

Committee Report

Item No: 7A

Reference: DC/20/05894

Case Officer: Vincent Pearce

Ward: Thurston.

Ward Member/s: Cllr Harold Richardson and Cllr Wendy Turner

RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE RESERVED MATTERS WITH CONDITIONS

Description of Development

Submission of details (reserved matters) for Outline Planning Permission DC/19/03486. Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping to be considered for the construction of 210 dwellings, public open space, play area, sustainable drainage features and associated infrastructure including foul sewerage pumping station.

Location

Land south west of Beyton Road, Thurston, Suffolk

Expiry Date: 31/08/2021 [extension of time agreed]

Application Type: RES - Reserved Matters

Development Type: Major Large Scale - Dwellings

Applicant: Bloor Homes & Sir George Agnew

Agent: n/a

Parish: Thurston

Site Area: 7.96ha [red line]

Density of Development:

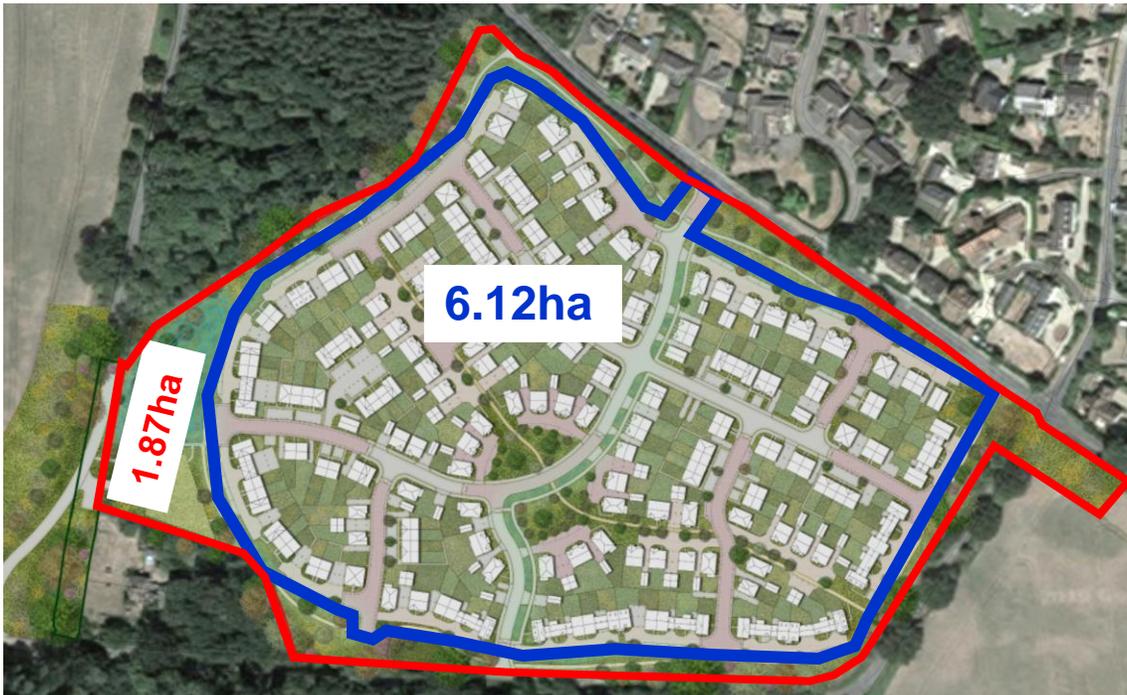
Gross Density (Total Site): no of dwellings ÷ red line area = 26.4 dwellings per hectare

Net Density: no of dwellings ÷ net developable area (Red Line Site but excluding strategic open space and SuDs) [6.1226ha] = 34.3 dwellings per hectare

Minus central green circus = 35.7dph

Net Density with distance to the middle of the road on frontage with proposed housing [excluding New Road frontage] road width = 6.8677ha = 30.6 dph

Note: The percentage of site dedicated as undeveloped [open space/habitat/SuDS] = 23.4% [1.84ha] of the total area. [policy requirement = 10% open space] The extent of the developable area was set by the Council in the outline planning permission



top: figure 1: **Developable area for the purpose of net density calculation**
 bottom: figure 2: **Central green circus [black outline] and road frontage for the purpose of the density calc. [yellow dashed line]**

Details of Previous Committee / Resolutions and any member site visit: None
Has a Committee Call In request been received from a Council Member (Appendix 1): No
 This is an automatic committee item
Has the application been subject to Pre-Application Advice: Yes (PPA)

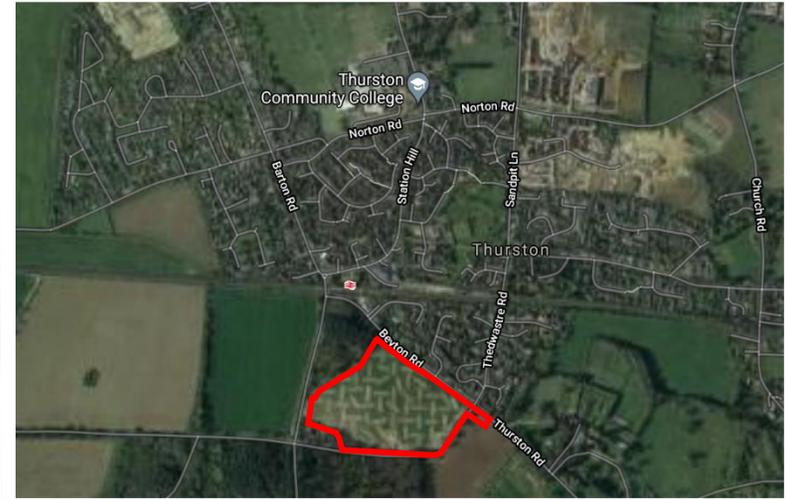
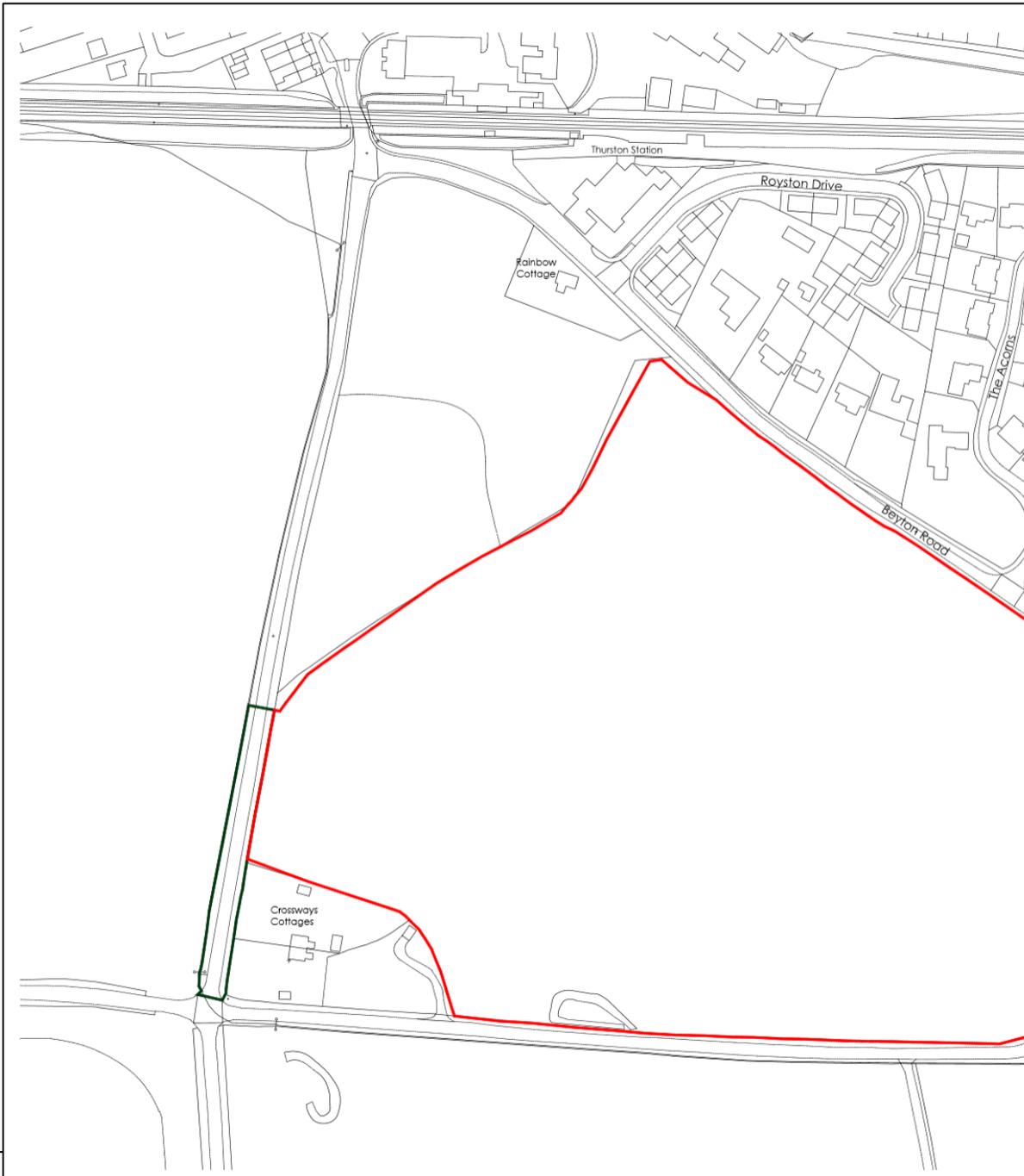


figure 3:
Location Plan

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason:

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]

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan: [October 2019]

Policy 1C 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 8 Parking Provision
Policy 9 Landscaping and Environmental Features
Policy 11 Provision for Wildlife in New Development
Policy 12 Minimising Light Pollution

Core Strategy 2008:

CS05 - Mid Suffolk's Environment
CS09 - Density and Mix

Core Strategy Focused Review 2

FC01 - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
FC01_1 - Mid Suffolk Approach To Delivering Sustainable Development

Local Plan 1998:

GP01 - Design and layout of development
H04- Proportion of Affordable Housing
H02 - Housing development in towns
H03 - Housing development in villages
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

Other relevant considerations include

Adopted Parking Standards [refreshed 2019]
National Design Guide

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 (Appendix 3)

Thurston Parish Council [2 February 2021] [update follows]

The Parish Council's response is made in the knowledge that the outline planning permission is subject to a Judicial Review challenge and that its response should not in any way be taken as an acceptance that the outline permission is lawful.

Spatial Strategy

1. As has been mentioned by the Parish Council on similar applications for new dwellings outside of the settlement boundary, this site is outside of the Settlement Boundary of Thurston as defined in the made Thurston Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) as adopted by Mid Suffolk in October 2019. The Thurston NDP POLICY 1: THURSTON SPATIAL STRATEGY clearly 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.

Officer comment:

Having had regard to all material planning considerations the Council granted the outline planning permission. The point made by the Parish Council was thoroughly considered at that time and it was ultimately determined that residential development here was appropriate for reasons set out at that time. The present application is a Reserved Matters submission, the principle of residential use having been established by the grant of outline planning permission [with a complex and comprehensive S106 Agreement that delivers a wide range of mitigation]. The exercise for Members is not to re-strike the planning permission from scratch, but to ensure that the development delivers the anticipated benefits without causing any unjustified or unacceptable harm in relation to the matters for which reserve matters approval is sought. In the case the proposed reserved matters sit squarely within the parameters set within the outline planning permission.

2. Thurston Spatial Strategy further 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.

Officer comment:

The outline application was never promoted by Bloor Homes as delivering specialist housing. The Council determined the outline planning application on the basis that it represented an orthodox housing proposal outside of the settlement boundary. The extant planning permission imposes no such control on the nature of the development to be provided, save for the provision of affordable housing which is already subject to a s106 legal agreement.

Housing

3. The housing provision for elderly / retired is inadequately catered for within the proposals submitted with only 6 x 2 bed bungalows (rent only) and 5 x 3 bed bungalows (private). The Parish Council contends that most elderly/retirees would probably be seeking to buy a minimum 2-bedroom bungalow. This provision fails to take into account the aging population in Thurston as identified within the Thurston NDP and has failed to demonstrate that the proposal has sought to offer future-proofed bungalows and houses suitable for those wishing to downsize.

Officer comment:

Emerging Joint Local Plan Policy LP06 includes the following reference when considering 'mix and type of composition':

"...Will be expected to reflect the mix and type (including bungalows) of housing needs identified in the most relevant district needs assessment evidence supported by the Council. Any bungalows provided will be required to remain in perpetuity through the removal of permitted development rights...."

No specific ratio of bungalow to other type of dwelling is prescribed in the emerging policy.

It is acknowledged that the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan makes a number of references to bungalows, including:

Paragraph 2.2, page 8

"...There is a shortage of certain types of housing in Thurston, particularly for young people (who currently often move out of the village to find suitable provision) and

older people (who need bungalows, houses designed for and suited to their needs, sheltered housing and care provision)...

Paragraph 4.2, page 30

“...The provision of bungalows, sheltered housing and care facilities outside the settlement boundary will be viewed favourably (with more weight being given to proposals that are adjacent to the boundary as opposed to being clearly separate from it). Such proposals would have to demonstrate that there are no other suitable sites within the settlement boundary that are available or deliverable.”

Paragraph 5.17, page 35

“..Housing suitable for older people could be provided in a range of forms, for example level-access bungalows, purpose built houses or apartments, sheltered accommodation, very sheltered accommodation, a ‘retirement village’ or assisted living schemes.”

Paragraph 5.22, page 36

In order of need, the housing needs of existing residents are:

- Assisted living/sheltered accommodation.***
- One- or two-bedroom bungalows.***
- Three- or four-bedroom houses.***
- Three- or four-bedroom bungalows.***
- One- or two-bedroom houses.***
- Larger family houses.***
- Flats.***

The inclusion of 11 bungalows within the development will go some way towards providing one of the types of accommodation for older people sought by the Parish Council.

Condition 6 of the outline permission is relevant:

“6. Prior to or concurrent with the first application for the approval of reserved matters, details of the mix of type and size of the market dwellings to be provided shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Reason - For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning of the development.”

The Council’s evidence base for the JLP Examination describes the future requirement for new accommodation as follows:

Type	Owner occupied	Priv. rented	Afford. rent	Afford. shared
	Table 4.4e [2016 base]	Table 4.5e [2016 base]	Table 4.7e [2016 base]	Table 4.6e [2016 base]
One bedroom	7.1%	22.6%	22.5%	25.2%
Two bedroom	34.3%	19.9%	28.1%	32.1%
Three bedroom	29.4%	32.5%	23.6%	25.5%
Four + bedroom	29.2%	25.10	25.90%	17.2%

figure 2: SHMA Update Jan 2019: size of new accommodation required in Mid Suffolk over the next 18 years [updated from 2016 base]

Household type	2018 %'age Table 4.1e	2036 %'age Table 4.1e
One person	26.3%	27.6% [up]
Couple no children	35.7%	37.4% [down]
Couple with child/children	25.9%	21.9% [down]
Lone parent	7.7%	8.3% [up]
other	4.4%	4.8% [up]

figure 3: SHMA Update Jan 2019: projected household population in Mid Suffolk over the next 18 years.

Mix and type will be explored in greater within the report that follows.

- Furthermore, the proposal fails to take account of the Babergh Mid Suffolk District Homes and Housing Strategy 2019-2024 which exemplifies this point by referencing that currently (2019) there are 1 in 5 people over the age of 65 in Suffolk which is expected to rise to 1 in 3 over 20 years' time.

Officer comment:

It is recognised that an aging demographic is now typical across much the country with average life expectancy having until recently consistently risen and improvements in medical treatments.

5. As outlined by the NDP Policy 2 - all new housing proposals will be expected to address the evidence-based needs of the Thurston Neighbourhood area. It is expected that this should also take into account the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2019) which stated that over 34.4% of owner-occupied homes by 2036 would require a smaller house. The Parish Council requires the mix of properties being offered to reflect an increase in the number of bungalows offered with a mix of 2 bed bungalows and 3 or 4 bed bungalows.

Officer comment:

Mix is explored in detail elsewhere in this report but as detailed a little later on there is a strong emphasis on 1 and 2 bedroom affordable units and 2 and 3 bedroom units within the open market element.

6. It is noted that this point was made by the Parish Council in its submission under DC/19/03486 "Acknowledging that the proposal may well include bungalows (with the precise number and nature of these being determined under a reserved 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 current details make provision for 11 bungalows. [6 affordable and 5 open market] Discussion on the requirement and ability to secure bungalows is presented elsewhere in this report

7. 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:

Planning Permission has been granted and the development is expected to comply with it, subject to any conditions imposed upon it (and the associated s106 legal agreement). The submitted reserved matters applications sits squarely within the parameters already established.

8. The Parish Council supports the comment made by the Acting Strategic Housing Team Manager and is concerned at the lack of detail submitted for the 73 units of affordable housing with regards to lack of type, bedrooms and overall size.

Officer comment:

The submitted details provide full details and reference is made to drawing reference SP10 Rev D. This will be shown within the presentation at Committee.

In summary

**22 x shared ownership units
51 x affordable rented** } **73**

Breakdown:

Affordable Rented

Name	House Type	Variant	Storey	No. Beds	Compliance	sqft	sqm	No.	Total sqft
Affordable									
Rent									
Symons GF	1 bed flat	GF	2	1	NDSS	546	50.7	5	2730
Symons FF	1 bed flat	FF	2	1	NDSS	658	61.2	5	3290
Bridge	1 bed bridge unit	FF	2	1	NDSS	681	63.3	2	1362
Tessimond	2 bed bungalow	bungalow	1	2	NDSS	760	70.6	6	4560
Sansom	2 Bed house		2	2	NDSS	850	79.0	28	23800
Sutherland	3 Bed house		2	3	NDSS	1001	93.0	3	3003
Landor	3 Bed house		2.5	3	NDSS	1225	113.8	2	2450
Total Rent								51	

Shared Ownership

Name	House Type	Variant	Storey	No. Beds	Compliance	sqft	sqm	No.	Total sqft
Savage	2 Bed house		2	2	NDSS	850	79.0	12	10200
Sassoon	3 Bed house		2	3	NDSS	1001	93.0	10	10010

As previously stated all the affordable units meet NDSS. Bloor is one of the few national house builders developing in the District that provides dwellings with 100% NDSS compliance. This is evidence of their commitment to work with the Council's ambitions.

They include six affordable bungalow all rented. Clearly not just older people may benefit from single level [ground] living.

Of the affordable rented dwellings the composition is as detailed below

23.5% 1bedroom, 2 person } **90.1%**

66.7% 2 bedroom 3 person
9.8% 3 bedroom 4 person

This suggests that the majority of affordable rented units [39] will be for the smaller sized units with 12 at 3 bedrooms. This would seem to embrace the future need although it is right to say that bungalows are not as numerous as the Parish Council would have wished.

In terms of the open market units the mix has been further adjusted and the breakdown is as follows:

33.6% 2 bedroom
38.0% 3 bedroom
28.4% 4 bedroom

This is achieved by introducing additional numbers of 2 bedroom units and broadening the range of house types from the originally proposed Dekker [22 units] to include The Maurier [16] and Godden [8] [whilst retaining 22 Dekkers]

Previously the proposed mix was as follows:

16.1% 2 bedroom,
41.6% 3 bedroom
42.3% 4 bedroom

Bloor has stated that:

“The SHMA (January 2019) was released before COVID occurred and the long term impact it has made to changes in work practices including the introduction of hybrid working. Hybrid working enables employees to work full or part time at their home and comes in tandem with many employers moving to smaller premises. This has led to a change in the housing market in terms of occupier requirements for their home. These are crucial market signals which influence our sales team and the demand for new homes and the types of new homes required. Since COVID there has been an increase in the demand for new homes to provide sufficient accommodation for a home office, to allow home working, but also which provides sufficient bedroom space for family use or a spare room for visitors. This has led to an increase in market demand for 3 bedroom properties which fulfils and addresses lifestyle changes to hybrid working.

With the above and the SHMA in mind, the number of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom market properties has been reviewed to provide a balanced approach between the SHMA and the new requirements for home working brought about by COVID: “

The review recently undertaken by Bloor now brings the proposed mix much closer to the SHMA requirements.

Name	House Type	Variant	Storey	No. Beds	Compliance	sqft	sqm	No.	Total sqft
Private									
Dekker	2 bed house	semi / ter	2	2	NDSS	766	71.2	22	16852
Maurier	2 bed house	semi	2	2	NDSS	919	85.4	16	14704
Godden	2 bed house	semi	2	2	NDSS	924	85.9	8	7392
								46	
Tanner	3 bed house	semi / ter	2	3	NDSS	920	85.5	7	6440
Lawrence	3 bed house	det / semi	2	3	NDSS	940	87.4	13	12220
Huxley	3 bed house	det	2	3	NDSS	963	89.5	4	3852
Booker	3 bed bungalow	det	1	3	NDSS	1110	103.2	5	5550
Maynard	3 bed house	semi	2.5	3	NDSS	1162	108.0	4	4648
Hurston	3 bed house		2	3	NDSS	1241	115.3	11	13651
Winterson	3 bed house		2	3	NDSS	1311	121.8	8	10488
								52	
Butler	4 bed house	corner	2	4	NDSS	1310	121.7	20	26200
Macaulay	4 bed house	det / semi	2.5	4	NDSS	1271	118.1	4	5084
Gwynn	4 bed house		2	4	NDSS	1410	131.0	7	9870
Plomer	4 bed house		2	4	NDSS	1553	144.3	8	12424
								39	
TOTAL PRIVATE								137	149375

9. As has been previously stated by the Parish Council it would require an undertaking that all new development, not just that for affordable or shared ownership should meet the Nationally Described Space Standard as published in March 2015.

Officer comment:

Bloor Homes is delivering 100% NDSS compliance on this site.

Layout

10. As has also been mentioned by the Parish Council under submissions submitted under Planning Application Ref: DC/19/03486, the density and layout of the proposal fails to accord with Policy 1Cc of the Thurston NDP which requires all new development coming forth to 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.

Officer comment:

The Parish Council has not described the actual failings they see in terms of achieving the quality expected within Policy 1Cc and therefore the criticism is perhaps unsubstantiated. This report will explore the question of design quality in detail. Officers believe a high a standard of design is achieved. Members will of course be aware that good design is not just a question of 'looks'. What officers have sought to negotiate is a development with a

sense of place. That's where a good level of interaction between people, buildings, spaces and activity designed into the scheme from the start.

The point made by the Parish Council in respect of landscape is noted but the developable area matches that agreed at outline stage. Encroachment into the total area of open space has been avoided within the reserved matters application. Again, planning permission remains extant and this application for approval of reserved matters sits squarely within the parameters already considered and approved.

Unusually for modern developments the area of open space accounts for more than 23% of the total site area. Bloor should be credited for approaching the development of this site with an emphasis on creating generous green areas, corridors, links and landscaping and not seeking to water down the quality established at outline stage. The presentation to Committee will elaborate on the extensive landscaping and habitat creation. Biodiversity will be enhanced.

11. The layout proposed, as per the drawings submitted by the applicant indicates Net Densities of 30-45 per hectare for most of the site which does not confirm with a site siting at the edge of a rural village abutting a rural landscape. There has been significant encroachment on the area previously illustrated / portrayed as green area which results in buildings being set to a rigid building line with terraced housing creating an area that is more akin to an urban town centre development.

Officer comment:

The gross density of development is 26.4 dwellings per hectare. Gross density is the red line area divided by the number of dwellings to reach an overall density figure.

The point made by the Parish Council however refers to net density. That is the site area minus open space and SuDS. Accurately measuring the site area minus open space produces a developable area of 6.12ha. A crude estimate of density is therefore 35.7ha.

However, for density to be correctly calculated half the road width of any fronted edge should also be included. The site has frontage development to Beyton Road and Mount Road. Including this reduces gross density to 30.6 dph.

Whether the net density is 30 dph or 35.7 dph it is in line with densities approved in north Thurston under the Thurston 5 permissions and others. It is entirely consistent with the character of the area.

Densities between 30-40 are at the lower end of previous expectations from Government. Too low a density represents inefficient use of greenfield land. Too high a density outside of large towns and cities potentially creates an unsympathetic character.

Members are advised that the character areas within this development have been devised to present urban/rural edge development to the countryside whereas within the heart of the scheme building forms are tighter. An extensive landscape buffer is retained around the western, southern and eastern perimeters to present a strong green edge to the

development. As previously stated the Beyton Road frontage has been treated to create a landscape dominated frontage to reflect the pattern on the opposite side of the road.

Focusing on a headline density figure can be misleading if the nuances of character are not considered. Arbitrarily focusing on a density of 30dph is not always helpful for this reason. That said the overall density of development on this site net can be said to be 30.6dph but the test is 'does it work as a place'?. Officers believe it does. Indeed, it represents something of an exemplar.

12. Overall the Parish Council is concerned that once again there is an urban feel to the design which neither complements nor enhances the village. The designs being offered are a stock house type which has failed to respect not only the character and appearance of Thurston but also that of Suffolk. The proposal shows a dominant road system thereby creating a layout more suited for an urban rather than a rural setting.

Officer comment:

The village of Thurston is an urban area within a rural setting. Old parts of Thurston survive as you might expect but the village has seen substantial expansion in the 20th and 21st centuries as is recognised in the Neighbourhood Plan. [paragraphs 3.21 – 3.29, pages 16-17.]

Looking at the character of Thurston is interesting in terms of its morphology. Thurston as we now know it is largely a construct of the 1970's and a later. The OS map as recently as 1958 [survey, published 1960] shows Thurston as being a largely undeveloped small hamlet.

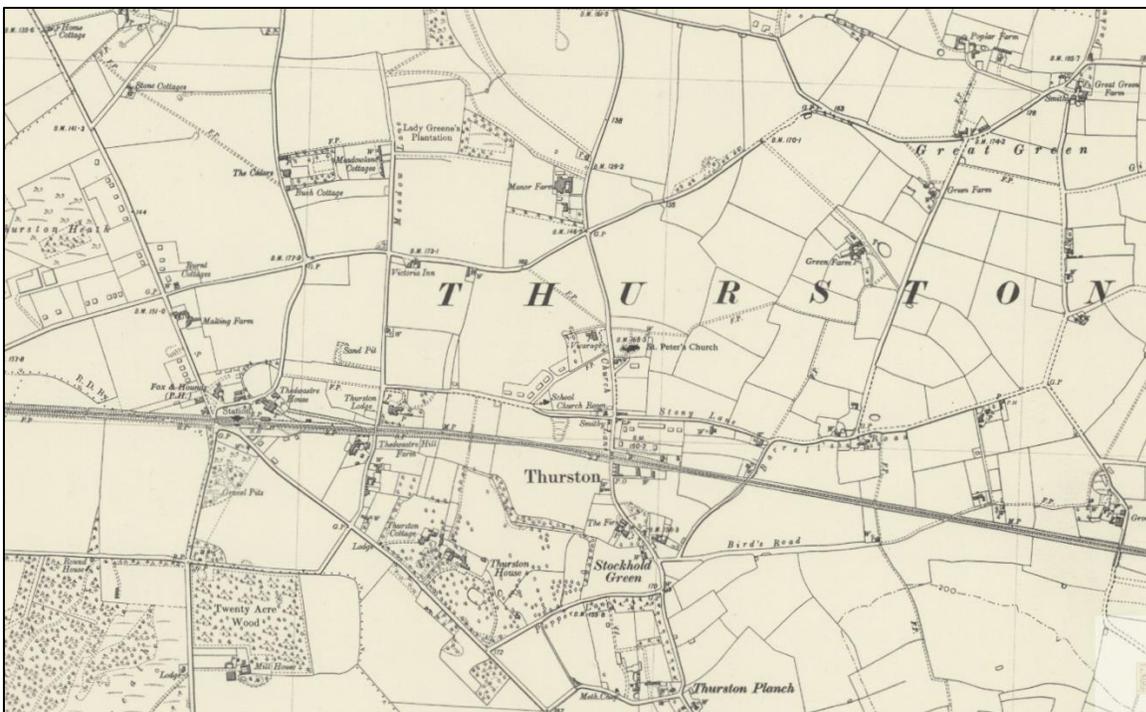


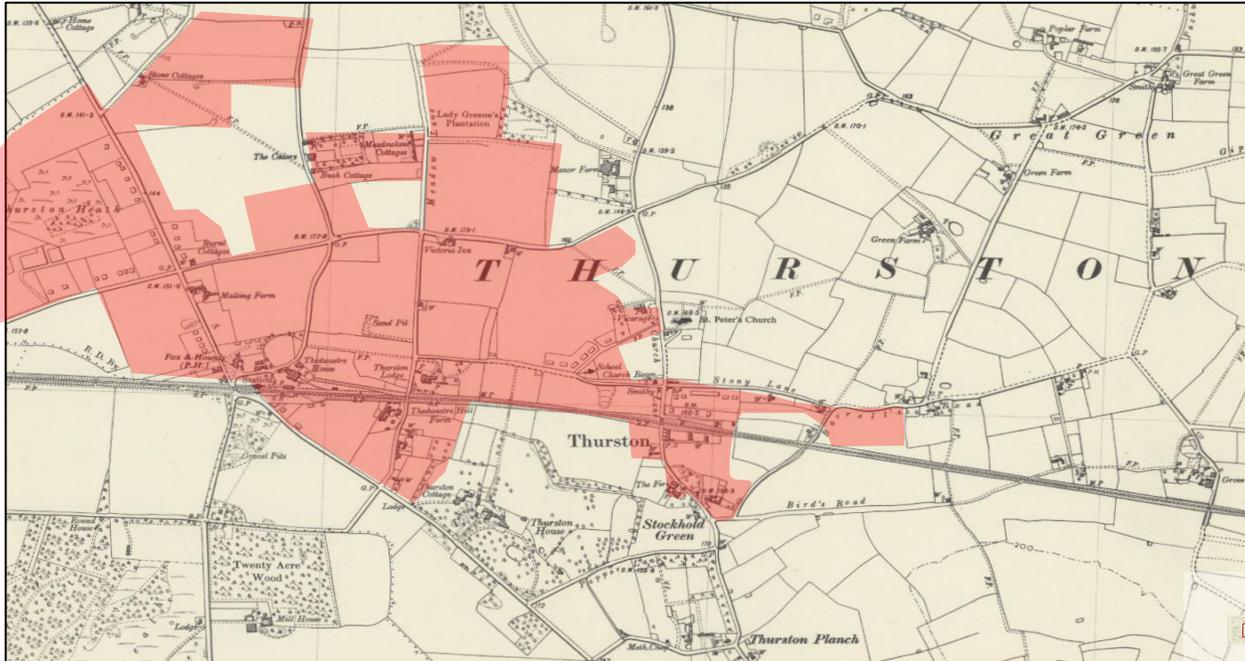
figure 4: Thurston 1950 OS Six Inch England and Wales surveyed 1950 published

The situation was little changed by 1968.



figure 5: Thurston 1968

In terms of character Thurston is dominated by modern development from the 1970's onwards. If anything, the predominant character of Thurston is relatively modern estate development. The map below superimposes urban Thurston 2021 [excluding sites yet to be commenced] over the 1958 map of the village. The result is remarkable in terms of the accelerated modern expansion.



The character of the development and its relevance to Thurston will be explored in detail later in this report.

13. Generally, within the site there has been no attempt to create spaces between areas or groups of houses by creating green open spaces. It is noted that there is only one small green “communal area” at the centre of the development with little attempt made to use the topography of the area to allow for a design that would create a more interesting street scene. The Parish Council would request that this approach be explored in more detail and that the attempt to “shoehorn” in as many dwellings as possible be resisted at all costs.

Officer comment:

On the contrary creating green links and connectivity corridors has been a central component in design negotiation. Indeed, Members required the illustrative layout developed at outline stage to underpin Reserved Matters such was the quality of that layout and its linkages. Members will also notice how the emphasis in the layout is on the orientation of dwellings on a east-west [south facing] access to maximise the benefits of sunlight i.e. solar gain.

14. Furthermore the layout fails to take into account guidance as given within Suffolk County Council’s (2000 revised) Suffolk Design for Residential Areas, the Government’s Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2 as well as Historic England’s Streets for All documents. The Thurston NDP provides exemplar information on the street scenes that are acceptable – Chapter 5 Housing and Design – at page 39 has an example of Spatial Organisation that would be supported.

Officer comment:

It is noted that Character Area 5 - Beyton Road/Thedwastre Road Area within the Character Assessment 2017 [revised 2018] is summarised thus.

	<p>THEDWASTRE ROAD, POKERIDGE GDNS, THE ROSE GDNS, LODGE CLOSE</p> 	<p>BEYTON ROAD, ROYSTON DRIVE</p> 	<p>THE ACORNS</p> 
<p>Summary of Characteristics</p>	<p>A semi-rural feel to this narrow road which has now become a primary route through the village. Original large individual properties on substantial plots some of which have been developed into small cul-de-sacs of large modern detached houses, a few of which fill their plot. Attractive mixed hedging and large oaks and scots pines in gardens to west.</p>	<p>Beyton Road has a 7.5-ton weight restriction (except loading) and is a country road which is a primary route to A14, busy at peak times. To the north there is a narrow pavement and a small number of detached properties on adequate plots and to the south is a field hedge and agricultural land. There is a semi-rural feel with attractive views of the trees of the Rougham Estate to the south.</p>	<p>A 1990 development of 15 large detached houses and a bungalow with a large front garden giving a green and tree-filled entrance to the cul-de-sac.</p>

In terms of features identified as detracting from the character of Area 5 within the Assessment

<p>Key detracting features</p>	<p>Narrow pavement and none over railway bridge where the traffic calming often causes waiting traffic to mount the verge or pavement. Busy cross roads at Pokeriage Corner with poor visibility for all access points.</p>	<p>Dangerously narrow pavement along Beyton Road with large vehicles and school buses daily mounting the pavement at junction with New Road/Barton Road. Flooding at Pokeriage Corner and under Railway Bridge. Busy cross roads at Pokeriage Corner with poor visibility.</p>
		

Members will also note that the Assessment describes there being no detracting elements within the Acorns component of Area 5. The Assessment includes an image of a large modern dwelling within the Acorns under the heading of no detracting.

<p>Key detracting features</p>	<p>None.</p>
	

House Design/Residential Design

16. Thurston’s NDP Policy 4 expects all new development to reflect the scale, mass height and form of neighbouring properties.

Officer comment:

The point is noted and will be discussed further within the report but Members will note the scale, mass, height and form of existing development on the north side of Beyton Road as illustrated below.



figure 13a: **Existing development Beyton Road opposite the RM site**



figure 13b: **Existing development Beyton Road 'The Acorns' opposite the RM site**



figure 13c: **Existing development Beyton Road opposite the RM site**

17. Concern is raised at those dwellings to be sited along Beyton Road and in particular in the vicinity of Pokeridge Corner which fails to reflect the scale, mass and form of properties that are to the north of Beyton Road. All houses to the north of Beyton Road are of a lower density and, in the main, large houses that are spread out in large plots with garage and planting used to create enclosures.

Officer comment:

Whilst the point made is noted, when the layout is examined a concerted and successful attempt has been made to produce a character of development south of Beyton Road that is sympathetic with that north of it in terms of the relationship of buildings to the road and intervening open space.

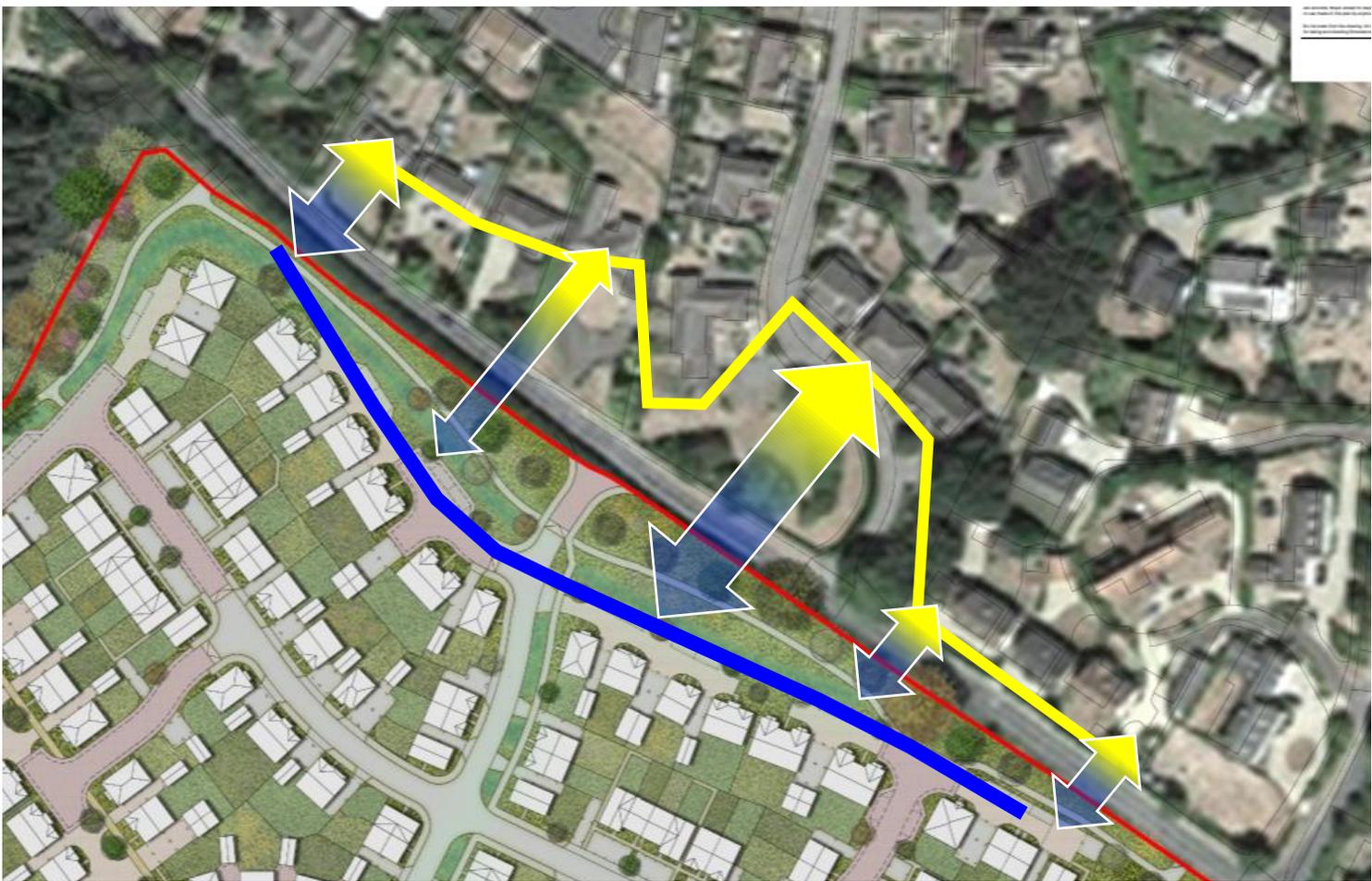


figure 14: **Mirroring the existing building line in Beyton Road**



figure 15: **Mirroring the existing building forms in Beyton Road**

Furthermore, there are a number of examples of plots north of Beyton Road that are occupied by very large houses that take up almost the entire plot width. They are not as generously spaced as the Parish Council suggests is the norm.



figure 16:
Examples of existing large houses on narrow plots - Beyton Road

The 210 dwelling development now under consideration [RM] will create a new edge to the village and therefore a new interface between rural and urban. The character of the proposed development reflects this movement. It is unreasonable to expect a development of 210 dwellings to have an arcadian character because that numbers of dwellings does not represent slow piecemeal organic expansion and very low density development does not represent the efficient use of land.

18. The proposal plans high density house types at this point of the development which results in the area appearing over-developed and fails to avoid the appearance of cramming. In turn this creates a rigid building line and should be rejected as unsuitable at this location.

Officer comment:

This is not a high density development as previously explained

19. The Parish Council would like to see the density spread around the development in order to ensure that there is a looser more organic layout with reduced densities to provide a stepped transition from a semi-rural position to rural.

Officer comment:

This has been achieved through the character areas and landscaping

20. As has been mentioned previously by the Parish Council on other significant planning applications within Thurston, it is disappointed to note that, contained within this proposal, there are a number of 2 and a half storey dwellings along the eastern and southern edge. As has been stated, the Parish Council is concerned that their inclusion at different roof heights from the surrounding dwellings will provide for a street scene that is neither in keeping with the surrounding area nor enhancing of the area as a whole.
21. The inclusion of 2.5 storeys with ridge heights of up to 11 metres does not complement the area in which the site is located and fails to mirror the character of the local vernacular.

Officer comments: [for 20 & 21]

The layout includes very limited numbers of 2½ storey dwellings. Other new developments in Thurston within the Thurston '5' include 2½ storey dwellings. On the site currently before Members Bloor in discussion with officers have limited their use to just 10 plots in locations that assist legibility by allowing people entering the development to have useful 'way-markers' or create focal points in a composition as good urban design principles promote. It is part of place-making.

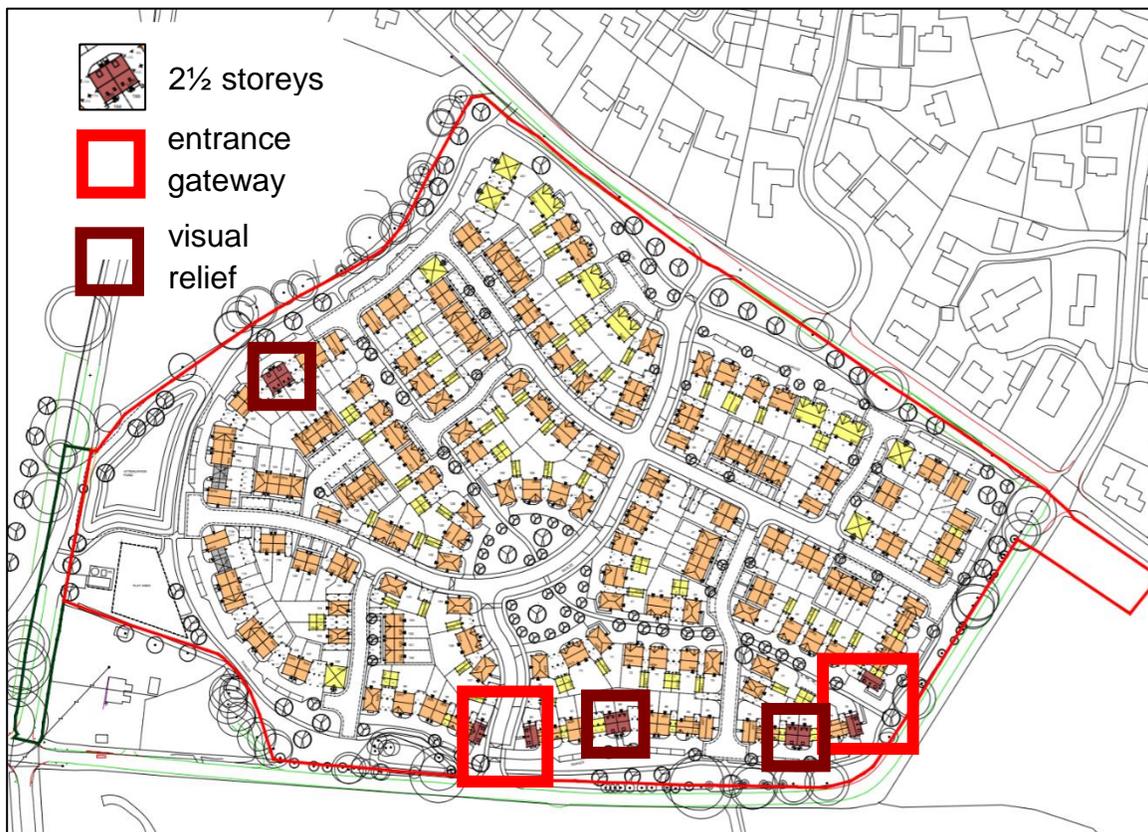


figure 17: **Limited use of 2½ storeys [4.8% of total units]**



figure 18: **Limited use of 2½ storeys [4.8% of total units]**



figure 19: **Example of existing 2½ development in front of the Listed Station [which is itself 3 storeys]**

The Parish Council's reference to a ridge height of 11m on the 2½ storey units is misleading. The ridge height [Maynard house type] is 10.2m The height of the chimney stack is 11m. The ridge height is in part dictated by the depth of the building. The roof pitch on the Maynard is 40° which is below the normal 45°. It is therefore likely that the ridge height of the Maynard would be 10.2m even at 2 storeys.

The Parish Council's concern in respect of 2½ storey development is consistent across new development in Thurston. On other sites officers have negotiated reduced dormer proportions which ensure that the dormers read merely as minor incidences in the roof.

Bloor is proposing 2½ storey house types with what officers see as over sized dormers in terms of their proportion and relationship to windows at first floor. Reductions in the

dormer proportions on these units will ensure that they do not draw the eye to the roof. Oversized dormers create a top-heavy appearance whereby the existence of attic rooms become over emphasised and visible from public vantage points. The diagram below shows the effect of reducing the dormer proportions. Officers recommend a condition to require the amendment to be provided prior to the construction of each relevant plot.



figure 21. Recommended reduction in dormers on the 'Macauley house type [by condition]



figure 22.
Recommended reduction in dormers on the 'Macauley house type [by condition]

22. The Parish Council is similarly concerned at the house sizes being proposed and requests that all dwellings comply with the sizes laid out under the Nationally Described Space Standard as issued by the government. The Parish Council would request that the comments and recommendations of the Strategic Housing Officer be further explored.

Officer comment:

All dwellings meet NDSS

23. The Parish Council also contends that any application coming forth should have had more of a rural feel to the development and should have had less of a regimented form of design with the use of cul-de-sacs to avoid the 'tunnel' effect. Given the location of the housing to be allocated on the site there should be more connection with the rural landscape surrounding the site and the use of soft landscaping to shape views and enclose space is also sought.

Officer comment:

The character areas have been developed to avoid the creation of an overly regimented layout. It is highly unlikely that 210 dwellings built at the same time as part of a large estate can be created to have an organic traditional appearance due to the requirements of the volume housing industry. Bloor however have gone beyond most in working with officers to create a varied layout with traditional components and themes and should be commended. There is a rich mix of house types, styles and a variety of forms that embrace terraces semi-detached and detached dwellings.

Materials

24. Within the Design and Access Statement it is noted that the distribution of a variety of materials across the development will result in a palette that reflects the character areas defined by the applicant to create variety and interest within the street scene. The Parish Council accepts that the aim is to provide a site that reflects the character of the local area but would suggest that black cladding and black pantiles are not in keeping with the area in which the site is located.

Officer comment:

Black pantiles will be excluded by condition as they are more redolent of Norfolk. Boarding can be conditioned to be cream or white although black boarding does have a strong rural association and can add some drama.

Materials include clay plain and pantiles and artificial slate, and brick and render from the traditional palette.

Climate Emergency

[officer comment appears as a consolidated response after TPC's point 33]

25. In 2019 Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council declared a climate emergency with aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030. In line with this, they released the document - Suffolk Guidance for Parking in which it states "Following on from DfT's recent Road to Zero10 publication and

Suffolk County Council's commitment to make the county of Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030, sufficient provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure must be made to help meet the governments ambition of all cars and vans being zero emission by 2050".

26. The Parish Council is concerned that in light of the Climate Emergency declared by not only MSDC but also Suffolk County Council as the Principal Authority, it is only proposed to have electric vehicular charging points for dwellings with garages only. The Parish Council would like to see measures that enable all to contribute to tackle climate change, reduce carbon emissions and waste and make the county cleaner and greener and this limitation does not support the measures that are being taken and should be part of all planning applications submitted for consideration.
27. The Thurston Neighbourhood plan in its commitment to a cleaner, greener alternative to diesel and petrol cars, has highlighted the fact that there are currently no electric charging points in the village and is committed to changing this as part of the infrastructure and future proofing of the village ready for this change in 2030.
28. It is therefore expected that any plans submitted shows that this commitment to the community is being recognised. There is a concern that the applicant does not intend to provide every home with the correct unit to facilitate electric vehicle charging in line with the County Council requirements and the Neighbourhood Plan obligations.
29. In accordance with Policy 4, the Parish Council cannot support new development coming forward that fails to incorporate electric charging points and as such requires that all dwellings should be equipped with EV charging infrastructure.
30. The Parish Council is also concerned at the location of parking for visitors which may lead to congestion on the spinal road as well as inappropriate parking on footpaths and verges thereby impacting on highway safety for all users. The Parish Council would like to see a revised layout showing adequate visitor parking suitably located and accessible for use.

Energy Strategy

31. It is noted that the Energy Strategy has the following in terms of priority: Be Lean; Be Clean and Be Green and that the reports and method statements for delivery in some cases go beyond the legal requirements.
32. However, there is a concern that whilst the focus has been on ensuring all new dwellings have sufficient insulation there is limited detail on ensuring how dwellings will be adequately ventilated for future residents to ensure that the periods of intense heat in the summer months are experienced in a comfortable manner.
33. The Parish Council would also like clarification as to why solar panel heating (in all forms) has not been included and why there is no provision for the collection and re-use of "grey Water". It seeks reassurance from the Local Planning Authority that this will be explored, and the developer required to implement such measures.

Officer comment:

Members will be pleased to note that whilst not strictly required to do so Bloor Homes has agreed to deliver a 19% improvement consistent with emerging JLP policy.

The scheme includes 100% NDSS

Currently Bloor Homes is the only major house builder developing within Mid Suffolk that is making these commitments. It represents a new benchmark against which other developments will be compared.

Air source heat pumps are proposed on some units representing something of a breakthrough [minimum 13 units].

PV panels will be included on 105 dwellings from new. This represents 50% of the total units.

Electric vehicle charging is being provided along with two electric car club vehicles [S106 but details are subject to a separate discharge of condition submission DC/19/03486-Condition 23 (Electric Car Charging)].

Bloor describes the full package of measures as:

- Provision of 2 car club cars (can be electric!) and spaces.
- Communal electric vehicle charging point
- Energy efficient design measures within the fabric of the building to increase thermal performance of the dwellings
- Photovoltaic Panels (PV)
- Air Source Heat Pumps
- Water consumption will average less than 110 litres per person per day
- 19% carbon reduction over building regulations in accordance with forthcoming changes to Part L and emerging Local Policy.
- Installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- All new homes will be built to Nationally Described Space Standards.
- Ecology – extracted the plan which details the below.
 - Bats
 - 4 x Bat Boxes to trees
 - 4 x bat boxes integrated in buildings
 - Birds
 - 3 x open-fronted boxes on trees;
 - 3 x starling nest boxes (45mm hole) on trees;
 - 3 x house martin nest cups on buildings; and
 - 20 x swift nest bricks on buildings.
 - Further habitat enhancement such as the sowing of areas of semi-formal and informal grassland within the proposed development with native,

wildflower grassland seed mix will provide abundant invertebrate prey and seed resources for birds.

- Reptiles
 - The proposed attenuation basin will have the potential to provide enhancement for common lizards and will be planted with species known to benefit wildlife. Buffer habitats will also be created around/close to the attenuation basin and will include high-quality transitional edge habitats suitable for reptiles. Inclusion of rough grassland seed mixes in the landscaping plan will improve habitat for common lizard.
- Hedgehogs
 - The provision of access points into residential gardens would be an important enhancement for this species providing additional foraging resources. To facilitate the movement of hedgehogs through the site, ad hoc 13cm x 13cm holes will be provided within fencing/walls to permit movement of hedgehogs.
 - Additional and enhanced habitat will be created throughout the site, for example the retention and enhancement of the hedgerows, and creation of attenuation basin will create further foraging habitat for European hedgehogs.
- Invertebrates
 - 3 x tree-mounted bug boxes
- Planting for ecology

Common Name	Scientific Name	Benefits
Shrubs		
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Broom	<i>Cystisus scoparius</i>	Nectar, larval foodplant
Buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	Nectar, berries, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina agg.</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Field rose	<i>Rosa arvensis</i>	Nectar, larval foodplant, fruit
Gorse	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Nectar, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Guelder rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Nuts, larval foodplant
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Nectar, fruits
Tutsan	<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant
Wayfaring tree	<i>Viburnum lantana</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Berries, nesting cover
Climbers		
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Ivy	<i>Herdera helix</i>	Nectar, fruit, larval foodplant, nesting cover
Traveller's joy	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	Nectar, seeds, larval foodplant

- New Planting- counted 138 trees, 1821 hedges inc native, 3947 shrubs and perennial plants.
- Off-site mitigation for grey partridges
- Green infrastructure including a circular walk for use by new and existing residents and delivery of off-site cycle way and bridleway secured under the outline consent.

This is to be commended as it supports the Council's commitment to tackling the climate emergency

Landscaping and Environment

[officer comment appears as a consolidated response after TPC's point 33]

34. The new dwellings, on such a tight scale are considered to be incompatible with the wider rural open countryside character and visual appearance and would therefore have a negative adverse effect on the rural character of the area. The proposed development, on the edge of the village, will therefore appear discordant when viewed against the established grain of development which would have a significantly detrimental effect on the character of the area. Policy 9 of the Thurston NDP requires all new development to be designed to ensure that its impact on the landscape and the high-quality rural environment of Thurston is minimised.
35. To accord with the Thurston NDP the Parish Council would have wished to have been given further details of wildlife planting to be incorporated into the site with proposals that retains the rural village feel of Thurston with appropriate landscaping used within the street scene to shape views and to define areas. There is little attempt to break up the urban layout by using planting to create clusters of housing and soften the landscape.
36. The Parish Council is pleased to note the following protective features as stated under the Arboricultural Method Statement: establishment of root protection areas; shrubs to be removed by hand to protect roots; protection of tree canopies and protected species to be unharmed (no tree subject to a TPO to be felled).
37. However it does not support the removal of any mature trees and in particular the removal of trees numbered T57, T8, T11 and T12 which is felt to be contrary to Policy 9 of the NDP. The Parish Council expects all levels of local government to ensure that all efforts are made to protect and retain mature trees and hedges to ensure that the impact of development is softened, and the rural aspect of the village is maintained in particular where it abuts the countryside.
38. It is encouraging to note that the 11 trees subject to a TPO to the south and east of Fishwick Corner are to be untouched and it is expected that all levels of local government ensure that statements made in documents such as these are fully endorsed.
39. The Parish Council wishes to record that it objects to the poisoning of stumps with the use of approved chemicals on this site along with the use of chemical weed killer as provided in the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan.
40. The Parish Council questions the requirement for there to be a limited period within the Management Plan for the maintenance of the landscaping scheme - 12 months. The Parish Council would like to see this extended to 5 years, in accordance with other developments of a similar size, to ensure that the area is adequately maintained, enhanced and protected

and that dead, dying, severely damaged or diseased trees and hedgerow are replaced by specimens of similar size and species within a specified timeframe.

41. The Parish Council concurs with the comments made by Place Services with regards to the mix and percentages for the proposed hedgerow mix on site and would like to see an enhanced landscape buffer on all areas that abut the countryside in accordance with Policy 9 of the NDP.
42. It further agrees with the plans for the large areas of amenity grass and would support the proposal for these areas to be flowering lawn mixes which improve biodiversity value and will be easier to maintain in the long term. The Parish Council would also support the introduction of carbon sequestering grasses as an alternative to grass and turf options for residential plots and verges.

Officer comment:

The landscaping is supported by the Council's landscape consultant. Whilst the loss of four trees is noted the landscaping scheme as now presented includes some 138 new trees and extensive hedgerow planting.

Connectivity

[officer comment appears as a consolidated response after TPC's point 49]

43. 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.
44. The Parish Council once again raises its concern that this application still fails to address the issue of highway safety for those accessing the services and facilities of the village from this site on the south of the village. It draws reference to SCC Highways letter response of 7 th January 2021 and would like clarity as to how and when the walking and cycling routes connected to the crossing on Beyton Road will be assessed to address issues previously raised.
45. For those accessing educational facilities, the main access route will be 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 adequately 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.

46. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Draft Joint Local Plan makes reference in its Infrastructure Delivery Plan (July 2019) to a footway with a priority system under the railway bridge on New Road/Barton Road, the Parish Council is concerned that there is a lack of clarity as to how the expectations of Suffolk County Council Highway's Department for a 2-metre shared path to promote cycling, will be achieved under this railway bridge.
47. The Parish Council would also like clarity as to how such a shared path will be achieved on the footpath that forms part of the Priority Crossing on Thedwastre Road.
48. As was also stated under its submission for Application DC/19/03486 and 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 is disappointed at the response from Network Rail given that they are an intrinsic part of the solution to ensure that this application is sustainable.
49. Noting that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan – (July 2019) makes reference to the potential for a new passenger underpass being investigated by Network Rail and Suffolk County Council as a potential solution to passenger safety issues and increased individual and collective risk to passengers, the Parish Council is concerned at the delay that has arisen with this investigation, especially given that Members of the Mid Suffolk Planning Referrals Committee that determined the application for outline planning permission debated this matter at length at the meeting of 29th January 2020.

Allotments

50. The lack of allotments within the village along with their provisioning is mentioned within the made Thurston NDP and the Parish Council cannot support an application that fails to take note of the demand for such a facility. It should be noted that the NDP states that allotments should be provided in groups that have appropriate care, cycle and foot access and should ideally be on the periphery of housing development. Policy 5 states that the provision of allotments or community spaces will be strongly supported.

Officer comment:

Planning permission has been granted and is extant. This application deals with the defined reserved matters and is in conformity with the planning permission.

Play Areas / Play Strategy

51. With regards to play provision the Parish Council is disappointed that there is limited provision for formal play equipment to be provided at the site. The inclusion of a small play area on the western edge of the development adjacent to the attenuation pond and pumping station is considered to be inappropriate for a development of this size.

Officer comment:

The play area is what was secured as appropriate at the time of the outline permission and is supported by Public Realm. Included in the development is a circular fitness trail.

52. The Parish Council also questions the physical location of the play area at this point in the development.

Officer comment:

Whilst the Parish Council does not say why it questions the location it is assumed that there is some concern at its location close to the SuDs basin from a safety point of view and possibly from a supervision/surveillance point of view. SCC generally requires the sides of such basins to have a gradient of 1:3 which is better than ROSPA's guidance of 1:4.

53. The proposals for a children's play area and associated outdoor gym equipment is lacking in quality and quantity given that this site is not located within reasonable walking distance of the facilities and services of the village.

Officer comment:

The facilities here will largely serve the residents of this development and those existing nearby residents in Beyton Road and Thedwastre. Members will be pleased to note that gym trail opportunities have also been secured in north Thurston thereby spreading such facilities around the village.

54. As has been stated on previous applications, the Parish Council is committed to ensure that any new play provision within the village is strategically placed to ensure it complements existing provision and meets any known deficits. The Parish Council would like to see a facility offered which will be of a demonstrable recreational or amenity value and should be multi-functional and should be in conformity with Policy 5C of the NDP. In general, it has been acknowledged that there is a need for 'adventure style provision' particularly attractive to juniors and older children but this should not be at the exclusion of the toddlers up to 10-12 year old children).

Officer comment:

Does not exclude the delivery of more adventurous play and the District Council also aims to move away from traditional playground experiences. This should chime with the Parish Council's aspirations.

Lighting

55. Whilst there are mitigations steps in place to limit light spillage, the Parish Council would like clarification on the statement "will ensure that excess light does not fall on sensitive ecological areas". Clarification in terms as to what is excess light and how are the terms excess and sensitive ecological areas defined for the purposes of this development?

Officer comment

Lighting is a matter for SCC Highways under the S38 process and for MSDC Planning under discharge of condition attached to the outline permission.

Construction Management Plan

56. Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges that the Construction Management Plan/Construction Environment Management Plan is a comprehensive and well written document, it will seek reassurances that it is adhered to and enforcement by the Local Planning Authority should the development go ahead in its current form.

Officer comment

The Construction Management Plan is a matter for discharge of condition attached to the outline permission. The comments in respect of enforcement are noted. Hopefully with regular routine dialogue between TPC and MSDC any issues reported will be followed up and reported upon.

57. It does however have concerns at comments raised within the Ecological Report relating to vehicle idling, acknowledging that this is a significant contributor to air quality. It would appear that there is an allowance for vehicles to idle for up to 30 minutes under the Noise and Vibration "Plant and equipment will be switched off when not in use including during breaks and down time of more than 30 minutes" which is then contradicted by the Air Quality report which states "There shall be no idling vehicles, ensure all vehicles switch off engines when stationary".

Officer comment:

This observation of a conflict is noted and will be addressed at the appropriate discharge of condition stage

58. Clarification is required on the above given that the proposed duration of works is 5 years from commencement date including enabling works.

Officer comment:

noted

Flooding

59. The Parish Council notes the holding objection from Suffolk County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), under application Ref: DC/20/2262/RM as submitted to West Suffolk Council and also under this application, until the flooding risk has been resolved and endorses these comments and looks to the Local Planning Authority to ensure that such matters are fully addressed.

Officer comment:

SCC Floods and Water now raise no objection

Highways

60. The Parish Council makes no apology for referring to its concerns relating to Highway issues as notified under its submission for Outline Planning Approval DC/19/03486 as there is little change to the original proposals other than minor updated to the existing plans for Fishwick Corner, the railway bridge on New Road/Barton Road arrangements and site entrance and exit points.

Officer comment:

Members will be familiar with the extensive package of highway improvements secured at the outline stage. Clearly whilst the Parish Council is entitled to point out its previous strong objection to the development it has perhaps underplayed the value of the secured works. The construction of a new junction at Fishwick Corner, creation of a cycle connection from there towards Bury St Edmunds, improvements to Pokeriage Corner junction including enhanced visibility and tackling reported flooding issues, crossing on Beyton Road , a new roundabout at the Beyton Road /New Road junction and the widening of the footpath under Thurston Railway Bridge, amongst others, all address issues identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.

It bears repeating, again, that the development benefits from planning permission and the application before Members for determination deals with the reserved matters.

61. 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.

Officer comment:

The continued objection of the Parish Council to the principle of development is noted. This however is a Reserved Matters submission outline planning permission having been granted.

62. The Parish Council remains concerned that this detailed submission continues to offer a level of growth which is still unsustainable, unsafe and will have a severe impact on the Highway Network in and around Thurston.

Officer comment:

The continued objection of the Parish Council to the principle of development is noted. This however is a Reserved Matters submission outline planning permission having been granted.

63. The mitigation measures previously identified by Suffolk County Council in October 2017 have yet to be implemented let alone tested to ensure that their implementation provides solutions to the severe negative impact that additional growth will have on Thurston.

Officer comment:

Phasing of the works is a S106 matter/ it is beyond the ambit of this reserved matters submission.

64. *The position stated above was also referenced by Suffolk County Council in December 2019 in which it was 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 identified 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:

SCC Highways did not object to the outline planning application subject to securing the highway works which it actively negotiated along with MSDC. SCC Highways does not object to the reserved matters details.

65. 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 Pockeridge Corner.
- Highway junction improvements at Beyton 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 Beyton 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 given the untested mitigation measures that have been agreed for the “Significant Five Developments” in Thurston.

Officer comment:

SCC Highways did not object to the outline planning application subject to securing the highway works which it actively negotiated along with MSDC. SCC Highways has now raised no objection to the Reserved Matters details subject to conditions.

The Parish Council would like to state it considers that this application offers limited benefits for Thurston and the wider area and that the proposals submitted are not economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. It further holds that the application as submitted will result in overdevelopment of an area which will fail to enhance, protect, or conserve the environmental conditions of the area nor will it enhance or protect the local character of the area.

The Parish Council draws reference to the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which will set an expectation that good quality design will be approved while poor quality will be rejected and includes a commitment to ensure that all streets are lined with trees. Furthermore, the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP has stated that developments should ensure that they reflect and enhance their surroundings and preserve local character and identity and the Parish Council respectfully requests that the Local Planning Authority ensures that this application is rejected until it is amended to ensure that current and new residents are able to benefit from well-designed neighbourhoods.

Overall 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.

Thurston Parish Council [11 August 2021]

“The Parish Council, having considered the further information as detailed on the Mid Suffolk Planning Portal, at a Parish Council Meeting on 4th August 2021 would like to confirm that its previous objections as outlined in its letter of 2nd February 2021 are still valid and would ask that the following matters are also taken into account:

Judicial Review

1. The Parish Council's response is made in the knowledge that the outline planning permission is subject to a Judicial Review challenge which is due to be heard in October 2021 and that its response should not in any way be taken as an acceptance that the outline permission is lawful.

Tenure

2. The Parish Council still holds that the housing provision for elderly / retired is inadequately catered for within the proposals submitted and draws reference to its previous submissions on this matter.

Officer comment

See previous comments. The Parish Council previously suggested 12 bungalows be provided whereas the proposal provides 11. No specific delivery ratio is included in the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan nor the Draft JLP.

Affordable Housing / Shared Ownership Units

3. 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 has concerns at the lack of detail coming forth for the 73 units in terms of size and bedroom numbers.

4. The Parish Council draws reference to the National Housing Guide (January 2021) which states that where different tenures are provided, they should be well-integrated and designed to the same high quality to create tenure neutral homes and spaces, where no tenure is disadvantaged.

5. The Parish Council is concerned that the current layout is not able to be build tenure blind and has failed to assimilate the differing types of tenure throughout the site.

Office comment:

Officers have specifically negotiated house types that can be said to have a sympathetic character not just to Thurston but to the open market units. Indeed some of the affordable units will be required to be constructed in traditional materials.



figure 23. **Affordable dwellings**



figure 24. **Open market dwellings**

The affordable units as are dispersed across parts of the site

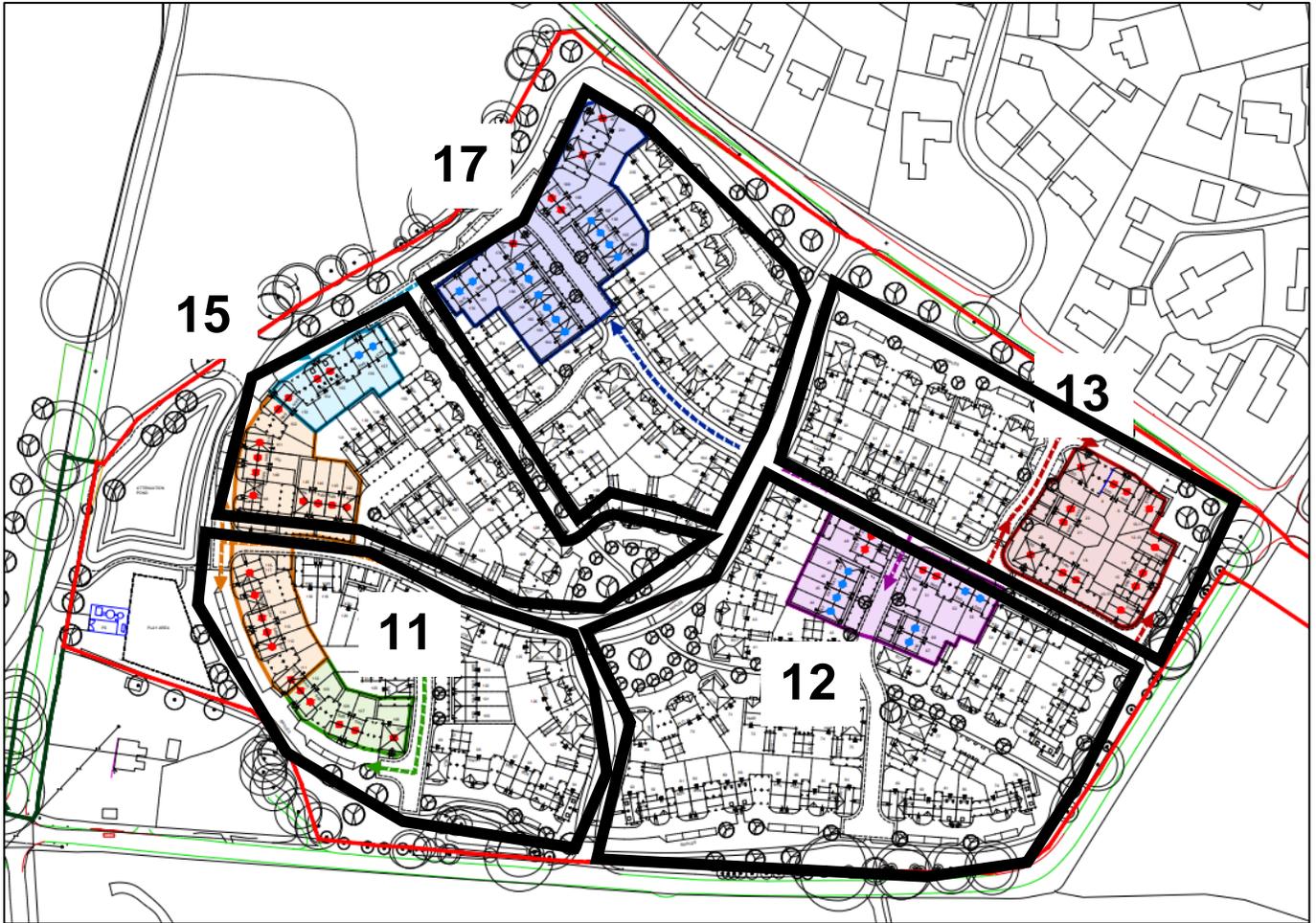


figure 25. **Distribution of affordable housing [no objection from Strategic Housing Team]**

Layout

6. With reference to the National Housing Guide there is a concern that the layout still fails to create a well-located, high-quality, well-designed space that is safe for all to live in.

7. Reference is made to the Design Out Crime Officer submission which draws attention to the limited allocation of garages with the location of many opening the rear of properties up to being vulnerable to unlawful incursion. There is a requirement for better planning and a need to ensure that the right conditions have been fully explored to ensure all feel safe and secure with limited need for additional security measures.

8. The Parish Council concurs with the issue in relation to flying freeholds and would like the areas that have drive-through rear parking to be revisited and that overall parking spaces are located to allow active surveillance for owners' vehicles

Officer comment:

The bridging units referred to by the Parish Council as flying freeholds are a device that enhances surveillance of parking areas in a way that is not achieved by other types of units. This is because occupiers will look towards the spaces from first floor living rooms and bedrooms.



figure 26. **Surveillance of parking spaces from bridging unit**



figure 27 **Surveillance of parking spaces from bridging unit**

The aim in the locations chosen is to reduce the visual impact of parked cars by allowing private drives rather than ordinary roads on frontages to the key areas of peripheral open space thereby reducing the intrusion of cars into the landscape.



figure 28
New Crossways Green

Members will note that the bridging units are in reality no different to car ports with accommodation over in orthodox layouts. The two examples of bridging units included here over sail an access to 4 parking spaces.



9. The Parish Council reiterates the need within the site to create spaces between areas or groups of houses by creating green open spaces. There is only one small green “communal area” at the centre of the development with little attempt made to use the topography of the area to allow for a design that would create a more interesting street scene.

Officer comment:

The central green space is part of a green corridor that connects an existing woodland on the north-west corner of the site to the countryside and woods on its south-east side.



figure 29
Green corridor

The areas of open space are as prescribed at outline stage within the S106. Included is a gym trail and the woodland setting will facilitate active play.

10. In order to achieve a well-designed place to live in there should be sufficient space given over for green infrastructure, which is fit for purpose, manageable and maintained for continual use.

11. The lack of a variety of natural and designed landscapes within the development is disappointing to see and the applicant should be requested to address the lack of public open space that will support a wide variety of activities.

12. Furthermore, given the changes to the NPPF, the Parish Council would expect to see the applicant's willingness to the environmental commitment to ensure that all of the streets are lined with trees and undertake appropriate measures that will deliver an attractive area for people to live in.

13. The Parish Council also draws reference to the issues as raised by the Senior Development Management Engineer for Suffolk County Council and notes the recommendation for a holding refusal until they have been addressed.

Officer comments:

The issues raised are capable of resolution by condition. For example the pyramid parking arrangement:

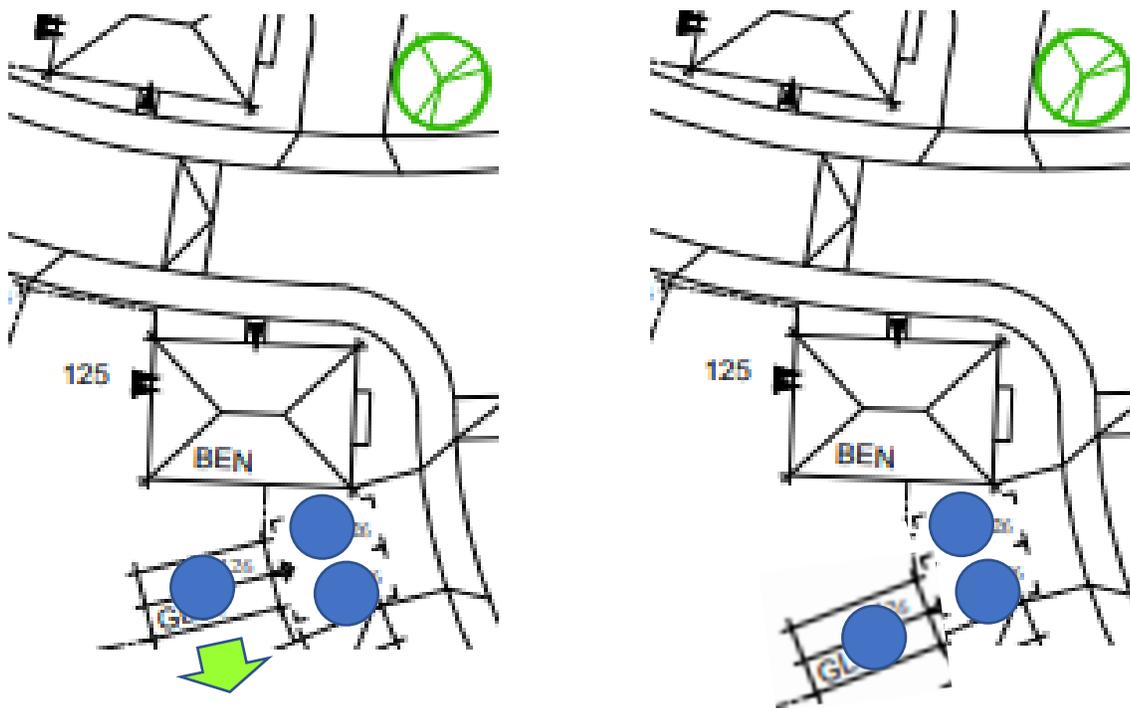


figure 30
resolving pyramid parking

Biodiversity

14. The applicant has failed to demonstrate how it will deliver measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats for the area impacted by this development. Whilst it is understood that such gains can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of both measures, there is little detail as to how the proposal will achieve a biodiversity net gain as required by the 25-year Environment Plan.

15. The Parish Council would like to see site specific enhancements that will achieve biodiversity net gains not only at street level but also at household level incorporated into the design of the dwellings being proposed.

16. The Parish Council draws reference to the National Housing Guide which further exemplifies that well designed parking should be attractive, well landscaped and sensitively integrated into the built form so that it does not dominate the development or the street scene. The current street scene fails to incorporate green infrastructure, including trees, to soften the visual impact of cars, help improve air quality and contribute to biodiversity
Connectivity / Sustainable Travel Mode

17. As has been previously stated, 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. It is not felt that the issues raised by the parish council previously have been sufficiently addressed to ensure that the safety of all highway users is at the forefront of this proposal.

18. In accordance with changes to the NPPF, the current proposal fails to accord with the emphasis on highway safety as well as capacity and congestion. The Parish Council supports conditions to ensure that the highest priority is given to the sustainable modes of transport, such as pedestrians and cyclists, followed by access to high quality public transport. and accessible means of transport.

19. Overall it is not considered that there are efficient and safe modes to encourage a move to low impact on the environment, by encouraging walking, cycling and car sharing.

20. More emphasis should be placed on ensuring that walking, cycling and public transport are utilised and that access to the facilities in the village is safe for all users of the highway.
Climate Change / Sustainability

21. With reference to the Parking and Cycle Strategy Plan, the parish council is also concerned that there is only one communal electric vehicle charging point for the 210 dwellings plus any visitors and concurs with the comments by the BMSDC Environmental Management Officer that the applicant has failed to take into account the draft Suffolk County Council Climate Action Plan.

22. The applicant should also be requested to ensure that measures are in place to ensure that well designed car and cycle parking facilities are increased and conveniently sited so that they will be well used.

23. The current location for the electric charging facility is unlikely to encourage such use and fails to meet the needs of different users including occupants, visitors and people with disabilities. Further consideration should be given as to how additional facilities can be accommodated in a variety of ways, in terms of location, allocation and design ensuring their arrangement and positioning relative to buildings limit its impacts, whilst ensuring it is secure and overlooked.

Officer comment

ev charging is a matter already covered by condition that requires discharge.

The council's ecology consultant supports the application

Sheds on all plots can be conditioned.

General comments around connectivity have been covered elsewhere.

From the further documents submitted, the Parish Council would like to state that it still considers that this application still offers limited benefits for Thurston and the wider area and that the proposals submitted are not economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. It further holds that the application as submitted will result in overdevelopment of an area which will fail to enhance, protect, or conserve the environmental conditions of the area nor will it enhance or protect the local character of the area.

National Consultee (Appendix 4)

Network Rail

No objection.

Natural England

No comments. [update 4 August 2021 – no comment]

Historic England

No objection.

Highways England

No comment. [update 12 August 2021 - No Objection maintained]

County Council Responses (Appendix 5)

Suffolk County Council – Highways [17 August 2021]

Notice is hereby given that the County Council as Highway Authority make the following comments:

- the developer has indicated they will provide some cycle provision; we recommend this is along the northern perimeter between Pokeridge Corner connection to the new cycleway on Fishwick Corner.
- the visibility for 20mph designed roads is 2.4 x 25m; as long as private drives has this minimum dimension, this will be acceptable.
- the pyramid parking still needs to be addressed; this design and allowed on site at Acton but they were on private drives; this site has pyramid parking on the adoptable roads. (This design was missed on the site at Stowupland).
- the developer has informed us the landscaping will be restricted to ensure visibility is not obstructed by new plants and will not overhang the highway
- we recommend the footway widths are conditioned to 2.0m minimum.
- the tabletop ramp will be relocated to the north to avoid turning movement on the ramp.
- the developer has indicated all double width parking spaces between walls/fences will be 6m wide minimum which is acceptable.

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:

Estate Roads Design Condition: Before the development is commenced, 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.

Parking Condition: Before the development is commenced details of the areas to be provided for the manoeuvring and parking of vehicles 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, to promote the use of sustainable travelling alternatives within the area and use of electric vehicles.

Travel Plan Officer

Having reviewed the documents submitted, I have no comment to make at this stage, as the implementation of the Travel Plan secured through a planning condition as part of the outline planning application that is not yet due.

Flood and Water [30 July 2021]

The following submitted documents have been reviewed and we recommend approval of this application. • Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy Ref 1707-020 Rev E

- Planning layout Ref 19-2012-PL-02 Rev A
- Planning layout- 19-2012-PL-01

- Landscape and Ecology Management Plan dated Sept 2020
- Engineering Layout sheets 1 to 8 Ref PA590-EN 002C, 003B, 004C, 005B, 006C, 007C, 008C, & 009B

Archaeology

This is a large site 7.8ha that has not been subject to archaeological investigation, in an area of archaeological potential recorded on the County Historic Environment Record, in close proximity to a Roman Road (RGH 017) and in a general landscape of later prehistoric activity. As a result, there is high potential for the discovery of below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, and groundworks associated with the development have the potential to damage or destroy any archaeological remains which exist. There are no grounds to consider refusal of permission in order to achieve preservation in situ of any important heritage assets. However, in accordance with the National Planning 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.



Figure 31:
Aerial 2021 showing trial trenching marks

Development Contributions

There is a planning obligation dated 22 December 2020 attached to the outline permission under reference DC/19/03486. I have no comments to make but various colleagues will deal with relevant service matters such as highways, floods planning, fire service, and archaeology.

Internal Consultee Responses (Appendix 6)

Place Services – Landscape [12 August 2021]

Having reviewed the updated Site Landscaping, Hard surfaces and Boundary Treatment plans and further to our letter dated 18/10/2021 we welcome the amendments made. Two matters still require further consideration.

- 1) We believe the use of hoggin as a surface material for the path which runs through the centre of the site and runs between private plots and the highway is inappropriate. The surface layer is easily transferred

under foot or wheel, especially when wet. We would therefore advise a resin bound aggregate or similar is used as an alternative.

2) Shrub planting has now been provided to the edge of the infiltration basin, which has a side slope ratio of 1:4, therefore we would advise that the knee rail is removed.

Officer comment:

These remaining residual matters can be resolved by condition

Strategic Housing [13 August 2021]

Based on 210 dwellings, this development triggers an affordable housing contribution under current local policy of 35% of total dwellings = 73 affordable dwellings.

The associated s106 on the outline application details the affordable housing mix and the plan that accompanies this application shows 73 units although provides no detail of type, bedroom numbers etc

The mix was agreed with the applicant and should therefore concord with the affordable housing scheme in the s106.

The layout is acceptable.

With reference to the open market housing the mix provided shows a large number of 3 and 4 bedroom homes – 115 units in total compared with a much smaller number of 2 bedroom homes – 22 units

There is growing evidence that housebuilders need to address the demand from older people who are looking to downsize or right size and want to remain in their local communities.

There is a strong need for homes more suited to the over 55 age bracket within the district and supply of single storey dwellings or 1.5 storeys has been very limited over the last 10 years in the locality.

The Thurston Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2 states that - 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).

Table 4.4e Size of new owner-occupied accommodation required in Mid Suffolk over the next 18 years

Size of home required	Current size profile	Size profile 2036	Change required	% of change
One bedroom	707	1,221	515	7.2%
Two bedrooms	5,908	8,380	2,472	34.4%
Three bedrooms	13,680	15,784	2,104	29.3%
Four or + bedrooms	12,208	14,303	2,096	29.2%
Total	32,502	39,688	7,186	100.0%

For the above reasons, we recommend a decrease in 3 and 4 bedroom homes and an increase in 2 bedroom homes and the inclusion of some bungalows would be welcomed. This would provide a broad range of homes to meet a wide ranging housing need.

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 100% of relets in perpetuity.
- The affordable units to be constructed 'tenure blind'
- 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.

Heritage

At Outline Stage, the Heritage Team identified a low to medium level of less than substantial harm to Crossways Cottages, which was identified as a non-designated heritage asset, due to erosion of its rural setting. Given that Outline Approval has been given, I raise no further concerns at this stage. The development leaves a reasonable undeveloped buffer around Crossways Cottages, particularly adjacent to the road to the west, from where Crossways Cottages is most publicly visible. The proposed pumping station may be the most notable intrusion into this particular part of Crossway Cottages' setting, but as this appears to be a fairly low level structure, I consider that its impact would be minimal. Otherwise, the heights, designs and materials of those dwellings closest to Crossways Cottages would also be reasonable and roughly what would have been expected. Consequently, I consider that the level of harm would be at the lower end of that previously identified. Furthermore, I do not consider that further amendments or information at this stage, or conditions, could discernibly lower the harm further, and thus are not considered to be warranted. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application, as per para.197 of the NPPF, as well as the policies in the Local Plan.

[update 12 August 2021 - no further comment to make]

Ecology

We have reassessed 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), provided by the applicant at outline stage, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, Protected & Priority species/habitats.

In addition, we have reviewed the Site Landscaping Plans and a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan undertaken by Bloors Homes Ltd (September 2020).

It is highlighted that we are generally satisfied with the submitted plant specifications and soft landscaping measures. However, we do recommend that a minor alteration to the proposed native hedgerow mix should be incorporated for the proposed site. As a result, Place Services Ecology

have corresponded within our Landscape Team and agree that the Native Species Hedgerow should be amended to the following mix and percentages:

- 60% Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- 20% Field maple (*Acer campestre*)
- 10% Hazel (*Corylus Avellana*)
- 5% Hornbeam (*Prunus avium*)
- 5% Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)

This hedgerow mix will be suitable for the local variation of species and will provide nesting opportunities for nesting and foraging bird species. However, we also note that an alternative native hedgerow mix has been proposed for the mediation landscaping and highway layout. Therefore, it is highlighted that we approve of this mixture, but recommend the remove of *Malus sylvestris* from the mixture if the hedge is to be low-lying.

In terms of the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, it is indicated that we approve of the proposed management and aftercare measures for the soft landscape measures. However, we note that the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan contains no details on the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures, as outlined within the Phase 2 Ecology Survey (Southern Ecological Solutions Ltd, Southern Ecological Solutions Ltd 2019). Therefore, to ensure compliance with conditions 24 and 32 of the outline consent, it is recommended that following further details on reasonable biodiversity enhancements should be finalised for this application prior to determination:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
- b) detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;
- c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
- d) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
- e) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

This should demonstrate the heights and orientations of the proposed bird or bat boxes and should also include the indicative locations of where the hedgehog highways (13x13cm holes at the base of fencing) will be installed and delivered throughout the site.

Public Realm

Public Realm support the proposals for the children's play area and the associated outdoor gym equipment and consider these suitable for the development. The inclusion of natural wildflower meadows and swales is welcomed and the Public Realm team support these proposals.

[update 12 August 2021]

“Public Realm Officers are supportive of the proposed landscaping treatment and consider the LEMP appropriate to enable the landscaping to establish. The inclusion of *Typha* in the pond planting mix will mean that there will be a need to control this very invasive species to ensure that it does not develop into a monoculture of lower ecological value”

Officer comment:

The comment made by Public Realm in respect of *Typha* [Bullrush] is noted. Members could if they choose condition that an alternative less invasive species is used.

Land Contamination

No objection.

Environmental Health – Noise/Odour/Light/Smoke

The working hours proposed within in the document are outside of those that are acceptable to MSDC. Please ask the applicant to amend these to
Mon-Fri 0800-1800,
Sat 0900-1300.
No work on Sundays or bank/public holidays.

Environmental Health – Sustainability

I have viewed the applicant's documents, in particular the energy strategy, The indication that a fabric first response is important as to be welcomed. There is no detail on the provision of electric vehicle charging. I have no objection and if the planning department decided to set conditions on the application.

Waste Services

No objection subject to conditions.

Environmental Health [noise odour smoke] 4 August 2021]

No comment

Other

West Suffolk Council

No comment.

Anglian Water

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.

Foul Water

The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of N/A Water Recycling Centre which currently does not have capacity to treat the flows the development site. Anglian Water are obligated to accept the foul flows from the development with the benefit of planning consent and

would therefore take the necessary steps to ensure that there is sufficient treatment capacity should the Planning Authority grant planning permission.

Surface Water

We have reviewed the applicant's submitted surface water drainage information and have found that the proposed method of surface water discharge does not relate to an Anglian Water owned asset. As such, it is outside of our jurisdiction and we are unable to provide comments on the suitability of the surface water discharge.

B: Representations

At the time of writing this report at least 20 letters/emails/online comments have been received. It is the officer opinion that this represents 20 objections. A verbal update shall be provided as necessary.

Grounds of objection are summarised below:

Contrary to Thurston Neighbourhood Plan

Lack of infrastructure – schools, GPs etc

Increased traffic

Highway safety

Drainage

Boundary issues

Wildlife impacts

Landscape character

(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

REF: DC/19/03486

Outline Planning Application (some matters reserved - access to be considered) - 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).

DECISION: GTD

23.12.2020

REF: DC/19/05180

Other Districts Development – 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.

DECISION: 29.01.2020



Application No: DC/20/2262/RM

APPLICANT

Bloor Homes And Sir George Agnew
Bloor Homes Eastern
Marauder House
Skyliner Way
Bury St Edmunds
IP32 7YA

Date Registered: 29 December 2020

Date of Decision: 11 August 2021

Town And Country Planning Act 1990 (as Amended)

Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Proposal: Reserved matters application - submission of details under planning permission DC/19/1519/OUT - the means of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the improvements to the junction of New Road and Thurston Road

Location: Land West Of Crossways Cottages, Junction New Road/Thurston Road, Rougham, Suffolk

REF: DC/20/01574	Consultation on Application received by West Suffolk Council - Highway Improvements to the Crossroads known as Fishwick Corner through the Creation of a Staggered Junction with associated Landscaping, Drainage and Infrastructure	DECISION: DEC 14.07.2020
REF: DC/21/00301	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486 - Condition 14 (Construction Management)	DECISION: PCO
REF: DC/21/00302	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486 - Condition 22 (Water and Efficiency Measures)	DECISION: GTD 12.03.2021
REF: DC/21/00418	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 15 (Tree Protection Measures)	DECISION: GTD 29.01.2021
REF: DC/21/00974	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 11 (Estate Roads and Footpaths), Condition 12 (Loading/Unloading, Manoeuvring, Parking and Cycle Storage) and Condition 13 (Refuse/Recycling Bins)	DECISION: PCO
REF: DC/21/00975	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 10 (Details of Highway Improvements and Mitigation)	DECISION: PCO

REF: DC/21/00976	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 23 (Electric Car Charging)	DECISION: PCO
REF: DC/21/02407	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486 - Condition 27 (Fire Hydrants)	DECISION: PCO
REF: DC/21/02505	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 16 (Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy)	DECISION: GTD 21.06.2021
REF: DC/21/02506	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 28 (Archaeology: Post Investigation)	DECISION: GTD 21.06.2021
REF: DC/21/02698	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 8 (Surface Water Drainage)	DECISION: PCO
REF: DC/21/03228	Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03486- Condition 21 (Materials)	DECISION: PCO

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1.0 The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1. The site comprises relatively flat agricultural land situated to the south west of Beyton Road, on the southern fringe of Thurston. The site is accessed via Beyton Road which serves a number of dwellings on the northern side. There 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 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 in visual terms.
- 1.3. The application site comprises 7.96 hectares.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1. The application seeks approval of reserved matters comprising layout, appearance, scale and landscaping associated with outline permission DC/19/03486 issued in December 2020. At the time of outline permission being granted access was approved. This scheme element is therefore not considered further in this report, save for noting that the submitted reserved matters detail is consistent with it. A signed s106 agreement associated with DC/19/03486 was executed in December 2020 binding the developer to requirements including affordable housing provision, open space management, car club commitment, electric vehicle charging (one point within the site and financial contribution), Thurston Station Platform Design Study contribution, Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy and financial contributions towards highway improvement works, primary school and travel plan evaluation.
- 2.2. As is required by condition 4 of the outline consent, the proposed development subject of the reserved matters application generally accords with the details in the illustrative masterplan 19-2012-SL101J, Design and Access Statement (Boyer June 2019) and Design Statement (Boyer November 2019) submitted in support of the outline application.
- 2.3. Key aspects of the site layout/design are as follows: (bracketed numbers refer to the respective features shown on the masterplan provided below)
 - 210 dwellings, including 73 affordable dwellings pepper potted across the development;
 - 27dph overall density, with 30-45dph in the centre of the site and 25-35dph on the northern part of the site adjoining Beyton Road;
 - Predominant two storey scale, 2.5 storeys on eastern and southern edges, 11 bungalows along Beyton Road frontage;
 - Materiality comprises brick (dark red/multi red/white buff), render and black cladding, grey flat/red flat/red pantile roofs;
 - Green linear corridors (8) linking multi-functional green spaces (10), including a central open space (9);
 - Peripheral green buffer including retained trees and hedging (4);
 - Swale feature within the peripheral green buffer (12);
 - Dwellings fronting green spaces;
 - Two vehicle access points: Beyton Road (primary); Mount Road (secondary) as per those approved at outline stage;
 - Street hierarchy comprising primary spine road and secondary and tertiary streets;
 - Infiltration basin to the southwestern edge of the site (11);
 - Play area to the southwestern corner of the site (14);
 - Four character areas, comprising 'Thurston Grove', 'Crossways Green', 'Mill View' and 'Crossways Internal';
 - Parking: 53 visitor spaces; 1 space per 1 bedroom unit; 2 spaces per 2 and 3 bedroom unit; 3 spaces per 4 bedroom unit; 2 secure covered cycle spaces per unit;
 - Hard surfacing comprises a mix of tarmac, block paving (Brindle and Burnt Oak) and rolled hoggin;
 - Peripheral pedestrian and cycle path, footpaths along both sides of majority of internal streets.
 - Foul water pumping station is proposed to the southwestern corner of the site.



figure 32: **Key aspects**

3.0 The Principle of Development

- 3.1. The principle of a 210 dwelling development, including access, has been established by grant of outline planning permission DC/19/03486. The key test is whether the proposed layout, scale, appearance and landscaping respond appropriately to the character and amenity of the area, having regard to relevant guiding development plan policies, including the adopted Thurston Neighbourhood Plan (TNP). A key consideration is the performance of the application against the National Design Guide (NDG).

4.0 Scale and Layout

- 4.1. The development comprises 210 dwellings, in accordance with the outline consent and, specifically, compliant with condition 7 of that consent.
- 4.2. The predominant two storey scale of development is acceptable, consistent with much of the development closest to the site, which comprises dwellings located on the northern side of Beyton Road. The height transition between the existing body of the village, north of Beyton Road, and the subject development is appropriate, noting the inclusion of bungalows along much of the southern side of Beyton Road. This moderated height transition is a purposeful design response, intended to provide a graduated, sympathetic change.

- 4.3. Some express the concern of the inclusion of 2.5 storey development, which rises to 11m in height (slab to ridge). Of the 210 dwellings, only 10 dwellings extend to 2.5 storeys. All but two of the 10 are located on the southern periphery of the site. All of them are flanked by two storey development. Four of the dwellings are located on corners, where an increased building height can be more readily absorbed in a streetscape character sense. Taller buildings play a positive urban design role, acting as landmarks. The inclusion of an increased building height offers a memorable feature, assisting in creating a sense of place. Given the built form context, the 2.5 storey dwellings will not give rise to adverse character outcomes that compromise the overall townscape aesthetic.
- 4.4. As noted above, the layout generally accords with that considered and approved at the outline consent stage, compliant with condition 4 of the outline consent. The street hierarchy is clear, there is a mix of open spaces and a complementary variety of building types and sizes. As set out in the supporting Design and Access Statement and the Design and Sustainable Development update of August 2021, the layout/design has evolved over time and been informed by discussions with relevant parties through, principally, the outline approvals process through 2019. This design process is one promoted and encouraged at paragraph 132 of the NPPF. Design quality is clearly central to the place making endeavours of the developer and they are to be commended in this regard.
- 4.5. The proposed internal street hierarchy and layout is supported by the Highways Authority. The Authority notes issues with some visibility splays at internal junctions and these can be resolved by planning condition. Likewise, minor design changes are required in order to comply with design standards, as well as the Department for Transport Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN1/20) in respect to the provision of shared footways, and these too can be addressed by planning conditions. The level of provision and layout of the on-site vehicle and cycle parking, for dwellings and visitors, is generally compliant with the Suffolk Parking Standards 2019, responding positively to TNP Policy 8 Parking Provision.
- 4.6. Visual bulk, daylight and sunlight levels of neighbouring residential properties are safeguarded owing to the respectful siting of the proposed dwellings. Similarly, overlooking of neighbouring properties is restricted to an appropriate level. The same applies internal to the scheme, with dwellings sited in a manner that ensures a high level of amenity for future occupants. The high degree of passive surveillance afforded to all green space areas is a particularly pleasing aspect of the scheme, as shared amenity spaces must offer conditions for users to feel safe and secure in order for them to be successful. Environmental Health has recommended suitable construction working hours and these can be conditioned accordingly. The development does not give rise to any amenity-related concerns such that they warrant the withholding of an approval of the reserved matters as currently presented.

5.0 Appearance

- 5.1. The developer has considered very carefully the overall aesthetic, with particular attention being paid to ensuring attractive places and buildings are delivered. The design approach sees the adoption of four distinct character areas. The character areas, as explained in the Design and Access Statement, use distinctive patterns of building setbacks, frontages,

architectural treatments, materials, and inter-relationship between public and private spaces to help the dwellings sit within their surroundings and create legibility across the site to assist in way finding.

- 5.2. The Design and Access Statement and update go into some detail describing the typical development patterns of each character area, which are informed by a local character appraisal. This 'character area' approach creates a positive, coherent identity, one that offers visual interest and a quality townscape. Although each area varies in architectural treatment, the Design and Access Statement demonstrates that they all draw upon the architectural precedents prevalent in the village, contributing to the features which positively define Thurston's character, a key design requirement of TNP Policy 4A. The Parish Council considers the development to be more akin to an urban town centre development. Officers disagree.
- 5.3. TNP Policy 4B sets out residential design criteria that new development is encouraged to achieve. The development proposal responds well to the stated criteria, noting:
 - The layout incorporates short winding streets/closes, offering an appropriate level of development 'intimacy';
 - The development does not result in the loss of any historic buildings nor harms any designated or non-designated heritage assets;
 - The site is not overdeveloped, there is an absence of indicators suggesting development 'cramming';
 - Refuse storage is largely out of sight;
 - Active travel modes are central to the development, with an extensive walking and cycling network integral to the development layout; and
 - A soft feel to the external site periphery is achieved through the peripheral green buffer.
- 5.4. Boundary treatments visible in the public domain have the potential to make or break townscape quality. The external perimeter of the site features a low, 0.45m timber knee rail fence. There is very limited fencing to the frontages of the internal streets, largely confined to only red brick walls used in locations where boundary demarcation is necessary, like return frontages. Critically, 1.8m high timber fencing is limited to the demarcation of private common boundaries, and therefore not visible from the internal streets. The proposed boundary treatments complement, rather than detract from, the local character.
- 5.5. In respect to potential heritage impacts, there are no nearby listed buildings. The nearest non-designated heritage assets are Crossways Cottages. The impact on these assets has been considered by the Heritage Officer who deems the harm to be at a low level. Officers concur. It is important to note that this level of harm assessed is lower than the anticipated harms when undertaking the planning balance in granting permission in outline. The reserved matters detail sits squarely within the envelope of assessment already undertaken.



figure 33: **Village style housing**



figure 34: **Village style housing on the edge of the development [and it's affordable rented]**



figure 35 **Part Beyton Road frontage**



figure 36: **Part Central green crescent frontage**

6.0 Landscaping

- 6.1. Policy 1C(c) of the TNP requires new housing proposals to be delivered with 'high quality natural landscaping' in order to retain the rural character and physical structure of Thurston.
- 6.2. The main place making design principle that is adopted in the development is that of green design. A network of green corridors set within generous green edges provide for a particularly verdant character response. As noted in the Design and Access Statement, landscape is at the development's heart. This design philosophy demands a high quality natural landscaping response, in accordance with TNP Policy 1C.
- 6.3. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF[2021] states that planning decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. The proposal responds favourably to all of these requirements. As noted above the development is based on a landscape structure comprising green linear corridors, complemented by a peripheral green buffer. Tree planting is evident throughout the development, with existing trees retained wherever possible on the site's fringe and new trees proposed in all green spaces and along most internal streets. The outcome is a landscape response that is sympathetic and complementary to local landscape character.
- 6.4. TNP Policy 9 states that development which abuts open countryside must not create a hard edge. The policy states that retention and planting of trees, hedges and vegetation is encouraged to soften the impact of the development. The proposed peripheral green buffer achieves exactly this requirement, a soft permeable landscape edge that transitions respectfully to the open countryside beyond. This is achieved through hedgerow and tree retention, the introduction of extensive tree plantings and generous open space corridors unencumbered by built form. The proposal very purposefully avoids a hard edge character outcome, in support of TNP Policy 9.
- 6.5. The streetscape response ('Thurston Grove' character area) to Beyton Road is a particularly important design element given its direct interface with the village body, and one that has been well considered. The generous linear green area directly fronting Beyton Road forms a verdant entrance/space to the development, in addition to complementing the landscaped green that fronts part of the northern side of Beyton Road (The Acorns). The informal arrangement of dwellings, their considerable setback from the road and absence of front boundary treatments combine to provide a sense of openness and park-like ambience along Beyton Road, avoiding the hard-edge character that would be inappropriate at this interface. The greening of the Beyton Road frontage enhances local landscape character and will enhance the setting of the southern village fringe.
- 6.6. The Landscape Consultant has reviewed the suite of amended hard/soft landscaping plans as well as the Landscape Management Plan, and is satisfied with the overall landscape

character response and proposed management methodology for the implementation and long-term maintenance of the planting. The consultant recommends minor amendments to the submitted plans, for example revised hedgerow species mix, and these can all be satisfactorily addressed by planning conditions.

- 6.8. A range of contrasting block paving is used as surfacing to the road and private parking areas to prevent the development from being dominated by black tarmac, with parking areas also clearly defined from internal streets. The variation in hard landscaping is welcomed.
- 6.9. The Ecology Consultant has reviewed the landscaping details and considers that they will provide biodiversity enhancements via the provision and maintenance of native hedgerows/trees, bird and/or bat boxes and hedgehog highways (13x13cm holes at the base of fencing). The Public Realm Officer supports the location of the children's play area and the associated outdoor gym equipment, as well as the inclusion of natural wildflower meadows and swales. The play area and outdoor gym, local community facilities, comply with the criteria set out at TNP Policy 5B Community Facilities.



figure 37: Extract – Landscaping Central green cand part of the green link

7.0 National Design Code

- 7.1. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that development which is not well designed should be refused, particularly where it fails to reflect government guidance on design, including the

National Design Guide January 2021 (NDG) – refer footnote 52. In other words, development should conform with the NDG.

7.2. The assessment outlined in this report demonstrates that the proposal responds positively to the ten characteristics contained in the NDG, which ‘all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the NPPF’. In short, the development: (NDG characteristics bolded)

- Relates well to the site and responds positively to the wider **context**;
- Does not compromise the valued historic setting of the village;
- Results in a well-designed, high quality and attractive place;
- Through the adoption of distinct character areas, creates appropriate local character and **identity**;
- Offers an appropriate level of **built form** ‘compactness’ and building intimacy;
- Provides a well-connected network of transport routes, for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, providing ease of **movement** through the development;
- Promotes active travel;
- Is underpinned by an extensive network of green corridors and open spaces
- Features community infrastructure enhancing social connections and recreational values;
- Offers biodiversity enhancements, enhancing **nature**;
- Incorporates well-located, high quality and attractive shared amenity areas;
- Provides safe **public spaces** that promote social connection;
- Comprises a mix of market and affordable dwellings, of varying type and size, providing mixed and integrated **uses**;
- Features sustainable, healthy **homes and buildings**;
- Adopt construction materials that are **resources** efficient;
- Feature buildings that are designed to last – **lifespan**.

8.0 Other Matters

Flood Risk and Drainage

8.1. SCC Flood and Water has reviewed the flood related documentation supporting the application and does not raise an objection to the scheme. Surface water drainage is subject to a separate discharge of condition application DC/19/03486- Condition 8 (Surface Water Drainage)

Allotments

8.2. The Parish Council is critical of the absence of any allotments. Policy 5 encourages allotments, it does not require the provision of allotments. The lack of allotment provision is attached very limited weight given the absence of direct policy conflict, it is not fatal to the scheme. The reserved matters are consistent and in conformity with the planning permission already granted.

The Section 106 [a resume of mitigation secured at outline stage]

8.3 In summary, the signed S106 secured at outline stage provides for:

- The need for a highway works phasing plan and a comprehensive package of highway improvements that include

Widening of footpath under Thurston Railway Bridge

New junction at Fishwick Corner

Improvements to Pokeriage Corner junction

New roundabout on New Road/Beyton Road junction [West Suffolk District Council]

Cycleway connection from Fishwick Corner back to Bury St Edmunds [West Suffolk District Council]

New Crossings on Beyton Road

Improvements to footpath on Thedwastre bridge

- 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]

Matters subject to current undetermined Discharge of Condition submissions under separate references:

DC/19/03486 - Condition 14 (Construction Management)

DC/19/03486- Condition 23 (Electric Car Charging)

DC/19/03486- Condition 10 (Details of Highway Improvements and Mitigation)

DC/19/03486- Condition 11 (Estate Roads and Footpaths), Condition 12 (Loading/Unloading, Manoeuvring, Parking and Cycle Storage) and Condition 13 (Refuse/Recycling Bins)

DC/19/03486 - Condition 27 (Fire Hydrants)

DC/19/03486- Condition 8 (Surface Water Drainage)

DC/19/03486- Condition 21 (Materials)

These matters will be decided outside of the present Reserved Matters arena and whilst some of the detail may appear on the submitted drawings were Members to approved the Reserved Matters details that relate to any pf the above would be excluded from the RM permission pending determination under the Discharge of Condition submissions.

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figure 38: **Adjusted mix layout**

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

9.0 Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 9.1. Outline consent has been granted for 210 dwellings, establishing the in-principle acceptability of advancing a housing scheme at the site. Access was approved as part of the outline permission and therefore is not material to the subject assessment but noting that the reserved matters submission is in conformity with that detail. The level of affordable housing was secured by planning obligation at the outline stage and the proposed plans are consistent with that requirement.
- 9.2. The character response is one informed by a local character appraisal, as well as a comprehensive constraints and opportunities analysis. Site context analysis of the type undertaken is welcomed, as is a design that responds to a site's constraints and opportunities. The scale and layout of development follows that approved at the outline stage. The form and design detailing of the dwellings are appropriate, consistent with those found across the district. The mix of single and double storey dwellings follows the neighbouring development typology and is therefore not out of place in character terms. The development will create an acceptable townscape quality. There is no heritage character harm greater than that already anticipated and assessed in granting permission.
- 9.3. The development will not compromise the amenity of residents occupying the northern side of Beyton Road. The development will offer appropriate internal amenity for its future occupants, as well as abundant opportunity for social connection and interaction.
- 9.4. The landscaping theme, dominated by an integrated green infrastructure response, is supported by the landscape consultant. Removal of existing trees is minimised. The landscaping scheme gives effect to the ecology assessments that supported the outline consent, ensuring the development will deliver positive biodiversity outcomes in addition to ensuring a positive landscape character response is provided.
- 9.5. On-site car parking and cycle provision is standard compliant. Non-compliance with highway safety design standards, as identified by the Highways Authority, can be adequately resolved by planning conditions.
- 9.6. The details submitted in support of the reserved matters application conform with the requirements of all relevant TNP policies, giving positive effect to the objectives of the TNP. The details also respond positively to the National Design Guide, providing an attractive, safe and well-designed place for its future residents.
- 9.7. The development will add positively to the Thurston community and the reserved matters are accordingly recommended for approval. The reserved matters detail demonstrates that

the development to be provided is consistent with the requirements of the outline planning permission. The submission accords with the development plan and policies of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

(1) That the reserved matters of scale, layout, appearance and landscaping are approved subject to the following conditions:-

- Approved Plans (Plans submitted that form this application)
- Construction working hours – amended
- Reduction to dormer proportions on 2½ storey units
- Landscape Management Plan implemented/secured
- Estate Roads Design Condition [including cycleway and footpaths]
- External Materials full details [exclude black pantiles]
- Parking Condition
- Landscape amendments
- Ecology amendments
- Electric vehicle charging
- Sustainability Officer requirements
- Need to substitute Typha [Bullrush] planting in drainage basin
- Active play within LEAP

(2) And the following informative notes as summarised and those as may be deemed necessary:

- Pro active working statement
- SCC Highways notes
- Support for sustainable development principles
- Anglian Water advisory notes