

21 February 2024

Item: 2.

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| Application No.: | 23/00834/OUT |
| Location: | Land Bordered By Woodlands Park Avenue And Woodlands Park Road Maidenhead |
| Proposal: | Outline application for access only to be considered at this stage with all other matters to be reserved for up to 225 residential dwellings with strategic open space incorporating informal sports pitches and land for allotments, new vehicular access off Woodlands Park Road and emergency access off Woodlands Park Avenue, pedestrian and cycle access, SUDs, biodiversity features and other associated infrastructure. |
| Applicant: | Mr Lambert |
| Agent: | Mr Luke Veillet |
| Parish/Ward: | Cox Green Parish/Cox Green |
| If you have a question about this report, please contact: Sarah Tucker on 01628 796292 or at sarah.tucker@rwm.gov.uk | |

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal seeks outline planning permission only with all matters reserved apart from access for the erection 225 dwellings on the western part of the site, with the provision of two sports pitches, allotments, informal open space and drainage attenuation ponds to the eastern side of the site. The site lies within Borough Local Plan (BLP) Allocation AL24: Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue and north of Woodlands Business Park. The site is allocated for approximately 300 residential units, strategic open space and sports pitches.
- 1.2 The proposal includes substantial benefits in terms of the provision of housing on an allocated site, along with 85 affordable homes, in line with the requirements of BLP Site Allocation AL24, and would provide significant improvements to Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue, provision of open space, sports pitches and allotments, funding towards the Borough's carbon off-setting fund, funding towards improving public rights of way in the vicinity of the site, and would deliver significant biodiversity net gain on site.

It is recommended the Committee authorises the Assistant Director of Planning:

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| 1. | To grant planning permission on the satisfactory completion of an undertaking to secure the infrastructure in Section 12 of this report, set out below: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contribution towards the Council's carbon off-setting fund;• On site policy compliant affordable housing;• 5% of housing to be to Building Regulation M4(2) standard;• 5% of housing to be fully wheelchair accessible;• On site policy compliant 5% custom built housing;• Provision of on site biodiversity net gain;• Construction of the main vehicular site access onto Woodlands Park Road;• Construction of the emergency vehicular access onto Woodlands Park Avenue;• Provision of uncontrolled and controlled pedestrian crossings across Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue with associated infrastructure; |
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- **Widening of the carriageway of Woodlands Park Road and provision of a right turn lane;**
- **Improvements to the roundabout junction with Woodlands Park Road/Cannon Lane/Waltham Road;**
- **Contribution for funding for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for parking and waiting restrictions;**
- **Contribution for funding for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to reduce the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph on Woodlands Park Road;**
- **Provision of three new bus stops on Woodlands Park Road;**
- **Implementing and monitoring a Travel Plan to encourage residents to use sustainable modes of travel;**
- **Contribution towards the improvements of Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the vicinity of the site; and,**
- **Provision of on site open space including sports pitches, allotments and informal open space and play areas.**

and with the conditions listed in Section 15 of this report.

2. REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION

- The Council's Constitution does not give the Assistant Director of Planning delegated powers to determine the application in the way recommended; such decisions can only be made by the Committee as the application is for major development.

3. THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The application site comprises two fields of agricultural land (16.8ha) bordered by Woodlands Park Road to the north, Woodland Park Avenue to the west, Lillibrooke Manor and Barns and a turf supplier to the east, and Woodlands Business park to the south.
- 3.2 There is a hedgerow tree belt between the two fields and hedgerows along the boundaries to the north and west and part of southern boundary. The site lies within the south-western part of Maidenhead in the parish of Cox Green. The site is broadly flat and is bounded by existing development on north, south and west sides, with agricultural land to the south-east.
- 3.3 The site forms the AL24, Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue and north of Woodlands Business Park Site Allocation within the BLP.

4. KEY CONSTRAINTS

- 4.1 The site is allocated in the BLP (AL24) for residential use, public open space and two junior sports pitches, with the retention of the central tree belt and provision of all housing to the west of the existing tree belt.
- 4.2 The area to the east of the tree belt is retained in the site allocation as Green Belt. Lillibrooke Manor and Barns is a Grade II listed building. The far south-east corner of the site lies within Flood Zone 2; however, but the rest of the site is within Flood Zone 1. A sewer easement runs through the site.

- 4.3 To the eastern boundary of the site lies PROW COXG/6/1, and PROW COXG/7/1 which runs along the southern site boundary. There are no trees on the site which are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) or classified as veteran trees.

5. THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The application seeks outline planning permission only with all matters reserved apart from access for the erection 225 dwellings on the western part of the site, with the provision of two sports pitches, allotments, informal open space and drainage attenuation ponds to the eastern side of the site. The central tree belt is proposed to be retained. Access is proposed to the north from Woodlands Park Road, with a 4m wide pedestrian and emergency access to the west onto Woodlands Park Avenue.
- 5.2 The proposed housing would comprise a mix of apartments and houses with 40% affordable housing, in a mix of 12 x 1 bed apartments, 27 x 2 bed apartments, 12 x 2 bed houses, 25 x 3 bed houses and 9 x 4 bed houses. The affordable houses would be predominately for social rent.
- 5.3 The proposal is in outline, with all matters reserved apart from access. As such, only the principle of development and the details of access are for determination here. All other matters including layout, scale, design and landscaping will be included in subsequent reserved matters applications if the scheme is approved. However, the applicants have submitted a parameter plan and an illustrative master plan to ensure that the development can be carried out appropriately.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 6.1 There is no planning history to the site in relation to planning applications. However, it is noted that a Stakeholder Masterplan document (SMD) for the site was approved by Cabinet on 26 January 2023.

7. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 7.1 The main relevant policies are:

Borough Local Plan (BLP)

| Issue | Policy |
|---|--------|
| Spatial Strategy for the Borough | SP1 |
| Climate Change | SP2 |
| Sustainability and Placemaking | QP1 |
| Green and Blue Infrastructure | QP2 |
| Character and Design of New Development | QP3 |
| Building Height and Tall Buildings | QP3a |
| Development in Rural Areas and the Green Belt | QP5 |
| Housing Development Sites | HO1 |
| Housing Mix and Type | HO2 |
| Affordable Housing | HO3 |

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| Historic Environment | HE1 |
| Managing Flood Risk and Waterways | NR1 |
| Nature Conservation and Biodiversity | NR2 |
| Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows | NR3 |
| Renewable Energy | NR5 |
| Environmental Protection | EP1 |
| Air Pollution | EP2 |
| Artificial Light Pollution | EP3 |
| Noise | EP4 |
| Infrastructure and Developer Contributions | IF1 |
| Sustainable Transport | IF2 |
| Open Space | IF4 |
| Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside | IF5 |
| Community Facilities | IF6 |
| Utilities | IF7 |

8. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 4 - Decision-making

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 – Making effective use of land

Section 12- Achieving well-designed places

Section 13- Green Belt

Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 16- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Borough Wide Design Guide
- Tall Buildings SPD

Other Local Strategies or Publications

Other Strategies or publications material to the proposal are:

- RBWM Townscape Assessment
- RBWM Landscape Assessment
- RBWM Parking Strategy

- Interim Sustainability Position Statement
- Corporate Strategy
- Environment and Climate Strategy

9. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Comments from interested parties

81 occupiers were notified directly of the application.

The planning officer posted a notice advertising the application at the site on 18/05/2023 and the application was advertised in the Local Press on 13/04/23

17 representations were received objecting to the application, summarised as:

| Comment | | Where in the report this is considered |
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| 1. | Woodlands Park Avenue road is a small road and cannot take an additional 300-400 cars plus construction traffic. | See section 10 |
| 2. | Increased noise pollution. | See section 10 |
| 3. | Green Belt should be protected | The residential part of the development is not Green Belt but allocated for development in the BLP (AL24). See section 10 |
| 4. | Drains get choked when there is heavy rain, the drainage system is frail | See section 10 |
| 5. | GP's are over-subscribed and no hospital in Maidenhead. | See section 10 |
| 6. | Local schools are at capacity. | See section 10 |
| 7. | Loss of green space for housing. | See section 10 |
| 8. | Area is prone to flooding | See section 10 |
| 9. | Loss of views from existing residential properties | Loss of view is not a material consideration that can taken into account in the assessment of this application in accordance with relevant development plan policies. |
| 10. | Only one secondary school in the vicinity. | See section 10 |
| 11. | How is the local infrastructure to absorb the new development. | See section 10 |
| 12. | Query how CIL going to pay for existing issues such as traffic/schools/GP's. | See section 10 |

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| 13. | Air quality is poor in the area and the development will make it worse. | See section 10 |
| 14. | Traffic data for this proposal was undertaken in 2017 which needs to be updated. | See section 10 |
| 15. | Proposed access is very close to existing residents properties, which will cause conflict. | See section 10 |
| 16. | Concern that the emergency access will be changed to an all vehicle access. | See section 10 |
| 17. | Will the 2/3 storey flats at the end of Woodlands Park Avenue obstruct the view of oncoming vehicles? | See section 10 |
| 18. | 2/3 storey flats will look out of place here. | See section 10 |
| 19. | Development should be a mix of houses for families not flats as they would look totally out of place, as the area is a mix of bungalows and houses. There are plenty of flats being built elsewhere. | See section 10 |
| 20. | Berkeley Homes have not provided any current traffic analysis past Woodlands Park Road. Development will have a huge knock on effect in the wider area, not just near the development. | See section 10 |
| 21. | The proposed access into Woodlands Park will be dangerous due to the speed of the traffic and the volumes of traffic using the area - needs further review. | See section 10 |
| 22. | The Residential Travel Plan will not work as people will not use public transport or cycle. | See section 10 |
| 23. | Mode of Transport Census is 12 years out of date and cannot be used to determine the suitability or impact of this development. | See section 10 |
| 24. | No report assessing impacts on wildlife | See section 10 |
| 25. | Impact on road safety of the area. | See section 10 |
| 26. | The proposal represents large urban sprawl that does not integrate well with existing housing and neighbours. | See section 10 |
| 27. | There are too many dwellings for the size and position of the plot. The flats are not consistent with the existing housing types. | See section 10 |
| 28. | Will need to be significant improvements to Woodlands Park Road, especially the junction with Woodlands Park Avenue as there is a poor site line. | See section 10 |

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| 29. | Woodlands Park should remain a village not become urbanised. | See section 10 |
| 30. | Has it been decided which schools are to take the increase in children numbers which will affect safe routes to school. | See section 10 |
| 31. | Increase in light pollution. | See section 10 |
| 32. | Loss of surrounding property value. | This is not a material consideration that can be taken into account in the assessment of this application |
| 33. | Development will result in overshadowing and loss of outlook. | See section 10 |
| 34. | Construction will disrupt business activities to Woodlands Business Park. | This is covered by other legislation. |
| 35. | Parking in the business estate when the site is occupied will be a problem. | Parking for the development will be secured by recommended condition. See section 10. |
| 36. | The ditch on the border of Woodlands Business Park often floods and we fear that the development will result in increased flooding to our property. | See section 10 |
| 37. | Harm to local wildlife as a result of construction works. | See section 10 |
| 38. | Local residents were not properly consulted on this application, should have been wider consultations. | See section 10 |
| 39. | Too much emphasis on non-motor traffic in traffic improvements. | See section 10 |
| 40. | Lack of parking space at Maidenhead Station. | This is outside the scope of the application currently under consideration. |

Statutory consultees

| Consultee | Comment | Where in the report this is considered |
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| Environment Agency (EA) | The Thames Area Sustainable Places Team is unable to provide a detailed response to this application. We are currently only providing bespoke response to the highest risk cases. The proposal is within a groundwater protection area and if infiltration drainage is proposed then it must be demonstrated that it will not pose a risk to groundwater quality. | Noted. See Section 10 |
| Active Travel England | No comment | Noted. See section 10 |

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| Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) | No objection subject to a recommended condition | See section 10 |
| Natural England | Site is within an Impact Risk Zone for Great Thrift Wood SSSI. No objection subject to Construction Management Plan condition to mitigate impacts. | See section 10 |

Consultees

| Consultee | Comment | Where in the report this is considered |
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| Berkshire Fire Service | No duty placed on the Fire Authority to make any comment on the application. Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement. | Noted |
| East Berkshire Ramblers | No objections at this stage of the application. We would like to be consulted on future proposals as the land borders two public rights of way. | Noted. See section 10 |
| Nature Space | Satisfied that if this development was to be approved, it is unlikely to cause an impact on great crested newts and/or their habitats. | See section 10 |
| RBWM Housing Enabling Officer | Whilst the application is in outline, an indicative housing mix has been proposed. This mix incorporates a range of house types with a mixture of homes as affordable housing. The affordable housing proposals are generally supported by the housing officer. | See section 10 |
| RBWM Education Services | School places will be funded via CIL not S106 payments. Spare school places are available at Woodlands and Wessex Primary Schools in the short term. However, an increase in the birth rate, and immigration to the district plus new housing is likely to lead to an increase in demand in both primary and secondary places, but there are initial plans to meet the demand in due course. | Noted. See section 10 |
| RBWM Leisure Services | No response. | See section 10 |
| RBWM Conservation | No response. | See section 10 |
| RBWM Environmental Protection | <i>General</i> - Construction Environmental Management Plan required <i>Contaminated land</i> : No objection subject to conditions <i>Noise</i> : No objection subject to a condition <i>Air Quality</i> : The site does not lie within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The submitted air quality report is acceptable. The mitigation measure for operational development set out in 6.2 of the report should be implemented in full. | See section 10 |

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| Berkshire Archaeology | The site falls within an area of archaeological significance and archaeological remains may be damaged by ground disturbance. Recommended Written Scheme of Investigation condition. | See section 10 |
| RBWM Public Rights of Way | Acceptance of S106 contribution as mitigation for the adverse impact on the recreational and amenity value of the PROW immediately adjacent to the site. | See section 10 |
| RBWM Highways | No objection to the principle of the proposed access points and improvements at this stage subject to a S106/S278 agreement and recommended conditions. The modelling is acceptable and represents an appropriate baseline to assess the local highways network. | See section 10 |
| RBWM Ecology | No objection, subject to condition. | See section 10 |
| Thames Water | No response received | Noted. |

Others (e.g. Parish and Amenity Groups)

| Group | Comment | Where in the report this is considered |
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| Cox Green Parish Council | <p>1. The proposed crossing on Woodlands Park Road near the junction of Woodlands Park Avenue is clearly unsafe due to traffic approaching from the east via a steep decline and sharp bend. The needs of, and mitigation for, the development would be better served by a raised zebra crossing further into Woodlands Park (suggest by doctors' surgery which serves Cox Green as well as Woodlands Park). This would also provide a 'cleaner' junction in terms of road markings.</p> <p>2. It is suggested that the crossing point on Woodlands Park Avenue (at its junction with Woodlands Park Road), be raised and therefore form part of the existing traffic calming on the road.</p> <p>3. The proposed pedestrian crossing at the entrance is totally inappropriate situated in the turning section of the sole vehicle access to the development. Safety concerns will not encourage parents to allow their children to walk to the schools using this route and does not provide a safe way for cyclists to join the existing cycle network. Furthermore, this crossing would link to a very narrow and poorly maintained footway thus providing a further disincentive to walking.</p> <p>4. As a result of 3 above and the proposed pedestrian/cycle route within 4. As a result of 3 above and the proposed pedestrian/cycle route within the development alongside the entrance, the need for a</p> | See section 10 |

footway leading out of the access point is considered unnecessary. There is no walking route or destination that would require this footway, indeed the proposed routes within the development provide more direct and safer routes.

5. The Parish Council is opposed to a pedestrian crossing between Lowbrook Drive and Heynes Green as the developer's proposal would have a major impact on peak time traffic exiting Lowbrook Drive.

6. In consideration of 3 and 5 above, the Parish Council would support the concept of a repositioned tiger crossing at our desired location (as shown on the attached map) with the addition of pedestrian activated traffic lights. This would also provide more direct access to Lowbrook Drive and hence the direct route to local facilities, schools, etc. as well as cycle route 4 for any cyclist.

7. To improve access and utilisation of the local public transport an enhancement to the bus stop opposite Lowbrook Drive is sought. The repositioning of it alongside the above-mentioned tiger crossing and creation of a bus layby will help promote a safer transport option to and from the new development as well as the new public and recreational facilities.

8. The measures above also help facilitate the rerouting of the proposed pedestrian/cycle path across the public open space, which in its currently proposed position is not conducive to the activities over the area it currently crosses. Whilst the sports pitches are primarily informal, their proximity to a pedestrian/cycle surface is not considered appropriate.

9. The principle of encouraging greater uptake of walking and cycling in the local area will only be achieved by making it a more attractive and feasible option and by reducing the impact of the many disincentives. To this end the pedestrian and cycling routes within the development, in particular those linking to the existing road network will need appropriate lighting including low level within the open space.

10. Whilst the submission indicates the extent of the potential adopted highway leading from the existing road, it does not extend into the public realm area (public open space, community orchard, allotments and other areas). It is suggested that a publicly accessible area should have access from the public highway and therefore an extension of the proposed adopted highway area is suggested on the attached map.

Informative:

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| | <p>1. The Parish Council considers the travel/transport modal choices of the residents of the development to be of high strategic importance.</p> <p>2. Woodlands Park Road, whilst being a relatively narrow road is the strategic through route linking outlying areas of the Borough to the A404(M) and M4 and often carries heavy lorries. It also serves as the primary route within Cox Green to the motorway network for the Heynes Green and Lowbrook estates as well as the neighbouring community of Woodlands Park.</p> <p>3. Cox Green is home to 5 schools (1 x secondary, 2 x primary, 1 x special needs, 1 x private), 2 day nurseries, a local shopping precinct which hosts retail, leisure and food outlets, a Post Office, 2 public houses, a community centre, a library, and a leisure/sports centre plus other employment destinations. All these local community facilities and associated services are on the opposite side of Woodlands Park Road to the development.</p> <p>4. Existing vehicular traffic during “school runs” is a direct cause of disturbance and disruption for residents and a primary cause of peak time traffic congestion.</p> <p>5. There is one woefully inadequate pedestrian crossing on Woodlands Park Road within Cox Green at the junction with Ockwells Road, the primary pedestrian & cyclist route to Ockwells Park, pedestrian access to the public footpath network via footpath 6 and part of the Civic Society’s Boundary Walk. The Parish Council is actively seeking a significant upgrade of this crossing as part of its “safe Routes to Schools initiative.</p> <p>6. Most peak time traffic movements exiting the Lowbrook estate will be trying to turn left including the newly re-routed bus service.</p> <p>7. There are two bus stops on Woodlands Park Road within the civil parish. The town centre bound stop is currently unused as the number 7 route is subject to a trial change. The outward bound is not served by a safe road crossing.</p> | |
| Binfield Badger Group | Request there be a full ecological survey undertaken at a time of year when the presence of active badger setts is not obscured by foliage. We also ask that we be sent an unredacted copy of any report subsequently produced. If a clan is indeed resident on the site then we object to the development on the basis that the badgers will suffer disturbance during the construction and habitation phases as there will be: | Section 10 |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • much foraging lost • increased human footfall near the setts • increased dog presence • increased traffic • increased light pollution • the risk of badgers taking up residence in newly constructed gardens, thus rendering some uses by the householder potentially illegal and • increased risk of resident badgers being displaced and coming into conflict with other neighbouring clans. <p>We ask that we be kept informed of the progress of this application.</p> | |
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10. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

10.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Principle of Development;
- ii Climate Change and Sustainability;
- iii Affordable Housing;
- iv Housing Provision and Quality;
- v Flooding and Drainage;
- vi Design and Character;
- vii Trees and Landscape;
- viii Ecology and Biodiversity;
- ix Impact on Heritage Assets;
- x Impact on amenity of neighbouring buildings;
- xi Parking and Highways Impacts;
- xii Air Quality and Noise;
- xiii Other infrastructure requirements; and,
- xiv Other Material Considerations

Principle of Development

10.2 Policy HO1 of the BLP commits to providing at least 14,240 new dwellings in the plan period up to 2033 that will focus on existing urban areas and the allocations listed within the policy and as shown on the Proposals Map.

10.3 The site is allocated in the BLP under Site Allocation Proforma AL24. This allocates the site for approximately 300 residential units, public open space and sports pitches. The site specific requirements are as follows.

1. Provide a mix of residential, strategic public open space and sporting hub for western Maidenhead
2. Retain the existing central tree belt in the centre of the site running north to south
3. Provide all housing to the west of the existing central tree belt order to create a defensible boundary to the urban edge
4. Limit development on the eastern side of the central tree belt to the provision of facilities associated with delivery of the strategic open space and sports pitches
5. Provide strong pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the housing area and into and through the strategic public open spaces on the eastern side of the central tree belt. Provide strong linkages into surrounding urban and countryside areas including connections to the Public Rights of Way network

6. Ensure that the development is well served by public bus routes/demand responsive transport/other innovative public transport solutions, with appropriate provision for new bus stop infrastructure, such that the bus is an attractive alternative to the private car for local journeys, including local railway stations
7. Develop and implement a robust residential travel plan to manage travel to and from the site and reduce instances of single-occupancy car trips, including a car club for residents
8. Create a strong high quality green and blue infrastructure framework across the whole site to deliver biodiversity, health and wellbeing benefits, recreation, food production and leisure opportunities. The central tree belt and the public open spaces to the east will form the focus for the Green Infrastructure network on the site
9. Retain valuable trees at site boundaries and enhance biodiversity across the site by placing sports pitches in a woodland setting
10. Provide appropriate edge treatment and transition from the strategic public open spaces to the countryside
11. Minimise the visual impacts of any recreational, sporting or leisure built form on the eastern side of the central tree belt, including sports pitch lighting
12. Provide family housing with gardens
13. Provide 40% affordable housing
14. Provide 5% of market housing units for custom and self build plots (fully serviced)
15. Be designed sensitively to conserve and enhance the setting of nearby Listed Building
16. Provide appropriate mitigation measures to address the impact of noise and air quality so as to protect residential amenity
17. Front onto both Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue
18. Address potential risks to ground water and surface water flooding issues
19. Consider flood risk as part of a Flood Risk Assessment as the site is partially located within Flood Zone 2 and larger than one hectare
20. Demonstrate the sustainable management of surface water runoff through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in line with policy and best practice; any proposed surface water discharge must be limited to greenfield runoff rates
21. Undertake a minerals assessment to assess the viability and practicality of prior extraction of the minerals resource, as the site falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area.

10.4 The report below will address the individual requirements of the proforma in detail. However, the principle of the residential use is acceptable. The site is in two parts. The eastern side would be for residential development, then to the west of the central tree belt would be the sports pitches, open space and allotments. Whilst the application is in outline with access only to be determined, the applicant has submitted a parameter plan to indicate where and what type of development would take place on site. This shows that the residential development of 225 units would be in the western side of the site, on two sides of the sewer easement, with the north-west corner of the site for sustainable urban drainage (SUD's), together with the retention of the central tree belt and the provision of two junior sports pitches, allotments, informal open space and sustainable urban drainage on the western side of the site. Furthermore, the illustrative masterplan gives an indication of how the 225 dwellings and the sports pitches, allotments and SUD's could be achieved. This is discussed further in the Design and Character section below, but both the parameter plan and the illustrative masterplan indicate that the principle of the residential development accords with the Site Allocation Proforma AL24.

10.5 The eastern part of the site lies within the Green Belt and as such the proposed uses here (the two junior sports pitches, the allotments, informal open space and SUD's)

does require a further Green Belt assessment under BLP Policy QP5 and NPPF paragraph 155.

- 10.6 Paragraph 155 of the NPPF gives a list of appropriate development in the Green Belt and these include material changes in the use of land such as changes of use such as for outdoor sport and recreation and engineering operations. BLP Policy QP5 sets out that outdoor sport or outdoor recreation should be of a scale appropriate to the functioning of the use to which the land is associated, buildings should be unobtrusive, and the development (including lighting) should have no detrimental effect on landscape quality.
- 10.7 Whilst the proposals are in outline, the illustrative masterplan gives an indication of the form of development on the eastern side of the site. The two junior sports pitches, allotments and informal open space would constitute appropriate development in the Green Belt. Furthermore, they are of a scale that is appropriate to the scheme, and no floodlighting is proposed for the pitches. The allotments may in the future include small scale sheds for occupiers to keep tools in etc.; however, these would be small and unobtrusive and can be controlled via condition on any future reserved matters application. Whilst the proposals do include some parking for the allotments, this can be landscaped appropriately, again at reserved matters stage. The proposed SUD's comprises attenuation ponds and as such are considered engineering operations and are also therefore appropriate development in the Green Belt. The proposed SUDs do not include buildings.
- 10.8 Given the above, it is considered that the development is in principle in accordance with Site Allocation Proforma AL24 and as such BLP Policy HO1. The development is also in accordance with Green Belt policy set out in BLP Policy QP5 and the NPPF paragraph 155. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable.

Climate Change and Sustainability

- 10.9 New development is expected to demonstrate how it has incorporated sustainable principles into the development including, construction techniques, renewable energy, green infrastructure and carbon reduction technologies as set out in Policy SP2 of the BLP that requires all development to demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to and mitigate climate change.
- 10.10 A Sustainability and Energy Statement has been submitted as part of the planning application. This sets out the energy efficiency, low carbon and renewable energy measure which could be incorporated into the detailed design. The report highlights the use of sustainable materials to reduce environmental impacts of construction, together with measures through construction and operation of the site to reduce pollution, minimise waste and encourage recycling and passive design measures, the use of photovoltaic panels and the use of energy efficient, low-carbon and renewable technologies and water efficiency measures.
- 10.11 The proposed development would also be designed to minimise pollution, be adaptable to climate change and also consider health and wellbeing. Whilst the application is outline and the proposed sustainable strategy is indicative and sets out what could be achieved, on this basis the proposed development would sufficiently incorporate sustainable design techniques. A condition is recommended which would secure the submission of an updated Energy and Sustainability Statement as part of a future reserved matters application. This would provide further details of sustainable design and construction measures to be incorporated into the development to achieve, as far as possible, a net-zero carbon outcome on site. As it is not clear as to whether

the development would be net-zero carbon at this stage, the legal agreement would secure an appropriate carbon off-set contribution at reserved matters stage should the development not be net-zero carbon. This would ensure compliance with the requirements of policy SP2 of the BLP and the Council's Interim Sustainability Position Statement.

Affordable Housing

- 10.12 Policy HO3 of the BLP requires the development of greenfield sites providing up to 500 dwellings to provide 40% of the total number of units as affordable, in a mix in accordance with the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2016. The Site Allocation Proforma also requires 40% affordable housing provision.
- 10.13 Whilst the application is in outline, an indicative mix is proposed as follows. 85 residential units in the following form, 12 x 1bed flat, 27 x 2 bed flat, 12 x 2 bed houses, 25 x 3 bed houses and 9 x 4 bed houses. Of the proposed affordable housing units, 46% is proposed as social rent (all the proposed affordable houses), 34% as affordable rent (22 apartments plus seven of the 2 bed houses), and 20% shared ownership (17 x 2 bed flats).
- 10.14 The RBWM Housing Enabling Officer has stated a preference for a more even split between 2 bed apartments and 2 bed houses. However, this would result in a reduction of the overall quantum of residential dwellings on site since the extra land-take required for houses and gardens compared to flats and given the extensive constraints on site (the storm sewer, the tree belt and the Green Belt) this approach is considered acceptable for this particular site. As such, in this context, the Housing Enabling Officer considers the amount and mix of the proposed indicative affordable housing to be acceptable.
- 10.15 Given the above, the proposal is in accordance with Policy HO3 of the BLP, the BLP AL24 Site Allocation proforma with regard to affordable housing and as such this provision is acceptable and will be secured by a recommended S106 obligation.

Housing Provision and Quality

- 10.16 Policy HO2 states that provision of new homes should contribute to meeting the needs of current and projected households and provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, reflecting the most up to date evidence set out in the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). BLP Policy HO2 also requires on sites of 100 or more dwellings, the provision of 5% of market housing as fully serviced plots for custom and self-build housing. Furthermore, Policy BLP HO2 requires for larger sites, 30% of the dwellings delivered as accessible and adaptable dwellings in accordance with Building Regulations M4(2) and 5% as wheelchair accessible. Site Proforma AL24 also requires 5% self-built or custom built residential units.
- 10.17 The proposed indicative market housing mix is as follows. 128 dwellings of which there are 9% 1 bed apartments, 13% 2 bed apartments or houses, 40% 3 bed houses, and 38% 4+ bed houses. This mix of market housing is close to the recommended housing mix for East Berkshire, but with a slightly lower percentage of 2 bed units and a slightly higher percentage of 4+ bed units. Given that the majority of the mix is in accordance with the Berkshire SHMA and given the constraints of the site in terms of Green Belt, existing trees and the sewer easement, this is considered acceptable.

- 10.18 The application states that 30% of the homes are proposed to be built to Building Regulations M4(2) as accessible and adaptable, and 5% of the homes are proposed to be fully wheelchair accessible. These will be secured via a S106 obligation.
- 10.19 The application states that 5% of the market units are proposed to be custom build homes, equating to 11 plots. To ensure that these dwellings are secured and developed in accordance with the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), a S106 obligation and conditions are recommended. Since the application is in outline, a design code for these units is recommended by condition.
- 10.20 Given the above, the housing provision and quality is considered acceptable, subject to recommended S106 obligations and conditions and as such conforms to Policy HO2 of the BLP and the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma.

Flooding and Drainage

- 10.21 Policy NR1 of the BLP states that development should be located and designed to ensure that flood risk from all sources of flooding is acceptable in planning terms. Furthermore, the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma states development should address potential risks to ground water and surface water and consider flood risk as part of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), as well as demonstrate suitable management of surface water runoff through the use of SUD's.
- 10.22 As set out above, the majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1, with the far south-eastern part of the site just located within the edge of Flood Zone 2. The south-western part of the site lies within the Source Protection Zone (SPZ) for groundwater aquifer. The western edge of the site and south western part of the site lies in an area that is at risk for surface water flooding. There is also a Thames Water storm water sewer that runs through the site with an easement, and the Thames Water foul water sewer runs along Woodlands Park Road to the north of the site.
- 10.23 In terms of the part of the site that is within Flood Zone 2, this is proposed to be informal open space and as such, this is an appropriate use within this flood zone, as it is considered by the NPPF to be water-compatible development. This is a stance also supported by BLP Policy NR1.
- 10.24 The SPZ lies partially in the south-western section of the site, as does a borehole abstraction point; however, again, development is not proposed at the borehole itself. The LLFA have raised no objections to the development with regard to its location at a SPZ, subject to a recommended condition 4 relating to a detailed drainage scheme.
- 10.25 The site is partially at risk of surface water flooding on the western and south-western areas. To address this as part of the proposed development, a large surface water exceedance flow attenuation basin is proposed in the north-western tip of the site, as well as attenuation basins in the informal open space in the south-eastern part of the site. Since there is a stormwater sewer that runs through the site, Thames Water have agreed a number of storm water connections to this sewer with the applicant. Furthermore, levels to the west of the current storm sewer easement are proposed to be raised by 1.5- 2m to enable surface water run-off to two proposed drainage ditches/swales. Whilst this approach is acceptable in principle, a recommended condition will require these details to be provided prior to the relevant reserved matters application.
- 10.26 There is a Thames Water foul sewer that runs along Woodlands Park Road to the north of the site and the proposal is to connect to this foul sewer with the use of a pumping

statement. Whilst no comment has been made by Thames Water following consultation, it is clear from the FRA that they have been in discussions with the applicant regarding foul and surface water connections, and these are considered acceptable in principle.

- 10.27 Given the above, and with no objection from the LLFA or other consultees to the scheme, subject to recommended detailed conditions, the flooding and drainage impacts of the proposal are considered acceptable and in accordance with the NPPF, BLP Policy NR1 and the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma.

Design and Character

- 10.28 Policy QP3 of the BLP sets out that new development will be expected to contribute towards achieving sustainable high quality design in the Borough, and help create attractive new townscapes and landscapes, create easy and safe access and movement for pedestrians, cyclists, and cars. Policy QP3a sets out that large developments can establish their own sense of place and general heights may be increased to support placemaking and efficient use of land. The recently adopted Tall Buildings SPD states that for the current application site, there are no opportunities for tall buildings but opportunities for a single large building to emphasise the entrance on Woodlands Park Road, with a maximum of three storeys. It also states that on large greenfield development sites such as this, there may be an opportunity to increase the general heights beyond the existing context to deliver sustainable developments and make efficient use of land.
- 10.29 The AL24 Site Allocation proforma states that development should front onto Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue and minimise the visual impacts of recreational or sports use on the eastern side of the development. It further states that development should provide strong pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the housing area and into the public open space and provide linkages to the existing PROW network. The Borough Wide Design Guide (BWDG) sets out design principles relating to character and layouts of new developments.
- 10.30 The application is in outline, with the access only to be determined at this time, and as such layout, scale and design are reserved matters that can only be determined when the relevant reserved matters applications are submitted. However, the applicants have submitted a parameter plans which sets of types of development 'zones' and gives an indication as to the general form of development.
- 10.31 The parameter plan indicates that adjacent to Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue there would be zones of two storey buildings, with a zone 2.5 storeys high buildings adjacent to the business park to the south of the site. Within the main body of the site, situated around the surface water exceedance flow attenuation basin and the sewer easement, up to three storeys are proposed.
- 10.32 It is clear from the indicative residential unit mix that the majority of the dwellings are proposed to be housing (rather than apartments). The increase in height to part of the site due to surface water flooding issues, as set out in the Flood and Drainage section above, would not unduly raise levels in the area since there is a dip on the land here and the raising of levels would make the site compatible in height to the adjacent Woodlands Park Avenue. Given the constraints on the site, including the sewer easement, the trees and hedgerows and the need for surface water attenuation areas, the use of the inner part of the site for three storey dwellings to achieve the numbers of units proposed is considered appropriate and in accordance with BLP Policy QP3a and the Tall Buildings SPD. Since layout, scale and design are not for determination

here, these issues can be controlled by way of a recommended condition requiring a design code to be submitted prior to the relevant reserved matters application.

- 10.33 The BWDG states that designers should pay particular attention to connectivity, street design, open spaces, and blocks. Layouts should be designed to encourage walking, cycling and public transport. This is supported by the requirement in AL24 Site Allocation Proforma for strong pedestrian and cycle connectivity.
- 10.34 Whilst these issues are for determination at a later date at reserved matters stage, the current application should indicate that these issues can be resolved satisfactorily. The parameter plan shows pedestrian/cycle linkages to the east of the main access from Woodlands Park Road to the proposed sports pitches at the junction of Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue, with two further pedestrian accesses onto Woodlands Park Avenue and accesses to the open space from the PROW's to the east. The proposal is therefore considered to have suitable pedestrian/cycle access through the site, connecting it to the existing residential area and also connecting the open space and recreational elements of the proposed scheme to the wider area. Within the development site itself, the eastern section of the residential development is proposed to have a primary vehicular route, with secondary routes crossing the sewer easement to the western part of the proposed residential development. This will provide a clear street hierarchy within the site itself. The illustrative masterplan indicates that street layout, block design and street design has the potential to provide priority to pedestrian and cycle movement throughout the scheme. These details can be secured by way of a recommended condition requiring a relevant design code for submission prior to the relevant reserved matters application.
- 10.35 Whilst the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma states that development should front onto Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue, there is substantial hedgerow along the boundary of Woodlands Park Avenue and a lesser hedgerow but some well-established trees along the boundary of Woodlands Park Road. There is swale proposed close to this boundary that connects to the storm water sewer. As it is desirable from both a visual and biodiversity perspective to retain these hedgerow and trees, apart from where accesses are proposed, development is shown on the parameter plan to be set back from these hedgerows and trees, giving room for the swales in this location.
- 10.36 Since this application is in outline, with only access to be determined at this time, details of the layout and landscaping for the open space and recreational elements of the scheme will be subject to a design code controlled by a recommended condition, with details to be submitted before the relevant reserved matters application.
- 10.37 Given the above, the character and design of the proposal is considered acceptable and in accordance with BLP Policies QP3 and QP3a, the Tall Buildings SPD, the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma and the BWDG.

Trees and Landscape

- 10.38 BLP Policy NR3 sets out that development proposals should carefully consider the individual and cumulative impact of development on existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, including those that make a particular contribution to the appearance of the local character. The AL24 Site Allocation Proforma states that the existing central tree belt should be retained, and that valuable trees at site boundaries should be retained. Furthermore, it states that visual impacts of any recreational, sporting or leisure on the eastern side of the site should be minimised, with appropriate edge

treatment and transition from the open space to the countryside. There are no TPO's on site and no veteran trees.

- 10.39 The central tree belt is proposed to be retained, with residential development to the west of it, and open space, allotments and sports facilities to the east. There would be some minor breakthrough in order to enable a footpath to connect these parts of the development. Details of this would be submitted as part of a future reserved matters application for site layout and landscaping. The hedgerow on the western boundary of the site is also proposed to be retained, albeit with a small breakthrough for the emergency/pedestrian access to Woodlands Park Avenue. The hedgerow to the south is proposed to be retained. The hedgerow on the northern edge of site is patchy and non-existent in places, though there are some large trees here. There would be some removal of vegetation to enable vehicular access to the site from Woodlands Park Road, but the existing large trees would be retained. Conditions requiring details of tree retention and protection at reserved matters stage are recommended to address this.
- 10.40 There are no landscape designations within the vicinity of the site. The site is mostly flat and the surrounding landscape is also relatively flat. Views out of the site are disrupted by the existing mature boundary vegetation and the central tree belt. The existing houses in the vicinity limit views of the site to that of the immediate surroundings to the north and the west. To the east and the south there are open views of the site from the PROW's, though most of these views would be of the proposed open space, sports pitches and allotments, rather than the built development itself.
- 10.41 Proposed building heights are up to a maximum height of three storeys with restrictions to two storeys along the western boundary and 2.5 storeys along the northern and southern boundaries. Effects on the wider landscape are considered negligible given that the site is visually well contained, with well-established trees and hedgerows, the majority of which are proposed to be retained. Further landscape planting is also proposed within the site, both for the built development and the open space, sports pitches and allotments, the details of which would be included in the relevant reserved matters application.
- 10.42 Given the above, subject to recommended condition, the impact on the trees and hedgerows and landscape is acceptable, and in accordance with BLP Policy NR3 and the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 10.43 BLP Policy NR2 sets out that development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they maintain, protect and enhance the biodiversity of sites including features of conservation value and the presence of protected species and should avoid impacts on habitats and species of principal importance. The policy further sets out that proposals will be required to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity by quantifiable methods. The AL24 Site Allocation Proforma states that development should create a high quality green and blue infrastructure framework across the site to deliver biodiversity.
- 10.44 The habitats within the site compromise one large and one small arable field, an area of semi improved grassland, the central tree belt and species rich boundary hedge lines to the west and north. The site lies within the Impact Risk Zone for the Great Thrift Wood SSSI to the south-east of the site and Natural England have advised that a construction and environmental plan condition be implemented to address any impacts on the SSSI. This condition is recommended.

- 10.45 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculation has been undertaken as part of the application which shows a net gain in biodiversity units of 30%, which would be provided on site, the majority of which is within the eastern part of the site. It is recommended that the BNG is secured via a S106 obligation.
- 10.46 Bat surveys undertaken showed that there was low to moderate use of the site by bats and that the two sheds on site were unsuitable for use by roosting bats. Most of the bat activity was found along the central tree belt which is proposed to be retained. A condition requiring wildlife friendly lighting is recommended.
- 10.47 There was no evidence of great crested newts, dormice, otter or watervole on site. However, a low population of slow worms on site has been identified and as such, a condition requiring the submission of a reptile mitigation strategy is recommended. The site contains habitats suitable for nesting birds and as such any vegetation clearance or demolition of sheds should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season and this is secured via a recommended condition.
- 10.48 A main badger sett has been identified on site. The Council's Ecologist has agreed that as a last resort the badger sett can be relocated to a more appropriate location and has recommended a condition to this effect. Since the application is in outline with only access to be determined here, the location of the badger sett can be taken into account when layout is applied for.
- 10.49 Subject to the completion of a legal agreement to secure BNG and the recommended conditions it is considered that the proposal would accord with the NPPF, BLP Policy NR2 and the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 10.50 BLP Policy HE1 sets out that development proposals are required to demonstrate how they preserve or enhance the character, appearance and function of heritage assets and their settings and respect the significance of the historic environment. The AL24 Site Allocation Proforma states that the development should be designed sensitively to conserve and enhance the setting of the nearby Listed Building.
- 10.51 The Historic England listing for Lillibrooke Manor states that it is a 14th century hall house, mostly re-built in the late 16th century and extended in the 19th and 20th centuries. The building itself is part timber framed, encased in brick and part brick with old tile gabled roofs. It now has a U plan form, with a mid 20th century extension on the north-east gable. The building is currently used as a private house and a wedding venue. As it stands, the setting of the listed building has been somewhat compromised by the erection of a large barn and turfing works 60m to the south of the south wing. There are no listed walls surrounding the listed building in the vicinity of the application site.
- 10.52 The listed building itself lies 20m from the easterly site boundary of the application site, with an open grassed area in-between. The two junior sports pitches are proposed to the east of the listed building, so the area would remain open. No floodlighting or associated sports buildings are proposed here due to the sensitivity of the site within the Green Belt. On-site planting could provide a boundary to the grounds of the listed building to enable a soft visual edge to the site. Details of this would be set out in a recommended condition for inclusion in the relevant reserved matters application for landscaping. Given the open nature of the site proposed here, and the proposed planting, which can be controlled at a future reserved matters stage, it is considered

that there would be a negligible impact on the setting of the listed building adjacent to the site.

- 10.53 The site lies within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley that has been occupied since prehistory. It is adjacent to Lillibrooke Manor, a medieval hall house, and to the north west there are known Roman villa sites. Archaeological investigation to the north revealed archaeological finds of possible Bronze Age date. There are also a range of medieval and post-medieval sites within 1km of the site. As such, the site falls within an area of archaeological significance and archaeological remains may be damaged by ground disturbance for the proposed development. To address this, Berkshire Archaeology have recommended a written scheme of investigation condition, to undertake archaeological site investigation, including trial trenching.
- 10.54 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed impact on the heritage assets is acceptable and as such the proposals conform with BLP Policy HE1 and AL24 Site Allocation Proforma in this regard.

Amenity of neighbouring buildings

- 10.55 BLP Policy QP3 sets out that new development should have no unacceptable effect on the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of adjoining properties.
- 10.56 The submitted parameter plan shows that the nearest development to existing residential properties on Woodlands Park Avenue would be 29m away and from Woodlands Park Road, the closest is 27m. Most development on the edges of the site would be between 30m-49m from existing properties. From these distances, there would be no unacceptable impact in terms of loss of privacy or outlook for existing residents. Furthermore, the parameter plans indicate that development near the boundaries of the site is proposed to be two storey. Details of the layout, scale and design would be dealt with a reserved matters stage; however, the parameter plan can be secured by way of a recommended condition.
- 10.57 Given the above, it is not considered that there are unacceptable impacts on the amenities of existing local residents, in accordance with BLP Policy QP3.

Parking and Highways

- 10.58 BLP Policy IF2 states that development should be designed to improve pedestrian and cyclist access and be designed to improve accessibility by public transport. The AL24 Site Allocation Proforma states that development will be required to be well served by public transport with appropriate provision for new bus stop infrastructure, development and implement a robust residential travel plan to reduce instances of single-occupancy car trips.
- 10.59 Vehicular access is proposed from Woodlands Park Road via a splitter junction and a right hand turn, with an emergency vehicular access proposed on Woodlands Park Avenue, which would also serve as a pedestrian and cycle access.
- 10.60 The submitted Transport Statement states that nine junctions were subject to traffic modelling, and two junctions were found to have exceeded capacity. These were the Woodlands Park Road/Woodlands Park Avenue junction and the Cannon Lane/Woodlands Park Road/Waltham Road junction. Mitigation is therefore proposed for these junctions.

- 10.61 Highway improvements are proposed to Woodlands Park Road to accommodate the access and increase safety for pedestrians on both sides of the road. This includes road widening and the speed limit is proposed to be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. Two zebra crossings are also proposed crossing Woodlands Park Road, one to the east of the proposed junction and one zebra crossing close to the junction of Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue. Three further uncontrolled crossings are also proposed, two on Woodlands Park Road and one on Woodlands Park Avenue. Three further bus stops are proposed in the vicinity of the site. Mitigation at the Cannon Lane/Woodlands Park Road/ Waltham Road junction comprises a junction redesign to accommodate the extra traffic from the development.
- 10.62 The Highway Officer is satisfied that the proposed access, pedestrian and cycle crossings, and the proposed highway improvements are acceptable in relation to the development and would be secured via a S106 obligation. Furthermore, the relevant reserved matters application should include the submission of further detail to confirm that refuse and fire tender would be able to safely manoeuvre around internal roads. This would be required by a recommended condition.
- 10.63 Parking has not been considered at this stage as scale, layout and design has not been applied for at this time; however, a condition requiring parking to be design coded is recommended.
- 10.64 The Highway Officer and the PROW Team have expressed concerns regarding a direct route for pedestrians and cyclists through the site to link up to PROW COXG/6/1 that runs along the eastern boundary of the site. However, the footpath itself is outside the red line and within third party ownership and as such there is no mechanism as part of the determination of this application to enable upgrading this footpath directly. As such, the PROW Team have requested a S106 contribution to enable them to mitigate the impacts of the development on this PROW and PROW's COXG/7 and 8, which the developer has agreed to and would be secured as part of this application.
- 10.65 Concerns have been raised by Cox Green Parish Council regarding the location of the proposed crossings and the lack of detail on walking and cycling access, which is integral to the greater uptake of these forms of travel. However, the Highway Officer is satisfied that the proposed crossings, their type and location would result in a safe environment for pedestrian and cyclists accessing or egressing the development. Since the application is in outline with only vehicular access to be determined at this stage, the pedestrian and cycle routes have not been designed to any great detail, and will be assessed when the relevant reserved matters have been submitted.
- 10.66 Concerns have been raised by local residents about the suitability of the traffic data for the development. The traffic modelling data is based on the Council's own Strategic Transport Model and has been fully assessed by the Highway Officer. There is no modelling data later than 2017; however, the validated flows have been extrapolated to 2033 and the Highway Officer is satisfied with the results.
- 10.67 The following S106 obligations are proposed to address and mitigate any highways impacts of the proposed development:
- i. Construction of the main vehicular site access onto Woodlands Park Road;
 - ii. Construction of the emergency vehicular access onto Woodlands Park Avenue;
 - iii. Uncontrolled and controlled pedestrian crossings across Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue with associated infrastructure;
 - iv. Widening of the carriageway of Woodlands Park Road and provision of a right turn lane;

- v. Improvements to the roundabout junction with Woodlands Park Road/Cannon Lane/Waltham Road;
- vi. Contribution for funding for a TRO for parking and waiting restrictions ;
- vii. Contribution for funding for a TRO to reduce the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph on Woodlands Park Road;
- viii. Provision of three new bus stops on Woodlands Park Road;
- ix. Implementing and monitoring a Travel Plan to encourage residents to use sustainable modes of travel; and,
- x. Contribution towards improvements in the local PROW network

This would also ensure that there would be safe routes to school to nearby primary schools.

- 10.68 Subject to the recommended conditions and S106 obligations secured through the legal agreement, the proposed impacts on the highway network, both vehicular and pedestrian are considered acceptable in accordance with BLP Policy IF2 and the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma.

Air Quality and Noise

- 10.69 BLP Policy EP2 sets out that development proposals should show how they have considered air quality and should not put new or existing residents at risk of harm from unacceptable levels of air quality. BLP Policy EP4 is also relevant and sets out that development proposals should consider the noise impact on nearby properties and the intended new occupiers. The site does not lie within or close to an Air Quality Management Area.
- 10.70 The applicant has submitted an air quality assessment which shows that local air quality conditions are below the respective air quality objectives. Air quality mitigation measures are set out in the report, including the use of air source heat pumps instead of gas boilers and thermal glazing windows and these issues would be controlled via the sustainability measures for the dwellings set out at reserved matters stage and controlled via a S106 obligation. This mitigation is considered acceptable.
- 10.71 An acceptable noise assessment has also been submitted which demonstrates that there would be no adverse impacts regarding noise as a result of the proposal subject to a recommended construction management plan condition.
- 10.72 Subject to the proposed S106 obligation and the recommended condition, the implications of the proposal on air quality and noise of existing and future residents is considered acceptable and in accordance with BLP Policies EP2 and EP4.

Other infrastructure requirements

- 10.73 BLP Policy IF4 states that new open space and play facilities for children will be required for sites allocation for new housing in accordance with the Open Space Study (OSS). The AL24 Site Allocation Proforma states that the site is required to provide public open space and sports facilities as well as residential on the eastern side of the allocation.
- 10.74 The open space provided has been assessed against the requirements in the OSS. The amount of amenity greenspace (0.324 ha provided), sports pitches (0.648 ha) natural and semi natural green space (0.972 ha) are over the required amounts set out in the OSS. The provision for children is in accordance with the amount required and comprises one Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) and one Local Area of Play (LAP)

on the eastern side of the development within the wider area of open space, and one LEAP and four LAP's located within the western part of the site within the residential area (totalling 0.13ha).

- 10.75 The site has a large over-provision of allotments when assessed by the OSS, which requires 0.108 ha of allotments, and the proposal is providing 1.074 ha. This over provision of allotments was requested by Cox Green Parish Council during pre-application discussions and detailed in the approved stakeholder masterplan, for use for the wider community given the locally expressed need, not just as mitigation for the occupiers of the site itself. The Parish Council has confirmed that they are willing to take on the management of the allotments as well as other open space. Given that this is related to a locally expressed need by the Parish Council for allotments, this policy over-provision is acceptable.
- 10.76 The types and amounts of open space and recreation would be included in a S106 obligation and the details and layout of the open space and recreation would be subject to the relevant reserved matters application. Given this, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with BLP Policy IF4 and the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma.
- 10.77 Whilst details and layout of the open space and reaction would be included in the relevant reserved matters application, as discussed above under the Principle of Development, the use of floodlighting and changing rooms are not included on site due to the visual sensitivity of the Green Belt.
- 10.78 With regard to school places, the RBWM Education Services Officer has stated that the pupil yield model indicates that the demand for reception places in local primary schools from the development would grow slowly with demand peaking in 2040 then falling and as such the development would lead to a need for new school places locally. There are currently spare primary school places at Lowbrook Academy, Wessex Primary School, and Woodlands Park Primary, although there is a shortage of spaces for girls in years 7 and 8 at secondary school level. However, Education Services have confirmed that there are initial plans to meet the demand in due course and that this demand will be funded by CIL payments.

Other Material Considerations

- 10.79 The Environmental Protection Officer has concluded that the contaminated land implications of the school are acceptable subject to recommended conditions.
- 10.80 The applicant has submitted a Minerals Assessment as required by the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma. The intrusive investigation identified the presence of sandy gravelly clay beneath the site; however, that this was at a thickness and depth below overburden strata which were considered to have no/negligible mineral worth. Furthermore, the size of the site introduces constraints which would limit the volume of material which could be won by mass extraction and there are two sewers also crossing the site, restraining it further. It was therefore concluded that the presence of sandy gravelly clay beneath the site has no mineral worth and as such, mass extraction is not considered economically viable. This is accepted and on this basis, the application demonstrates compliance with the requirements of the AL24 Site Allocation proforma.
- 10.81 Concerns have been raised by local residents that there was not enough consultation on the application. However, consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as set out in section 6.

10.82 Concerns have been raised the proposals will impact on existing health services. However, the scheme is not of a size to justify contributions to the local health services such as GP's and recent case law states that higher level health services such as hospitals cannot be funded by S106 obligations.

10.83 Concerns have been raised with regard to the potential for light pollution as a result of development. As set out in the Principle of Development section above, the site is allocated within the BLP for development of this form and as such there would be an urbanising effect of the development on what is currently a greenfield site. Whilst this would include street lighting, which is required in urban areas for safety reasons, this is an inevitable part of urban development on an allocated site.

11. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

11.1 The development would be liable to pay CIL at a rate of £141.11sqm. The liability would be calculated at Reserved Matters stage.

12. PLANNING BALANCE

12.1 The Borough does not have a five-year housing land supply. Given that the application was submitted before the 19/12/2023 paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is relevant, which states that planning permission should be granted unless:

- (i) The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development or;
- (ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

12.2 In this case, there are no policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance that provide a clear reason to refuse the development, as such the application must be assessed under paragraph 11d(i) which sets out that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

12.3 There are many benefits to the scheme as follows:

- i. Delivery of 225 homes, 85 of which would be affordable;
- ii. Provision of a reduction in carbon compared to buildings regulations and a contribution to the Borough's carbon off-set fund is net zero not achieved at reserved matter stage;
- iii. Highway improvements, including extra bus stops and crossings on Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue;
- iv. Provision of a policy compliant area of green space, including two junior sports pitches, allotments, informal green space and two LEAP's and five LAP's;
- v. Provision of policy compliant biodiversity net gain;
- vi. Provision of family homes in the form of three and four bedroom housing for which there is need;
- vii. Provision of custom build homes; and,
- viii. A contribution towards upgrading PROW in the vicinity of the site.

12.4 There would be no adverse impacts within the application that cannot be mitigated by either recommended condition or S106 obligations that would outweigh the significant benefits of the scheme.

12.5 For the reasons set out within the report, the proposed development is compliant with the NPPF, the relevant policies of the BLP, including the AL24 Site Allocation Proforma. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to the recommended conditions and the S106 obligations.

13. CONCLUSION

13.1 The application, would for the reasons set out above, represent an acceptable form of development on an Allocated Site in the BLP that would make for highly efficient use of the site, with an acceptable access to be provided.

14. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

- Appendix A - Site location plan
- Appendix B – Access plans, parameter plan and illustrative masterplan

15. CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED FOR INCLUSION IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED

1 Details of the scale, layout, appearance and landscaping (hereinafter called the 'reserved matters') shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any part of the development is commenced.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

2 An application for the approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

3 The Development shall commence within two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

4 Prior to commencement of the development, a surface water drainage scheme, based on the submitted sustainable drainage strategy, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:

i. Full details of all components of the proposed surface water drainage system including dimensions, locations, gradients, invert levels, cover levels and relevant construction details;

ii. Supporting calculations confirming compliance with the Non-statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems, and the attenuation volumes to be provided;

iii. Details of the maintenance arrangements relating to the proposed surface water drainage system, confirming who will be responsible for its maintenance and the maintenance regime to be implemented; and,

iv. Details of the proposed levels in the north-west corner of the site, indicating how overland flows will be directed into the attenuation basin

The surface water drainage system shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the NPPF, BLP Policy NR1 and to ensure the proposed development is safe from flooding and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

- 5 No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following.
- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;
 - b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones";
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements);
 - d) the results of up to date surveys for bats, badgers and reptiles carried out in accordance with recognised guidelines;
 - e) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features;
 - f) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works;
 - g) Responsible persons and lines of communication;
 - h) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person; and,
 - i) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.
- The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with the NPPF and BLP Policy NR2.
- 6 Prior to the commencement of development, a report detailing the external lighting scheme and how this will not adversely impact upon wildlife shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include the following figures and appendices:
- i. A layout plan with beam orientation;
 - ii. A schedule of equipment;
 - iii. Measures to avoid glare; and,
 - iv. An isolux contour map showing light spillage to 1 lux.
- The approved lighting plan shall be maintained thereafter be implemented as approved.
- Reason: To limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on nature conservation in accordance with the NPPF.
- 7 No development hereby permitted, site clearance, vegetation removal, or ground works shall commence until a badger mitigation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall be based upon an up to date badger survey and include 1) measures to ensure that the main badger sett identified in the ecology report (Ecological Assessment, Hankinson Duckett Associates, November 2023, ref: 2090.68) is retained and protected from interference during the construction period or if this is not possible details of the new artificial sett and methodology for excluding it, 2) measures to protect the existing and or artificial sett from interference during the construction phase and after completion of the development, and 3) measures to ensure that badgers will be able to continue to traverse across and forage within the application site during construction and after completion of the development.
- Reason: To protect badgers, a protected species, from the adverse impacts of development. Relevant policies - Local Plan NR2.
- 8 No development hereby permitted, including ground works or vegetation clearance, shall commence until a reptile mitigation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The strategy be based upon an up to date reptile survey and

shall include full details of how reptiles will be protected from harm during the construction period.

Reason: In protect reptiles and habitats on site and in accordance with the NPPF and BLP Policy NR2.

- 9 No vegetation clearance or demolition of sheds on site shall be undertaken outside the bird nesting season or if that is not practical, areas to be cleared should be checked by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately prior to the works commencing.

Reason: To ensure the protection of nesting birds and in accordance with the NPPF and BLP Policy NR2.

- 10 No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
2. The programme for post investigation assessment;
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation; and,
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.

The Development shall take place in accordance with the approved WSI. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the approved WSI and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: To protect potential archaeological remains within the site and surrounding area in accordance with policy HE1 of the Borough Local Plan.

- 11 Prior to any equipment, machinery or materials being brought onto the site, details of the measures to protect, during construction, the trees shown to be retained on the approved plan, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved measures shall be implemented in full prior to any equipment, machinery or materials being brought onto the site, and thereafter maintained until the completion of all construction work and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been permanently removed from the site. These measures shall include fencing in accordance with British Standard 5837. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made.

Reason: To protect trees which contribute to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area and in accordance with BLP Policy NR3.

- 12 Development, other than that required to be carried out as part of an approved scheme of remediation, must not commence until conditions 1 to 4 have been complied with. If unexpected contamination is found after development has begun, development must be halted on that part of the site affected by the unexpected contamination to the extent specified by the Local Planning Authority in writing until condition 4 has been complied with in relation to that contamination.

1. Site Characterisation

An investigation and risk assessment, in addition to any assessment provided with the planning application, must be completed in accordance with a scheme to assess the

nature and extent of any contamination on the site, whether or not it originates on the site. The contents of the scheme are subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The report of the findings must include:

land;

- a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination;
- as assessment of the potential risks to:
 - human health;
 - property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, adjoining groundwaters and surface waters;
 - ecological systems;
 - archaeological sites and ancient monuments;
 - an appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of preferred option(s).

This must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11'.

2. Submission of Remediation Scheme.

A detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

3. Implementation of Approved Remediation Scheme.

The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification of commencement of the remediation scheme works.

Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report (referred to in PPS23 as a validation report) that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

4. Reporting Unexpected Contamination

In the event that contamination is found at anytime when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of condition 1, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of condition 2, which is the subject of the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition 3.

5. Long Term Monitoring and Maintenance

A monitoring and maintenance scheme to include monitoring the long-term effectiveness of the proposed remediation over a period of (x) years, and the provision of reports on the same must be prepared, both of which are subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Following completion of the measures identified in that scheme and when the remediation objectives have been achieved, reports that demonstrate the effectiveness of the monitoring and maintenance carried out must be produced and submitted to 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, CLR 11'

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and the neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors and in accordance with BLP Policy EP1.

- 13 No development shall commence until the vehicular access has been constructed onto Woodlands Park Road in accordance with the details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety. Relevant Policies and in accordance with BLP Policies IF2 and QP3.

- 14 No part of the development shall be occupied until the emergency access from Woodlands Park Avenue has been constructed in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The access shall thereafter be retained for emergency purposes only.

Reason: In the interests of highway and pedestrian safety and to facilitate access by emergency service vehicles or vehicles in the event of an emergency and in accordance with BLP Policies IF2 and QP3.

- 15 No part of the development shall be occupied until the visibility splays shown on the approved drawings at the main vehicle access, emergency service access, junction with Woodlands Park Avenue/Road and all proposed controlled and uncontrolled crossings have been provided. The areas within these splays shall be kept free of all obstructions to visibility above a height of 0.6 metres from the surface of the carriageway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with BLP Policies IF2 and QP3 of the Borough Local Plan.

- 16 Details of the following shall be submitted with the relevant reserved matters application:

- i. A detailed sustainability and energy statement for all residential properties;
- ii. A design code for all types of residential development including the street hierarchy, block structure and street design (including parking) and how this is in accordance with the approved parameter plan;
- iii. Details including cross sections showing the change in levels necessitated by the surface water drainage;
- iv. Details of evidence that refuse and fire tender would be able to safely manoeuvre around internal roads; and,
Details of cycle parking facilities for all dwellings

Reason: To ensure that these details can be fully assessed at reserved matters stage.

- 17 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed below.

S 001 Rev. P2
PP01 Rev. P2
MP01 Rev. P2

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved particulars and plans.

Informatives

- 1 The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act.
- 2 Any incidental works affecting the adjoining highway shall be approved and a licence obtained before any work is carried out within the highway, through contacting The Highways and Transport Section at RBWM. A formal application should be made allowing at least 12 weeks prior to when works are required to allow for processing of the application, agreement of the details and securing the appropriate agreements and licences to undertake the work. Any work carried out on the public highway without proper consent from the Highway Authority could be subject to prosecution and fines related to the extent of work carried out.
- 3 Highways Act Section 278/38 would need to be entered into with the Highway Authority in order to form the vehicular site accesses onto Woodlands Park Road & Avenue including all the other necessary associated infrastructure works such as new footways, kerbs, drainage, street lighting, landscaping, vegetation/soil removal / releveling, carriageway & footway re-surfacing/widening, cats' eyes, signs and lining works. In addition, the main pedestrian/cycle formalised crossings and access and the improvements to the roundabout junction with Waltham Road, Cannon lane and Woodlands Park Road. The section can be contacted via email at HighwaysDC@RBWM.gov.uk to receive the initial email.

