways within and around the development site

Estimated costs¹² of S278 Highway Improvements = £1,152,600

¹² Provided by applicants highway consultants

This figure significantly exceeds the just under £1m secured from the Thurston Five developments and indicates the extent to which Bloor Homes has sought to genuinely tackle the currently unresolved issues south of the railway.



Figure 9: Highway works locations

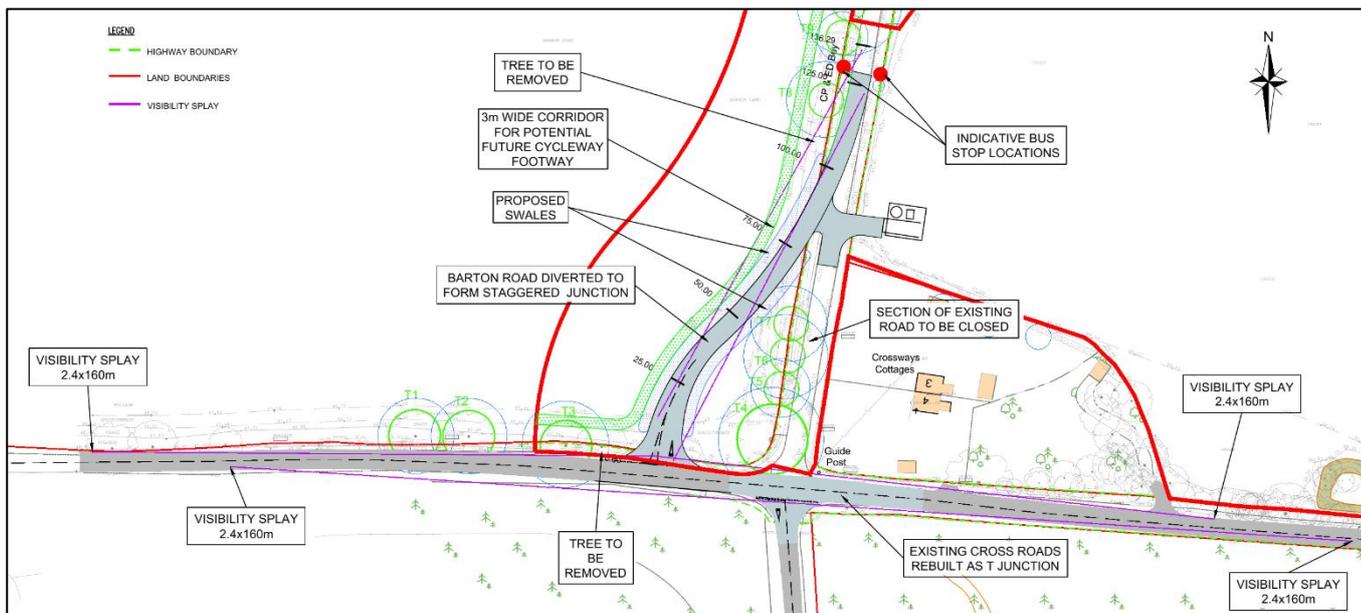


Figure 10: Proposed Fishwick Corner highway works

3.17 **Phasing of improvements**

- 3.17.1 From a road safety point of view the most important junction improvement to secure before any other is considered to be that to Fishwick Corner. Indeed, if the Committee is minded to grant permission then Bloor Homes, Suffolk County Council Highways and officers from MSDC and WSDC are all agreed that all the Fishwick Corner improvements need to be completed and available for use **before** any residential plot proceeds above slab level.
- 3.17.2 In order to ensure that the other improvement works are completed in a timely manner it is suggested that if Members are minded to grant planning permission a clause/s needs to be included within any associated s106 requiring the submission by the developer and approval by the LPA [in discussion with the LHA] of a highway improvement phasing plan. This document shall be required to be submitted by a prescribed trigger date and shall restrict occupancy of dwellings across the site in such a way as to ensure all the proposed highway improvements are completed in a prescribed order and by a prescribed deadline ahead of any agreed occupancy phasing and certainly ahead of final completion of the residential development. The actual improvement details, funding etc can then all be agreed via a S278 Agreement under the Highway Act with Suffolk County Council as local highway authority. [MSDC as the planning authority being satisfied with the details provided as part of this application for the purpose of determining this application]
- 3.17.3 One of the main public benefits associated with this proposed development is the raft of much needed highway improvements it brings to the village south of the railway line. If Members are persuaded that these benefits [along with others] outweigh any associated harm [and this is the view of officers] then it is imperative that the village see's the provision of these improvements at an early stage and not some illusive or elusive point in the future.

This is a must.

3.18 **West Suffolk District Council's consideration of the proposed Fishwick Corner improvements [DC/19/1519/OUT - WSDC] and the impact of DC/19/03486 - MSDC]**

- 3.18.1 WSDC's Development Control Committee formally considered the matter at its meeting of Wednesday 4 December 2019.

The officer recommendation presented within the agenda to Member's was as follows:

91. It is recommended that planning permission be APPROVED subject to Mid Suffolk Council (MSDC) resolving to approve the remainder of this cross-boundary application and the completion of a s106 agreement in respect of the planning obligations considered necessary by Mid Suffolk Council.

Planning conditions are recommended in respect of the planning matters listed below in so far as they relate to the works within West Suffolk. The final detail of the

conditions required in respect of the whole development to be agreed with Mid Suffolk Council, with authority delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning and Regulatory in consultation with the Chair of the Development Control Committee to agree the conditions. Suggested planning conditions in respect of the development within West Suffolk:

- Approved plans
- Time limit
- Reserved matters for the construction of access in the WS administrative area
- Surface water drainage details
- Detailed design of road realignment
- HGV construction management plan
- Provision of fire hydrants
- Archaeological investigation and evaluation
- Landscaping scheme
- Ecological mitigation and enhancement measures
- Arboricultural method statement
- Tree Protection details
- Scheme for the reinstatement of the stopped up highway
- All conditions imposed by MSDC for the parts of the development situated in its administrative area

The minute of that meeting records that:

“72. Planning Application DC/19/1519/OUT - Land Adjacent to Fishwick Corner, Thurston Road, Rougham (Report No: DEV/WS/19/048) Outline Planning Application (means of access to be considered) - (i) proposed improvement to Fishwick Corner in West Suffolk Council and (ii) 210no. dwellings means of access, open space and associated infrastructure, including junction improvements with all proposed development located within Mid Suffolk District Council

This application was referred to the Development Control Committee as the development related to a cross boundary application with Mid Suffolk Council.

The Principal Planning Officer advised that the development within West Suffolk concerned the realignment of the junction known as Fishwick Corner. The remainder of the development was within Mid Suffolk and related to the delivery of up to 210 dwellings, means of access, open space and associated infrastructure on land at Beyton Road, Thurston.

A Member site visit was held prior to the meeting.

Since publication of the agenda a late representation had been received from Thurston Parish Council which the Officer had circulated to all Members of the Committee. DEV.04.12.2019 Officers were recommending that the application be approved subject to conditions as set out in Paragraph 91 of Report No DEV/WS/19/048 and subject to Mid Suffolk Council approving the remainder of the cross-boundary application at their Committee meeting in January 2020.

Speakers: Councillor Sara Mildmay-White (Ward Member for Rougham) spoke against the application Sophie Waggett (applicant) spoke in support of the application

A number of Members voiced concern at the application and objected to determining it prior to Mid Suffolk Council considering their element of the scheme.

The Committee also expressed disappointment that the Suffolk County Council Highways representative who was due to attend the meeting had, at the last minute, been unable to do so.

Councillor David Roach proposed that consideration of the application be deferred in order to allow the scheme to be firstly determined by Mid Suffolk Council and to also ensure that a Highways Officer was able to attend West Suffolk's Development Control Committee during their determination. This was duly seconded by Councillor Peter Stevens.

Upon being put to the vote and with the vote being unanimous, it was resolved that

Decision

Consideration of the application be DEFERRED in order to allow the scheme to be firstly determined by Mid Suffolk Council and to also ensure that a Highways Officer was able to attend West Suffolk's Development Control Committee during their determination."

- 3.18.2 The case officer dealing with the application DC/19/1519/OUT [WSDC] has confirmed that now SCC Highways has provided a supportive formal detailed consultation response and as MSDC's Referrals Committee will consider the application DC/19/03486 on 29 January 2020 it is her intention to re-present an updated report [with unchanged basic recommendation; Approve] to WSDC's Development Control Committee on the first available meeting after 29 January 2020 which is likely to be 4 March 2020. [WSDC Development Control Committee meets on a four-weekly cycle].
- 3.18.3 The comments of SCC Highways [January 2020] being presented to MSDC Members within this report are the same as those now provided to WSDC. At the time of considering their application in December 2019 WSDC did not have the benefit of that advice.
- 3.18.4 Members are advised that the case officer from WSDC that is dealing with DC/19 was present at a meeting here in Endeavour House on 10 January 2020 to discuss SCC Highway's latest definitive comments with them, Bloor Homes and MSDC officers.
- 3.18.5 It is hoped that SCC Highway officers will also attend the future Development Control Committee meeting that will be considering the Fishwick Corner Improvements to provide WSDC Member's with advice and to answer questions in the same way that SCC Highway officers will be attending the MSDC Referrals Committee meeting on 29 January 2020.
- 3.19 **Layout, scale, density, design, appearance, urban design & parking**
- 3.19.1 Whilst, as previously explained, these elements are not to be determined here [rather being reserved matters in the eventual event of outline planning permission being granted] officers have been engaged in extensive and complex negotiations to secure a commitment to high quality around these aspects. Officers wish to ensure that if

Members are ultimately minded to grant outline permission they can provide the Committee with the confidence they will require around the delivery of what might be something of an exemplar terms of quality.

- 3.19.2 Officers believe that what is now being shown on the illustrative drawings [after much amendment] is of a higher standard than has been achieved elsewhere across much of the District. Officers are so pleased with these aspects that it is suggested that in the event of Members being minded to grant outline planning permission the illustrative drawings now be referred to in the decision as being the basis for reserved matters submissions. Bloor Homes is supportive of this approach because they are committed to early delivery of this project and have invested resource into working up considerable detail to demonstrate that they too wish this to be a stand out development for all the right reasons. They also hope that if permission is granted the extensive design work will reduce reserved matters determination time.
- 3.19.3 This is not Bloor being over-confident of success or of taking success for granted but an example of a national housebuilder working with officers to provide Members with added supporting material to demonstrate that what is being promised will be delivered. Members have on occasion commented that outline permissions don't always deliver the quality of final development that was envisaged at the time of deciding the outline application.
- 3.19.4 Bloor Homes is to be commended for their effort in producing what is considered to be a high quality layout and overall development. They approached the negotiation very openly and responded positively to advice.
- 3.19.5 Thankfully the character of the development that has emerged is varied and visually interesting. It won't have the ubiquitous blandness or visual monotony often associated with largescale modern estate development. The applicants have responded well to the local context. The building line along the sites Beyton Road frontage mirrors that on the other side of the road and so open space and landscaping is allowed to dominate the frontage, immediately preventing any sense of claustrophobic encroachment. Elegant bungalows will lace this frontage reducing the visual impact of new development as well as providing a sensitive foil to existing homes on the other side of the road.
- 3.19.6 Development in the site's south-western corner has been deliberately designed to create the sense of being the built frieze at the back edge of what will be a new village green. This is a lower density character of a type that suits an edge of village location. The southern, south-eastern and western edges have all been designed to present a countryside edge character to adjacent roads and woodland with a generous set-back being included from the established woodland to the north-west. Density towards the centre of the development does become more intimate but even here care has been taken to create a central open space around which buildings has been sensitively positioned to create good urban design.
- 3.19.7 The layout was re-planned at an early stage to ensure that green corridors criss-cross the development linking open spaces and woodland in a wildlife friendly and pedestrian friendly way whilst also allowing development to be set back from ecologically sensitive woodland margins.
- 3.19.8 House types have been modified to create an appearance better suited to a traditional village setting. Within the presentation that will accompany this item at the Committee

meeting all these elements will be highlighted. Officers have also received a commitment from Bloor Homes to use where appropriate materials from the traditional vernacular palette [e.g. clay tiles, soft red or gault stock bricks rather than concrete alternatives]

3.19.9 Parking levels will be expected to meet with the Council's Adopted Parking Standards and this is a matter for scrutiny at Reserved Matters Stage [in the event that outline planning permission is granted]

3.20 **Drainage**

3.20.1 SCC Water & Floods have raised no objection subject to conditions and they too have been involved in extensive negotiation with Bloor Homes. This appears to have produced good results.

3.21 **Sustainability**

3.21.1 The fact that Thurston is defined as a Key Service Centre in the Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2008 within policy CS1 'Settlement Hierarchy' means by definition that it is a sustainable location and a focus for development [along with the 'Towns' – Stowmarket, Eye and Needham Market]

3.21.2 Public Transport

It is one of but a few settlements within the District that is served directly by its own railway station – 'Thurston'. This provides connections to London Cambridge Bury St Edmunds Ipswich and the network beyond.

3.21.3 Thurston is served by two main bus routes:

384 / 385 Stephenson's Buses which link Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket via Thurston but using slightly different routes.

3.21.4 In combination these routes deliver buses from Thurston Green at:

Stowmarket - **Thurston** - Bury St Edmunds [unemboldened text below]

Bury St Edmunds – Thurston – Stowmarket [**emboldened text** below]

Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
07.06	07.06	no	09.10	09.10	no
07.51	07.51	service	10.44	10.44	service
09.53	09.53		11.56	11.56	
10.50	10.50		13.29	13.29	
12.33	12.33		14.47	14.47	
13.50	13.50		16.30	16.30	
15.20	15.20		17.59	17.59	
16.50	16.50		19.02	19.02	
18.00	18.00				

3.21.5 CS3: This encourages the use of initiatives such as:

- ❖ Use of low water volume fittings and grey water systems
- ❖ Orientation to maximise solar gain
- ❖ High levels of insulation
- ❖ Adequate provision for separation and storage of waste for recycling; and,
- ❖ Use of materials from a sustainable source in new development

to contribute towards sustainable construction

3.21.6 Whilst this is an outline planning application Bloor Homes have indicated a strong desire to proceed quickly with the submission of reserved matters in the event that planning permission is granted. As part of that the company has already committed to delivering a number of green features with others to be negotiated.

3.21.7 Bloor Homes has agreed to implement a Grey Partridge ecological mitigation programme and this is welcomed.

3.22 **CIL and village infrastructure**

3.22.1 Members are advised that conservative estimates of the likely CIL receipts from the market housing within the Thurston Five developments is between £7,772,502 and £8,881,851. If the Bloor Homes application were to be approved, reserved matters subsequently approved and the development delivered then a further CIL contribution of between £1,961,018 and £2,240,909 would be expected [subject to overall floor area]. **Consequently, the Thurston Five sites and Beyton Road could produce a CIL total of between £9,733,520 and £11,122,760.**

3.22.2 Thurston Parish Council is entitled, as of right, to 15% of this total where the development commenced prior to adoption of the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan and 25% where commencement followed adoption. **So for example if the Beyton Road application were to be granted and commenced then Thurston Parish Council will stand to directly receive [estimate] between £490,254 and £560,227 from that development.**

3.22.3 **15% of the Thurston Five CIL estimate is between £1,165,875 and £1332,277.**

3.22.4 **This produces a combined total of between £1,656,129 and £1,892,504.**

3.22.5 This is money that can be spent by the Parish Council delivering new and expanded community facilities and infrastructure within the village

3.22.6 The remaining 85% or 75% sits with MSDC to be released for such projects as deemed appropriate and eligible. It is from this pot that the NHS would for example seek to secure funding for expanded GP services or other agencies [including MSDC] would seek to secure funding for their own infrastructure projects within the village. [e.g. Thurston Station platform improvements].

3.22.7 These are significant sums and reflect the amount of new development being accommodated within Thurston but they are also large enough to provide extensive

mitigation for the impacts of that development. That is how CIL is expected by the Government to function.

3.22.8 Members are advised that any S106 contributions secured sit outside of the CIL regime and are in addition to CIL contributions.

3.23 **S106 Contributions**

3.23.1 Bloor has agreed in principle to the following S106 requirements:

- ❖ The need for a highway works phasing plan to be submitted to and approved by the Council as local planning authority before any development on site proceeds above slab height. That plan shall identify when each of the required highway works is to have been provided by reference to a prior to [x] occupations within the residential development. The mechanics for delivery of those works shall be the subject of S278 Agreements with SCC as local highway authority. MSDC as local planning authority will require the development to conform with the Highway Works phasing plan thereafter and for phased occupations not to exceed the restrictions set out within that agreed Plan
- ❖ On-site delivery of 35% affordable housing as required¹³ by the Council's Housing Strategy Service
- ❖ £30,000 financial contribution towards a Thurston Station platform improvement feasibility and design study
- ❖ Delivery of no less than two car club vehicles within the village
- ❖ Provision of a public electric charging point within the village
- ❖ Provision of urban gym trail facilities within the development and an equipped local play area. [with appropriate maintenance arrangements]
- ❖ Provision and maintenance of open space
- ❖ Payment of the Education contributions

New primary school land cost : £67,288

New primary school build cost: £1,019,772

New early years build cost: £372,609

Total £1,459,669 [or such other sum¹⁴ as shall have been agreed with SCC]

3.24 **Landscape Impact, Trees, Ecology, Biodiversity and Protected Species**

3.24.1 Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect and conserve landscape qualities taking into account the natural environment and the historical dimension of the landscape as a whole rather than concentrating solely on selected areas, protecting the District's most important components and encouraging development that is consistent with conserving its overall character.

¹³ To include agreed split between affordable rented and shared ownership, nomination rights, unit size [no of beds and no of persons per unit and delivery rate linked to phased occupations of open market units

¹⁴ Depending on mix of units[no of persons per dwelling] and proportional build costs or such other factors as are reasonable

- 3.24.2 The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils.
- 3.24.3 The application site currently consists of agricultural land. Proposed landscaping and habitat creation is likely to enhance the overall biodiversity of the site and the introduction of green corridors between natural features will facilitate easier movement of wildlife.
- 3.24.4 An assessment has been undertaken with regards to the protected species and sufficient ecological information has been submitted to provide certainty as to the likely impacts on protected and Priority species/habitats. The mitigation measures identified in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment have been considered and the mitigation measures outline in the report are considered to be suitable. As such the proposal is considered acceptable in this regard.
- 3.24.5 The trees and be retained [and the trees subject to TPOs will be safeguarded via a condition requiring a tree protection plan to be submitted to and approved the Council as local planning authority in advance of work starting on site.

3.25 **Land Contamination, Flood risk, and Waste**

- 3.25.1 Environmental Health confirm that there is no objection to the proposal in this regard and SCC is satisfied with drainage details. The site will be laid out to facilitate easy waste collection.

3.26 **Heritage Issues [Including The Impact On The Character And Appearance Of The Conservation Area And On The Setting Of Neighbouring Listed Buildings]**

- 3.26.1 No adverse heritage impacts have been identified and none are expected as confirmed by the Council's Heritage Team in their formal response

3.27 **Impact on Residential Amenity**

- 3.27.1 The application is for outline only with all matters reserved save for access. As such residential amenity is not a consideration at this stage as any issues could be addressed and overcome subject to design, form and siting within the plot, it is unlikely that there would be any impact on the existing residential amenity and this would not be sufficient to warrant refusal at this stage as the design could address these issues.
- 3.27.2 It is noted that the latest illustrative layout includes proposed bungalows on the site's Beyton Road frontage which would avoid adverse impacts on residential amenity of those living opposite.
- 3.27.3 It should also be noted that the illustrative layout was amended at an early stage to pull proposed development away from the existing cottages just outside the south-west corner of the site

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

4. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 4.1 Where the proposed development conflicts with the housing settlement policies of the Council it does not accord with the development plan taken as a whole. However, officers consider that there are other material considerations which direct that planning permission should nevertheless be granted, not least through acknowledging that such policies are inconsistent with the NPPF and where the underlying aims of those policies would be otherwise met. It is acknowledged that the proposal does cause some tension between what is expected in terms of a constraint on future development within Thurston as envisaged in the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan and what is clearly a sustainable development proposal in line with the NPPF.
- 4.2 Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan includes expansion of the village envelope this is to embrace sites that have already been granted planning permission. The Neighbourhood Plan does not identify [allocate] sites for future expansion and this conflicts with the direction of travel in the Draft Joint Local Plan. The District Council as local plan making authority has indicated a requirement to allocate the application site [and others] for residential development. This application conforms with that objective and will help to meet the identified requirement for Thurston during the Plan period up to 2036.
- 4.3 This proposal delivers a raft of benefits chief of which is a package of highway improvements south of Thurston Railway Bridge that will have village wide [and beyond] benefits in terms of highway safety and ease of access. These works are identified in the Thurston neighbourhood Plan as being key to future development. This proposal represents the best way of securing the improvements because no other applicant has controlled sufficient land to make them possible [including the Thurston Five]. Suffolk County Council as local highway authority has indicated that it is not in a position to deliver the package of improvements. Consequently when exercising the tilted balance these highway works alone significantly tip the balance in favour of supporting the proposal. When all the benefits are taken into account the adverse impact of permitting another 210 dwellings in Thurston is outweighed.
- 4.4 On that basis the Committee is recommended to GRANT planning permission subject to a S106 Agreement to secure the matters identified earlier and conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

In the event of:

- 1. The satisfactory and prior completion of a S106 Agreement to secure the delivery of a staggered junction and associated new section of road as generally shown on drawing ref: X601_EL_201B [Fishwick Corner] along with the delivery of the matters set out in the recommendation section of this report**

- ❖ The need for a highway works phasing plan to be submitted to and approved by the Council as local planning authority before any development on site proceeds above slab height. That plan shall identify when each of the required highway works is to have been provided by reference to a prior to [x] occupations within the residential development. The mechanics for delivery of those works shall be the subject of S278 Agreements with SCC as local highway authority. MSDC as local planning authority will require the development to conform with the Highway Works phasing plan thereafter and for phased occupations not to exceed the restrictions set out within that agreed Plan
- ❖ On-site delivery of 35% affordable housing as required¹⁵ by the Council's Housing Strategy Service
- ❖ £30,000 financial contribution towards a Thurston Station platform improvement feasibility and design study
- ❖ Delivery of no less than two car club vehicles within the village
- ❖ Provision of a public electric charging point within the village
- ❖ Provision of urban gym trail facilities within the development and an equipped local play area. [with appropriate maintenance arrangements]
- ❖ Provision and maintenance of open space
- ❖ Travel plan monitoring fee
- ❖ Payment of the Education contributions

New primary school land cost : £67,288

New primary school build cost: £1,019,772

New early years build cost: £372,609

Total £1,459,669 [or such other sum as shall have been agreed with SCC]

THEN,

2 The Chief Planning Officer be authorised to GRANT Outline Planning Permission subject to conditions that shall include those as summarised below and those as may be deemed necessary by the Chief Planning Officer:

- Reduced time limit for submission of reserved matters [to 12 months] and then 18 to commence
- Reserved matters as submitted shall be based substantially on the illustrative drawings reference...and shall include cross sections
- Removal of householder permitted development rights
- No encroachment of built form into any of the open space areas shown on the illustrative layout

¹⁵ To include agreed split between affordable rented and shared ownership, nomination rights, unit size [no of beds and no of persons per unit and delivery rate linked to phased occupations of open market units

- Reduced time for submission of reserved matters [to 12 Months] and then 18 months to commence
- Reserved Matters to be substantially in accordance with illustrative material
- No built form shall encroach into or upon any of the open space land shown on the illustrative drawings
- Total residential units shall not exceed 210
- Unit size shall be a matter for reserved matters
- Removal of Permitted development Rights
- Approved Plans (Plans submitted that form this application)
- Parking to comply with Adopted Parking Standards
- Ecological Mitigation
- Electric charging to all plots and sustainable construction
- External materials which shall include clay tiles and clay stock bricks, externally applied glazing bars and 75mm window reveals in masonry
- Construction Method Statement
- As required by SCC Highways
- As required by SCC Water & Floods

and ,

3 Appropriate informatives

HOWEVER;

- 4 In the event of the Planning obligations or requirements referred to in Resolutions (1) and (2) above not being secured within 6 months then the Chief Planning Officer be authorised to refuse the application on appropriate grounds if he deems there is little or no prospect of the issues delaying the securing of (1) and (2) being resolved given a reasonable extension of time.**