

## **Land at Cotefield Farm, Bodicote**

***Application for engineering operations including drainage outfall to reed bed to serve consented residential development (ref. 11/00617/OUT, 12/01802/REM)***

### **Planning Statement**

#### **Purpose**

This short Planning Statement has been produced in support of a Planning Application to amend the form of drainage from consented residential development on land at Cotefield Farm, Bodicote (ref. 11/00617/OUT, 12/01802/REM) and to explain the circumstances that have led to this Planning application.

#### **Planning History**

Original Outline consent ref. 11/00617/OUT, for 82 dwellings was granted at Appeal. Reserved Matters application ref. 12/01802/REM was subsequently granted on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013. A further application ref. 16/01599/F to vary the original Outline, has recently been granted for an additional 4 dwellings on the site.

An application was made in February 2017 for engineering operations to amend the form of drainage for the consented residential site, including the creation of pond through associated bunding ref.17/00316/F. This application was not supported by Officers primarily for reasons of perceived adverse landscape impact.

The current drainage proposal has been reviewed and agreed in principle by Officers at Oxfordshire County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority. The drainage proposal has also been considered by Officers at Cherwell District Council as the relevant Planning Authority and is in principle felt to offer a less impactful solution in terms of landscape impact than application ref. 17/00316/F, with the route through the trees as currently proposed, felt to be less impactful than in the more northerly and visible position as approved through the original discharge of Outline condition 5 ref. 13/00357/DISC.

On land immediately adjacent to the site to the south, consent was granted for 95 dwellings ref. 14/02156/OUT on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. The drainage solutions proposed through the current application have been sized to accommodate the additional outfall from the land to the south of the site, in conjunction with appropriate storage on site as required, should this be required at a later date.

## **Previously approved scheme**

Outline condition 5 of consent ref. 11/00617/OUT required that drainage details be approved, accordingly information was submitted to discharge this condition (drawings 99538/2050, 99538/7001, 99538/7002 and 99538/7004). The aforementioned drawings were approved through the discharge of condition 5 on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 2014, ref. 13/00357/DISC.

The drainage scheme approved pursuant to the discharge of condition 5, drawing 99538/2050, shows the drainage exiting the site through the tree buffer to the west. The route through the trees and the removal of trees this necessitated, was therefore accepted by Cherwell District Council.

## **Proposed alterations**

The proposed amendments to the drainage scheme involve the re-routing of the drainage further down the hill south easterly and through the tree belt at a lower and less visible point. Please see submitted drawing 15031 - 100S104 (ii) H. The surface water outfall continues underground to an existing ditch which lies alongside a hedgerow and is therefore obscured from view. The ditch is to be extended and planted to form a reed bed. This drainage option offers a more sustainable solution than consented under condition 5, delivering water quality improvement and minimisation of visual impact.

The drainage route through the trees and associated easement, are the same as the details originally approved. The scheme varies as it is further down the hillside, in a less prominent position behind the 95 dwellings approved under consent 14/02156/OUT.

As confirmed by the arboricultural report also submitted in support of the current proposals, the impact on the tree belt is limited as the trees to be removed are of unremarkable quality. The overall impact of the removal of trees to allow for the amended drainage position, is considered to be insignificant when compared with the changes required to implement the extant development adjacent. The impact of the loss of these trees is not materially greater than the loss of the trees already consented to be approved. Please see the arboricultural report for further detail.

## **Conclusion**

Both the existing approved drainage scheme and the proposed scheme have been reviewed and approved in principle by Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Water, and the proposed drainage scheme offers a more sustainable solution in a less visible location. Although the development for 86 dwellings is currently under way, no dwellings are yet occupied and the drainage required to service the dwellings has therefore yet to be connected allowing a short window of time to implement this alternative and superior drainage scheme to be approved by Cherwell District Council and then installed.