

## **APPENDIX A**

RELEVANT EXTRACTS FROM THE NPPF

- 4.1 Paragraph 8 of the revised NPPF highlights three dimensions to sustainable development being economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 4.2 The revised NPPF at paragraph 11 states that for plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development which for decision making this means:
- “c) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
  - d) Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
    - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
    - ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework*
- 4.3 Paragraph 47 identifies that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.
- 4.4 The Government’s policy, as set out in the revised NPPF, is to boost significantly, the supply of housing. Paragraph 60 reads:
- “To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, **that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed** and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.”*
- 4.5 The revised NPPF looks at delivering a sufficient supply of homes, Paragraph 62 identifies within this context, the size, and type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies including older people.
- 4.6 Paragraph 69 of the revised NPPF acknowledges that small and medium sized sites and make an important contribution to meeting housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of good mix of sites local planning authorities should support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.
- 4.7 The revised NPPF identifies at Paragraph 120(c) that substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.

- 4.8 The Government recognises at Paragraph 124 that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:
- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
  - b) local market conditions and viability;*
  - c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
  - d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
  - e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.*
- 4.9 In respect of heritage, the NPPF at paragraph 189 states that heritages assets “...are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations”.
- 4.10 When considering the impact of a proposal upon the significance of a designated heritage asset the “*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*”
- 4.11 Paragraph 197 of the NPPF sets out that in determining planning applications, local authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.12 If a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm of a heritage asset, Paragraph 202 advises that “*this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*”
- 4.13 Paragraph 203 goes on to state “*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*”
- 4.14 Paragraph 206 states “*Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*”
- 4.15 The overriding message in the NPPF is one of sustainable development.

## **APPENDIX B**

APPEAL DECISION, FORMER BASINGSTOKE  
POLICE STATION, BASINGSTOKE, RG21 4AD  
APP/H1705/W/20/3248204



## Appeal Decision

Hearing Held on 27 April 2021 and 18 May 2021

Site visit made on 29 April 2021

by Adrian Hunter BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/20/3248204

Former Basingstoke Police Station, London Road, Basingstoke RG21 4AD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Churchill Retirement Living against the decision of Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 19/01822/FUL, dated 28 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2020.
  - The development proposed is demolition of existing buildings and erection of 56 No retirement apartments, guest apartment, communal facilities, vehicular access, car parking and landscaping.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of 56 No retirement apartments, guest apartment, communal facilities, vehicular access, car parking and landscaping on land at Former Basingstoke Police Station, London Road, Basingstoke RG21 4AD, in accordance with planning application Ref 19/01822/FUL, dated 28 June 2019, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

### Application for costs

2. At the Hearing an application for costs was made by Churchill Retirement Living against Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

### Preliminary Matters

3. For reasons of precision and clarity, I have taken the description of **development from the Council's decision notice.**
4. The appellant has included revised plans and information as part of their appeal. Whilst not before the Council at the time of their decision, they were submitted at the outset of the appeal, therefore parties have had the opportunity to comment. Having reviewed the original proposal and the revised plans, I do not consider that the main elements of the scheme have materially altered from that originally submitted and upon which consultation took place. Against this backdrop, I consider that no-one would be prejudiced if I were to consider the revisions as part of the appeal, taking account of the principles established in the Wheatcroft case. Therefore, I have determined the appeal on this basis.

5. The proposal is supported by a planning obligation in the form of a Unilateral Undertaking under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. I have had regard to it in reaching my decision. As agreed between the parties, a completed version was submitted shortly after the hearing closed.
6. The appeal hearing was conducted as a Virtual Hearing.

#### Main issues

7. The main issues in this appeal are:
  - The effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area, in particular, whether the siting, layout, design, scale, bulk and appearance of the development would appear as an incongruous form of development having regard to the pattern and character of the surroundings;
  - Whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Basingstoke Town Conservation Area and whether it would preserve the setting of the White Hart Public House, a Grade II listed building;
  - Whether the proposed development makes adequate provision for safe and secure cycle parking;
  - Whether the proposed development makes adequate provision for the storage of refuse and recycling; and
  - Whether the proposal makes adequate provision for local infrastructure, in particular the provision of affordable housing and open space provision.

#### Reasons

##### *Character and appearance*

8. The appeal site lies to the east of Basingstoke Town Centre, on the northern side of London Road. The site comprises the vacant former police station and associated surface car parking and ancillary outbuildings, which are located to the rear. Fronting onto London Road, the existing building is predominantly single storey across the frontage, with a taller, 4-storey central section, which extends back into the site. The building is set back from London Road, where there are a number of trees, grassed areas, along with a number of former car parking spaces between it and the footway.
9. The surrounding area comprises a mix of modern and historic developments. Due to the uses of a number of surrounding buildings, the area forms the core of civic activity within the town, with uses including Council Offices, Registry Office and Basingstoke Magistrates' Court. Immediately to the east is Lauriston Court, which is a 3-4 storey residential block, that extends back, away from the road. Further to the east, the area is predominantly residential and is more sub-urban in character, with dwellings comprising a mix of detached and semi-detached properties.
10. A particular characteristic of the area is that all the buildings are distinct and individual, sitting within their own plots with space around them. However, whilst the buildings on the northern side of London Road are set back behind landscaping, those on the southern side are positioned close to the carriageway edge. As a result, the northern side has a verdant character.

11. The appeal site lies within Basingstoke Town Conservation Area (BTCA), and there are a number of nearby listed buildings, including The White Hart Public House, Goldings and Eastlands, all of which are Grade II.
12. Policy EM1 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (BDLP) states that development will be permitted only where it can be demonstrated that the proposals are sympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area concerned and must respect, enhance and not be detrimental to the character or visual amenity of the landscape likely to be affected.
13. Policy EM10 of the BDLP states that proposals will be required to respect the local environment, contribute to the streetscene and be visually attractive. Policy EM10 advocates a high quality and robust design-led approach to new development. In particular, the policy requires that development must **'positively contribute to the appearance and use of streets' (criteria 1b), 'respond to the local context' (criteria 1c), contribute 'to a sense of place' (criteria 2a) and have 'due regard to' the density, scale, layout and appearance of the surrounding area (criteria 2c).**
14. In contrast to the existing main building, the proposed four storey development would extend across the full width of the plot and, due to its height, would be of considerably greater scale, bulk and mass. The building would be positioned closer to London Road, which, in combination with its additional size, would increase the presence and visual prominence of development on the site. Although in this respect, I note that it would be in line with the adjoining Lauriston Court development. Furthermore, a reasonable amount of open and undeveloped space would be provided to the front and around the sides of the building, albeit less than that around the existing police station.
15. In my view the local character of the area is varied, with no particular style of building, footprint, scale, building line or materials being particularly prevalent. Building heights are also varied, however given the rise in levels towards the towns centre, due to their position in relation to London Road, those on the southern side appear more prominent.
16. As a result, whilst the building would be larger than the existing development on the site, it would still appear as its own building, which due to the detailing of the elevations and the use of contrasting materials, would ensure that it would retain an identity of its own. In this respect, whilst being modern in design and appearance, the proposal would be similar in its overall pattern and characteristics to surrounding developments.
17. Furthermore, when travelling along London Road, towards the appeal site and beyond, the nature and character of surrounding development changes from a more suburban feel, to a more dense, urban environment. This provides a sense of arrival within the town centre. The overall scale and design of the building would be in keeping with this change in character and would help to support and maintain that sense of arrival and a perception of entry into the town centre.
18. At the hearing, there was considerable debate with regard to the existing plane trees which are located to the front of the site. It was put to me by the Council that the existing trees represent important features within the BTCA and the street scene and, as a result, form a key element of the open and verdant

character of the northern side of London Street. Having visited the site, I would concur with this view.

19. From the evidence, it is clear that these trees would be retained, although some works would be required to them to enable the development to take place. However, due to their relationship with the proposed building, they would result in some shading to a number of the dwellings which would front onto London Road. This, **in the Council's view**, would result in substantial pressure for these trees to be removed in the future. In response, it was put to me by the appellant that, unlike traditional open market housing, residents of retirement living apartments often seek properties with views of trees and therefore it was their intention to retain and manage them.
20. I accept that due to the relationship of the building with the trees, it would result in some shadowing to a number of the dwellings located to the front of the building. However, on the basis of the evidence before me, I am satisfied that sufficient measures would be in place to ensure the long-term retention and management of these trees.
21. Pulling all these elements together, I conclude on this main issue that the proposal would deliver a quality design, which, in combination with the retention of the existing landscaped front of the site, would not materially harm the character and appearance of the area.
22. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area and, in this respect, accords with Policies EM1 and EM10 of BDLP, the Design and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

### *Designated Heritage Assets*

#### Basingstoke Town Conservation Area

23. The BTCA covers the historic core of Basingstoke and is divided into five Character Areas, with the appeal site falling into Character Area Three, Goldings and Parkland. The Basingstoke Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document 2015 (CAA) defines the area as being dominated by the formality of the 18th century fronted house and the relationship with its former parkland.
24. The predominant character is defined by existing development, principally large civic and administrative buildings, which are located at the western end of London Road. These buildings are prominent within the streetscape and contrast in scale to the two-storey former historic residential buildings of Goldings and Eastlands. On the northern side, the buildings are set back from the road, but are positioned along the pavement edge on the southern side. Buildings are varied in appearance, therefore there is no particular architectural style which dominates the Character Area.
25. Section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 identifies the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This is reflected in Policy EM11 of the BDLP, which establishes that proposals must conserve or enhance the quality of the borough's heritage assets, which includes Conservation Areas. EM11 states that proposals will be permitted



- where they demonstrate an understanding of the character and setting of Conservation Areas and respect historic interest and local character and ensure the use of appropriate materials, design and detailing.
26. In contrast to the existing building on site, the proposed development would be of a greater height and scale and would therefore be more prominent within the street scene. Furthermore, with the replacement of the single storey aspects of the existing building with a four-storey development, the building would have a greater visual presence. That said, the increase in prominence and visual presence of development on the site does not, in my view, automatically translate into a form of development which would harm the BTCA.
  27. The Council were of the view that the development of the site required a **building to exhibit a 'Pavilion' style, so as to respond to surrounding** developments. However, on this matter, I agree with the appellant that using the accepted interpretation of the term, none of the surrounding buildings could be described to fully meet this style. To my mind, the reference to Pavilion in this context relates more to the provision of, and a sense of space around the building, allowing it to be fully appreciated, rather than a building which is also ornate and unique in its architectural detailing.
  28. In this respect, whilst the building would be positioned closer to London Road, it would be set within a landscaped context, with retained trees along the site frontage and space provided both either side and within the site. The footprint of the building would also respect the overall shape and pattern of the existing police station, with a frontage and a central core extending into the site. As such, the proposal would respect the existing grain and character of the BTCA.
  29. Whilst being four-storeys in height, due to the surrounding topography, the ridgeline of the proposed building would be lower than Eastlands and would be of a comparable height to the buildings on the opposite side of London Road. Furthermore, whilst being set further forward, the front of the building would mirror that of the adjoining Lauriston Court. This, along with the retention of the existing trees and associated landscaping, would maintain a substantial element of the verdant character of the northern side of London Road. As a result, the proposed building would be in keeping with surrounding development and would not appear overly dominant within the street scene.
  30. With regards to the existing building, there were differing views from the parties in terms of its quality and the overall contribution it makes to the BTCA. In my opinion, the existing building, due to its distinctive design and appearance, is, at best, a noteworthy feature within the BTCA, with its former use being **reflective of the 'civic' nature of surrounding land uses**. However, overall, I find that the existing building makes no positive contribution to the BTCA. Neither do I consider, nor find evidence to support, **the Council's** submission that the existing building serves as a **'bookend' to the BTCA**.
  31. Drawing these aspects together, the proposal would not harm the architectural interest of the BTCA. It would remove a building that, whilst not harmful to the BTCA, in my view makes no positive contribution to it, and would replace it with a building that would be in keeping with its surroundings, with its design and siting complementing surrounding buildings. Furthermore, whilst it would be more prominent due to its scale, it would not appear as a dominant form of development. Existing trees along the frontage would be retained, along with

an element of landscaped frontage. As such, the proposal would preserve the overall character and appearance of the BTCA.

32. I have had regard to my duty under S72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal scheme would not harm and would preserve the character and appearance of the BTCA and therefore accords with Policy EM11 of the BDLP, Section 4 and 7 of the SPD and Section 16 of the Framework.

#### White Hart Public House

33. The White Hart Public House is a Grade II listed building and is located on the opposite side of London Road. The building dates to the eighteenth century with a nineteenth century addition to the east. From the evidence, the building served as an important public house and inn on one of the main routes into the historic core of Basingstoke. The heritage significance of the building is therefore defined by both its age and its architectural detailing, along with its historical importance as a roadside inn. To some degree however, the overall significance of the building has been reduced over the years by surrounding modern development.
34. I have already concluded that the existing police station makes no positive contribution to the BTCA and, for the same reasons, I conclude that it makes no contribution to the setting of the White Hart Public House. That said, the presence of the existing trees and the verdant frontage of the appeal site, do however make some contribution to the appreciation of the listed building, in particular when viewing the building along London Road in both directions. In this respect, the retention of the majority of the trees, and the potential for additional landscaping in this area, would preserve the overall setting of the listed building in this respect.
35. Views of the building along London Road would still be retained, allowing the former historic role and function of the building to be appreciated, although these would be seen within the context of the new development on the appeal site. The prominence of the White Hart Public House would therefore not be harmed by the proposal.
36. In respect to the overall design of the proposed building, whilst being modern, it would reflect and respond to surrounding local character and architectural detailing, which is characteristic of this part of the streetscape. As a result, it would not harm the setting of the listed building when seen from surrounding viewpoints.
37. Whilst the proposal would result in the provision of a new building that would be of a greater scale than the existing Police Station, given the separation distance between it and the listed building, I do not find that the ability to appreciate the listed building would be altered, to such a degree, as to harm the significance of the building. Furthermore, given the separation provided by London Road, and the fact that the proposal would retain a substantial element of the existing landscaped frontage, this would be sufficient to ensure that the proposal would not be overbearing to the listed building.

38. As a consequence, whilst the proposed building would be taller and located closer to the listed building than the existing development on site, I find that the overall historic significance of the listed building would not be harmed.
39. I have had regard to my duty under S66(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as to the listed building. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal scheme would preserve the setting of the White Hart Public House and would not harm its significance. Therefore, the proposal accords with Policy EM11 of the BDLP, Section 4 and 7 of the SPD and Section 16 of the Framework.
40. In summary, I conclude that the proposal would cause no harm to the designated heritage assets.

*Cycle parking provision*

41. The Parking Supplementary Planning Document July 2018 (PSPD), sets out the **Council's standards with regards to** the level of cycle parking provision necessary within new developments. Where cycle parking is provided the PSPD requires it to be secure and covered, conveniently located adjacent to entrances/exits to buildings, enjoy good natural observation, be easily accessible from roads and/or cycle routes and be well lit. In terms of the level of cycle parking to be provided, the PSPD does not set out specific requirements in relation to cycle parking for retirement housing, but instead, requires provision to be determined on a case by case basis.
42. Through the submission of the updated plan, the appeal proposal would make provision for six cycle stands, which would be located in a covered shelter at the end of the refuse/recycling building. In total this would provide sufficient space for 12 cycles.
43. In support of the level of provision, evidence was presented to me by the appellant, including levels of use from other similar developments, to support the case that due to the nature of the development and the age of the intended occupants, the total level of cycle use would be low, and would be mainly related to staff use, rather than residents. At the hearing, the Council maintained a position that the level of provision was insufficient.
44. Having reviewed the evidence, I find the survey data and the case put forward by the appellant to be compelling and, in this instance, provides strong justification to support the overall proposed level of provision on site. Furthermore, I note that the nature of the provision would meet the requirements set out in the PSPD. Therefore, given the nature and type of the development proposed, I consider that the proposal would make adequate provision for cycle parking to meet the needs of both residents and staff.
45. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would make adequate provision for safe and secure cycle parking and, in this respect, accords with Policies CN9 and EM10 of the BDLP, the PSPD and Section 9 of The Framework.

*Waste and recycling provision*

46. The Design and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document July 2018 (DSSPD), sets out the **Council's** requirements with regard to a range of

- development standards, including the provision of adequate waste and recycling facilities.
47. Using the DSSPD, based on the size of the scheme, the Council considers that the proposed development would require the provision of 18 x 1100 litre containers for waste and recycling and 9 x 240 litre glass recycling containers.
  48. Through the provision of the amended plan, the proposal would provide 12 x 1100 litre and 9 x 240 litre glass recycling containers, to be within a bin store located adjacent to the site entrance.
  49. At the Hearing, the view of the Council was that, despite the amended plan, the level of provision was still well below the required level and, as a result further additional bins would be required in the future, which, due to the limited size of the bin store, would have to be provided externally. In the view of the Council, this would represent visual harm to the area. On the other hand, evidence was presented by the appellant in the form of data from other similar developments to show that, whilst the overall provision was less than **the Council's DSSPD, the level of bins** to be provided on site, accorded with their experience of the waste and recycling that arose from other similar developments.
  50. I agree with the Council that, given the location of the site, the proliferation of external bins would harm the character and appearance of the area. However, given the evidence provided by the appellant, it is clear that, due to the nature of the development proposed, the level of waste from the proposed use would be less than that which would be generated from a general needs housing development of a similar scale.
  51. On this basis, I am therefore satisfied that due to the nature of the development, the amount, level and location of the bin stores provided as part of the scheme are sufficient to meet the overall needs that would arise from the development.
  52. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would make adequate provision for the storage of refuse and recycling and, in this respect, accords with Policies CN9 and EM10 of the BDLP, the DSSPD and the Framework.

#### *Provision of Infrastructure*

53. The appeal is supported by a Planning Obligation in the form of a Unilateral Undertaking, which sets out contributions to be provided for both open space and affordable housing.
54. At the Hearing, the parties were in agreement with regards to the total level of contributions that the development could make to ensure it remained viable. However, there was disagreement with regards to the split of these contributions, with the Council seeking a considerable proportion of the monies to be spent on improvements to nearby open space.
55. To address this, the appellant, through the Unilateral Undertaking provided two options for the contributions as set out in Schedules A and B of the Undertaking. Schedule A included their preferred level of contribution, with the focus being on affordable housing. Whereas schedule B, **reflected the Council's** position.

56. Paragraph 56 of the Framework and Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations make it clear that Planning Obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the identified tests, namely (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (b) directly related to the development; and (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
57. It was agreed between the parties that an open space contribution would meet tests (a) and (b). However, in the view of the appellant, the level sought for open space was not fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.
58. In justifying their figure, the Council referred to their adopted standards and clarified that the sum was based on identified need across the Borough for open space provision. Furthermore, in calculating the requirement, they did not consider that the on-site provision was suitable and therefore required the total of provision to be provided off-site.
59. On the other hand, it was put to me by the appellant that, due to the type of housing proposed, the open space requirements of the proposal would be different to that which would be expected from general open market housing. In their experience, residents would make more use of internal spaces in the form of the residents' lounge and use the communal gardens in a different way.
60. Turning to the proportion of contributions, I am not convinced by the case put forward by the Council with regard to the need for a substantial element of the contribution to be used towards open space provision within the area. Whilst I do not doubt that future residents of the proposed development would indeed wish to access nearby open spaces, in particular War Memorial Park, given the nature of the proposed use, I would envisage this to be limited to more general visits for walking or sitting, rather than any more specific purpose. I also consider that some acknowledgment has to be made of the on-site provision. Whilst this may not be extensive, it would, no doubt, meet the needs of particular residents, who may not wish, or even be able to access local parks.
61. On this basis, I do not find that the level of contribution for open space sought by the Council to be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. Furthermore, in terms of affordable housing, my attention was drawn to the significant needs across all types of housing across the Borough, with the appellant describing the shortfall as acute. From the evidence, I would concur with this position. In light of this position, it would therefore appear fair and reasonable to require the substantial element of the contributions to be made towards the provision of affordable housing.
62. For the above reasons, I therefore conclude that the proposal, through Schedule A of the Unilateral Undertaking, would make adequate provision for local infrastructure, in particular the provision of affordable housing and open space provision and, in this respect, accords with Policies CN1, CN4, CN6 and EM5 of the BDLP, the Planning Obligations for Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document and the Framework.

#### Planning Balance

63. It is acknowledged by the Council that, at this moment in time, they are unable to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land. On the basis of the information before me, I see no reason to disagree with this position and I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.

64. Paragraph 11 of The Framework states that where relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so, would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as whole or where specific policies in the NPPF, indicate that development should be restricted. Furthermore, I have found no conflict with the Framework in respect of heritage issues. As a result, I find that the tilted balance as identified in Paragraph 11d of the Framework is engaged in this case.
65. I have found that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area and accords with the relevant policies in the development plan and the Framework. There would be no harm arising from the proposal to nearby designated heritage assets, with the proposal preserving the character of the BTCA and the setting of the nearby listed White Hart Public House. Furthermore, I have concluded that the proposal provides adequate cycle parking, refuse storage and policy compliant levels of contributions to both affordable housing and public open space. These weigh heavily in favour of the proposal.
66. A number of benefits were also put to me by the appellant. The Council did not take issue with these benefits, but, in their view, considered that they did not attract sufficient weight to overcome the harm they considered would be caused by the conflict with the development plan and the Framework.
67. The proposal would provide much needed housing for older people. In this respect, I note from the evidence that there is a shortfall within the Borough for the provision of this type of accommodation and that there are no specific allocations for such development. Therefore, the Council is reliant on windfalls for their delivery. Such provision of specialist housing also allows for the release of under-occupied housing stock. Furthermore, the proposal would make a substantial contribution to the provision of affordable housing within the Borough. In light of the advice contained within Paragraph 59 of the Framework to significantly boost the supply of homes, and to meet the needs of groups with specific housing requirements, it is appropriate to give significant weight to these benefits.
68. The proposal would involve the re-development of previously developed land, which is located within close proximity to the town centre and all the associated services and facilities that this has, thereby making the site sustainable in this respect. It is therefore appropriate to attach substantial weight to these benefits.
69. The proposal would provide economic benefits through the generation of jobs, during both the construction, but also once the development has been completed. Further benefits would also be delivered through increased spending by residents locally. Given the scale of the development proposed, it is appropriate to attached substantial weight to these benefits.
70. Further benefits would also be delivered through the optimum use of the site for new development, along with some environmental improvements through the reduction in hardstanding within the site. It is appropriate to afford these benefits moderate weight.
71. In summary, I have found no conflict with any of the relevant development plan policies and therefore conclude that the appeal proposal accords with the



development plan. As the Council are unable to demonstrate a 5-year land supply, Paragraph 11d of the Framework provides that applications should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

72. In this instance, there is clear and convincing evidence with regards to the suitability of the proposal. The delivery of specialist housing weighs substantially in favour of the appeal scheme, especially given the critical need identified at national level in both the Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), along with the identified shortfall in terms of the delivery at local level. As a result, even if I had reached a different conclusion in relation to the heritage issues and found there to be harm to the identified designated heritage assets, any harm would have been clearly outweighed by the significant public benefits of the scheme. Therefore, in this case, I find no reasons to withhold planning permission.

### Planning Conditions

73. At the hearing, a number of minor changes to the conditions were suggested, to ensure that the correct plan references were included within the conditions. As such, and in light of my conclusion in the Preliminary Matters section of this decision, I have made the requisite amendments in the interests of clarity and precision.
74. The suggested conditions have been considered in light of the advice contained within the Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance. A standard implementation condition, along with a requirement to implement the scheme in accordance with the approved plans is necessary.
75. To ensure the external appearance of the building it is necessary to require the submission of details of proposed materials and finishes. For the same reason, it is appropriate to attach a condition requiring the details of all hard and paved surfaces to be approved.
76. To protect the character and appearance of the area, it is appropriate to attach a condition requiring the submission of a landscaping scheme, along with a management plan for its continued maintenance.
77. To ensure bio-diversity enhancement is delivered, it is necessary to attach a condition requiring the submission of a habitat enhancement scheme. For the same reasons, it is necessary to require the submission of details of any proposed external lighting.
78. To protect the living conditions of surrounding residents it is necessary to require the submission of a noise assessment, along with restrictions on noise levels to be generated from construction activities. For the same reason, it is necessary to attach a condition to ensure no piling methods are used in the construction and to require the submission a measured site survey.
79. To ensure that risks from contaminated land to the future users of the site and adjoining land are minimised, it is necessary to require the submission of a desk top study and that a verification report to show that any risks have be mitigated.

80. In the interests of highway safety, it is necessary to require the provision of adequate visibility splays. For the same reason, it is appropriate to require the access to be constructed from suitable material and to ensure that the car parking is laid out and available prior to the use of the site
81. In the interests of local residents, businesses and also in the interest of highway safety, it is necessary to attach a condition requiring the submission of a Construction and Environmental Method Statement.
82. Considering the presence of existing trees on the site, it is necessary to attach a condition requiring the submission of tree protection measures. For the same reason, it is necessary to require the submission of details of all existing and proposed utilities.
83. To prevent the risk of flooding, it is necessary to attach a condition requiring the submission of a surface water drainage strategy.
84. Given the nature of the development, it is necessary to attach a condition to restrict the occupancy of the dwellings.

#### Conclusion

85. For the above reasons, the appeal is allowed, subject to the conditions as set out in the attached schedule.

*Adrian Hunter*

INSPECTOR



APPEARANCES

*FOR THE APPELLANT*

Neil Cameron QC	Landmark Chambers
Robert Jackson	Planning Issues Ltd
Matthew Shellum	Planning Issues Ltd
James MacKay	Alder King
Paul White	Ecus Ltd

*FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING  
AUTHORITY*

Nicola Williams	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
John Dawson	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Daniel Ayre	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Terry Martin	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Tom Roworth	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Sooh Boocock	Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Parminder Dosanjh	Aspinall Verdi
Matthew Olive	Aspinall Verdi

### Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan (drawing 10101BS PA100 Rev A); Proposed site plan (drawing 10101BS PA101 Rev D); Ground floor plan (drawing 10101BS PA102 Rev B); First floor plan (drawing 10101BS PA103 Rev A); Second floor plan (drawing 10101BS PA104 Rev A); Third floor plan (drawing 10101BS PA105 Rev A); Proposed elevation 1 (drawing 10101BS PA107 Rev A); Proposed elevation 2 (drawing 10101BS PA108 Rev A); Proposed elevation 3 (drawing 10101BS PA109 Rev A); Proposed elevation 4-6 (drawing 10101BS PA110 Rev B); Proposed roof plan (drawing 10101BS PA106 Rev A); Proposed elevations of outbuilding (drawing 10101BS PA111 Rev A).
3. Notwithstanding the approved plans, no development above ground floor slab level shall commence until details of materials and finishes have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details should include samples, including on-site sample panels as applicable. These requirements include the provision of information relating to:
  - the size, texture, colour and source of bricks including specials;
  - the bonding and coursing of brickwork;
  - the material, texture and colour of any tiles/slates;
  - mortar mixes;
  - the material, texture and colour of any other materials such as cladding, string courses, coping and balustrades; and
  - Windows and doors.

The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details so approved.

4. Notwithstanding the details submitted, no development above ground slab level shall occur until the following drawings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
  - Scaled drawings at a scale of 1:10 including string courses, window cills and headers, the depth of window reveals, windows and doors and parapet.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.

5. No development above ground floor slab level shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted (including replacement trees where appropriate). The works approved shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of the building(s) or when the use hereby permitted is commenced. In addition, a maintenance programme

- detailing all operations to be carried out in order to allow successful establishment of planting, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development takes place above ground floor slab level. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
6. No development shall take place above ground floor slab level of the building until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme for landscape management and maintenance detailing, as a minimum, an implementation timetable for all landscaping works and a landscape management programme, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
  7. No development above ground floor slab level shall take place on site until details of the materials to be used for hard and paved surfacing have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved surfacing shall be completed before the adjoining buildings are first occupied and thereafter maintained.
  8. No development above ground floor slab level shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of screen walls/fences/hedges to be erected. The approved screen walls/fences/hedges shall be erected before the building hereby approved is commenced and shall subsequently be maintained. Any hedging, trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, details of which shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before replacement occurs.
  9. No development shall take place until details of the habitat enhancement scheme have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details so approved.
  10. Details of any proposed external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details so approved.
  11. No development above ground floor slab level should take place until a noise assessment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The noise assessment should, if found necessary, provide a noise mitigation scheme for protecting the proposed dwellings from neighbouring commercial land uses. Should a scheme of noise mitigation be required no dwelling should be occupied until a post completion noise survey has been carried out by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant and a report has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

12. The rating level of sound emitted from any fixed plant associated with the development shall not exceed background sound levels between the hours of 0700-2300 (taken as a 15 minute LA90 at the nearest sound sensitive premises) and shall be no greater than 5dB below the background sound level between 2300-0700 (taken as a 15 minute LA90 at the nearest noise sensitive premises). All measurements shall be made in accordance with the methodology of BS4142: 2014 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound and/or its subsequent amendments.

Where access to the nearest sound sensitive property is not possible, measurements shall be undertaken at an appropriate location and corrected to establish the noise levels at the nearest sound sensitive property.

Any deviations from the LA90 time interval stipulated above shall be agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

13. No works pursuant to this permission, including demolition, shall commence until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority: -

A desk top study carried out by a competent person documenting all potential sources of contamination on the site in accordance with national guidance as set out in Contaminated Land Research Report Nos. 2 and 3 and BS10175: 2011

And

With the exception of the demolition of existing buildings and removal of existing hardstanding no works pursuant to this permission shall commence until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority: -

- (a) a site investigation report documenting the ground conditions of the site and incorporating chemical and gas analysis identified as being **appropriate by the Council's Environmental Health team and in accordance with BS10175: 2011 - Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites - Code of Practice;**

and, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority,

- (b) a detailed scheme for remedial works and measures to be undertaken to avoid risk from contaminants/or gases when the site is developed. The scheme must include a timetable of works and site management procedures and the nomination of a competent person to oversee the implementation of the works. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and include if necessary proposals for future maintenance and monitoring.

If during any works contamination is encountered which has not been previously identified it should be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. The additional contamination shall be fully assessed and an appropriate remediation scheme, agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR11'.

14. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied/brought into use until there has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority verification by the competent person approved under the provisions of condition 13(b) that any remediation scheme required and approved under the provisions of condition 13(b) has been implemented fully in accordance with the approved details (unless varied with the written agreement of the Local Planning Authority in advance of implementation). Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority such verification shall comprise;

- as built drawings of the implemented scheme;
- photographs of the remediation works in progress; and
- Certificates demonstrating that imported and/or material left in situ is free of contamination.

Thereafter the scheme shall be monitored and maintained in accordance with the scheme approved under condition 16(b), unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

15. Prior to construction of development commencing visibility splays of 2.4m. x 43m. shall be provided at the entrance. These splays shall have all obstructions removed between 1m and 2m. above the level of the adjacent carriageway and shall be maintained thereafter.

16. Prior to occupation the works to the access including the first 6m measured from the nearside edge of carriageway shall be surfaced in a non-migratory material. This area shall be maintained in this condition thereafter.

17. No development or other operations (including demolition, site preparation or groundworks) shall commence on site until a Construction and Environmental Method Statement that demonstrates safe and coordinated systems of work affecting or likely to affect the public highway and or all motorised and or non-motorised highway users, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement must demonstrate the adoption and use of the best practicable means to reduce the effects of noise, vibration, dust and site lighting and shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall include for:

- Means of direct access (temporary or permanent) to the site from the adjoining maintainable public highway;
- The parking and turning of vehicles of site operatives and visitors off carriageway (all to be established within one week of the commencement of construction works (including ground works) pursuant to the development hereby approved);
- Loading and unloading of plant and materials away from the maintainable public highway;
- Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development away from the maintainable public highway;

- Wheel washing facilities or an explanation why they are not necessary;
  - The erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
  - Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
  - A scheme for recycling and disposing of waste resulting from construction work and the management and coordination of deliveries of plant and materials and the disposing of waste resulting from construction activities so as to avoid undue interference with the operation of the public highway, particularly during the Monday to Friday AM peak (06.30 to 09.30) and PM peak (16.00 to 18.30) periods;
  - The routes to be used by construction traffic to access and egress the site so as to avoid undue interference with the safety and operation of the public highway and adjacent roads, including construction traffic holding areas both on and off the site as necessary;
  - Procedures for maintaining good public relations including complaint management, public consultation and liaison;
  - **Arrangements for liaison with the Council's Environmental Protection Team;**
  - All works and ancillary operations which are audible at the site boundary, or at such other place as may be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, shall be carried out only between the following hours: 0730 Hours and 18 00 Hours on Mondays to Fridays and 08 00 and 13 00 Hours on Saturdays and; at no time on Sundays and Bank Holidays;
  - Deliveries to and removal of plant, equipment, machinery and waste from the site must only take place within the permitted hours detailed above;
  - Mitigation measures as defined in BS 5528: Parts 1 and 2: 2009 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites shall be used to minimise noise disturbance from construction works; and
  - Procedures for emergency deviation of the agreed working hours;
18. The building shall not be occupied until the proposed car parking facilities have been laid out in accordance with the approved site plan. The car parking provided shall thereafter be kept available at all times for the intended use.
19. Notwithstanding the arboricultural information already provided within the Barrell Tree Consultancy arboricultural assessment & method statement, ref: 17356-AA4-PB, 04/07/19., no development or other operations (including demolition, site preparation or groundworks) shall commence on site, until a revised scheme of tree protection has been submitted to and approved in writing by Local Planning Authority. In addition to other trees on the site, the revised scheme shall include the retention and maintenance of the 4 London plane trees to the front of the site. The scheme of protection shall include temporary fencing, ground protection, supervision and special engineering solutions designed to ensure the successful retention of trees. The development shall proceed in accordance with the approved tree protection scheme.
20. No development including site clearance, demolition, ground preparation, temporary access construction/widening, material storage or construction

works shall commence on site until a plan showing the location of all existing and proposed utility services has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include gas, electricity, communications, water and drainage. No development or other operations shall take place other than in complete accordance with the utility services plan.

21. No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage strategy has been provided to the Lead Local Flood Authority, containing the following elements:
  - Any proposals for such systems must be supported by an assessment of the risks to controlled waters.
  - Where infiltration is used for drainage, evidence that a suitable number of infiltration tests have been completed. These need to be across the whole site; within different geologies and to a similar depth to the proposed infiltration devices. Tests must be completed according to the BRE 365 method or another recognised method including British Standard BS 5930: 2015. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
22. Piling using penetrative methods shall not be carried out other than with the written consent of the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
23. No works shall take place on site until a measured survey of the site has been undertaken and a plan prepared to a scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and intended final ground levels and finished floor levels in relation to a nearby datum point which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be completed and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details.
24. Each dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied only by;
  - (i) A person aged 60 years or over;
  - (ii) A person aged 55 years or older living as part of a single household with the above person in (i); or
  - (iii) A person aged 55 years or older who were living as part of a single household with the person identified in (i) who has since died.

## **APPENDIX C**

APPEAL DECISION, STANFORD HILL,  
LYMINGTON, SO41 8DE  
APP/B1740/W/20/3265937





## Appeal Decision

Inquiry Held on 11, 12, 18, 19, 20 and 24 May 2021

Site visit made on 21 May 2021

by G J Fort BA PGDip LLM MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021

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Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/W/20/3265937

Site of The Rise and Three Neighbouring Properties, Stanford Hill, Lymington, SO41 8DE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Renaissance Retirement Limited against the decision of New Forest District Council.
  - The application Ref 20/10481, dated 1 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 14 October 2020.
  - The development proposed is the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 44 sheltered apartments for the elderly with associated access, mobility scooter store, refuse bin store, landscaping and 34 parking spaces.
- 

### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 44 sheltered apartments for the elderly with associated access, mobility scooter store, refuse bin store, landscaping and 34 parking spaces at the site of The Rise and Three Neighbouring Properties, Stanford Hill, Lymington, SO41 8DE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/10481, dated 1 May 2020, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule below.

### Procedural Matters

2. The application that led to this appeal was refused by the Council on a number of grounds including its effects to biodiversity (both offsite and on-site) and its effects to the living conditions of the occupants of 14 and 15 Bucklers Mews. However, during the course of the appeal, the Council withdrew its objections in relation to these aforementioned matters on the basis that the proposed development could be made acceptable in these terms through the use of planning obligations or conditions.
3. Whilst these matters do not therefore form main issues in this appeal, I am the competent authority for the purposes of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Habitats Regulations). Consequently, the Habitats Regulations require me to carry out an appropriate assessment of the appeal scheme in circumstances where it would be likely to have significant effects on European sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects – I return to this issue below. Moreover, I will deal with the

**other matters covered by the Council's original** reasons for refusal, where appropriate, elsewhere in this decision.

4. During the Inquiry, it emerged that the Council had recently adopted<sup>1</sup> a Mitigation for Recreational Impacts on New Forest European Sites Supplementary Planning Document (the Mitigation SPD), which supplants the guidance<sup>2</sup> that was relevant at the time of the decision on the application that led to this appeal. The Mitigation SPD was provided as an Inquiry document and adequate time was available for its implications to be captured in the **appellant's finalised planning obligation related to this matter. Consequently, I** consider that no prejudice would occur to the interests of any parties as a result of me taking the Mitigation SPD into account in my assessment of the **appeal's planning** merits.
5. Following the closure of the Inquiry, I received finalised planning obligations relating to a number of matters, which are covered in my reasoning below.

#### Main Issues

6. I consider the main issues in this case to be firstly, the effects of the proposed development on the significance of Lymington Conservation Area, and the Grade II Listed Buildings at Highfield (No 1 (Hill House) No2; Nos 3 and 4 (Down House); and Nos 5 and 6 (Highfield Ridge)); and secondly, the effect of the appeal scheme on the character and appearance of the area.

#### Reasons

##### *Site, surroundings and proposed development*

7. The appeal site comprises four relatively deep residential plots currently occupied by detached houses of varying scale and character. These existing dwellings are set back from Stanford Hill behind a considerable amount of hard standing bounded by hedges, and short walls in a mix of materials. Close to the town centre, the appeal site is just outside the boundary of the Lymington Conservation Area. Bucklers Court, a building mainly of three-storeys, and of a relatively deep plan, with a long, but articulated front elevation addressing the curve of Stanford Hill, lies to one side of the appeal site set at a higher level due to the underlying topography of the area. To the other is Concord, a detached dwelling in a deep plot. To the rear of the appeal site are detached houses in relatively deep plots, which address Belmore Road. The comparatively denser development of Bucklers Mews also lies to the rear of part of the appeal site. Situated across Stanford Hill from the appeal site are the mature trees and broad landscaped area to the rear of Rowans Park. Further up the hill, situated behind a landscape element referred to by parties as a **"green"** the substantial properties of Highfield, which are of considerable aesthetic quality, provide an obvious focal point.
8. The appeal scheme would entail the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and the development of a larger single building of mainly three storeys, which would provide 44 sheltered apartments for older people. A portion of the proposed development would also include a lower ground floor. Of a broadly **"T" shaped footprint, the appeal building** would comprise a number of distinct

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<sup>1</sup> On 5 May 2021

<sup>2</sup> *Mitigation Strategy for European Sites: Recreational Pressure from Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document* (Adopted June 2014) (CD4.6)

elevational elements of varied overall heights and set-backs from the highway. **The proposed building's** rear wing would project more deeply into the plot than the existing buildings. Vehicular access and egress from the site would be provided via two highway crossovers, and the remaining existing crossovers would be removed which would create a more consolidated boundary across the front of the appeal site than exists at present. The boundary would incorporate hedges and railings. A landscaped strip, including tree planting, would be placed between the front boundary and **the appeal scheme's** parking and access arrangements. Further parking would be provided on the portion of the site adjacent to Bucklers Court and Bucklers Mews. To the rear and side boundaries additional tree planting would accompany the retained trees in the site, which include one identified **as an "important tree" in the Lymington Local Distinctiveness Supplementary Planning Document** (adopted February 2011) (the Distinctiveness SPD).

#### *Listed Buildings and Conservation Area*

9. It is common ground between the main parties that the appeal site is within the setting of both the Conservation Area and No 1 (Hill House); No2; Nos 3 and 4 (Down House); and Nos 5 and 6 (Highfield Ridge), Highfield, which are all Grade II Listed Buildings (the Highfield Listed Buildings).
10. The Highfield Listed Buildings are pairs of properties, which vary in terms of their elevational treatment and the materials employed but are consistent in terms of their scale. The overall symmetry of each pair, and the classical proportions of their facades are also clear similarities shared by the Highfield Listed Buildings. Occupying an eminent position at the brow of Stanford Hill, the Highfield Listed Buildings are high-status structures which mark an entry point into the historic town, with windows and other features at their fronts orientated towards Stanford Hill.
11. Consequently, insofar as is relevant to the appeal, the significance of these buildings derives, to a considerable degree, both from this marked architectural quality; and from their historic interest in terms of the evidence they yield about the development of Lymington, particularly in terms of their status as a visual entry point to the town centre and their position at the western extent of its historic core. In this latter respect, I also **note the Council's view of their** relationship to the emergence of Lymington as a resort in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As high-status buildings situated at the brow of the Hill and orientated towards it, views to and from them are elements of the setting that contribute to their significance in these respects.
12. The Listing Descriptions for the Highfield Buildings **contain the annotation "GV"**, which indicates that their Group Value is of note, both in terms of their relationships with each other and with other nearby Grade II Listed Buildings at Stanford Road and Priestlands Place. It is clear that the Highfield Listed **Buildings' relationships with these other structures** is also a matter relevant to the consideration of the contribution made to the significance by their setting.
13. Historic mapping<sup>3</sup> supplied by both parties shows that most of the area broadly to the south of Highfield, aside from the **"green"** has changed considerably since the Listed Buildings were originally constructed – with extensive residential development taking place over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

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<sup>3</sup> In **the Council's Conservation Proof of Evidence Appendix 2** (CD8.10) and **the appellant's Heritage Proof** (CD8.18)

Whilst the density of much of this development allows for landscaping and mature trees, the predominantly domestic character of much of the land, and the buildings on it, is readily perceived in views from Highfield – meaning that **any 'designed views' that may have existed when the Listed Buildings were constructed have already been fundamentally altered.**

14. The proposed building would be of a greater scale than the dwellings currently on the appeal site, and its footprint would extend across the existing plots. However, the proposed building would be set well back from Stanford Hill, behind tall trees. Taken together, these aspects of the appeal scheme's **design** would help it to assimilate with the generally leafier and more spacious pattern further down the hill. The appeal scheme would not therefore, appear as an alien feature within this setting, which already includes buildings and landscaping. Moreover, the appeal site is set at a considerably lower level than Highfield. As a result, taken together with its set back and landscaping proposals, the appeal scheme would not constitute a dominant feature in views available from Highfield. In my judgement therefore, the proposed development would not **materially erode any 'designed views' from the Highfield Listed Buildings** and would thus avoid harm to their significance in this respect.
15. The location of the Highfield Listed Buildings on the brow of the hill and their scale, taken together with the set-back of the proposed development, the level of its site and the landscaping proposals to its front, would also ensure that the Listed Buildings remain the pre-eminent structures marking the entry point to the historic town, in views toward them from lower down Stanford Hill. Accordingly, the aforementioned aspects of the architectural and historic significance of the Highfield Listed Buildings would not be eroded as a result of the appeal scheme.
16. No 7 Highfield House and No 8 Highfield are not included on the statutory list, and neither are they identified in *Lymington: A Conservation Area Appraisal* Supplementary Planning Guidance (adopted July 2002) (the CAA) as "**Key / Important Unlisted Buildings**". The Council confirmed at the Inquiry that they do not appear on a local list. Nevertheless, the Council consider them to be non-designated heritage assets. Be that as it may, for the reasons set out above in terms of the **appeal site's relationships to Highfield**, I consider that the proposed development would not cause a harmful effect to any significance that those non-designated properties may possess.
17. The appeal site is situated to the side of Bucklers Court, a substantial structure, which would effectively screen it from the Grade II Listed Buildings on Priestlands Place and Stanford Road. As a result, the proposed development would not interrupt the relationship that these structures have with the Highfield Listed Buildings and would not diminish their group value.
18. The Conservation Area has a legible medieval street pattern in its core, with 18<sup>th</sup> Century and later expansion at its periphery. These aspects contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area in its architectural and historic senses – as does the resultant harmonious, but nonetheless varied, nature of its built form.
19. Bucklers Court marks the boundary of the Conservation Area in relation to the appeal site, and effectively severs inter-visibility between the site and the historic core of the town – albeit the appeal site is inter-visible with the

Highfield properties. I accept that there is a marked change in character and scale **between Bucklers Court and the appeal site's properties**. It is clear that the change in scale from Bucklers Court to the predominantly 20<sup>th</sup> Century dwellings further down the hill would become more gradual and transitional as a result of the proposed development.

20. However, the proposed development would clearly read as a modern building and not a traditional one, and due to its site level, set-back and landscaping at its front, it would not appear overly assertive. Moreover, these aspects of the proposed development, taken together with the more assertive positioning of Bucklers Court, and the high quality architecture of the Highfield Listed Buildings set at the brow of the Hill, would ensure that the existing entry to the **Conservation Area and the town's historic core** would remain readily understandable. Consequently, the proposed development would not undermine the legibility of the town and would not erode the historic and architectural significance of the Conservation Area.
21. Accordingly, for the reasons set out above, I conclude on this main issue that the proposed development would avoid harm to the significance of the Conservation Area, and to the Grade II Listed Buildings No 1 (Hill House) No2; Nos 3 and 4 (Down House); and Nos 5 and 6 (Highfield Ridge) Highfield. In these respects, the proposed development would accord with Policy DM1 of the New Forest Local Plan Part 2 (adopted April 2014) (the Part 2 Plan) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Taken together and amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance; and that development should pay particular regard to setting, historic significance and context of heritage assets. In arriving at this view, I have taken fully into account the relevant Historic England good practice and related advice<sup>4</sup>.
22. In light of the above, and mindful of my duty under s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990, I conclude that the proposed development would preserve the setting of the Grade II Listed Buildings No 1 (Hill House) No2; Nos 3 and 4 (Down House); and Nos 5 and 6 (Highfield Ridge) Highfield.
23. Whilst I have been supplied with the CAA, that document makes clear<sup>5</sup> that it provides guidance **on "the subject of the design of development in Lymington's central conservation area"** (with my emphasis). The appeal site would thus be outside the scope of this document in terms of its design principles.

#### *Character and appearance*

24. For the purposes of the Distinctiveness SPD, the appeal site is located within Character Area 6 - South Lymington. According to the Distinctiveness SPD<sup>6</sup> this area has several key defining elements including the similar scale and mass of neighbouring dwellings, the presence of large trees, large garden settings (including rear garden islands), common set-backs, build-up of plot widths and low front boundaries. As currently developed, the site broadly conforms to these key defining features.

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<sup>4</sup> GPA2 *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (CD7.13); GPA3 *Setting and Views* (CD7.14); Historic England Advice Note 1 – *Conservation Areas* (CD7.16); Historic England Advice Note 12 – *Statements of Heritage Significance* (CD7.17)

<sup>5</sup> At paragraph 1.2

<sup>6</sup> At page 95

25. Nevertheless, the Distinctiveness SPD, makes it clear<sup>7</sup> that the guidance contained within the document **"should inform the necessary thorough** research into the context of individual sites. **It is for the ... developer or the designer to investigate the finer nuances of the place and how they can inform the design of new development."** In these regards it is relevant that the appeal site is situated at the boundary of Character Area 6, close to Character Area 1 – the Town Centre, and Character Area 7 – Yaldhurst Purlieu. In this context, it is also relevant that the Framework<sup>8</sup> sets out that SPDs relating to design matters should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.
26. I readily accept that there is a clear distinction between Bucklers Court and the dwellings present at the appeal site in terms of their massing, scale, set-back density and the build-up of their building lines. I am also mindful of the design intentions set out in previous planning policy/guidance relating to the Bucklers Court site, which identified **an "opportunity to 'round off' the town centre with a high quality residential scheme"**<sup>9</sup>. Nevertheless, I saw that, due to its immediate proximity to the appeal site, Bucklers Court provides a clear context, and unlike the majority of dwellings in Area 6, which are in the main situated on quieter residential streets and cul-de-sacs, those on the appeal site directly address the A337 (Stanford Hill). To my mind, these aspects of the appeal site, and its relationships with its immediate surroundings could reasonably be considered finer nuances of this part of Area 6 which clearly distinguishes it from the wider area, which lacks such immediate contextual relationships. For this reason, I do not share the **Council's view that the design evolution of the appeal scheme, as expressed in the Design and Access Statement and other submissions, is based on erroneous conclusions about the appeal site's context.**
27. The design of the proposed development has responded to this site-specific context and would see a building which would, instead of the marked change in character that now exists, provide a more transitional approach. This would be achieved through a building which would step down in scale from its northern edge to its southern, and would incorporate distinct elevational elements, which would be set further back from the highway than Bucklers Court. The proposed building would be set in from its boundaries and landscaping would be provided adjacent to these. **These elements of the appeal scheme's design** would ensure that the proposed building, despite its scale and massing, would not appear as an overly assertive feature. For these reasons too, it would not compete with **the 'rounding off' role** of Bucklers Court, or interfere with a contextual understanding of where the town centre and Conservation Area begins. Neither would the proposed development dominate Concord, the dwelling to its other side.
28. The front of the proposed building would incorporate four distinct elevational elements, which would provide articulation and modelling to this street-facing elevation. I saw within **the appeal site's** wider surroundings (including at Highfield) examples of dormer windows, canopies, parapets, and flat-roofed elements. The proposed building would also clearly reference the range of facing materials present in nearby structures.

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<sup>7</sup> At paragraph 1.3

<sup>8</sup> At paragraph 126

<sup>9</sup> Included in Appendix 4 of **the Council's Conservation Proof of Evidence** (CD8.12)



29. Some aspects of the elevational treatment would differ from those of some of the traditional buildings in the area. For example, I note views that the elevations may not achieve the precise classical proportions, particularly under the pediment, in contrast to the Highfield Listed Buildings and Bucklers Court; and its dormers **would be in a broadly "landscape" rather than a "portrait"** orientation unlike a great deal (although not all) of dormers present on buildings within the Conservation Area. Moreover, the front elevation, whilst incorporating symmetrical elements (such as the rendered element with dormer windows), taken as a whole would be asymmetric – and also incorporate asymmetric individual elements. I am mindful also that, unlike Bucklers Court, the proposed development would incorporate more extensive areas of flat roofing. Nevertheless, the appeal site is outside of the Conservation Area, and the proposed development would be a modern building, which would clearly read as such, albeit with references to traditional elements. Furthermore, due to the roof-level design, which includes parapets and pitched features, the flat roof elements would be largely invisible in the majority of available views of the appeal scheme. Accordingly, the proposed **development's** design would not appear incongruous in these terms.
30. The appeal scheme would introduce a more consolidated front boundary than exists at present with associated landscaping and tree planting and in this respect would be a considerable improvement on the current arrangement of highway crossovers. In these terms, the proposed development would clearly meet with the Distinctiveness SPD's design advice relating to the garden setting for built development<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, this aspect would greatly assist the proposal to assimilate with its surroundings.
31. In other respects, the proposed development would not meet the **Distinctiveness SPD's guidance of most relevance** to the character area within which it sits – in terms of its build-up of building line and its plot width. Whilst I accept that this would close the gaps currently present between the houses on the site, these gaps are only perceptible in a limited range of views, and in any event ancillary structures are present in a number of them. Consequently, the current contribution of the gaps between the **appeal site's** existing dwellings to the streetscene is, in my view, limited and their loss would be mitigated by the implementation of the proposed landscaping scheme. Moreover, the articulation of the proposed front elevation would also serve to break up the building line into visually discrete elements.
32. I note also that the rear wing of the proposed building would extend over the rear gardens currently at the appeal site, and that this element of the scheme would be visible in gaps from Belmore Road. Nevertheless, a considerable proportion of the rear garden would remain and existing trees would be accompanied with new planting. Taking these aspects of the proposed development together with the depth of neighbouring gardens and the maturity of their existing vegetation, I consider that the **rear 'garden island' would not** be harmfully eroded, and that intervening landscape elements would screen and soften views through to the rear of the proposed development.
33. The Framework sets out that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes<sup>11</sup>; and that where there is an existing shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs (a matter of

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<sup>10</sup> Set out on page 95

<sup>11</sup> At paragraph 117

common ground between the parties in the current case), it is especially important that planning decisions ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site<sup>12</sup>. To my mind, the site-specific design response of the appeal scheme would ensure that this is the case, and, taken together with the lack of material harm that would be caused in townscape terms, justifies a departure from the advice of the Distinctiveness SPD in this case insofar as its guidance regarding the build-up of building line and plot width is concerned.

34. For the reasons set out above, the appeal scheme would clearly not constitute an example of poor design, and thus would not conflict with the Framework<sup>13</sup> in this regard. Accordingly, these considerations taken together with my conclusions regarding the effects of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets, lead me to the conclusion on this main issue that the appeal scheme would avoid harm to the character and appearance of the area. In these respects, the proposed development would accord with Policy ENV3 of the New Forest Local Plan (adopted July 2020) (the Local Plan), insofar as (amongst other things) it expects new development to create buildings, streets and spaces which are sympathetic to the environment and their context in terms of layout, landscape, scale, height appearance and density and in relationship to adjoining buildings, spaces and landscaping features. For these reasons too, I find no conflict with the **Government's** priorities for well-designed places as expressed in the National Design Guide.

#### Other Matters

##### *Housing Supply Position*

35. It is common ground that the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of **deliverable housing land**. **Although I accept that the Council's** recently adopted Local Plan includes a strategy to meet its requirement over the plan period – delivery of its strategic site allocations is not progressing at the rate previously anticipated. The Council is currently engaging with developers to support an updated housing supply position to be published later this year. However, the fruits of that labour are not yet available – **and I am mindful of the Council's** statement that, as this work is still in progress, **"it is not possible** to take a definitive position on whether or not the Council has a five-year housing land supply at this present point in time and to attempt to do so through this Appeal **Inquiry would not be practical or worthwhile"**<sup>14</sup>. Consequently, at the Inquiry no substantive evidence was forthcoming sufficient to undermine **the appellant's** conclusion<sup>15</sup>, based on robust and credible analysis, that there is only around a 2.5 year supply of specific deliverable housing sites – a position that they **characterise as an "optimistic view"**<sup>16</sup> of the situation.
36. Moreover, I have found that no harm would occur to the significance of heritage assets as a result of the proposed development, and that in this respect, policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance do not provide a clear reason for refusal. In such circumstances the Framework indicates<sup>17</sup> that the tilted balance is engaged. In arriving at this

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<sup>12</sup> At paragraph 123

<sup>13</sup> At paragraph 130

<sup>14</sup> Paragraph 4.10 of **Appendix 4 of the Council's Proof of Evidence** (CD8.6)

<sup>15</sup> Per paragraph 10.2 *Draft Proof of Evidence: Housing Land Supply*, included as **Appendix 1 to the Appellant's Planning Proof of Evidence** (CD8.29)

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid* at paragraph 10.2

<sup>17</sup> At paragraph 11(d)



view, I acknowledge that the Council has met the most recent Housing Delivery Test – however, the Framework is clear<sup>18</sup> that this consideration would not disengage the tilted balance, where a five year supply of deliverable housing sites cannot be demonstrated.

37. **Whilst the Council and appellant’s assessments differ on this point, both** indicate a significant need<sup>19</sup> for specialist housing for older people in the District over the plan period. During the course of the appeal, I have been supplied with no substantive evidence which suggests that there are any deliverable sites, other than the one subject to this appeal, which would make a meaningful contribution to the supply of sheltered housing in the short-to-medium term. Furthermore, the **Government’s Planning Practice Guidance** (PPG) advises<sup>20</sup> that the need to provide housing for older people is critical.
38. I am mindful of views of interested parties<sup>21</sup> referring to the availability of older people’s properties in Lymington and the **perceived slow sales of some of the** available stock -including one development, which appears to have completed in late 2019. Some consider that the level of parking provided and other matters such as the tenure arrangements involved in such housing may have contributed to slower than usual sales rates for the recently completed scheme. Nevertheless, social distancing measures pursuant to the COVID-19 pandemic have been in place for a considerable period of time following the completion of that scheme – and these may well have affected sales rates. I am conscious also that the market for age-restricted housing is necessarily smaller than that for general needs housing subject to no age restrictions – this is clearly another factor which could influence sales rates for such dwellings.
39. Some consider that housing, such as that proposed in this case could attract occupants from outside of the District. However, the demographic projections **on which the Council’s needs** assessments are based includes an allowance for in-migration – and I am mindful of the material presented by the appellant in relation to one of its recently completed schemes<sup>22</sup> located in Brockenhurst, which demonstrates that a considerable proportion of its occupants moved from properties within the immediate locality. Although this material relates to an individual scheme, and is thus a limited sample, I have been supplied with no substantiated evidence that would refute this or that demonstrates that higher proportions of in-migration have occurred in respect of other schemes.
40. Accordingly, these matters do **not materially undermine either the appellant’s or Council’s assessments in terms of the** underlying need for this type of accommodation over the plan period.
41. Furthermore, in **enabling older people to ‘down-size’** to smaller accommodation, which nonetheless would meet their needs, the proposed development would free up larger housing elsewhere, including a proportion in the District, which would also have beneficial housing supply effects.
42. Against this background, and taking into account the Court judgements and appeal decisions provided by the parties<sup>23</sup>, **the appeal scheme’s delivery of**

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<sup>18</sup> At Footnote 7

<sup>19</sup> Per paragraph 6.24 of the Local Plan

<sup>20</sup> *Housing for Older and Disabled People* at Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626 Revision date: 26 June 2019

<sup>21</sup> Including Lymington and Pennington Town Council (ID3) and the Lymington Society (ID11)

<sup>22</sup> At Appendix 3 of the **appellant’s Planning rebuttal to proof of evidence by Mr James Gilfillan** (CD8.35)

<sup>23</sup> *Hallam Land Management Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities*

specialist housing for older people would deliver benefits that weigh very significantly in its favour.

*Other Benefits of the proposed development*

43. Due to its adjacency to the town centre, its positioning within a settlement boundary, and its ready access to services, the appeal site is manifestly a sustainable location – a matter of common ground between the parties. In these ways, the proposed development would accord with the Local Plan's intention for older persons' housing to be located close to local facilities and services<sup>24</sup>.
44. Moreover, a considerable proportion of the appeal site also constitutes previously developed land – and I am mindful that some 61% of the District's area is what the Local Plan describes as "**Greenfield with NPPF 2012 footnote 9 constraints**"<sup>25</sup>. In the light of these considerations, **the Framework's** support for the effective<sup>26</sup> and efficient<sup>27</sup> use of land is particularly relevant. For these reasons, taken together with my findings on housing supply matters, I consider that **the proposed development would also contribute to the Government's** objective of delivering the right homes in the right places<sup>28</sup>.
45. The PPG sets out<sup>29</sup> that offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems. Research has been drawn to my attention by the appellant<sup>30</sup>, which finds that provision of housing of the type proposed could yield substantial savings to health and social care budgets.
46. The proposals would deliver a biodiversity net gain (BNG) on the site, which would be secured by a planning condition, of over 10%. Although Policy STR1 of the Local Plan requires BNG, it sets no specific percentage gain, and legislation enshrining a requirement is not yet in place. In any event, the BNG provided would be a clear benefit of the appeal scheme.
47. During its construction phase the proposed development would create direct employment, of some 20 roles per annum over an 18 month build programme<sup>31</sup> - and over that time the appeal scheme would also have a positive effect on economic activity in the wider construction supply chain. When completed, the adjacency of the appeal site to the town centre would likely lead to a considerable increase in spending at local businesses. These

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*and Local Government and Eastleigh Borough Council* [2017] EWHC 2865 (Admin); *Cheshire East Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Rowland Homes Ltd* [2014] EWHC 3536 (Admin); *Phides Estates (Overseas) Limited v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Shepway District Council and David Plumstead* [2015] EWHC 827 (Admin); APP/B1740/W/17/3174028; APP/B1740/W/17/3180586; APP/H2265/W/18/3202040; APP/R3650/W/18/3211033; APP/B1740/W/18/3198347; APP/F2605/W/18/3194045; APP/A0665/W/18/3203413; APP/B1740/W/18/3212419; APP/C3810/W/19/3242332; APP/C3810/Y/19/3242340; APP/W1145/W/19/3238460; APP/Q3115/W/19/3230827; APP/C1570/W/19/3242550; APP/A1530/W/19/3223010; APP/N1730/W/20/3261194; APP/G5180/W/20/3257010.

<sup>24</sup> Expressed at paragraph 6.27 of the Local Plan

<sup>25</sup> At Figure 2.5

<sup>26</sup> At paragraph 117

<sup>27</sup> At paragraph 122

<sup>28</sup> Set out in *Fixing our broken housing market* Cm9352 CD7.8

<sup>29</sup> *Housing for Older and Disabled People* at Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626 Revision date: 26 June 2019

<sup>30</sup> *Healthier and Happier: an Analysis of the fiscal and wellbeing benefits of building more homes for later living*, Produced by WPI Strategy, September 2019 included as Appendix 15 to the appellant's Statement of Case

<sup>31</sup> Per the appellant's *Planning Proof of Evidence* at paragraph 9.1 CD8.29

would be clear benefits in the economic sense – and in these terms the Framework makes clear that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth<sup>32</sup>.

48. Accordingly, for these reasons, the proposed **development's clear social, environmental and economic benefits** taken together would attract very significant weight in the overall planning balance.
49. Although some would prefer to see development of family housing, given the proportion of older residents already in the District, an alternative scheme to provide such dwellings is not before me in this appeal, and in any event, for the reasons set out above, the proposed development would meet clear needs and secure a number of benefits.

### *European Sites*

50. The Statement of Common Ground<sup>33</sup> **and the appellant's** Proof of Evidence in respect of Ecology and Nature Conservation<sup>34</sup> highlight the following European sites in close proximity to the appeal site:
- the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
  - the New Forest Special Protection Area (SPA)
  - the Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC;
  - the Solent Maritime SAC;
  - The Solent and Southampton Water SPA and RAMSAR.
51. Where plans or projects, either alone or in combination with others, would be likely to cause significant effects to European sites, the Habitats Regulations requires the competent authority to carry out an appropriate assessment before granting such consent. For the purposes of the Habitats Regulations, I am the competent authority in respect of this appeal and will proceed on this basis.
52. In short, the internationally important interest features of the New Forest European sites derive from the heathland, water and meadow features, and the habitats they provide for, amongst others, the European honey buzzard, the hen harrier, the Eurasian hobby, the European nightjar, the woodlark, the Dartford warbler and the wood warbler. The internationally important special interest features of the Solent European sites, are, in summary, and amongst other things, the coastal lagoon, sandbank, mudflat, annual and perennial vegetation of drift lines and stony banks, shifting dunes and salt meadow features. These European sites provide a habitat for **Desmoulin's whorl snail**, the sandwich tern, the common tern, the little tern, the roseate tern, the dark-bellied brent goose, the Eurasian teal, the ringed plover, the black-tailed godwit, and the Mediterranean gull.

### *Likely Significant Effects*

53. The increase in residential development that would occur as a result of the appeal scheme would be likely, in combination with other plans and projects, to

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<sup>32</sup> At paragraph 80

<sup>33</sup> CD7.12 at paragraph 3.8

<sup>34</sup> CD 8.27

have a significant effect on the New Forest and Solent European sites as a result of recreational disturbance. Furthermore, an increase in occupation and related transport movements is also likely, in combination with other plans and projects to lead to air quality implications that could lead to significant effects on the New Forest SAC. Moreover, in terms of the Solent European sites, the proposed development is likely to have significant effects in terms of the increase in nitrates arising as a result of the additional wastewater that would be discharged from the site.

#### *Recreational Pressure and Air Quality*

54. Recreational pressures arising from the proposed development would be likely to include disturbance of wintering birds feeding and roosting along the Solent coastline. Similarly, the disturbance of ground nesting birds in the New Forest European sites as a result of increased recreational activity arising from the site would also be likely to lead to adverse effects. Other effects could include trampling, nutrient enrichment and increased risk of wildfires as a result of increased recreational activity. In these ways, the proposal, in combination with other plans and projects, would adversely affect the integrity of the European sites.
55. There is a degree of uncertainty at this stage as to whether or not the air quality impacts of proposed developments in the New Forest District would lead to significant effects to the integrity of European sites. Nonetheless, it is necessary to apply the precautionary principle in relation to this matter, and it is not possible to establish conclusively at this stage that no adverse effects would arise to the integrity of the European sites as a result of its air quality implications.
56. It follows that, in terms of recreational pressure and air quality, the proposed development could clearly cause an adverse effect to the integrity of the relevant European sites and their conservation objectives. However, I have been supplied with a lawfully executed planning obligation pursuant to s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), which would secure mitigation measures in accordance with **the Council's Mitigation SPD and its *Developers' Contributions to Air Quality Monitoring on New Forest Habitats* note of 2 March 2021<sup>35</sup>**. I am also mindful of **Natural England's position<sup>36</sup>** on these matters, which is that appropriate financial contributions, in line with the Mitigation SPD, would provide acceptable mitigation in these terms. I consider that the unambiguous content of **Natural England's consultation response** in these regards means that the requirement<sup>37</sup> for consultation on this matter in terms of my appropriate assessment has been met.
57. The obligations in these regards are clearly necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms, are directly related to the proposed development, and are based on an established methodology which ensures that they are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Accordingly, the obligations meet the relevant legal<sup>38</sup> and national policy tests<sup>39</sup>. In these terms, I am satisfied that I can take these planning obligations into account and that they would provide an effective mechanism

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<sup>35</sup> CD7.18

<sup>36</sup> Set out in its consultation response on the planning application dated 24 June 2020

<sup>37</sup> Established by Reg 63(3) of the Habitats Regulations

<sup>38</sup> Per Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended)

<sup>39</sup> Per paragraph 56 of the Framework

for ensuring that adverse impacts to the integrity of the relevant European sites in terms of air quality and recreational pressure would be effectively mitigated.

### *Nitrates*

58. Evidence produced by the Partnership for South Hampshire, which supported the production of the Local Plan, found that the majority of Solent water bodies had in most cases, less than good ecological status for elements such as dissolved inorganic nitrogen, and that wastewater treatment works in the area would reach capacity early in the plan period<sup>40</sup>. Consequently, developments in the New Forest Plan Area which would lead to increased discharges of wastewater would be likely to cause an adverse impact to the integrity of the Solent European sites in terms of nutrient enrichment. I am also cognisant that Natural England has advised the council that development which would result in increased overnight stays in certain parts of the District (including Lymington), should achieve nitrate neutrality to avoid any likely significant effects<sup>41</sup> to water quality in the Solent. Taking these things together, leads me to the view that without mitigation to achieve nitrate neutrality the proposed development, due to the increased wastewater discharge that it would create, would lead to an adverse effect to the integrity of the Solent European sites.
59. The appellant proposes an offsite mitigation package (the Heaton Scheme) based at a site in the Isle of Wight. In short, the Heaton Scheme would involve land being removed from active agricultural use to be planted with woodland. In doing so, the outflow of nitrates from the Heaton Scheme would reduce. The appellant would buy credits for the appropriate amount of land to be taken out of agricultural use to offset **the proposed development's nitrates output**. Contributions would also be included to secure monitoring of the Heaton Scheme by Isle of Wight Council.
60. Natural England confirmed<sup>42</sup> that the proposed mitigation land subject to the Heaton Scheme would be appropriate to offset nitrogen from developments which would discharge to the Pennington Wastewater Treatment Works, such as the one proposed in this case. Moreover, Natural England provided a site-specific response<sup>43</sup> on this point, which confirmed that the Heaton Scheme would be an appropriate location to provide mitigation in respect of the proposed development. Given the clear position of its representations generally in terms of the Heaton Scheme taken as a whole, and specifically in relation to the proposed development, I consider that this fulfils the requirement<sup>44</sup> for consultation with Natural England in respect of my appropriate assessment.
61. **Natural England's site-specific** response emphasises the necessity for any planning obligation relating to nitrates mitigation to secure the appropriate amount of land in the Heaton Scheme. Material submitted with the appeal, including the draft overarching agreement relating to the Heaton Scheme, and a nitrogen balance calculation for the proposed development based on the

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<sup>40</sup> Per paragraph 3.10 of **the Council's Interim Position Statement on Nutrient Neutral Development** of 4 September 2019, included as Appendix 2 of **the appellant's Planning Proof of Evidence** (CD8.29)

<sup>41</sup> Ibid paragraph 3.13

<sup>42</sup> In a letter of 21 April 2020 included at Appendix 24 of the **appellant's Planning Statement of Case** (CD7.24)

<sup>43</sup> Dated 26 November 2020 and included as Appendix 25 of **the appellant's Planning Statement of Case** (CD7.24)

<sup>44</sup> Established by Reg 63(3) of the Habitats Regulations

methodology established by Natural England, clearly demonstrate that the appropriate amount of land would be secured.

62. The appellant has submitted a unilateral planning obligation to secure the measures related to the Heaton Scheme, which would relate only to the area of **land necessary to mitigate the proposed development's effects**. However, I am mindful that neither of the parties promote this measure as their preferred option. Instead, securing the mitigation as part of the emerging overarching agreement relating to the wider Heaton Scheme as a whole would be preferred, not least as Isle of Wight Council would be a signatory to the overarching agreement and would thus be bound by its terms insofar as the responsibility for monitoring is concerned. I concur that there would be advantages in these terms of securing the mitigation via the overarching agreement rather than by the submitted unilateral undertaking.
63. The overarching agreement is not yet finalised – however, the Council indicated that it is due imminently. Consequently, the parties propose a Grampian condition, which would prevent the proposed development from being occupied prior to the mitigation measures pursuant to the Heaton Scheme being in place. This approach would be in-**step with the Council's Position Statement on Nutrient Neutral Development – Interim Nitrogen Mitigation Solution** (4 September 2019)<sup>45</sup>, which advocates the use of such conditions.
64. As set out above, the Council cannot currently demonstrate a supply of specific deliverable sites **to provide a minimum of five years'** worth of housing against their adopted requirement. In this context, the requirement to enter into proposal-specific arrangements in relation to nitrates agreements in the absence of a strategic package such as that which is to be subject to the overarching agreement, could act as a further impediment to securing permissions and completions – **placing the delivery of the District's housing requirement at risk**. For these reasons, I am of the view that exceptional circumstances exist which would justify the imposition of a condition which requires the appellant to enter into a planning obligation, and that this approach would therefore accord with the PPG<sup>46</sup> in these regards.
65. In arriving at this view, I am mindful that the proposed development could commence, but that only its residential occupation would be dependent on the measures being in place, as it is from this aspect of the proposal that the nitrates impacts would arise. I am content that the principal terms of the obligation are clear from the material before me, and that its imposition would clearly meet the three legal and policy tests<sup>47</sup>. Moreover, given that the completion of the overarching agreement is imminent, I consider that proceeding on the basis of the suggested Grampian condition would not unreasonably delay either the delivery of the development or its residential occupation. Taking these things together leads me to the view that the use of a Grampian condition in these circumstances would clearly accord with the advice set out in the PPG. For these reasons, I consider that the planning obligations contained in the unilateral undertaking related to this matter to be

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<sup>45</sup> Included as appendix 2 of **the appellant's Planning Proof of Evidence** (CD 8.29)

<sup>46</sup> *Use of Planning Conditions Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 21a-010-20190723 Revision date: 23 07 2019*

<sup>47</sup> Per Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure regulations 2010 (as amended); and paragraph 56 of the Framework



unnecessary in this case, and they therefore carry no weight in my assessment of the appeal's merits<sup>48</sup>.

#### *Appropriate Assessment*

66. For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would be likely to give rise to adverse effects to the integrity of European sites in terms of its recreational, air quality and nitrates impacts. However, the combination of the planning obligation which secures policy compliant mitigation in terms of recreational and air quality impacts; and the imposition of a condition requiring nitrate mitigation prior to the first occupation of the proposed development would ensure that the appeal scheme would not adversely affect the integrity of the relevant European sites. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would be acceptable in these terms, and would accord with Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan, insofar as it requires developments to avoid adverse effects to the integrity of European sites.

#### *Optional Technical Standards*

67. The Council suggested a condition which would require the proposed dwellings to meet the optional technical standard for wheelchair adaptable housing and cited Policy IMPL2 of the Local Plan as a justification for this. Although the Council withdrew this suggested condition during the course of the Inquiry, I am nevertheless mindful that s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires me to determine applications in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy IMPL2 requires sheltered housing to be built to the wheelchair adaptable dwelling standard of Part M4(3)2a of the Building Regulations. The proposed development would not meet this standard, a matter not disputed by the appellant. Consequently, in this respect the appeal scheme would conflict with the Local Plan insofar as this policy is concerned.
68. It is important to note that the appeal is pursuant to an application for full planning permission, rather than an outline scheme, and thus the internal arrangement of the proposed development would be fixed per the approved plans should permission be forthcoming – meaning that a condition requiring these standards would be likely to render the scheme unimplementable. I am mindful also that the design of the appeal scheme seeks to achieve the M4(2) Optional Building Regulations standard for accessible and adaptable dwellings<sup>49</sup> – albeit that without a condition specifying this, I accept that the Council could not enforce this standard. In any event, the proposed development would cater for a range of occupants, and not only those with impaired mobility. Consequently, I am not persuaded that a requirement for the higher optional standards to be deployed in all of the proposed dwellings would be either reasonable or necessary in this case.
69. Accordingly, taking these matters together with the benefits of the proposed development that are set out above, it is my view that any harm that would occur as a result of **the appeal scheme's variance with Policy IMPL2** of the Local Plan does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the proposed **development's** benefits – matters to which I accord very significant weight. In

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<sup>48</sup>Clause 6.6 of the unilateral undertaking indicates that in such a circumstance, the relevant obligations cease to have effect from the date of this decision

<sup>49</sup> *Rebuttal to the Proof of Evidence of Mr Gilfillan*, Contact Consulting, 30 April 2021 at paragraph 6 (CD 8.38)

arriving at this view, I am cognisant that the Council does not cite Policy IMPL2 in any of its reasons for refusal, and I have not been made aware of any material which indicates that compliance with the higher optional standard was sought prior to the appeal stage.

#### *Highway Safety and Parking*

70. The submitted plans depict works in the highway which would entail a dedicated right-turn lane from Stanford Hill to the access to the proposed development – and this measure could be secured by a condition – as could appropriate visibility splays from the proposed access. Consequently, whilst traffic movements associated with the site would undoubtedly increase as a result of the proposed development, these measures would ensure that its highway safety implications would be acceptable.
71. The appeal site is also in an accessible location in close proximity to the town centre and related bus routes and makes provision for mobile scooter parking and charging. Taken together, these aspects of the appeal site and the proposed development would allow its future occupants to use alternative transport modes and reduce the reliance on the private car. So, whilst I note views that the proposed development would not supply an adequate amount of car parking, I consider the provision it makes would not lead to any harmful overspill parking on adjacent streets. I am mindful also that the local highway authority has no objections to the proposed development in highway safety or parking terms.

#### *Living Conditions*

72. An electricity substation would be located in the corner of the site adjacent to 14 and 15 Bucklers Mews. The principal windows of these properties are in their front elevations, which are orientated away from the appeal site and the proposed substation, with only smaller windows at ground floor on other elevations – which the approved plans<sup>50</sup> for the Bucklers Mews properties indicate relate to kitchens and shower rooms. Moreover, I am mindful that the noise report submitted by the appellant<sup>51</sup>, finds that the noise effects of the substation would be negligible. Additionally, a condition, which would restrict the noise generated by the sub-station could be attached, and this would secure acceptable limits in these terms – a matter with which the Council agrees. Although I am mindful of comments relating to health and safety aspects of the proposed substation, I am satisfied that it will meet the relevant regulatory standards for such installations which are matters outside of the scope of planning control.
73. I acknowledge that due to their height and orientation of some of the proposed windows and balconies that these could lead to some overlooking of neighbouring properties. However, the installation of obscure glazing could be secured by condition and this, taken together with existing and proposed landscaping, would ensure that the proposed development would not materially reduce the level of privacy available to the occupants of neighbouring properties.

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<sup>50</sup> Included as Appendix 27 of **the appellant's** *Planning Statement of Case* (CD7.24)

<sup>51</sup> According to the *Statement of Case on Noise* included as Appendix 27 of **the appellant's** *Planning Statement of Case* (CD7.24)



74. As set out above, the proposed building would be taller than the dwellings currently at the appeal site, and the footprint of the rear wing would extend over an area of what is currently garden space. Nevertheless, the proposed **development would be adequately separated from the appeal site's rear** boundaries, and further still from the dwellings which address Belmore Road. Moreover, existing and proposed landscaping both within the appeal site and in the properties to its rear would screen views through from the Belmore Road properties to the appeal site. I saw also that the closest properties at Bucklers Mews are orientated in a way which present no direct views of the appeal site from its windows.
75. For these reasons I consider that, whilst undoubtedly more visible than the dwellings currently on the appeal site from some adjacent dwellings, the proposed development would not harmfully reduce the outlook available from the properties to its rear. Moreover, the distance achieved by the proposed building from the boundaries of its site would ensure that the amount of daylight and sunlight available to the occupants of adjacent dwellings would not be materially reduced as a result of the appeal scheme. Similarly, the **proposed development's distance from, orientation to, and the lower level of** the appeal site in comparison with the properties on Highfield would mean that the outlook available **from the latter buildings' front windows would not be** reduced to any meaningful extent. These relationships between the Highfield properties and the proposed development would also mean that adequate privacy would remain (and be provided for) their occupants.
76. These considerations therefore lead me to the conclusion that the proposed development, subject to the conditions that I have mentioned, would cause no adverse effects to the living conditions of the occupants of adjacent dwellings
77. Some consider that the density of the proposed development may not secure adequate living conditions for its future occupants, citing social distancing measures pursuant to the COVID-19 pandemic in support of this view. However, the proposed development would provide adequate amounts of internal and external space, and as a result I consider that it would secure a high standard of amenity for its future occupants.

#### *Affordable Housing*

78. The application that led to the appeal was supported by a viability statement, which was independently reviewed<sup>52</sup> on behalf of the Council. The independent review found, for site and proposal-specific reasons, that an affordable housing contribution would not be viable. I concur with the independent review that **the appellant's** viability evidence is reasonable. Moreover, for the reasons set out above, the proposed development would deliver specialist housing for older people for which there is a clear need. Consequently, the lack of provision of affordable housing, either on-site or in the form of a commuted sum is justified in this case, and would accord with Policies IMPL1 and HOU2 of the Local Plan insofar as taken together, and amongst other matters, they require the viability of development to be taken into account in decisions relating to the provision of affordable housing. In arriving at this view, I am cognisant that the Council raised no objections to the proposed development in these terms.

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<sup>52</sup> CD2.18

### *Health Considerations*

79. At the application stage, the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust sought a contribution from the proposed development to support the provision of its services during the first year of the proposed **development's** occupation to fill the gap that would occur until general funding available to the Trust increases in line with any overall increases in population. However, there is no specific Local Plan policy requiring such a contribution, and the viability material provided indicates that the proposed development would not be able to provide this in any event.
80. Moreover, I am mindful of the aforementioned research provided by the appellant<sup>53</sup>, which indicates that each person living in a home for later living such as those proposed in this case would benefit from reduced risks of health challenges, which could lead to circa £3,500 savings per occupant per annum to the NHS and social services. To my mind, this gives further evidential weight to the PPG<sup>54</sup>, insofar as it states that offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help reduce costs to the social care and health care systems. Also as set out above, based on sales of another comparative property in Brockenhurst, a considerable proportion of **the proposed development's occupants** would be likely to come from the existing catchment area for the NHS Foundation Trust – albeit I readily accept that some population increase could potentially occur both as a result of some in-migration to the proposed dwellings, and as a result of larger homes made **available through the appeal scheme's future occupants down-sizing**.
81. Nevertheless, these site and proposal specific reasons lead me to the view on this matter that the obligation sought by the Foundation Trust would not be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms and thus would not meet the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)<sup>55</sup> or the Framework<sup>56</sup> in this respect. Consequently, the unilateral undertaking submitted by the appellant to address this matter carries no weight in my **assessment of the appeal's merits**<sup>57</sup>.
82. Furthermore, **given the potential for specialist older people's housing to reduce** health risks, and thus pressure on related services, taken together with the likelihood that a considerable proportion of the occupants of the appeal scheme would come from the District, I consider that the proposed development would not give rise to any unacceptable additional pressure on local health services.

### *Flood Risk*

83. The appeal site is located in Flood Zone 1 which means that there is a low probability that river or sea flooding would affect it<sup>58</sup>. Conditions requiring the implementation and maintenance of an appropriate drainage system have been

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<sup>53</sup> *Healthier and Happier: an Analysis of the fiscal and wellbeing benefits of building more homes for later living*, Produced by WPI Strategy, September 2019 included as **Appendix 15 to the appellant's Statement of Case** (CD7.24)

<sup>54</sup> *Housing for Older and Disabled People* at Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626 Revision date: 26 June 2019

<sup>55</sup> Regulation 122(2)

<sup>56</sup> At paragraph 57

<sup>57</sup> In such a circumstance, Clause 6.4 of the submitted unilateral undertaking sets out that the relevant obligations cease to have effect from the date of this decision

<sup>58</sup> Per the PPG *Flood Risk and coastal change* Paragraph: 065 Reference ID: 7-065-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014

sought and can be imposed. I am also mindful that the Lead Local Flood Authority has raised no objections to the scheme subject to such conditions. Accordingly, I am of the view that the proposed development would be acceptable in these terms and would not lead to increased flood risk on the appeal site or elsewhere.

### Planning Balance

84. Although the proposed development would not secure housing which would meet the M4(3)2a optional technical standard and would thus be at variance with Policy IMPL2 of the Local Plan in this respect, the very significant benefits it would yield combined with the other material considerations referred to above (including the operation of the tilted balance, as set out in the Framework) would justify a decision other than in accordance with the development plan in this instance.
85. Furthermore, taken together, the above-matters also lead me to the view that the proposed development would accord with Policy STR1 of the Local Plan insofar as it expects, amongst other things, all new development to make a positive social, economic and environmental contribution to community and business life in the Plan Area. In my judgement, the appeal scheme would in all other respects accord with the development plan.
86. Whilst some consider that the appeal scheme could create a precedent for further development in the area, I have considered this site-specific proposal on its own merits. My decision in this case would not therefore create a precedent for proposals elsewhere in the area, or for instances where the harmful effects of proposals are not outweighed by their benefits.

### Conditions

87. The Framework sets out<sup>59</sup> that conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. I have considered the suggested conditions on this basis. In the conditions I have attached, I have made minor amendments to their wording in the interests of clarity<sup>60</sup>. Where conditions require compliance with them prior to the commencement of the proposed development, the appellant has supplied their written agreement<sup>61</sup> to their terms<sup>62</sup>.
88. In the interests of certainty, it is necessary to attach a condition that specifies the approved plans.
89. A condition is imposed which requires the submission of a construction management plan to the Council for its approval prior to the commencement of development on the site. As the construction management plan will set out the measures to be adhered to during the appeal **site's development phase**, elements of the condition of necessity require compliance prior to the commencement of development. For these reasons, I consider the imposition of this condition to be clearly justified.

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<sup>59</sup> At paragraph 55

<sup>60</sup> Condition numbers 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19

<sup>61</sup> ID9 *Agreement to pre-commencement conditions*

<sup>62</sup> Per s100ZA of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

90. In the interests of biodiversity, as well as the character of the site and its surroundings, and to ensure that existing trees that are due to be retained are adequately protected, a condition is attached which requires compliance with the **appellant's submitted** *Arboricultural Assessment and Method Statement*<sup>63</sup> and related details. Given the criticality of protecting the trees during the construction phase of the development there is clear justification for requirement for these measures to be in place prior to the demolition of the houses currently on the appeal site.
91. A condition is attached, which requires details of the materials to be used in the external construction of the appeal scheme to be submitted to the Council prior to their use. This condition is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings.
92. As set out above, the proposed landscaping elements of the appeal scheme are integral to its overall townscape quality. It is for this reason that a condition is attached which requires timely implementation of the landscaping proposals in accordance with the approved plans – and requires replacement of trees should this be necessary within 5 years of the proposed **development's completion**. For substantially similar reasons, a condition is attached which requires the implementation of the front boundary treatment and planting as depicted in the plans prior to the first occupation of the proposed development.
93. In the interests of highway safety, a condition is attached which requires visibility splays in line with those shown on the submitted plans to be provided, and to remain free from obstruction. I am of the view that any restriction of permitted development rights that this condition could entail would be clearly justified in the interests of highway safety. The same condition would also ensure that the proposed development would provide adequate amounts of car and scooter parking, including charging points.
94. Also in the interests of both highway safety and of the character of the streetscene a condition is attached which requires details of the highways works that would be required to facilitate the dedicated right turn and highway crossovers and the removal of redundant crossovers to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the development. The condition requires these measures to be implemented prior to the first occupation of the proposed development.
95. Given the criticality of these measures to ensure the highway safety of the development in its day-to-day use a pre-commencement condition is clearly justified in this case. I have made a minor modification to the suggested condition to ensure that it is relevant to planning insofar as the details of the **local highway authority's approval** are to be supplied to the Council prior to the commencement of the development. The local highway authority raises no objection to the scheme subject to the implementation of the highway works set out in the condition. A Grampian condition in this instance is therefore clearly justified as there is a reasonable prospect that those highway works would be carried out in a timely fashion.
96. In the interests of the residential amenity of the occupants of adjacent dwellings conditions requiring the installation and retention of obscure glazing

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<sup>63</sup> Produced by Barrell Tree Consultancy, Dated 17 April 2020

in identified windows and balustrades are clearly justified and are accordingly imposed.

97. To ensure that the appeal scheme would provide housing to meet the needs of older residents in accordance with the description of development given in the banner heading, a condition is attached which restricts the occupancy of the proposed dwellings to those aged 60 or above and their spouses or partners.
98. To ensure that the proposed development would provide adequate drainage and that development of the appeal site would not increase flood risk elsewhere, a condition is attached which requires the implementation of a drainage system in accordance with previously submitted details. Moreover, to ensure that the drainage infrastructure remains effective over the lifetime of the development, a condition is imposed which requires details and schedules of protection measures and maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system to be submitted to the Council for its approval and implemented in accordance with the approved details. I have made minor modifications to the suggested wording of this condition in the interests of precision and enforceability.
99. As set out above, in order to ensure that the noise created by the proposed electricity substation would cause no material harm to the living conditions of the occupants of 14 and 15 Bucklers Mews a condition is attached to ensure that acceptable limits are placed on this in line with the relevant British **Standards, and as set out in the appellant's noise** report<sup>64</sup>.
100. A condition is included to secure a biodiversity net gain on the site to ensure that the development would accord with Policy DM2 of the Local Plan in this regard, and to secure the benefit anticipated in documents submitted with the appeal. For substantially similar reasons, a condition is attached requiring the implementation and maintenance of the green roof. Also in the interests of biodiversity, and to ensure that any bats present on the site are adequately protected during construction and related activity, a condition is attached which requires details of appropriate licences for relevant works to be supplied to the Council prior to the commencement of any activities which may have an effect on their roosts.
101. I set out above the specific justification for including a Grampian condition which requires the submission of a mitigation package in respect of the **proposed development's nitrates output**. Accordingly, a condition to this effect is attached as it is necessary in the interests of the integrity of European sites. The condition imposed includes some minor amendments to the wording supplied by the Council, in the interests of enforceability and precision; and to ensure that the drafting conforms with the PPG advice relating to such conditions – particularly that they should be negatively worded<sup>65</sup>.

## Conclusion

102. For the reasons set out above, and taking fully into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

*G J Fort*

INSPECTOR

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<sup>64</sup>The *Statement of Case on Noise* included as Appendix 27 of the appellant's *Statement of Case* (CD7.24)

<sup>65</sup> *Use of Conditions* Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 21a-009-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014 and Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 21a-010-20190723 Revision date: 23 07 2019

## Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
  - Topographical Survey 2810-SV-1
  - Existing Floor Areas 2810-SV-2
  - Location Plan 1913 30
  - Site Plan 1913 31
  - Site Plan First Floor 1913 32
  - Lower Ground Floor 1913 33
  - Ground Floor Plan 1913 34
  - First Floor Plan 1913 35
  - Second Floor Plan 1913 36
  - Roof Plan 1913 37C Rev C
  - Proposed Elevations 1913 38
  - Proposed Elevations 1913 39
  - Indicative Street Scene and Site Section 1913 40
  - Section A-A 1913 41
  - Section B-B 1913 42
  - Section C-C 1913 43
  - Section D-D 1913 44
  - General Landscape Arrangement 1632-GA-100 REV K
  - Graphic Landscape Plan 1632-GP-101 REV K
  - Section A and B 1632-GP-102 REV A
  - Section C 1632-GP-103 REV A
  - Planting Plan 1632-PP-300 Rev L
  - Planting Schedule 1632-PP-301 Rev L
  - Tree Protection Plan 19028-BT2
- 3) No development shall take place, (including any works of demolition), until a Construction Method Statement (CMS) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The approved CMS shall include scaled drawings illustrating the provision for:
  - 1) The parking of site operatives' and visitors' vehicles;
  - 2) Loading and unloading of plant and materials;
  - 3) Management of construction traffic and access routes;
  - 4) Details of construction access and construction vehicle tracking;
  - 5) Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
  - 6) Details of the method of cleaning wheels and chassis of all HGVs, plant and delivery vehicles leaving the site and the means of keeping the



site access road and adjacent public highway clear of mud and debris during site demolition, excavation, preparation and construction.

The agreed CMS shall then be adhered to for the duration of construction of the development hereby permitted.

- 4) Prior to demolition of the existing houses at the site, the tree protective measures recommended by the Barrell Tree Consultancy *Arboricultural Assessment and Method Statement* (reference: 19028-AA-PB dated 17 April 2020) and the Tree Protection Plan (reference: 19028-BT2) shall be installed and thereafter retained for the duration of the construction period for the development hereby approved. No fires, building operations, storage of goods including building materials, machinery and soil, or discharge of any chemical substances, including petrol and diesel, shall be undertaken within the tree protection zones or within the canopy spreads, whichever is the greater, nor shall any change in soil levels or routing of services within those defined areas be carried out.
- 5) Prior to their use, details of all materials to be used in external facing walls, roofs, doors, windows, balustrades and hard surfaces shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.
- 6) All external hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and details within one year of the first residential occupation of development. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.
- 7) Prior to occupation of the development hereby approved the parking spaces, accesses, manoeuvring space, visibility splays and motorised scooter store (with electric charging points) shown on the approved plans shall be provided. The parking spaces shall be retained and kept available for the parking of residents and their visitors only. The visibility splays shall be kept clear of any obstructions over 0.6m in height.
- 8) Prior to occupation of the relevant flats, the windows on the south elevation shown to be obscure glazed on the plan ref: Proposed Elevations 1913-38, shall be obscurely glazed, top hung and shall not open outward more than 200mm and shall be retained as such.
- 9) Prior to occupation of the relevant flats, the 1.8m high obscure glazed balcony screens, shown on the approved plans, shall be installed and thereafter retained as such.
- 10) Prior to first residential occupation of the development hereby approved the boundary treatment as shown on the approved plans shall be planted, implemented and installed, as appropriate, and thereafter maintained and retained.
- 11) The sheltered apartments comprising the development hereby permitted shall only be occupied by persons of sixty years or over, and the spouse or partner of such a person and in the event of the death of such person,



the spouse or partner of such person shall be permitted to remain within the retirement apartments irrespective of whether they are aged sixty years or over.

- 12) Development shall not take place until details of the works in the highway to provide:
- The access and egress pavement crossovers and the right turn lane on the A337, as shown in principle on drawings PBA 107.0008.006 Rev C (included in the *Stanford Hill Lymington Transport Statement produced* by Paul Basham Associates) and Site Plan 1913.31; and
  - Removal of the existing pavement crossovers serving High Bank, Silver Birches and Hill View from the A337 and reinstatement of the kerb, pavement and verge;

Shall have been submitted to the local highway authority for approval for the purposes of s278 of the Highway Act 1980; and evidence of the local **highway authority's** s278 approval shall have been provided to the local planning authority.

The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the works in the highway have been constructed in accordance with the approved details.

- 13) Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, the drainage system shall be constructed to achieve the proposed discharge rate of 5.0 l/s, in accordance with the designs and details set out in *Hydraulic Modelling Calculations for 44 Unit Scheme Stanford Hill, Lymington produced by Arch Associates DRAINAGE STRATEGY LAYOUT*; Project No: AAL160; Drawing No: 502; Revision: P2; dated: APRIL 2020, received 17/09/20 unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.
- 14) Details for the long-term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved. The submitted details shall include:
- a. Maintenance schedules for each drainage feature type and ownership;
  - b. Details of and timescales for implementation of protection measures;
- The agreed maintenance and protection measures shall be implemented thereafter in accordance with the approved details, schedules and timescales.
- 15) The rating noise level from the proposed substation, determined in accordance with the requirements of BS 4142: 2014 + A1: 2019 *Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound* shall not exceed the prevailing representative background noise level by more than minus 10 dB in any external amenity space or at the nearest habitable room window (under free-field conditions) at numbers 14 and 15 Bucklers Mews at any time.
- 16) Any works that impact on the bat roosts (day roost for common pipistrelle at Silver Birches (garage) and day roost for brown long-eared at High Bank as identified in the Phase 2 Bat Survey Report undertaken by Abbas Ecology (Dated August 2019)) shall not in any circumstances

commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with either:

- a) a licence issued by Natural England authorising the specified activity/development to go ahead; or
- b) a statement in writing from the relevant licensing body to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/development will require a licence.

- 17) No construction works above damp proof course level shall take place until a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority (covering a minimum period of 30 years). The management plan should include:
- Methods and timetable for delivering BNG;
  - Responsibilities for delivering BNG – during and after construction;
  - Description of the habitats to be managed;
  - Clear timed and measurable objectives in the short, medium, and long-term for BNG - Detail objectives for all habitats (target condition);
  - A commitment to adaptive management in response to monitoring to secure the intended biodiversity outcomes;
  - Details for a formal review process when objectives are not fully reached / roles and responsibilities;

The agreed BNG and management plan shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the agreed timescales and schedules unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

- 18) The roof of the development hereby permitted shall not be constructed until full details and specification of the biodiverse extensive (green/brown) roof(s) as shown on the approved plan have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The biodiverse roof(s) shall be implemented in accordance with the details approved and shall be maintained as such thereafter.
- 19) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until:
- A water efficiency calculation in accordance with the Government's National Calculation Methodology for assessing water efficiency in new dwellings has been undertaken which demonstrates that no more than 110 litres of water per person per day shall be consumed within the development, and this calculation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority; all measures necessary to meet the agreed waste water efficiency calculation must be installed before first occupation and retained thereafter;
  - A mitigation package addressing the additional nutrient input arising from the development has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. Such mitigation package shall address all of the additional nutrient load imposed on protected European Sites by the development when fully occupied and shall allow the local planning authority to

ascertain on the basis of the best available scientific evidence that such additional nutrient loading will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the protected European Sites, having regard to the conservation objectives for those sites; and

- The mitigation package shall include a timetable for implementation and measures for retention and maintenance of that mitigation package.

The mitigation package shall thereafter be implemented, maintained and retained in accordance with the approved timetable.

\*\*\*End of Conditions Schedule\*\*\*

APPEARANCES

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Guy Williams of Counsel

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Council

*He called:*

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Officer, New Forest District Council

Warren Lever BSc (Hons) Cons  
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FOR THE APPELLANT:

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*He called:*

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Architect

On behalf of David James  
Architects & Partners Ltd

Andrew Williams BA(Hons) DipLA,  
DipUD, CMLI

Director, Define

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Councillor Andrew Peter Ash-Vie

Chair of the Lymington and  
Pennington Town Council Planning  
Committee

Don Mackenzie

Deputy Chair, The Lymington  
Society

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AT THE INQUIRY:

- ID1 – **Appellant’s Opening**
- ID2 – **Council’s Opening**
- ID3 – Lymington and Pennington Town Council Statement
- ID4 – Note to the Inspector on the overarching agreement and the unilateral undertaking
- ID5 – Secretary of State Decision Letter on APP/P1133/W/18/3205558 Land at Wolborough Barton, Coach Road, Newton Abbot TQ12 1EJ
- ID6 – Mitigation for Recreational Impact on New Forest European Sites Supplementary Planning Document
- ID7 – List of Suggested Conditions
- ID8 – Note on the current availability of Market Retirement Accommodation in New Forest District Council
- ID9 – **Appellant’s agreement to pre-commencement conditions**
- ID10 – Appeal Decision APP/N1730/W/20/3261194
- ID11 – Statement of the Lymington Society
- ID12 – Chris Cox Rebuttal Clarification
- ID13 – Closing Submissions on behalf of the Council
- ID14 - *Hallam Land Management Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Eastleigh Borough Council* [2017] EWHC 2865 (Admin)
- ID15 - Closing Submissions on behalf of the appellant

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY AGREEMENT AFTER THE INQUIRY:

- 1 - Unilateral Undertaking relating to Nitrates Mitigation: Dated 20 May 2021
- 2 - Unilateral Undertaking relating to Health Contributions: Dated 20 May 2021
- 3 - Section 106 planning obligations relating to mitigation of recreation impacts and air quality: Dated 26 May 2021

## **APPENDIX D**

APPEAL DECISION, FORMER FLEET POLICE  
STATION, FLEET, GU51 5QQ  
APP/N1730/W/20/3261194



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## Appeal Decision

Inquiry Held on 16-18 March 2021

Site visit made on 19 March 2021

by Harold Stephens BA MPhil Dip TP MRTPI FRSA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 May 2021

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Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/W/20/3261194

Former Fleet Police Station, 13 Crookham Road, Fleet GU51 5QQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Churchill Retirement Living Ltd against Hart District Council.
  - The application Ref 19/02659/FUL, is dated 15 November 2019.
  - The development proposed is demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to form 31 retirement apartments including communal facilities, retention of existing access, car parking and landscaping.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to form 31 retirement apartments including communal facilities, retention of existing access, car parking and landscaping at the former Fleet Police Station, 13 Crookham Road, Fleet GU51 5QQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/02659/FUL, dated 15 November 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions set out in the Schedule attached to this decision.

### Procedural Matters

2. The appeal was lodged against the non-determination of the planning application. The application was **reported to the Council's Planning Committee** on 11 November 2020 to inform the Planning Committee of the submission of the non-determination planning appeal and to establish what the decision of the Planning Committee would have been had it determined the application. The Planning Committee resolved that it would have refused the application for the following three reasons which are contained in the Planning Statement of Common Ground (SoCG).<sup>1</sup> In summary these are: (i) the proposed development would not provide an adequate level of affordable housing; (ii) the proposed development would not achieve a high-quality design or positively contribute to the overall appearance of the area; and (iii) the proposed development, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the Special Protection Area.
3. The application was supported by a number of plans, reports, and technical information. A full list of the plans on which the appeal is to be determined is

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 2.9



set out at paragraph 2.11 of the Planning SoCG which was agreed by the main parties. The application was also submitted with supporting statements and information which is set out at paragraph 2.12 of the Planning SoCG. The proposal was supported by a Design and Access Statement (DAS), a Planning Statement, information on Greenfield Runoff Rates, a Transport Statement, an Ecological Desk Study, a Shadow Habitats Regulation Assessment, a Ground Investigation Report, an Affordable Housing Viability Statement, a Statement of Community Involvement, a Thames Basin Heath Statement, a Sustainability and Energy Statement and a Planning Statement Addendum.

4. I held a Case Management Conference (CMC) on 11 January 2021. At the CMC the main issues were identified, how the evidence would be dealt with at the Inquiry and timings. In the weeks following the CMC both main parties continued discussions on the appeal to ensure that matters of dispute were clear and that all matters of agreement (non-disputed matters) were documented in either Statements of Common Ground or in draft Planning Conditions such that time on these matters was minimised at the Inquiry. It follows that there are two Statements of Common Ground in this case:
  - Planning Statement of Common Ground – 26/01/21
  - Viability Statement of Common Ground - 26/01/21.
5. At the Inquiry a Planning Obligation was submitted. The Planning Obligation is made by an Agreement between the Appellant, HSBC UK Bank Plc and Hart District Council under s106 of the TCPA 1990. The Planning Obligation secures the following: (i) an off-site financial contribution in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision of £500,000; (ii) provision of SANG<sup>2</sup> land at Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Sandy Lane, Church Crookham and provision of a SAMM<sup>3</sup> payment of £14,585. The s106 Agreement is signed and dated 10 May 2021 and is a material consideration in this case. A Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Compliance Statement was also submitted in support of the Planning Obligation. I return to the Planning Obligation later in this decision.
6. In relation to putative RfR1 (affordable housing), it is clear that agreement has now been reached in relation to an off-site financial contribution towards affordable housing that is secured through a s106 Agreement. Therefore, it is agreed that having regard to development viability, the appeal proposal would provide an adequate level of affordable housing provision. This matter is no longer in dispute **and did not form part of the Council's or the Appellant's** evidence.

## Main Issues

7. In the light of the above I consider the main issues are:
  - (i) *The effect of the design of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and*
  - (ii) *The effect of the proposed development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.*

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<sup>2</sup> Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Access Management and Monitoring

## Reasons

### *The Appeal Site*

8. The appeal site is an L shaped plot of land of approximately 0.29ha. The site slopes down from Crookham Road to the back of the site. The site is currently vacant being formerly a police station. The police station building (now demolished) was constructed in red brick and was located centrally within the site. On the south boundary is a single storey garage block. A tarmac surfaced car park associated with the police station use occupies the north west part of the site with access gained from Crookham Road. A secondary vehicular access is located to the south east from St James Road. The police station building was two storeys in height with a part pitched and part flat roof. An underground fuel tank is recorded on site.
9. To the south west of the site is Walton Close which incorporates three residential properties, separating the site from Walton Close is a brick wall. To the north west is Crookham Road and on the opposite side of the road is Grace Gardens and Fraynes Croft, both incorporate residential properties. To the north east is St James Road and on the opposite side are residential properties which were built in approximately 2010. To the south east is the access road to the Fleet Bowls Club clubhouse and residential dwellings to the rear. The properties in the immediate area range from single storey to three stories in height with the majority being of a brick construction. The site is not within a conservation area.

### *Description of Development*

10. The description of development of the appeal is:

***"Demolition of existing building and redevelopment of the site to form 31 retirement apartments including communal facilities, retention of existing access, car parking and landscaping."***

11. The proposed apartments would consist of 19 x one-bedroom apartments and 12 x two-bedroom apartments. These would be supported by communal facilities including a one bedroom guest suite, lobby, residents' lounge, and rear garden. The proposal would fall within Use Class C3 (Dwelling Houses).
12. The submitted Planning Statement (para. 2.10) states:

*"The developments consist of 1- and 2-bedroom apartments and are sold by the Applicant with a lease containing an age restriction which ensures that only people of 60 years or over, or those of 60 years or over with a spouse or partner of at least 55, can live in the development."*
13. The development would have a lodge manager who would be on call during normal working hours and would have an office. There is no warden living on site and no specialist medical support would be provided.
14. The scheme would consist of a single three storey building fronting Crookham Road. The main entrance to the building would be to the west and would also provide access to a car park for 20 vehicles. Vehicular access would be from Crookham Road as per the arrangement for the former police station.

### *Planning Policy*

15. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the appeal must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The parties are agreed that the statutory development plan includes the following documents: (i) The South East Plan (SEP) Saved Policy NRM6; the Hart Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 Saved Policies (HLP06); (iii) the Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032 (HLP32) and the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan (FNP) 2019. The parties are agreed that the policies relevant to this appeal are in these documents and they are listed at paragraphs 3.5-3.8 on page 11 of the Planning SoCG.
16. The development plan identifies the appeal site to be within the Fleet Settlement boundary and approximately 50m south west of the Fleet Town Centre boundary. For the purposes of FNP Policy 10A, the appeal site is identified as being within the Fleet Town Centre Character Area.
17. It is common ground in this case that the development plan is up-to-date. The relevant policies are also agreed and are set out in the Planning SoCG. I shall assess which policies are supportive, neutral or in conflict with the proposed development and the weighting that can be attached to various policies. Then I shall assess taking the plan as a whole, whether or not the appeal scheme complies with the development plan. Then in the light of compliance or breach whether there are material considerations which would outweigh that determination in accordance with the development plan.
18. Both parties are agreed that relevant policy and guidance is contained in the following documents:
  - Building for a Healthy Life (2020)
  - Government's Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
  - Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 -2032 (2016)
  - Hart District Council Urban Characterisation and Density Study (2010)
  - Hart District Council Parking Provision Interim Guidance (2008)
  - Hart District Council Five Year Housing Land Supply from 1 April 2020 (September 2020)
  - Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Delivery Framework (2009)
  - Hart Council Community Infrastructure Policy (August 2014)
  - Whole Plan and CIL Viability Study December (2016)
19. There is no dispute that the proposal complies with the vision and objectives of the plan in that it gives priority to the redevelopment of previously developed land and that it provides more accommodation for the elderly.<sup>4</sup> There is also agreement that the proposal complies with the following key policies. Firstly, it is agreed that Policy SD1, which deals with sustainable development, is not breached by the proposal. Policy SD1 is the overarching policy in the plan and must be given significant weight.

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<sup>4</sup> HLP32 page 32

20. Secondly, there is no dispute that Policy SS1, which sets out the spatial strategy and the distribution of growth, is supportive of the development. The appeal scheme is located in the most sustainable settlement in Hart and is on previously developed land. I note that in meeting the housing requirement of the District, criteria (b) identifies permitting further development within the defined settlement boundaries where this proposal is located. Compliance with Policy SS1 must therefore be given significant weight.
21. Thirdly, both sides accept that Policy H1 (a-c) supports the proposal. The appeal scheme would provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes having regard to the evidence in the SHMA about housing needs and the size, location and characteristics of the surroundings; it would also provide homes that are accessible and adaptable and it would provide homes that would be made for specialist accommodation having regard to the SHMA.<sup>5</sup> Collectively the proposal complies with Policy H1 and should be given significant weight.
22. Fourthly, Policy H2 is met by the s106 contributions. There is an accepted significant need for further affordable housing in Hart<sup>6</sup> and the policy compliance should be given significant weight. Fifthly, Policy H4 is also supportive of the proposal seeking the provision of specialist accommodation for older persons on sites within settlement boundaries.<sup>7</sup> Significant weight should be given to this policy. Sixthly, the parties agree that the proposal complies with Policy H6 in meeting nationally described internal space standards. Again, significant weight should be given to this policy compliance.

*First Issue - the effect of the design of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area*

23. The appeal scheme proposes a three storey L shaped building with the long frontages to Crookham Road (north west) and Walton Close (south west). A communal amenity garden would be provided to the rear of the building on the east part of the site and a car park to the south, accessed from Crookham Road. The main access to the building would be from the access road to the south west. The proposed building would feature a pitched roof, gables, dormer windows and balconies. The predominant elevation material would be red brick, light cream render and brick accents are also proposed. The roof would consist of grey tiling.
24. The Council maintains that the proposed development would result in a poor design response through its failure to integrate and interact successfully with Crookham Road and St James Close; that the proposed elevations lack detail and quality; and that the scheme fails to respond positively to urban design policies and guidance. It is argued that the proposal would not meet the requirements of Policy NBE9 of HLP32, Policy GEN1 of HLP06 or Policy 10 or 10A of the FNP. It is contended that these design policies are highly significant and sufficient in themselves to justify dismissing the appeal. Reference is

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<sup>5</sup> Paragraphs 128-131 of HLP32

<sup>6</sup> Paragraph 137 of HLP32

<sup>7</sup> Paragraph 156 of HLP32

made to the Government's increasing emphasis on the need for high quality design and placemaking which is evident from the NPPF, the Planning Practice Guidance, the National Design Guide and Building for a Healthy Life.

25. There was some discussion at the Inquiry about the status of the site and whether it is located within Fleet Town Centre. From the documents that are before me, I consider that the appeal site is not within the Fleet Town Centre for the purposes of the HLP32.<sup>8</sup> However, it is within the Fleet Town Centre Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of the FNP and to which the Urban Characterisation and Density Study (UCDS) and Townscape Analysis Map apply. Although both the HLP32 and the FNP form part of the statutory development plan any conflict in policy must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to become part of the development plan.<sup>9</sup>
26. Both sides agree that the UCDS is a material consideration and it identifies the site to be in Area D: Fleet Road of the Fleet Town Centre Neighbourhood Area. A number of locally listed and positive buildings are identified in the sub area on the Townscape Analysis Map. The UCDS identifies Area D as sensitive to change and identifies a number of characteristics that apply. Policy 10A of the FNP makes clear that proposals will be supported where they have appropriate regard to the design characteristics for the relevant land use in that character area.
27. Although the Council opened its case on the basis that the massing and appearance of the proposed development was in dispute between the parties, no material evidence was led by the Council on that point. The Council confirmed that the points of particular concern in relation to the design of the scheme were the lack of active frontages and local character.
28. As a preliminary point, I note that the site has been vacant for about six years but nowhere has the Council sought to impose a site specific design solution through the development plan nor has it set down a list of requirements for this site or the general area. Instead the Council relies on alleged conflict with Policies NBE9 of HLP32, GEN1 of HLP06 and Policies 10 and 10A of the FNP all of which are generic in nature.
29. With regard to Policy NBE9 of HLP32 the proposal is alleged to conflict with criteria (b) and (g) because of the lack of active elevation. However, there are 10 criteria in the policy and only two are said to be breached. Therefore, even on the **Council's** case 8 of the criteria are effectively complied with so that overall, the policy is complied with taking the policy as a whole. Secondly, neither criteria (b) or (g) expressly mention active frontage. The Council accepted that neither criteria in the policy mentioned active elevation.

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<sup>8</sup> Inset Map 10.1

<sup>9</sup> Section 38(5) of the PCPA 2004 refers. The HLP32 was the last document to become part of the development plan being adopted in April 2020

30. The Council argued that the aims of Policy NBE9 (b) and (g) cannot be met without active elevation. However, I consider the language in HLP32 is clear where the Council considers active frontages are necessary, such as in Policy ED5 and in the area in the Fleet Town Centre in Inset Map 10.1. I cannot accept that criteria (b) and (g) do actually deal with active frontages. Criteria (b) relates to the contribution of the building to public spaces and also access routes and public rights of way. It cannot be inferred that active frontages are implicit in that and the NPPF<sup>10</sup> states that policies must be clearly written and unambiguous. Exactly the same points can be made about criteria (g). This is all about crime and preventing anti-social behaviour. It cannot be inferred that active frontages are implicit here.
31. With regard to Policy GEN1 of HLP06, criteria (i), the Council accepted that this policy is generic in nature and has no express requirement for active elevation here. Moreover, there are numerous criteria in this policy and only one is alleged to be breached. With regard to Policies 10 and 10A of the FNP, I note that this policy was described by the examiner in 2019 as a generic design policy.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the Council **accepted that the relevant UCDS's** guidance<sup>12</sup> for new developments in Area D of the Fleet Town Centre was limited to developments being of two or three storeys and that there were various opportunities for public realm and traffic management opportunities.
32. Overall, it is clear to me that there is no express requirement for active frontages in any of these policies. The development plan simply does not require active frontages on the appeal site.
33. Additionally, the importance of active frontages is overstated by the Council. None of the documents cited in support of the pre-eminence of active frontages affords active frontages the weight given to them by Dr Kruczkowski.<sup>13</sup> Where the NPPF, the National Design Guide and Building for a Healthy Life do mention active frontages, they do so as ways of integrating buildings into their surroundings. This is recognised in the guidance that Dr Kruczkowski, cited at paragraph 2.3 of the Rebuttal PoE: the purpose of an active frontage is to add interest, life, and vitality to the public realm. In my view the proposed design does this, and the proposed development would be fully occupied on a full time basis by 31 occupants at least who would be resident and using the high street on a daily basis. There are no requirements or grading standards in the NPPF or otherwise for appropriate or inappropriate active frontages and, as I saw on my site visit, the activity afforded by the other frontages in the area is limited.
34. Turning to the alleged impact of the proposed development, I note that the proposed building would be set back about 5m from Crookham Road and about 1m below the level of Crookham Road. **The Council's** principal criticism

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<sup>10</sup> Paragraph 16

<sup>11</sup> Mr Moorhouse Appendix 1

<sup>12</sup> Appendix 1, page 12

<sup>13</sup> Dr Kruczkowski's POE paragraph 2.53-2.54



with the proposed development is that its principal façade does not face Crookham Road because the front door does not face Crookham Road, meaning that the frontage to the building could only ever achieve a “Grade D” standard for active frontages. I disagree.

35. It is wrong to say the principal elevation in the building would not be on Crookham Road. The principal elevation is defined by the massing of the proposed development and the location of the main road, which means that **the development’s principal façade would be the** elevation facing Crookham Road. As Mr Jackson confirmed the building would be easily legible and understood by anyone coming to the site and there would be no harm in having the main entrance to the side of the building.
36. The appeal scheme would offer a high degree of social interaction between residents of the development and those walking by it. Some 39 openings face Crookham Road over a frontage of 54 metres. The openings on the building increase the interface of the building with the public realm given that five of the ground floor flats have doors, leading onto patios, which would be used by residents. A further six of the first and second floor flats have Juliette balconies with fully opening doors. The **Council’s** approach highlights a lack of understanding of how to design a scheme which works for the provision of accommodation for older persons. The design which the Council appears to want would not be architecturally workable given the need for a level access to the building and level access internally.
37. In addition, the suggestion that the building could be level with Crookham Road is impractical because of the need for a platform lift and this would decrease the level of interaction with the public realm, as ground floor residents would be level with a busy road so less likely to use or sit on the six patios at the front of the building. **Dr Kruczkowski’s evidence in chief was that “an active frontage is not made active by having doors”.** The level of usage by a front door on Crookham Road would be limited in any event. The location of the car park at the rear means that even if there were a front door on the Crookham Road elevation of the building, it would not be regularly used. This is illustrated by the properties in **St James’ Close**. In my view there would be no material harm arising from the design of the appeal scheme.
38. I now turn to the alleged harm to local character. It was very difficult to discern from the **Council’s evidence** what the actual current character of the locality is. There is the guidance in the **UCDS’s** Area D: Fleet Road of the Fleet Town Centre Neighbourhood Area and the locally distinctive character of the site which the Council identified as coming from the Townscape Analysis Map. However, it is clear that not all of the characteristics that apply to the Area D character area are relevant to the appeal site.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, almost none of the characteristics of this area can be seen from the site or are relevant to the immediate surroundings. There is no retail adjacent, there is no Edwardian

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<sup>14</sup> UCDS Appendix 1 page 10 Area D: Fleet Road



character, there are no locally listed buildings within view, there is no **common building line and there is no view of a 1960's shopping centre**. The only points of relevance are that buildings are two-three storeys and that there is a negative building on the proposed site where sensitive development would be welcomed.

39. In my view the local character is highly varied and different with no dominant style, typology, massing, building line, footprint, scale, use or material. The scale and height of the site context is two to three storeys. The site context is mixed and includes detached houses, terraced houses, semi-detached houses, bungalows, and large flatted developments as well as commercial properties. It is obviously wrong to look at character based on a plan alone, which should actually be determined by the context of the site. The appearance of buildings and building materials used in the site context is also mixed. Plainly the site is in a location where the urban transitions into the suburban. In the context of the site, the scheme proposed by the Appellant offers high quality design, which is cohesive with Crookham Road and its surroundings. I cannot agree with the Council that the measured, polite, and benign elevations of this building would be so materially harmful to the existing character as to justify refusal on design grounds.
40. Where Dr Kruczkowski did identify buildings, **which made 'positive contributions', that is all he did. He did not identify any characteristics which** make them positive, for example in his description of Royal Parade. Dr Kruczkowski failed to identify any local characteristics from the Townscape Analysis Map which the proposal does not comply with save for that the character is about relationships with the street. That is, effectively, a repeat of the **Council's** case on active frontages which I have already dealt with above.
41. The proposed design would enliven the Crookham Road street scene. The proposed amenity space would be set down and back from the road which would allow some privacy and separation from traffic but would also allow some interaction between the public realm and residents. The boundary treatment is set at a height to allow passing pedestrians visual connection with residents at the front of the building. The setting down of the building is key to dealing with the sloping site levels of about 2m across the site, making the building accessible to all at a single level. The most appropriate location for practical entry to the building is at the south west elevation as designed, where it could be seen from both Crookham Road and the car park and can provide level access to the building.
42. The appeal scheme provides a high quality design. The context analysis within the DAS has identified this site as a transition site between the more urban grain development to the north and the suburban development to the south. The building would be set down into the site, to both create a level access to all points and reduce the height of the building to neighbouring dwellings. The proposal has similar eaves heights to St James Close. The roof would be stepped to break down into elements thereby reducing the overall mass.

Dormers would further visually break up the roof mass. The height, scale and mass are all appropriate for this site and its context. Gables with limited articulation are a feature of the immediate context. The DAS covers a detailed analysis of the materials and features of buildings in the local context. The proposed design therefore positively responds to all aspects of paragraph 127 of the NPPF and is high quality.

43. Drawing all of these threads together I conclude on the first issue that the proposed development is a high quality design which would positively contribute to the overall character and appearance of the area. The proposal would accord with aforementioned development plan policies NBE9 of HLP 32, GEN1 of HLP 06 and Policy 10 and 10A of FNP and with other relevant policy and guidance including that contained in the NPPF.

### *Second Issue - Effect on Thames Basin Heaths SPA*

#### *Assessment of likely significant effects*

44. The appeal site is located in proximity to the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA). It is within the 5 kms SPA Buffer Zone but outside of the 400m 'inner exclusion' zone identified within SEP Policy NRM6, HLP32 Policies NBE3 and NBE4 and FNP Policy 17. The TBHSPA is a network of heathland sites which are designated for their ability to provide a habitat for the internationally important bird species of woodlark, nightjar, and Dartford warbler. The area is protected in the UK under the provisions set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the '**Habitats Regulations**'). **These bird species are particularly subject to disturbance from walkers, dog walkers and cat predation because they nest on or near the ground.**
45. The conservation objectives for the SPA are to ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and to ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Habitats Regulations, by maintaining or restoring the extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features; the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features; the supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely; the population of each of the qualifying features, and, the distribution of the qualifying features within the site. I have had regard to these objectives in undertaking my duties in accordance with the Habitats Regulations.
46. The characteristics of the proposed development coupled with its proximity to the SPA present an increased risk of disturbance to its qualifying features. Natural England (NE) has indicated that it believes that within 5km of the SPA, additional residential development in combination will have significant effects on the Bourley and Long Valley SSSI, which forms part of the TBHSPA. Thus, without mitigation any such proposal is contrary to Habitats Regulations 63 and 64. Mitigation measures in the form of SANG and SAMM contributions are required to be secured to avoid impacts from residents who may recreate upon the SPA. NE also considers that without appropriate mitigation the

proposed development could have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Basingstoke Canal SSI. In order to mitigate these impacts and make the development acceptable foul drainage must be connected to the public sewer.

47. Collectively, SEP Policy NRM6, HLP32 Policies NBE3 and NBE4 and FNP Policy 17 require adequate measures to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects on the SPA. The application proposes 31 net additional dwellings (Class C3 use) within the 400m – 5km TBHSPA 'zone of influence'. As such, adequate measures in accordance with the Habitats Regulations and the above development plan policies are required. The Habitats Regulations require the Competent Authority to consider the potential impact that a development may have on a European Protected Site (TBHSPA).
48. **The Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership has agreed a 'Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Delivery Framework'**<sup>15</sup> to enable the delivery of housing in the vicinity of the TBHSPA without development having a significant effect on the TBHSPA as a whole. The delivery framework is based on avoidance measures and the policy indicates that these measures can take the form of areas of open space (SANG). The delivery framework also states developments can provide SANG or that Local Authorities collect developer contributions towards mitigation measures. This includes the provision of SANG land and joint contributions to the funding of SAMM of the effects of mitigation measures across the TBHSPA.
49. At the application stage, NE originally objected to the proposed development<sup>16</sup> but, following the submission of a Shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment,<sup>17</sup> advised that as long as the Applicant was complying with the requirements of Hart's Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy for the TBHSPA (through a legal agreement securing SANG and SAMM), NE had no objection on the grounds of the impact of the development on the TBHSPA.<sup>18</sup> No such legal agreement was in place at the time the appeal was submitted. As a consequence, the Inspector is now the Competent Authority for the appeal scheme, and it is necessary for me to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA).

#### *Appropriate Assessment*

50. This AA is necessary to comply with Regulation 63 (1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is accepted by the parties that the characteristics of the proposed development coupled with the proximity to the SPA present a likely significant effect in-combination to its qualifying features. The parties also agree that an appropriate Avoidance Strategy which involves the provision of SANG and a financial contribution towards the SPA wide SAMM project would be necessary and sufficient to address the impacts from the proposed development.

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<sup>15</sup> CD3.6

<sup>16</sup> Mr Moorhouse's Appendix 4

<sup>17</sup> D 2.7

<sup>18</sup> Mr Moorhouse's Appendix 5

51. Following submission of the appeal, the Appellant has provided a s106 Agreement, with a Deed of Covenant appended, relating to the acquisition of SANG land from a third party<sup>19</sup> at Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Sandy Lane, Church Crookham (Naishes Wood SANG). The s106 Agreement secures the appropriate amount of SANG land as mitigation for the appeal scheme and it also secures a financial contribution to the Council for SAMM. The assumed contribution for the SANG land is £186,600 plus VAT based on an assumed 0.43 ha of SANG Land and 31 units. The s106 Agreement also secures a SAMM contribution of £14,585 to be paid by the owner.
52. I consider that the proposed SANG and SAMM mitigation is likely to be effective as the SANG land was specifically designed to persuade visitors away from the SPA. It is reasonable to conclude that SANG is effective as mitigation and dwellings consented within 5kms of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA with accompanying SANG are not likely to result in an increased number of visitors to the SPA. I also consider the amount of SANG proposed in this case is more than adequate to mitigate for the expected contribution of the proposal to the combined visitor pressure impact on the integrity of the SPA and the SAMM contributions are appropriate to secure management and maintenance of the land in perpetuity.
53. The parties are agreed that the Inspector as Competent Authority can and should in this case find that development proposals would accord with the Habitats Regulations on the basis that the Appellant has secured access to the Naishes Wood SANG by entering into a Deed of Covenant with a third party<sup>20</sup> as set out in the s106 Agreement and by making the SAMM payment.<sup>21</sup> The Council considers that at 17 March 2021 there exists sufficient capacity at Naishes Wood SANG to mitigate any harm from the appeal proposals. In this case I found that the appeal scheme is otherwise acceptable by reference to other issues and therefore it is appropriate to consult NE accordingly.
54. On 29 March 2021 a consultation with NE was undertaken in accordance with the Habitats Regulations. The response from NE confirms its opinion that the proposed SAMM mitigation secured by the s106 Agreement is acceptable. NE also confirms that the amount of SANG land proposed and secured by the s106 Agreement and the Deed of Covenant, is acceptable to address the anticipated effects of the development. This response is consistent with NE's earlier consultation response provided for the appeal, in which it is stated that its objection would be removed if a SANG solution was found. Moreover, the SANG in question has already been opened to the public and is operational. I consider this provides absolute certainty that the SANG mitigation would be secured long before occupation.
55. Having had regard to the views of NE and taking into account that I have found all other matters to be acceptable I am content that with the necessary and sufficient measures secured the proposed development would not adversely affect the integrity of the European Site and its relevant features.

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<sup>19</sup> Taylor Wimpey Developments Limited

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> Document 4

56. I am also satisfied on the following matters. Firstly, there is an identified and, prepared SANG at Naishes Wood where access for mitigation purposes will be permitted if permission is to be granted by the Inspector. Secondly, there are no technical impediments to the use of the SANG land. Thirdly, the Council has signed the s106 Agreement. Fourthly, the Appellant is able and willing to pay the amount that is required under the SAMM and SANG arrangements. Finally, there is no evidence to suggest that the capacity which exists at Naishes Wood, is likely to vanish before the transaction is completed and therefore the SANG provision would ensure that the proposal would not give rise to adverse effects to the integrity of the SPA.
57. The Appellant has also confirmed that foul drainage would be connected to the main sewer and has agreed to a condition to ensure that wastewater capacity will be provided to accommodate the additional flows from the development.
58. For all of these reasons therefore I am satisfied that the mitigation described above would be appropriately secured and that it would be sufficient to prevent harmful effects on the integrity and interest features of the TBHSPA so there would be no conflict with the Habitats Regulations. Moreover, there would be no conflict with SEP Policy NRM6, HLP32 Policies NBE3 and NBE4 and FNP Policy 17. On the second issue I conclude there would be no justification to withhold permission.

#### Other Matters

59. Both parties accept that the proposed development would not result in a material loss of amenity to neighbouring residential occupiers and would meet the requirements of Policy GEN1(ii) of HLP06 and the NPPF paragraph 127(f) in this regard. The quantum of the proposed parking provision at a ratio of 0.65 is appropriate in this instance and would accord with HLP32 Policy INF3d) and FNP Policy 19. Matters relating to ecology and surface drainage can be secured by conditions. There was one objection from a neighbouring occupier on the grounds of noise and disturbance through construction and questioning the need for specialised accommodation for older persons. With regard to noise and disturbance this is a matter that can be dealt with by a planning condition. I have already dealt with the identified need for specialised accommodation for older persons earlier in this decision.

#### Planning Obligation

60. At the Inquiry, a s106 Planning Obligation was submitted by way of Agreement. The Planning Obligation is made by an Agreement between the Appellant, HSBC Bank PLC, and Hart District Council. A CIL Compliance Statement was submitted with the Planning Obligation. I have considered the Planning Obligation in the light of the CIL Regulations 2010, as amended, the advice in the NPPF and the PPG.
61. Local Planning Authorities should only consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.<sup>22</sup> Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations, as amended by the 2011 and 2019 Regulations, and paragraph 56 of the NPPF

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<sup>22</sup> NPPF paragraph 54

make clear that Planning Obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following three tests: (i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (ii) directly related to the development; and (iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

62. The s106 Agreement secures a financial contribution of £500,000 to be paid by the owners towards the provision of off-site affordable housing. Securing a financial contribution towards off-site affordable housing is necessary to meet the requirements of HLP32 Policy H2. It is directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. The financial contribution has been calculated based on the application site, development proposed and viability. The s106 Agreement requires the total affordable housing contribution to be used towards the provision of off-site affordable housing.
63. The s106 Agreement secures a SAMM contribution of £14,585 to be paid by the owners. The owner also confirms that the requisite amount of SANG on the SANG land has been secured by entering into a SANG Agreement. SEP Saved Policy NRM6, HLP32 Policies NBE3 and NBE4 and FNP Policy 17 require adequate measures to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects on the TBHSPA. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) require the 'Competent Authority' to consider the potential impact that a development may have on the TBHSPA. Mitigation of the likely significant effect of the development on the TBHSPA is therefore necessary and directly related to the development of 31 Class C3 residential units.
64. The SAMM contribution is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. It is based on the tariffs published by NE and agreed by the Hart District Council Cabinet on 01.10.2020 relating to dwelling size and occupancy. The Appellant has secured SANG from a third party and the associated SANG Agreement is appended to the s106 Agreement. The assumed contribution for the SANG land is £186,600 plus VAT. The SANG is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. It secures an area of SANG (0.43 hectares) based on occupancy rates of the scheme.
65. In my view, all of the obligations in the Planning Obligation are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Therefore, they all meet the tests within Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations and should be taken into account in the decision.

#### Planning Balance

66. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. I have identified the relevant policies in this case which are listed at paragraphs 3.5-3.8 of the Planning SoCG. There is no dispute between the parties that the development plan is up-to-date.
67. In all the circumstances of this case I find there is no conflict with any of the development plan policies. I conclude that the appeal proposal accords with the development plan when read as a whole. Paragraph 11c of the NPPF



provides that proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. There is clear evidence before me with regard to the suitability of the site. All the material considerations weigh in favour of the grant of permission.

68. The appeal site is located within the Fleet Settlement boundary. There is no dispute that the proposal complies with the vision and objectives of the plan in that it gives priority to the redevelopment of previously developed land and that it promotes more accommodation for the elderly. It is agreed that the proposal complies with 6 of the key policies in the development plan: HLP32: Policy SD1, Policy SS1, Policy H1 (a-c), Policy H2, Policy H4 and Policy H6. In my view, compliance with these policies can be given very significant weight. The proposal accords with other relevant development plan policies which can be given additional weight. The only conflict which the Council identified with the development plan policies is in respect of design and in particular HLP32: Policy NBE9, HLP06: GEN1 and FNP: Policy 10 and 10A. I have concluded that there would be no breach of any of these policies. The proposed development is a high quality design and accords with the design expectations of the development plan and paragraph 130 of the NPPF which makes clear that design should not be a reason for rejecting the development. There would be **no harm arising from the Council's criticism about the frontage of the proposed development or the alleged harm to local character.**
69. Moreover, there would be a number of benefits of the appeal scheme which were put forward by the Appellant. These benefits were not undermined to any degree during the Inquiry. I deal with each of these below explaining the weight that I attribute to each shown in the brackets.
70. The following benefits would arise: (i) much needed housing for older people. The Council suggests that the weight to this benefit should be tempered because the residents of the scheme would not be restricted to being aged 85 or over. However, given the needs identified in the SHMA<sup>23</sup> and the average age of **residents of the Appellant's development being 79-80**, the scheme meets the needs of the Council and significant weight should be given to this benefit. (ii) the development is of previously developed land (substantial weight); (iii) the development would be in a sustainable location (substantial weight); (iv) the development would make optimum use of the site (moderate weight); (v) the development would provide 31 market dwellings and is a clear benefit (substantial weight); (vi) **the provision of the Appellant's** payment of £500,000 to the delivery of affordable housing would be a significant benefit (substantial weight); (vii) there is a benefit releasing under-occupied housing stock<sup>24</sup> (substantial weight); (viii) the site would provide economic benefits by generating jobs, in the construction and operational phases of the development and by residents spending locally<sup>25</sup> (substantial weight); (ix) there would be social benefits in specialised age friendly housing<sup>26</sup> (substantial weight); (x) the environmental benefits of the scheme are a clear benefit (moderate weight). Cumulatively, these 10 benefits weigh heavily in favour of the appeal scheme especially given the critical need for housing for older people as identified at national level in the NPPF and NPPG and at local level in HLP32.

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<sup>23</sup> Figures 14.8 and 14.10 page 212

<sup>24</sup> NPPF paragraph 118(d) and paragraph 131 of HLP32

<sup>25</sup> NPPF paragraph 80

<sup>26</sup> Appeal Decision APP/G5180/W/16/3155059 POE Mr Shellum Appendix 4 paragraph 25



71. Therefore, even if I had reached a contrary conclusion in terms of this appeal and found that there was a conflict with the development plan, any harm which might be identified as arising from the appeal proposal comes nowhere near significantly and demonstrably outweighing the many and varied benefits of the appeal proposal. There is no reason to withhold planning permission in this case and I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

#### Planning Conditions

72. A list of suggested conditions was submitted by the Council at the end of the Inquiry (Doc3). I have considered these draft conditions in the light of the advice in paragraphs 54 and 55 of the NPPF **and the Government's PPG on the Use of Planning Conditions**. The Appellant has agreed to all of the suggested conditions except for Condition 13 which relates to Car Park Management. The Appellant has also agreed in writing to Pre-commencement Condition 3.
73. Condition 1 is the standard timescale condition. Condition 2 is necessary to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Condition 3 is required to protect the amenity of nearby residents. Condition 4 is necessary to ensure appropriate surface water drainage provision. Condition 5 is necessary to ensure safe living conditions for future residents. Condition 6 and Condition 7 are required to ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory. Condition 8 is necessary to ensure that adequate refuse storage is provided. Condition 9 is required to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.
74. Condition 10 is necessary to deliver a net gain in biodiversity. Condition 11 and Condition 12 are required to prevent on-site and off-site flood risk from increasing from the proposed drainage system. Suggested Condition 13 on Car Park Management is not agreed. In my view Condition 13 is unnecessary and unenforceable. It would also introduce no flexibility in the use of the parking spaces for the development which is unsustainable and counter intuitive to the reason the Council has given for the condition. I have deleted this suggested condition.
75. Condition 14 is required to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application and delivers age restricted housing. Condition 15 is required to ensure that the external appearance of the building is satisfactory. Condition 16 is necessary to ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking to prevent the likelihood of on-street car parking. Condition 17 is necessary to ensure that all new homes within the development meet the water efficiency standard of 110 litres/person/day. Condition 18 is required to protect the amenity of nearby residents.

#### Conclusion

76. Having considered these and all other matters raised I find nothing of sufficient materiality to lead me to a different conclusion. The appeal is therefore allowed subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule.

*Harold Stephens*

INSPECTOR

## SCHEDULE OF PLANNING CONDITIONS (1-17)

### Standard Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

### Approved Drawings

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:

Location Plan 10103FL PA00  
Proposed Site Plan 10103FL PA01 Rev A  
Proposed Ground Floor Plan 10103FL PA02  
Proposed First Floor Plan 10103FL PA03  
Proposed Second Floor Plan 10103FL PA04  
Proposed Roof Plan 10103FL PA05 Rev A  
Proposed Elevation A - Crookham Rd Elevation 10103FL PA06  
Proposed Elevation B - Walton CI 10103FL PA07  
Proposed Elevation C - St James Rd 10103FL PA08  
Proposed Elevation D - St James CI 10103FL PA09  
Indicative PV Layout C526-Fleet-Mech  
Soft Landscape Strategy 12773\_TG\_P01 Rev B  
Preliminary Drainage Layout PDL-101 Rev A  
Proposed Lighting Plan 10103FL- SK001  
Parking Swept Path Analysis ATR-101 Rev A

### Pre-commencement Conditions

#### Demolition and Construction Management Plan

- 3) No development shall commence until a demolition and construction management plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include details of:
  1. A programme of demolition and construction works;
  2. Methods and phasing for demolition and construction works;
  3. Locations of temporary site buildings, compounds, construction material and plant storage areas;
  4. Parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
  5. Loading and unloading of plant and materials;
  6. Demolition and construction traffic management;
  7. Wheel washing facilities;
  8. Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction; and
  9. A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works.

The development shall take place in accordance with the approved demolition and construction management plan.

### Detailed Surface Water Drainage Strategy

- 4) Excluding demolition, no development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage strategy based on the principles within drawing no. Preliminary Drainage Layout PDL-101 Rev A has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include:
1. A technical summary highlighting any changes to the design from that within the approved preliminary drainage layout;
  2. Detailed drainage layout drawings at an identified scale indicating catchment areas, referenced drainage features, manhole cover and invert levels and pipe diameters, lengths and gradients;
  3. Detailed hydraulic calculations for all rainfall events, including those listed below. The hydraulic calculations should take into account the connectivity of the entire drainage features including discharge location. The results should include design and simulation criteria, network design and results tables, manholes schedules tables and summary of critical results by maximum level during the 1 in 1, 1 in 30, 1 in 100 (plus an allowance for climate change) rainfall events. The drainage features should have the same reference as the submitted drainage layout;
  4. Evidence that urban creep has been considered in the application and that a 10% increase in impermeable area has been used in calculations to account for this.
  5. Exceedance plans demonstrating the flow paths and areas of ponding in the event of blockages or storms exceeding design criteria.

The development shall take place and retained in accordance with the approved detailed surface water drainage strategy.

### Contamination Strategy

- 5) Excluding demolition, no development shall take place until a detailed decontamination strategy in relation to the underground fuel tank on the site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall take place in accordance with the approved detailed decontamination strategy.

### Pre-above Ground Works Conditions

#### Materials

- 6) No above ground construction shall take place until details and samples of all external surfaces have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

#### Hard Landscaping

- 7) No above ground works shall take place until full details of hard landscaping have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Hard landscaping details shall include, as appropriate, proposed finished levels and/or contours, means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, and lighting features. The approved hard landscaping details shall be implemented prior to occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted and retained thereafter.

#### Refuse Storage and Management

- 8) No above ground works shall take place until full details of refuse storage and management have been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. Refuse details shall include bin store locations, design details, provision for 4 x 1,100 litre bins for waste and recycling and route(s) to and from the properties for collections. The development shall take place in accordance with the approved refuse storage and management details and retained thereafter.

#### Photovoltaic Panels

- 9) No above ground works shall take place until full details of the proposed photovoltaic panels have been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall take place in accordance with the approved photovoltaic panel details and retained thereafter.

#### Ecology (Swift Bricks)

- 10) No above ground works shall take place until details of the quantity and location of swift bricks has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall take place in accordance with the approved swift brick details and retained thereafter.

#### Pre-occupation Conditions

##### Surface Water Drainage System Maintenance

- 11) No dwellings shall be occupied until details for the maintenance of the surface water drainage system has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include:

1. Maintenance schedules for each drainage feature type and ownership; and
2. Details of protection measures.

The development shall take place in accordance with the approved surface water drainage system maintenance details and retained thereafter.

##### Wastewater

- 12) No dwellings shall be occupied until one of the following has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority:

1. Confirmation that wastewater capacity exists off site to serve the development; or
2. A housing and infrastructure phasing plan agreed with Thames Water; or
3. All wastewater network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed.

The development shall take place in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.

### Compliance Conditions

#### Age Restriction

- 13) The age restricted dwellings hereby permitted shall be occupied only by:
1. Persons of 60 years or over.
  2. Persons of 55 years or over living as part of a single household who is a spouse or partner of a persons of 60 years or over.

#### Soft Landscaping

- 14) Soft landscape shall take place in accordance with drawing no. Soft Landscape Strategy 12773\_TG\_P01 Rev B. Any such vegetation removed without the Local Planning **Authority's consent, or which die** or become, in the Authority's opinion, seriously damaged or otherwise defective during a period of five years following occupation shall be replaced and/or shall receive remedial action as required by the authority. Such works shall be implemented as soon as is reasonably practicable and, in any case, replacement planting shall be implemented by not later than the end of the following planting season, with planting of such size and species and in such number and positions as may be agreed with the Authority in writing.

#### Parking Provision and Retention

- 15) The development shall not be occupied until the approved parking for mobility scooters, cycles and vehicles has been provided in accordance with drawing no. Proposed Site Plan 10103FL PA01 Rev A. The parking shall be maintained at all times to allow them to be used as such.

#### Sustainable Water Use

- 16) All new homes within the development must meet the water efficiency standard of 110 litres/person/day and retained thereafter.

#### Construction Hours

- 17) No development, working on the site or delivery of materials shall take place at the site except between 0730 hours to 1800 hours weekdays or 0800 to 1300 hours Saturdays. No development, working on the site or delivery of materials shall take place on Sundays, Bank Holidays or Public Holidays.

## APPEARANCES

### FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Ms Saira Kabir Sheikh QC

Instructed by Hart DC

*She called:*

Dr. Stefan Kruczkowski BA (Hons)  
DipTP, PhD, RPUD, FHEA

Director, Urban Design Doctor Ltd

Mr Rob Moorhouse BSc, MSc, MRTPI

Principal Planning Officer, Hart DC

### FOR THE APPELLANT:

Mr Sasha White QC  
Ms Evie Barden of Counsel

Both instructed by Stuart Goodwill,  
Planning Issues Ltd

*They called*

Robert Jackson BArch, MArch, RIBA

Design Director, Planning Issues Ltd

Matthew Shellum BA (Hons), Dip TP

Head of Appeals, Planning Issues Ltd

### DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AT THE INQUIRY:

1. Opening Statement on behalf of the Appellant
2. Opening Statement on behalf of the Council
3. Draft Planning Conditions as at 17.03.2021 submitted by the Council
4. Executed Section 106 Planning Obligation dated 10 May 2021
5. Hart DC Community Infrastructure Levy Compliance Statement
6. **Appellant's note confirming acceptance of** Pre-commencement Condition 3 submitted by Mr Shellum
7. Closing submissions on behalf of the Council
8. Closing submissions on behalf of the Appellant

## **APPENDIX E**

### LIST OF AVIALBLE OFFICE SPACE IN BANBURY AND BICESTER



Town	Address	Sq ft	Sq m	Vacant yrs	Town Centre	Grade*
Banbury	Cherwell Business Village	3,934	365.48	6	No	C
	Pembroke House	16,514	1,534.19	1	No	A
	Prodrive Offices	5,630	523.04	2	No	B
	7 Canada Close	2,588	240.43	2	Yes	C
	Borough House Suites	1,229	114.18	2	Yes	B
	Unit 6 Manor Park	4,154	385.92	6	No	B
	Grimsbury Manor	5,567	517.19	3	No	B
	Charter House, 25 High Street	1,410	130.99	2	Yes	B
	Unit 7 Manor Park	3,798	352.85	6 months	No	B
	9 & 10 Somerville Court	4,329	402.17	0.75	No	B
	8 Somerville Court, BBP	3,406	316.43	2.5	No	B
	3 Somerville Court, BBP	1,563	145.20	1.5	No	B
	64-65 High Street	981	91.14	1	Yes	B
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Blenheim Court	3,410	316.80	6	Yes	A
	Finance House	11,197	1,040.23	3	No	B
	Suite 5 38 The Green	600	55.74	n/a	Yes	C
	First Floor 12A Marlborough	489	45.43	n/a	Yes	C
	White Lion Walk	392	36.42	n/a	Yes	C
	South Bar Street Serviced Offices	980 total	91.04			
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>72,171</b> <b>(69,384)**</b>	<b>6,704.87</b> <b>(6,445.93)**</b>		
Bicester	Bicester Innovation Centre	1,000	92.90	n/a	No	B
	Unit 13 Talisman Business Centre	5,968	554.44	n/a	No	B
	St Edburgs Hall, London Road	2,155	200.20	0.3	No	A
	Eco Business Centre, Elmsbrook	500	46.45	n/a	No	A
	The Old Bakery, Victoria Road	500	46.45	n/a	Yes	C
	Falcon House, Bicester Business	1,854	172.24	n/a	No	B
	Bicester Business Park, Telford	710	65.96	n/a	No	B
	Jubilee Suite, Bicester Business	913	84.82	n/a	No	B
	7 Avonbury Bus Park	3,464	321.81	Sept 21	No	B
	4A Lower Farm Barns	816	75.80	Oct 21	No	C
	Sb Lower Farm Barns	1,198	111.29	Oct 21	No	B
	Telford Road	1,985	184.41	Oct 21	No	B
	Meridian House Weston Green	2,095	194.63	Aug 21	No	C
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>23,158</b>	<b>2,151.40</b>		
Brackley	Unit 7 Oxford Court	1,508	140.09	1	No	B
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,508</b>	<b>140.09</b>			
	<b>TOTAL AVAILABILITY</b>	<b>96,837</b>	<b>8,996.36</b>			

As At November 2021, provided by White Commercial, a commercial letting agent based in Banbury.

## **APPENDIX F**

### ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The economic benefits of the proposed development at  
**Bolton Road, Banbury**

The proposed development at Bolton Road, Banbury will provide a new retirement development. This will stimulate economic growth and assist in meeting Cherwell's housing requirements and add to the authority's revenues.

**The proposal**



**80**  
Retirement Units

**Other details:**

The proposed development at Bolton Road will bring on underused brownfield site back into productive use through the provision of a new retirement development, and enrich the quality of the surrounding environment.



**Construction benefits**



**£8.1m**  
Construction value  
(total construction cost)



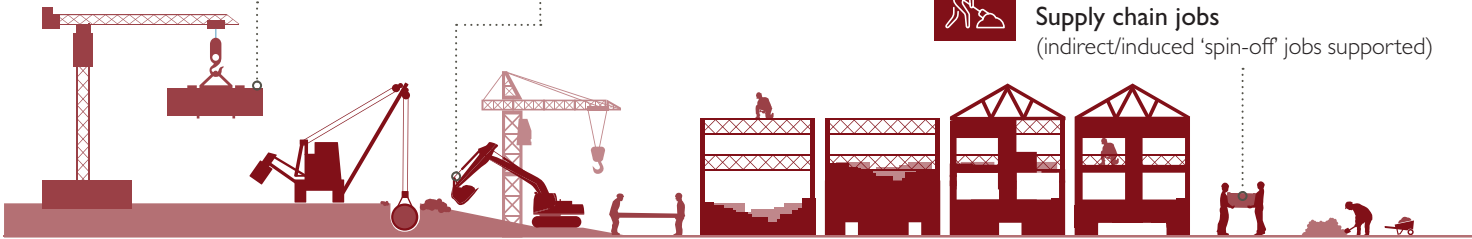
**£13.5m GVA**  
Economic output  
(additional GVA p.a.)



**77 Jobs**  
Construction jobs  
(temporary jobs over 1.4 year build period)



**86 Jobs**  
Supply chain jobs  
(indirect/induced 'spin-off' jobs supported)



**Operational and expenditure benefits**



**6 Direct jobs**  
(additional jobs supported  
by the new retirement  
development)



**£1.4m**  
Resident expenditure  
(within local shops and  
services p.a.)



**14 Supported  
jobs**  
(from increased expenditure  
in local area)



**£171,000**  
Economic output  
(additional GVA p.a.)



**Wider benefits**



**Contribution to Local Infrastructure**



**53**  
Potential existing homes  
(released for other buyers)



**£367,500**  
Fiscal savings  
contribution p.a.  
(to the NHS)



**Support the vitality of the high street**

**LICHFIELDS**

