

Committee Report

Item No: 7A

Reference: DC/21/06966
Case Officer: Bradly Heffer

Ward: Onehouse.

Ward Member/s: Cllr John Matthissen.

RECOMMENDATION – APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS WITH CONDITIONS

Description of Development

Application for approval of reserved matters following grant of planning permission DC/20/01110 Town and Country Planning - Submission of details for the Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for the erection of up to 146No dwellings (some single storey and affordable) including vehicular and pedestrian accesses, public open space, play space, landscaping, associated highways, drainage and utilities infrastructure.

Location

Land To The South Of, Union Road, Onehouse, Suffolk

Expiry Date: 25/03/2022

Application Type: RES - Reserved Matters

Development Type: Major Large Scale - Dwellings

Applicant: Bloor Homes Eastern

Agent: Mr James Bailey

Parish: Onehouse

Site Area: 7.61 hectares

Density of Development:

Gross Density (Total Site): Approximately 19.2 dwellings per hectare

Net Density (Developed Site, excluding open space and SuDs): Approximately 31 dwellings per hectare.

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

Has the application been subject to Pre-Application Advice: Yes – DC/21/04851

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason/s:

It is a major development for 15 or more dwellings and therefore has to be presented to the Planning Committee for determination.

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework

Adopted Core Strategy 2008

CS1 - Settlement Hierarchy
CS2 - Development in the Countryside & Countryside Villages
CS4 - Adapting to Climate Change
CS6 – Services and Infrastructure
CS5 - Mid Suffolk's Environment
CS9 - Density and Mix

Adopted Core Strategy Focused Review 2012

FC1 - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
FC1.1 - Mid Suffolk Approach To Delivering Sustainable Development

Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998

GP1 - Design and layout of development
GP2 - Development briefs
HB1 - Protection of historic buildings
H3 - 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
T9 - Parking Standards
T10 - Highway Considerations in Development
RT4 - Amenity open space and play areas within residential development

Stowmarket Area Action Plan 2013

SAAP Policy 4.2: Providing a Landscape Setting for Stowmarket
SAAP Policy 6.2: Land Adjoining Paupers Graves, Union Road, Stowmarket
SAAP Policy 6.6: Development Briefs
SAAP Policy 6.7: Paupers Graves
SAAP Policy 6.9: Transport - buses / cycle / walking
SAAP Policy 6.12 Infrastructure Delivery Programme (IDP)
SAAP Policy 9.1: Biodiversity Measures
SAAP Policy 9.5: Historic Environment

Neighbourhood Plan Status

This application site is not within a Neighbourhood Plan Area.

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)

Onehouse Parish Council initially commented as follows:

*'Concerns have been expressed regarding the siting of the pumping station. It should be investigated to moving this elsewhere on site so as not to impact on current residents.
Cllrs appreciate the provision of a pedestrian footway along the western boundary of the application site which will improve pedestrian safety along Starhouse Lane and hope this can be extended to cyclists.'*

Following submission of revised plans the following further comments were received:

'Councillors appreciate the resiting of the pumping station to mitigate the impact on current residents and the improvements to the footway to the western boundary of the site.'

Stowmarket Town Council comments as follows:

'RESOLVED: That the following representations be made in respect of the proposals:

- a. the Town Council notes that planning consent has been granted by the Planning Authority and the current application relates to the form of development rather than the principle of development;*
- b. the Town Council continues to have major concerns regarding the drainage arrangements for the site and potential for run-off on to the B1115; drainage problems are already being experienced in respect of the adjoining development and it is felt that the drainage and attenuation measures may not be sufficient within regard to the topography of the site;*
- c. there should be effective conditions applied to require the retention of existing hedgerows on the boundaries of the development site;*
- d. the planting scheme adjacent to Union Road appears to be "open" in character comprising grass and shrubs when the retention of hedging and planting of trees would help provide greater character at the entrance to the site;*
- e. the "missed opportunity" of creating a play area on the edge of this site and the edge of the adjoining development site is viewed as being disappointing; this would have provided a larger play area that would offer greater benefits in terms of public amenity;*
- f. the applicant should be encouraged to consider how existing trees around the boundary can be retained, even some that are dying in less conspicuous locations as this can help promote biodiversity;*
- g. the installation of swift boxes should be incorporated within the scheme in view of the decline in this species;*
- h. there should be an effective environmental management programme implemented by the developer to ensure that trees are watered and maintained until they become established;*
- i. opportunities should be explored for using benches on site made out of recycled materials; and*
- j. it is noted that the site is within Onehouse and the Planning Authority is requested to give consideration to the representations of Onehouse Parish Council as well as local residents insofar as they related to the reserved matters.'*

National Consultee (Appendix 4)

Historic England has confirmed it does not wish to comment on the proposals.

Natural England has no comment, and draws the Council's attention to its standing advice in relation to protected species and ancient woodland and veteran trees.

The **NHS Clinical Commissioning Group** has confirmed that it is satisfied with the with the mitigation contribution secured as part of the outline planning permission.

Anglian Water advises that the foul drainage strategy and flood risk documentation are considered acceptable. In relation to surface water drainage it is advised that the views of the LLFA should be sought. It is confirmed that AW promote the use of SUDS as a sustainable method of control.

County Council Responses (Appendix 5)

SCC Highways has advised it has no objection to the proposals, subject to the imposition of conditions on an approval of reserved matters.

SCC Development Contributions identifies that there is a completed planning obligation attached to the outline planning permission granted on the site, and this would be binding on the grant of reserved matters approval.

SCC Fire and Public Safety Directorate identifies that a condition (no. 14) was imposed on the outline planning permission, which secured the provision of fire hydrants on the site.

SCC LLFA recommend approval of the application.

SCC Travel Plan officer has no comment

SCC Archaeological Service identifies that the site has archaeological potential and recommends conditions relating to further archaeological investigation of the site being necessary – this work to be undertaken prior to the commencement of development.

Officer comment: conditions were attached to the grant of outline planning permission (condition no.s 24 and 25) so it would not be necessary to reimpose them on a reserved matters application.

The **Mid Suffolk Disability Forum** expects that all dwellings would meet part M4 of the Building Regulations. All dwellings should be visitable and meet Part M4(1), and at least 50% of dwellings should meet the 'accessible and adaptable' standard Part M4(2). In addition, at least 1 dwelling should be built to wheelchair standard Part M4(3), and 3% should be bungalows. Efforts should be made to ensure footpaths are wide enough for wheelchair users and surfaces should be firm, durable and level.

The **East Suffolk Drainage Board** requests that surface water discharge to a watercourse should accord with identified non-statutory technical standards and runoff is attenuated to Greenfield Runoff Rates wherever possible.

Internal Consultee Responses (Appendix 6)

The **Strategic Housing Team** has confirmed it welcomes the revised affordable housing schedule and plan showing the location on site. It is noted that the s106 agreement at the outline application stage establishes the amount of affordable housing to be provide on-site (21%) together with a commuted sum.

Place Services – Ecology noted the updated ecology information submitted with the application and also the conditions attached to the outline planning permission that require separate discharge. The provision of further integrated bat and bird bricks within the development is encouraged. Lastly, it is noted that a condition requiring a wildlife sensitive lighting scheme (attached to the outline planning permission) has already been discharged.

Place Services – Landscape final comments were unavailable at the time this report was written and an update will be provided at the Committee meeting.

The **Environmental Control (Noise/Odour/Light/Smoke)** officer has reviewed the Construction Environmental Management Plan and has no further observations to make.

The **Environmental Control (Sustainability)** officer confirms that there is no objection to the proposals and recommends the inclusion of a condition on an approval of reserved matters.

The **Environmental Control (Air Quality)** officer has advised there is no objection to the proposals.

The **Environmental Control (Land Contamination)** officer has no comment – all issues being addressed at the outline stage.

The **Heritage Team** advises that the proposal in its revised form would cause a very low to low level of less than substantial harm to the setting of a designated heritage asset. It is identified that the proposed roof materials for dwellings nearest to Star House Farm should be revised to include natural slate and red clay pantiles.

Waste Management has no objections to the proposal in its current form; its previous comments having been addressed.

The **Public Realm** team has asked for the footpath specification through the LEAP changed from self-binding gravel to the same specification as other paths through the development – the path should have a sealed surface.

Officer comment: this request is noted and may be addressed through a suitably worded condition.

B: Representations

Councillor Matthissen states:

‘Have discussed with case officer and changes appear positive.’

At the time of writing this report at least 9 letters/emails/online comments have been received. It is the officer opinion that this represents 9 objections, 0 support and 0 general comment. A verbal update shall be provided, as necessary.

Public representations are summarised below:-

- The proposed location of the sewage pumping station is unacceptable – it will result in amenity disturbances for local residents. The local area experiences flooding problems and these will be exacerbated.
- The location of affordable housing is not well integrated into the development.
- Headlights of vehicles will shine into neighbouring properties – solid screening should be provided which would also function as a safety feature.

- The development of this site is unnecessary and will increase pressure on current inadequate infrastructure. Onehouse will soon join Stowmarket. Local roads will not be able to cope with the additional traffic.
- Harmful local impact through additional traffic, air, light and noise. Loss of privacy will result.
- No mention of sustainable homes.
- Local ecology will be harmed.
- The proposed development would be out of character with the area.
- Pedestrian and cyclist facilities should be enhanced.
- The proposal is an overdevelopment of this site.
- The development should not be utilising the use of gas as other options are available.

(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/20/01110	Outline Planning Application. (Access to be considered) for the erection of up to 146no dwellings including vehicular and pedestrian accesses, public open space, play space, landscaping, associated highways, drainage and utilities infrastructure	DECISION: GTD 30.04.2021
REF: DC/21/06966	Application for approval of reserved matters following grant of planning permission DC/20/01110 Town and Country Planning - Submission of details for the Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for the erection of up to 146No dwellings (some single storey and affordable) including vehicular and pedestrian accesses, public open space, play space, landscaping, associated highways, drainage and utilities infrastructure.	DECISION: PCO

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1. The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1. The site for this proposal is an approximately L-shaped area of former agricultural land that is located within the parish of Onehouse. It is bounded to the north by Union Road, to the west by Starhouse Lane and to the south by B1115 Finborough Road. To the east is a site that is currently being developed for residential purposes. The boundaries of the site are, for the most part, defined by trees and hedging. Topographically the site falls from the north to the south.

- 1.2. Within the submitted application documents the site has a given area of approximately 7.61 hectares.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1 This reserved matters proposal seeks approval for the erection of 146no. dwellings on the identified site. The development would be accessed via a new junction leading off Union Road. Members are advised that at the time of the outline planning application submission, full planning permission was granted for the means of vehicular access.
- 2.2 The approved access would serve a central spine road that projected through the site, off which would extend a series of culs-de-sac and private drives serving individual groups of dwellings. Generally the form of development across the site would be a series of perimeter blocks, with dwellings oriented to that frontages of development were provided to the roads bounding the site, and also facing across the development site that is currently underway immediately to the east.
- 2.3 As well as the built form and associated infrastructure, the proposed scheme also includes a network of open space provision across the site. This includes larger areas to the north-east (containing the site of the proposed LEAP) and south-west of the site, and linear areas bisecting the site and also adjacent to the northern, western and southern boundaries. The open spaces would also contain the routes of footpaths serving the site and providing connections with the wider area.
- 2.4 In terms of the proposed built form, this would take the form of a range of detached, semi-detached and terraced units, with associated garaging or hardstanding parking provision. The proposed plans also shows the locations of visitor parking spaces across the site. The range of units proposed would include bungalows and houses. The architectural approach taken would be a traditional vernacular built form with dwellings incorporating pitched roofs and being constructed in brick, with some use of rendered blockwork.
- 2.5 A SuDS would serve the development, with the main attenuation basin for the system being located at the south-western corner of the site, adjacent to the junction of the B1115 with Starhouse Lane.
- 2.6 As part of the application submission the Design and Access Statement includes the following comments which are identified below for context:

'...the proposed development seeks to deliver a sustainable scheme that will integrate and contribute to the surrounding area. The design approach has been informed by the Suffolk Design Guide for Residential Areas, as well as guidance and comments from Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council. The design has also responded to best practice, context-led analysis which responds to the opportunities and constraints of the site. In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal constitutes an acceptable development for the site in planning terms and that, if approved, will make a positive contribution to the locality.'

- 2.7 The full text of the supporting documents are available to view on the Council's website.

3. The Principle Of Development

- 3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that 'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.

- 3.2 The site for this proposal is located on land that is currently unallocated for development, as defined in the adopted development plan. Therefore its development for residential purposes is a departure from the current plan. However, it is noted that within the Stowmarket Area Action Plan the site forms part of an area that is to be considered for allocation in the first review of this document. As Members are aware, the examination of the Council's emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP) is currently paused, pending the submission of additional information. Within the emerging Joint Local Plan (JLP), this site forms part of an overall residential land allocation (ref. LA036) that includes the land to the west currently being developed. Nevertheless, Members are advised that the weight that may be attached to JLP as part of the consideration of development proposals is limited at this stage.
- 3.3 Notwithstanding the above policy summary, in the case of the determination of this reserved matters proposal, it is considered that the outline planning permission that has been granted by the Council under application ref. DC/20/01110 clearly establishes the acceptability of residential development taking place on the identified site for up to 146no. dwellings, and is the starting point for the decision making process. Members are not tasked with re-considering the planning permission from scratch; rather, it is necessary to consider those details reserved under the planning permission for determination at this current stage of the overall process. The principle of development is therefore effectively fixed, subject to the conditions attached to the grant of outline planning permission.
- 3.4 In summary, the acceptability of the identified site to accept 146no. dwellings is established in principle and is the starting point for the determination of this reserved matters application.

4. Nearby Services and Connections Assessment Of Proposal

- 4.1 The site for this proposal is located within the parish of Onehouse but spatially is more closely related to the periphery of Stowmarket. Onehouse itself benefits from a Community centre and public house, as well as a parish church. In the wider area the site is well located to access service provision within the town of Stowmarket. Bus access to the town may be obtained via stops located to the east of the site in Union Road, and adjacent to the Shepherd and Dog public house located to the southwest of the site. In addition, the route of National Cycle Route 51 includes the part of Union Road that bounds the site to the north.

5. Site Access, Parking And Highway Safety Considerations

- 5.1 The NPPF identifies at paragraph 110 that in assessing specific applications for development it should be ensured that, inter alia, significant impacts on the transport network and highway safety can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree. Paragraph 111 recognises that development '...should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe..'
- 5.2 At the adopted development plan level the requirement for safe access is reflected in policy CS6, which identifies the need for new development to provide or support the delivery of appropriate infrastructure, and policy T10 which lists criteria that will be considered in regard to new development proposals.
- 5.3 As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the means of vehicular access to the site was not a reserved matter at the outline application stage, and full planning permission has been granted for this part of the development, and does not attract further consideration as part of this reserved matters submission. That said, the proposed road network within the site is a matter for

consideration under this submission and to this end the comments of the Highway Authority have guided the discussions with the applicant both pre- and post-submission.

- 5.4 Following initial submission of the application, the Highway Authority identified a number of elements that required revision. These included alterations to the proposed 'square' areas within the development, the adjustment of gradients to some roads, provision of a footpath link up to the eastern boundary of the site, and adjustment of some parking space positions. Members are advised that the scheme put forward for determination does address previous issues to the Highway Authority's satisfaction. It is noted that the proposed roads on site would be constructed with the intention of being adopted by the County Council as Highway Authority, with the exception of the private drives.
- 5.5 As regards provision of car parking spaces across the site, Members are advised that the scheme meets the standard for residential development that is included in the Council's adopted standards. This includes the provision of visitor spaces to serve the development. The submitted plans also include the provision of EV charging points to serve the majority of dwellings where on-plot parking spaces are provided. In all other instances the submitted details advise that ducting, and a suitable consumer unit to allow a wall charging unit to be installed by the householder would be provided.
- 5.6 Clearly the issue of traffic generation arising from this development continues to be a source of particular concern for local residents and this is reflected in the comments received. As part of the consideration of the outline planning application the submission included a Transport Assessment that detailed the impacts arising from this, and other committed developments in a defined area, on the local road network. The findings in the assessment were considered by the Highway Authority and accepted. That authority recommended conditions on a grant of outline planning permission that amongst other things controlled the final details of the site's access, provision of visibility splays at that access and, prior to first occupation, the provision of footways linking to the existing footway network at Union Road / Starhouse Lane junction and Finborough Road / Starhouse Lane junction. These footways are to be constructed and made available for use prior to first occupation. Members are advised that capacity issues within the highway network per se were not raised at that stage and it is not possible to revisit that position now that the principle of development for the nature and amount of development applied for has been established.

6. Design And Layout, Sustainability

- 6.1 As Members are fully aware, good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, as made clear in the NPPF. This requirement is reflected in adopted development plan policies CS5 and GP1, both of which identify that development will be of high quality design that respects the local distinctiveness and built heritage of Mid Suffolk. Members are advised that pre- and post-application engagement has taken place with the applicant regarding inter alia, the issue of the proposed layout and design of the development.
- 6.2 The application submission does include a Design and Access Statement (DAS) that advises of the design principles that have been applied, following a study of the application site and its context. The evolution of this reserved matters submission has also been informed by the outline application approval, a key element of which establishes the acceptability in principle of 146no. dwellings being located on the identified site.
- 6.3 The general arrangement of the proposed layout of development consists of a series of perimeter blocks across the site; a similar approach having been taken on the site adjacent to the east. This arrangement of dwellings enables a clear demarcation of public realm and private amenity spaces. This approach also avoids a situation whereby the rear gardens of dwellings are overly

prominent within the streetscene – thereby improving visual amenity generally. In addition, this arrangement of dwellings does also ensure that the frontages of the overall development site are addressed by the fronts of dwellings. Lastly, the arrangement enables passive surveillance of open spaces within the site, with dwellings arranged to overlook these spaces.

- 6.4 As well as the organisation of the dwellings, the proposal would also include a clear hierarchy of road types across the site, which would enable particular character areas to be created e.g. a variation in space between dwellings fronting on to the main spine road and those arranged around a private drive access. The organisation of roads is such that the main spine road serving the site is aligned to run through individual ‘squares’, and includes bends etc. to slow vehicle speeds. This avoids the creation of a continuous, visually unrelieved main route through the site which would not assist in improving visual amenity within the overall estate.
- 6.5 The proposed layout also includes a network of linked green spaces across the development site. These are located primarily on the site’s periphery; however a green link would also bisect the site through the centre of the developed area. This space would serve as a visual amenity resource as it would assist in breaking up the development into two main areas. The principle of this particular green link feature was first mooted at the outline application stage, and it has been successfully incorporated into the detailed layout design, in the view of officers. The open spaces on the site would also contain the LEAP facility (a requirement established at the outline application stage), an attenuation basin, pumping station, and footpath routes, serving the site and linking with Union Road, B1115 and the site to adjacent housing site to the east. The arrangement of the open space in the proposed manner would also enable the retention of the greater majority of existing trees and hedging that is located on the site, which is a clear benefit in terms of visual amenity.
- 6.6 In relation to the appearance of the development, this follows a vernacular architectural form, similar to that found in existing development within the vicinity – particularly the newer development to the east previously approved by the Council. Dwellings would be constructed in brickwork, with some rendered elements on particular designs, and would incorporate dual pitched tiled roofs, as would garages. Generally, it is considered that the proposed design approach would be in keeping with this particular location, particularly given the design approach taken on the volume development immediately adjacent. That said, the arrangement of development is such that it is considered this scheme is not merely a repeat of the approved development, and there would be a satisfactory variation in character and appearance between the two areas. Importantly, it is considered that the design approach would also be respectful of the surroundings and would not appear as a visually incongruous incursion.
- 6.7 The NPPF places sustainable development at the heart of responsible planning. New development should be planned to avoid vulnerability to climate change, and plans should provide a positive strategy for the use and supply of renewable energy. At the local level, adopted Core Strategy policy CS3 identifies the Council’s intention to reduce contributions to climate change. However, in relation to residential development the policy identifies a requirement that ‘...Sustainable Construction techniques will be encouraged in all new dwellings to achieve at least a three star rating under the Code for Sustainable Homes...’ As Members are aware, the Code has been replaced with new standards applicable under Building Regulations.
- 6.8 As part of the application submission the proposal includes an Energy Strategy Statement which is intended to examine ‘...the feasibility of suitable Low to Zero Carbon sources, high-efficiency alternative systems, and low carbon energy efficiency measures...’ The Statement identifies that with the withdrawal of the Code, the equivalent standard would require a 19% carbon reduction. In order to achieve this, Members are advised that the development would take a ‘fabric first’ approach, whereby the *demand* for energy is reduced by the construction of the buildings. In

addition, the Statement outlines the consideration of other methods of energy generation and, in this regard, it is proposed that 69no. dwellings on the site would incorporate solar voltaic cells on their roofs to generate electricity. The proposed development would also incorporate Flue Gas Heat Recovery Systems within 76no. dwellings. This technology ‘...takes advantage of the heat within the waste flue gases resulting from the combustion of gas within the boiler. This recovered heat is used to preheat the cold water entering the boiler, thereby lowering the amount of energy needed to warm the water up to the required temperature...’ In combination, the Statement identifies that the 19% reduction would be achieved. In this regard, Members will note that the Environmental Health (Sustainability) officer has no objection to the proposals.

7. Landscape Impact, Trees, Ecology, Biodiversity And Protected Species

7.1. Conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is a fundamental theme of the NPPF and adopted development plan policies such as CS4, CS5, CL1 and CL8. The site identified for the development contains natural features such as hedging and trees, and these elements add significantly to visual amenity in the area.

7.2 The approved outline planning application submission included a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in which the following concluding remarks were made:

‘...Overall the proposed development will result in limited impacts at a localised level. The scale and form of proposed development is likely to result in impacts which are limited to the site area and its immediate context. In the wider landscape, potential views of the proposals are predominantly heavily filtered by a ‘layered’ mature vegetation framework and are generally within the context of existing and emerging built form both interspersed within the surrounding landscape and within the settlement of Stowmarket...Furthermore, the proposals for open space and green infrastructure will deliver substantial enhancements in terms of the physical landscape resources...’

7.3 In consideration of the outline application the findings of the LVIA were accepted by officers, in consultation with the Council’s landscape consultants. Although landscaping was a reserved matter, in granting outline planning permission for the proposal a condition was imposed (04) as follows:

‘Any details submitted under Condition 2 shall, as appropriate and required, be in general conformity with submitted plan P18-2767_20B Boundary Vegetation to be Removed/Retained, Landscape Context and Connections Plan Ref: P18-2767_21 and the LVA Note Ref: P18-2767 20 January 2021.

Reason: To ensure careful planning in the preparation of the Reserved Matters scheme in respect of existing on-site boundary vegetation; and landscape and visual matters.’

7.4 On the basis of the above, the identified drawings and note are considered to establish parameters at least that should inform a reserved matters submission, in relation to both impacts on boundary vegetation, and also landscaping. Members are advised that, in this regard, officers consider the submitted plans to be in general conformity with those identified in the condition. The Landscape Context and Connections Plan shows the arrangement of open space on the periphery of the site, and a linking feature bisecting the developed areas, and this is reflected in the plans put forward for consideration. In addition, the tree and hedging retention reflects that shown on the identified plan.

- 7.5 Members are advised that the initial reserved matters submission elicited various comments from the Council's Landscape consultant and this current iteration of the proposals has, in the view of officers, addressed these satisfactorily.
- 7.6 In regard to impacts on trees and hedging, it is considered that the proposals reflect the relevant retention plan identified at the outline stage. The organisation of development means that the loss of the greater majority of these features is avoided. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been submitted as part of the reserved matters proposals. The AIA advises that some tree and hedge removal will be necessary to enable the development to go ahead. This includes vegetation at the location of the previously-approved site access, and a portion of hedging at the point where the required pedestrian access is to be formed on to B1115 Finborough Road. The AIA also identifies various trees on site where crown lifting works would be necessary, as well as dead or dying specimens that would be removed. The AIA advises that one B category tree would have to be removed. This document has been considered by the Council's Arboriculturalist who has commented as follows:

'I have no objection to this application subject to it being undertaken in accordance with the measures outlined in the accompanying arboricultural report. The tree and vegetation proposed for removal are of limited amenity value and are not of sufficient landscape importance to warrant being a constraint. If you are minded to recommend approval we will also require a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and dedicated Tree Protection Plan to help ensure harm is not caused to the trees scheduled for retention, this can be dealt with under condition.'

- 7.7 In relation to ecology and protected species, the initial assessment was undertaken at the outline application stage wherein an Ecology report was submitted as part the outline application submission. The application site itself is not covered by any specific wildlife site designation, nor is it located close to any statutory or non-statutory wildlife site. The land itself, having been used previously for agricultural purposes, was determined to be of low ecological value. However the trees and hedging on the site were determined to be of habitat value. The fact that these are for the most part to be retained is important in terms of species protection etc. The presence of protected species were detected on site including bats.
- 7.8 Following on from the outline application assessment stage, this current application includes an Ecological Enhancement and Mitigation Strategy (EEMS) and a separate Skylark Mitigation Strategy (SMS). In the case of the EEMS, this recommends that various enhancements are included within the development e.g. bird boxes, bat roost boxes, log piles/hibernacula for invertebrates etc, hedgehog holes and the introduction of various plant species across the site to encourage wildlife. It is also proposed to introduce 'no mow' areas within the development to encourage diversity in habitat composition. In regard to the SMS, the proposals seek to mitigate impacts on this habitat by offering appropriate alternative locations on other similar land.
- 7.9 The proposals have not prompted a comment from Natural England. The Council's Ecological Consultants have confirmed that the information provided is sufficient for the proper consideration of impacts on ecology, and no objection is raised.

8. Land Contamination, Flood Risk, Drainage and Waste

- 8.1 The NPPF at paragraph 183 identifies inter alia that planning decisions should ensure a site is suitable for its proposed use. In addition, paragraph 184 makes clear that where a site is affected by contamination, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. In addition development plan policy identifies the Council's intention to ensure that

new development proposals minimise the risk of contamination of underground water resources. Members are advised that the outline application submission was accompanied by Desk Based Land Contamination Assessment, the findings of which were considered by the Environmental Health Officer. At that time, the Officer did not raise an objection to the proposals, advising that any unexpected ground conditions (during construction) should be advised to the LPA. In addition, it was advised that the responsibility for the safe development of the site lies with the developer undertaking the work. The Officer has confirmed that there is no comment in relation to this reserved matters submission.

- 8.2 In relation to flood risk and drainage the NPPF identifies at paragraph 159 that ‘...Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk...’ Leading on from this, development policy CS4 identifies that ‘...the Council will support development proposals that avoid areas of current and future flood risk...’ The outline application submission included a Flood Risk Assessment and the LLFA, Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Board were consulted; no objections were raised to the proposals.
- 8.3 In this regard the entire site for the proposed development is located within flood zone 1 i.e. an area having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding (<0.1%). Therefore the site is not considered to be liable to unusual flooding events, and in that regard accords with the identified requirements of the NPPF and relevant development plan policy. In relation to pluvial events, the DAS advises that ‘...Small areas of pluvial surface water flooding exist on the site, but these areas are not being developed and are areas of open space...’
- 8.4 The proposed means of surface water drainage to serve the site would take the form of a SuDS. The scheme would include a series of swales and filter trenches across the site. The main attenuation basin is located at the south-western corner of the site; not least in recognition of the site’s sloping topography to the south. From here, surface water would be drained to the river Rat via an underground drainage pipe.
- 8.5 Members will note that the LLFA has confirmed no objection to the detailed proposals put forward as part of this reserved matters submission. At the time this report was produced, comments had not been received by the Environment Agency. Members will be updated accordingly at the meeting if comments are made.

9. Heritage Issues

- 9.1 The protection of heritage assets from inappropriate forms of development is an established tenet of planning control. Section 66(1) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 requires local authorities to afford special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of listed buildings, including setting. In addition, in the relation to conservation areas, section 72 of the Act identifies that ‘...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area...’. The NPPF at paragraphs 194 - 197 describes how development proposals affecting heritage assets should be considered. In addition, paragraph 199 makes clear that ‘...When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation...’ The NPPF also identifies at paragraph 202 that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal...’
- 9.2 The adopted development plan includes a specific policy, HB1, that seeks to protect heritage assets and their settings. This aim is reflected in SAAP policy 9.5 which aims to protect the historic landscape of Stowmarket and surrounding villages.

9.3 The site does not contain any above ground heritage assets, and therefore the impacts will arise in relation to settings of heritage assets in the vicinity of the site. In this regard, the Heritage Team identified, initially, that the proposals would cause a low to medium level of less than substantial harm to the setting of one of these assets – namely Star House Farm (and its associated, separately listed barn) located to the northwest of the application site. Following on from this response, the applicant has provided a further heritage consideration of this issue and this has led to the Heritage Team’s revision of its comments to determine that a very low to low level of less than substantial harm would result from the proposed development. Therefore the scheme presented for Members’ consideration has been judged to significantly lessen harm arising from impacts on the setting of the identified listed building. In this regard, it is necessary in accordance with the NPPF to balance the harm with the public benefits of the proposal. Significantly and principally the provision of 146 no. dwellings increases the District’s housing stock, including the provision of affordable housing units (established through s106 agreement). In addition, the Heritage Team’s comments in relation to materials for the proposed dwellings nearest the listed building can be properly addressed through the inclusion of a condition as part of a reserved matters approval. This issue has been raised with the applicant and it is agreed that the requested, revised roof materials would be applied to the dwellings fronting Union Road, namely plot no.s 1 – 3 and 9 – 13 inclusive. Therefore, even where considerable importance and great weight is attached to the harm identified, that harm would be outweighed by the public benefits to flow from the development. Moreover, the heritage balance was undertaken when granting outline planning permission for the development – the current reserved matters would ensure that the anticipated benefits are delivered whilst at the same time reducing the amount of heritage harm previously expected. An approval of the current application would be consistent with the decision to grant outline planning permission.

10. Impact On Residential Amenity

- 10.1 The assessment of residential amenity impacts is a key planning consideration. The Council’s adopted development plan policies SB2 and H3 make clear that development proposals will be considered inter alia in respect of the likely impacts that would arise in relation to residential amenity.
- 10.2 Notwithstanding the location of the application site, away from the defined settlement boundaries for Onehouse and Stowmarket, there are residential properties adjacent to the site. In addition, the site immediately adjacent is being developed for residential purposes, for a substantial number of dwellings. Generally, it is inevitable that the development will generate local impacts through visual impacts, increased traffic generation etc. The fact that this is a reserved matters submission means that the location of proposed dwellings in relation to existing may be appraised.
- 10.3 In this regard, the dwellings nearest the site are located on the southern side of Finborough Road, facing towards the site, and on the northern side of Union Road, again facing towards the site. In relation to the dwellings on Union Road, the proposed dwellings would be located approximately between 32 metres and 44 metres distant. The combination of distance, and the fact that the existing and new dwellings would be arranged in a front-to-front situation, would mean that the amenity of the occupiers of the existing dwellings would not be harmed by excessive overlooking or loss of privacy, in your officers’ view. It is considered that the main impact that would arise in this location would arise from vehicles using the approved access to the site, which has the benefit of full planning permission. Nevertheless, it is noted that the location of the access did not give rise to an objection from the Environmental Health team in relation to unacceptable impacts arising. That team did identify that disturbances would need to be properly controlled during the construction phase, and a condition (13) was imposed on the outline planning permission that

requires the agreement of a Construction Management Plan, prior to the commencement of development.

- 10.4 In regard to the dwellings opposite the site on Finborough Road to the south, these scale at approximately 34 metre at their closest point. Again the arrangement of dwellings is that a front-to-front positioning is achieved. It is also pertinent to the consideration of this location that an established hedge line is located on the site which would also assist in filtering views etc. Members are advised that the originally-submitted plans did show a new pumping station to serve the development being positioned between the southernmost units and the boundary with Finborough Road – opposite existing dwellings. This element of the new development gave rise to concerns over amenity impacts from local residents. As a result the applicant has agreed to relocate the pumping station away from the existing dwellings, near to the attenuation basin in the southwest corner of the site. Another concern that has arisen is the impact arising from vehicle headlights shining towards the dwellings on the south side of Finborough Road, bearing in mind the difference in levels between the site and the road. In consideration of this issue it is noted that there is an established hedge line on the southern boundary of the site which would assist in providing a filtering screen to reduce light impact. In addition, the access roads that would be used by vehicles on the site are considered to be reasonably distant to ensure that amenity impacts from vehicles were not unacceptably adverse.
- 10.5 In relation to the impact of the proposed development on the emerging site to the east, it is considered that the general location of the proposed development would ensure that instances of unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing etc were avoided by sufficient distance between units. Again, impact would be further mitigated by hedging and trees to be retained along the shared boundary between the two sites.

11. Planning Obligations

- 11.1 Members are advised that under the outline planning permission, a legal agreement was completed (dated 30th May 2021) that secured the following mitigation of impacts that would arise from the development:
- Provision of 21% affordable housing on the application site, together with a contribution of £31 248 towards the provision of affordable housing within the district of Mid Suffolk.
 - Early Years education contribution - £266 603.30
 - Primary education contribution - £758 795.58
 - Secondary education contribution - £618 149.40
 - Sixth Form education contribution - £142 649.30
 - Health Contribution - £84 140
 - Waste contribution - £16 060
 - Provision of a LEAP on the site plus maintenance contribution
 - Library contribution - £2 336
 - Provision of open space within the site, together with a maintenance contribution
 - Travel Plan contribution - £97 469.52

12. Parish Council Comments

- 12.1 The comments that have been received from Onehouse Parish Council and Stowmarket Town Council are fully acknowledged and appreciated. It is noted that the Parish Council acknowledges the revisions to the proposal following its initial comments.

12.2 Stowmarket Town Council's comments are noted. The following comments are made on individual points made:

- The drainage proposals for the scheme, utilising SuDS, has been considered by the LLFA and that authority has no objection to the proposals.
- The retention of trees and hedgerow features is incorporated within the submitted scheme and reflects the outline application parameters. Some removal of hedging on the Union Road boundary is necessary to create the vehicular access (and visibility splays) to serve the development. This aspect has obtained full planning permission.
- The location of the LEAP is established through the outline application process. Its location away from roads is considered a benefit in safety terms. Furthermore the facility would be overlooked by dwellings.
- Swift boxes would be installed as part of the overall scheme of ecological enhancements proposed for the site.
- The issue of open space is identified within the secured s106 agreement and it is the case that the agreement allows for this to be transferred to a Management Company, nominated body or the Parish Council. In addition, the outline planning permission included a condition (18) that secures the agreement of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan prior to the commencement of development.
- The use of recycled materials for benches can be secured if necessary through the proposed detailed landscaping condition.

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

13. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 13.1 The grant of outline planning permission DC/20/01110 established the acceptability in principle of 146 no. dwellings being erected on the identified site. On this basis the principle and nature of the development is fixed; Members are not required to re-consider the permission from scratch and officers are satisfied that the development will continue to deliver the anticipated benefits and within the envelope of impacts already considered.
- 13.2 As a planning judgement, given the fact that the outline planning permission established the acceptability of the development taking place on the identified site, it now falls for the details of the proposed development to be considered under this reserved matters submission.
- 13.3 The proposal as presented to Committee is not the first iteration of the plans; liaison has taken place with the applicant to address issues of townscape improvement, as well as other issues arising from consultee responses. The aim has been to ensure that a volume residential development can be provided on the site that is respectful of the constraints that exist and the challenges (and opportunities) that are presented by the site's topography. In both cases it is considered that the scheme presented to Members achieves an appropriate standard. The layout of the proposal is considered to be of merit in townscape terms, creating a legible development with properly defined public and private areas. In addition, the form of buildings reflects a traditional approach which is considered to be an appropriate design response in the context of the surroundings. Importantly, officers judge the reserved matters submission to follow the parameters of the indicative landscaping plans that were identified in condition 04 attached to the grant of outline planning permission.

13.4 In consideration of the proposals, the objections and concerns expressed by the Parish Councils, and local residents, are fully acknowledged and appreciated. The development of the land will clearly be a fundamental alteration in the local environment, and the development will generate additional traffic movements. That said, the principle is established through the outline approval and the submission is considered to follow the development parameters established at that time. The application for reserved matters approval put forward for consideration by Members is judged by your officers to be an appropriate scheme, which is worthy of a positive recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the reserved matters are APPROVED subject to the following summarised conditions and those as may be deemed necessary by the Chief Planning Officer:-

- Reserved matters permission given in accordance with the terms of the outline planning permission relating to this site and the conditions attached thereto remain in force, except where discharged or superseded by the reserved matters approval.
- Approved Plans (Plans submitted and as subsequently amended that form this application).
- Notwithstanding the submitted details the materials palette for the dwellings in the vicinity of Star House Farm to be agreed i.e. plot no.s 1 – 3 and 9 – 13 inclusive.
- Submission of a detailed hard and soft landscaping scheme. Paths serving the LEAP should incorporate a sealed surface.
- Submission of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and dedicated Tree Protection Plan to help ensure harm is not caused to the trees scheduled for retention
- Ecological mitigation in accordance with the Ecological Appraisal recommendations.
- Vehicle parking, cycle parking and bin collection points to be provided in accordance with the detailed plans provided prior to relevant part of development brought into use and thereafter retained as such
- Conditions recommended by the Highway Authority

Plus any further conditions as may be deemed necessary by the Highway Authority or the Chief Planning Officer

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

- Proactive working statement
- SCC Highways notes
- Support for sustainable development principles
- Informatives identified by SCC LLFA