

Development Management Ref No	No weeks on day of committee	Parish	Ward	Listed by:
F/2014/0940	44/13	Swallowfield	Swallowfield	Scheme of Delegation

Applicant Bellway Homes Thames Valley Limited

Location Willow Tree Works Swallowfield Street **Postcode** RG7 1QX
 Swallowfield Reading

Proposal Proposed redevelopment of site to provide 38 dwellings including affordable housing, hard and soft landscaping, open space, parking provision and associated

Type Full

PS Category 7

Officer Cris Lancaster

FOR CONSIDERATION BY Planning Committee on 1st April 2015
REPORT PREPARED BY Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

This application was deferred at the Meeting held on 10th December 2015 in order for full hydrodynamic modelling of all surface water routes on site for both the pre and post development levels to be submitted and considered by the Council's drainage consultants, WSP. This has now been undertaken and is considered in the report.

This is a full application and proposes redevelopment of the site to provide 38 dwellings including affordable housing, hard and soft landscaping, open space, parking provision and associated infrastructure. The principle means of access is via the existing main access onto Swallowfield Street with six dwellings served by two independent accesses, also from Swallowfield Street.

The developed part of the site is within Swallowfield which is identified in Policy CP9 of the adopted Core Strategy as a Limited Development Location where development is acceptable in principle.

The access, open space etc are outside the settlement boundary within Countryside. However, the proposals utilise the existing access and site road, albeit modified and the impact on the countryside is therefore not considered to be significant. The open space and play area will be available for use by the wider community.

The application has attracted a large number of local objections, principally in respect of flood and drainage impacts but also in terms of the density and scale of development, traffic impacts and detailed matters such as loss of privacy and adverse impacts on wildlife. The Council working with its flood and drainage consultants, WSP, have sought to engage with the resident's Flood Resilience Group (SFRG) in order to address local concerns. WSP is satisfied that the additional modelling undertaken by the applicant is acceptable and has no objections to the proposal subject to conditions.

The NPPF identifies three sustainability roles, environmental, social and economic.

Environmental

It is considered that the development will result in an appropriate design and density which would not materially harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not undermine the spatial distinction between the settlement and the countryside

Whilst the distance from services and facilities would weigh somewhat against the proposal, this must be balanced against the fact that the Policy CP17 of the Core Strategy identifies Swallowfield as a village that can accommodate developments of generally 25 units. Therefore, the Core Strategy accepts that Swallowfield is not unsustainable, albeit that this is limited. It must therefore follow that the general location of the site is acceptable for residential development. In addition, the relative sustainability of the site must be measured against the current use of the site where available evidence suggests that recent occupiers relied heavily on use of private vehicles. The site was also relatively underused by the previous occupiers. The site is largely unrestricted by planning controls and whilst current evidence suggests that there is no demand for the site, if it were to re-open it could operate in a relatively unrestricted manner. In contrast, the current application is subject of full control with an opportunity to impose restrictive conditions as well as secure mitigate and local improvements by way of a Section 106 agreement. There are no highway safety issues and the developer has agreed to make contributions to improve the local footpaths to the front of the site.

The applicants' commitment to Code 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, thereby moving to low carbon energy, is positive.

Whilst this aspect of the development has caused most local concern, the Council's consultants, WSP confirm that the development would not pose a flood risk and therefore recommend approval subject to conditions.

Social

The development would contribute to the support and strengthening of the local community and would provide housing to meet local needs by providing a mix of housing types and tenures. Concern has been expressed by several residents and the Parish about physical linkages to the centre of the village. However, this is not an isolated location and the development proposed is within the developed edge of the village. The development does not preclude additional linkages were third party land to become available. The development would create an area of open space and a children's play area open to local residents. Contributions are made by S106 agreement towards libraries, schools, children's play, pitches and recreation, countryside access, sports and swimming pool provision.

Economic

The development would enhance the economy of the community. New residents are likely to support local services and businesses.

The application is before the Committee as it is major development. The proposals are considered to be acceptable and therefore it is recommended that planning permission

be granted subject to conditions and completion of a satisfactory Section 106 Legal Agreement.

Community Infrastructure Levy Community Infrastructure Levy has been adopted with effect from 6th April 2015. Whilst the recommendation assumes completion of the legal agreement prior to that date any delay will inevitably take the decision after 6th April. As such, the Council and the developer are working to produce a legal agreement which allows for both scenarios. An update will be given at the Committee.

PLANNING STATUS

- Limited Development
- Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone
- SSSI 500m buffer
- Sand and Gravel
- Nuclear Consultation Zone
- Affordable Housing 40% (5 or more dwellings or 0.16ha)
- Flood Zone 1 (Note: The EA's consultation response note that it previously reviewed and approved the hydraulic modelling report for the site which demonstrates that the site is in Flood Zone 1 and not Flood Zone 3, as shown on its Flood Maps for Planning)

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee authorise the GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following:

A. Prior completion of a section 106 agreement as outlined in this report to provide for contributions to local services, amenities, infrastructure and affordable housing.

B. In the event of the application becoming CIL liable, the Head of Development Management be authorised to approve the application and issue a CIL liability notice in conjunction with the prior completion of a section 106 agreement to secure the provision of affordable housing.

C. Conditions and Informatives

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

Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced, samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings and all hardstandings shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the development is satisfactory. Relevant policies: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3.

3. This permission is in respect of the following drawings:

Drawing Title	Drawing No	Revision		
Site Plan	2521-10	L		
Location Plan Recent Housing Development	2521-13	C		
Site Plan Proposed Development	2521-15	H		
Site Plan Boundary Treatments	2521-16	H		
Street Elevations Sheet 1	2521-17			
Street Elevations Sheet 2	2521-18	A		
Street Elevations Sheet 3	2521-19			
Street Elevations Sheet 4	2521-20			
Street Elevations Sheet 5	2521-21			
House Types	2521A01-A03			
	2521 A101-103			
	2521 B01-B03			
	2521 C/D01-03			
	2521 C101-03			
	2521 F01-03			
	2521 G01-03			
	2521 H01-03			
	2521J01-03			
	2521K01-03			
	2521 L01-03			
Dimensioned Gardens	2521- 24	F		
Site Plan	2521-25	B		
Plot 12 Floor Plans	2521-A-01	A		
Plot 12 Elevations Sheet One	2521-A-02	A		
Plot 12 Elevations Sheet Two	2521-A-03	A		
Plots 16-18 Ground Floor Plan	2521-A1-03	A		
Plots 16-18 First Floor Plan	2521C_D-01	A		
Plots 16-18 – Elevations – sheet 1	2521C_D-02A	A		
Plots 16-18 – Elevations – Sheet 2	2521C_D-03A	A		
Plots 16-18 – Elevations – Sheet 3	2521C_D04			
Plots 13,14&15 – Floor Plan	2521C_D-05			
Plots 13,14&15 – Elevations – Sheet 1	2521 D-01 (Terrace)	A		
Plots 13, 14&15 – Elevations – Sheet 2	2521 D-02 (Terrace)	A		
Plots 13, 14&15 – Elevations – Sheet 3	2521 D-03 (Terrace)	A		

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

4. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing a scheme of landscaping which shall specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted. The works approved shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of buildings. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size or species

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP3 and MDD Policy TB21

5. No trees or hedges within the site which are shown to be retained shall be felled, uprooted, wilfully damaged or destroyed, cut back in any way or removed without previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority; any trees, shrubs or hedges removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years from the completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with trees, shrubs or hedge plants of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area, in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP3 and MDD Policy TB21

6. a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until a scheme which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent the site in accordance with BS5837:2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (The Approved Scheme); the tree protection measures approved shall be implemented in complete accordance with the Approved Scheme for the duration of the development (including unless provided by the Approved Scheme) demolition, all site preparation work, tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access, construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery;

b) No development (including tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving the use of motor vehicles or construction machinery) shall commence until the Local Planning Authority has been provided (by way of a written notice) with a period of no less than 7 working days to inspect the implementation of the measures identified in the Approved Scheme on-site;

c) No excavation for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or

otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme;

d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained

Reason: To secure the protection throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area, in the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP3 and MDD Policy TB21

7. No works related to the development hereby approved, including works of demolition or preparation prior to building operations, shall take place other than between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 13.00pm on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority

Reason: To safeguard amenity of neighbouring properties. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3

8. Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of all boundary treatments shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be maintained in the approved form so long as the development remains on the site.

Reason: To safeguard amenity and highway safety. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6

9. No development shall take place until a measured survey of the site and a plan prepared to scale of not less than 1:500 showing details of existing and proposed finished ground levels in relation to a fixed datum point) and finished floor levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation of the building

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory form of development relative to surrounding buildings and landscape. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3

10. No development shall take place including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall provide for:

- i) the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- ii) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- iii) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- iv) measures to prevent the deposit of materials on the highway and details of wheel washing facilities;

v) measures to inform local residents of commencement of development by letter and provide appropriate contact details for residents to contact the developer if they have concerns or issues

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, safety and convenience and to ensure that neighbourhood amenity is preserved. Relevant policies: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP6

11. No part of the building hereby permitted shall be occupied or used until the vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved plans. The vehicle parking spaces shall be permanently retained and remain available for the parking of vehicles at all times

Reason: To ensure adequate on-site parking provision in the interests of highway safety, convenience and amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP6 and MDD Local Plan policy CC07

12. Prior to commencement of the development hereby permitted details of secure and covered bicycle storage/parking facilities for the occupants of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle storage/parking shall be implemented in accordance with such details as may be approved before occupation of the development hereby permitted and shall be permanently retained in the approved form for the parking of bicycles and used for no other purpose.

Reason: In order to ensure that secure weather-proof bicycle parking facilities are provided so as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 4 (Sustainable Transport) and Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP6 and MDD Local Plan policy CC07.

13. Prior to the demolition of the existing buildings and structures and prior to development of the site, an assessment shall be carried out to determine whether any harmful materials are present and where such materials are found then measures shall be taken to prevent such materials from contaminating the land to be redeveloped. No building shall be occupied until a report detailing the assessment and where necessary mitigation measures undertaken, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure any contamination on the site is remedied to protect the existing/proposed occupants of the application site and adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP3

14. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Any subsequent investigation/remedial/protective works deemed necessary by the LPA shall be carried out to agreed timescales and approved by the LPA in writing. If no contamination is encountered during the development, a letter confirming this fact shall be submitted to the LPA upon completion of the development.

Reason: To ensure any contamination on the site is remedied to protect the existing/proposed occupants of the application site and adjacent land. Relevant

policy: NPPF, Core Strategy policy CP3

15. a) The applicant shall seek to build the development to achieve Code Level 4 in accordance with the requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes: Technical Guide (or such national measure of sustainability for house design that replaces that scheme). No dwelling shall be occupied until a Final Code Certificate has been issued for it by an accredited assessor certifying that Code Level 4 has been achieved.

b) If it is intended that the houses be built at less than Code Level 4, full details of why Code Level 4 is not achievable on site must be provided to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. No dwelling shall be occupied until a Final Code Certificate has been issued for it by an accredited assessor certifying that the agreed level has been achieved

Reason: To ensure the development contributes to sustainable development.
Relevant Policy: NPPF Section 10, Core Strategy policy CP1 and MDD Policy CC04.

16. No development shall commence until a programme of archaeological work (which may comprise more than one phase of work) has been implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority

Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential. Relevant policy: NPPF.MDD Policy TB25.

17. No development shall take place until the Employment Skills Plan has been implemented in full in accordance with the details submitted.

Reason: In the interests of securing sustainable local employment. The development is in a rural location and its benefits to local employment help to justify the development. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy CP15, MDD Local Plan Policy TB12.

18. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the garage accommodation on the site identified on the approved plans shall be kept available for the parking of vehicles ancillary to the residential use of the site at all times. It shall not be used for any business or as habitable space

Reason: To ensure that adequate parking space is available on the site, so as to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking, in the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant Policy: Core Strategy policy CP6 and MDD Local Plan policy CC07.

19. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no buildings, extensions, or alterations permitted by Classes A, B, C, D and E of Part 1 of the Second Schedule of the 1995 Order shall be carried out without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, preserve the character of the settlement and to ensure proper planning of the area. Plots are generally at or around the minimum separation distances and amenity space sizes so the Local Planning Authority wishes to assess the potential impact of such development. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP1, CP3 and the guidance set out in the adopted Borough Design Guide.

20. Prior to commencement of the development details of the extent, implementation, retention and management of the open space and children's play space shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring the future retention of the open space and the children's play space for the benefit of occupiers of the development hereby approved. Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3.

21. Prior to commencement of the development details of the play equipment and measures to ensure the security and safety of children shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such equipment and measures shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the development and thereafter retained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area and safety of users. Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3.

22. The mitigation and enhancement measures contained within the submitted Ecological Assessment – 5516.EcoAss.vf1 (Ecology Solutions, October 2014) shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority

Reason: To ensure the continued protection of protected species. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy CP7

23. Groundwater monitoring for the site shall be undertaken for no less than 6 months, and will include winter months November through to March.

Reason: To ensure that drainage measures are designed appropriately. Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDD Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

24. The Local Authority shall be notified of the construction programme for any SUDS measures which are to be constructed within Private Gardens, prior to the associated residence being sold.

Reason: To allow the Local Authority to designate these as Flood Defence Structures under the Floods and Water Management Act, and ensure that the necessary registration of the Local Land charge at the time of designation is completed prior to the sale of the property. Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDD Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

25. The development shall be delivered in accordance with the approved FRA and supplementary Flood Flow hydraulic analysis detailed/ documented in the Odyssey Markides Technical Note dated 6th February 2015

No development shall take place until full details of the Drainage System(s) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These shall include:

- Full details of all phasing and/or measures proposed to mitigate risks of flooding and/or pollution incidents arising to receiving watercourses/bodies or neighbouring development throughout construction.
- Demonstration of where and how surface water attenuation and infiltration shall be provided across the site and that the attenuation features are adequately sized to serve the development (i.e. will not flood any of the proposed dwellings or neighbouring development) for all events up to the 1 in 100 year storm plus allowances for the effects of climate change, taking account of achievable discharge rates over the lifetime of the development.
- Demonstration that the design of the drainage system accounts for the likely impacts of local groundwater levels (including seasonal variation), climate change and changes in impermeable area, over the design life of the development.
- Demonstration that the proposed development will not exacerbate the risk of surface water flooding off-site for all surface water flood events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event.
- Full details of all components of the proposed drainage system including source control, conveyance, storage, flow control and discharge. Details shall include dimension, locations, reference to storm simulation files, gradients, invert and cover levels and drawings as appropriate. This shall be identified for all catchments.
- Full details of water quality treatment components of the proposed drainage strategy. Details of component(s) including type, dimension, locations, capacity, maintenance requirements and frequency, gradients, invert and cover levels and drawings as appropriate. This shall be identified for all catchments.
- Full details of the maintenance and/or adoption proposals /agreements for the development covering every aspect of the proposed drainage system including a schedule of inspections and issue of an annual inspection report.

Reason: To ensure that drainage measures are designed appropriately. Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDD Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

26. No development shall take place until details of the implementation; maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. This shall include details of how prospective owners will be informed of the presence of SUDS structures in their Deed of Sales and what measures will be incorporated to ensure that they are not modified in any way and are maintained in perpetuity. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details. Those details shall include:

- i. a timetable for its implementation, and
- ii. a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable

drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure that drainage measures are managed and maintained appropriately. Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDD Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

27. None of the dwellings shall be occupied until works for the disposal of sewage have been provided on the site to serve the development hereby permitted, in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority in consultation with the drainage authority.

Reason: To ensure that drainage measures are managed and maintained appropriately. Relevant Policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policy CP3 and MDD Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

28. No development pursuant to this grant of planning permission shall take place until such time as a Travel Plan to include measures to encourage use of public transport and other methods of sustainable development together with a timetable and management arrangements for the implementation of each element has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development. Relevant policies: NPPF, Core Strategy Policies CP3 and CP6 and MDD Local Plan policy CC01

29. Before the development hereby permitted commences, a scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which specifies the provisions and details to be made to establish a Project Community Liaison Group for the duration of the construction works. The scheme shall include details of the dates of meetings and a name and telephone number for residents to contact should any issues arise during the construction period

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance during the construction period. Relevant policies Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3.

Informatives:

1. The applicants' attention is drawn to the conditions of this decision which must be complied with prior to commencement of development. Commencement of development without complying with conditions may place the works outside of the development permitted by this decision and may be liable to enforcement action. The information must be formally submitted to the Council in writing together with the relevant fee. Once the details have been approved in writing the development shall be carried out only in accordance with those details.

2. This permission should be read in conjunction with the legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, the contents of which relate to this development.

3. The applicant is reminded that this permission does not authorise any off-site highway or other works and site access to the public highway. A separate legal agreement (Minor Works Agreement) made with the Council under s184/278 of the Highways Act 1980 is required. No work within or affecting the public highway

shall commence until the agreement has been concluded and the Council, as local highway authority, has approved all construction and installation details together including with a programme of works.

4. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx. 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

PLANNING HISTORY

C/2010/0660 - Application for submission of details to comply with conditions 4 and 17 of planning consent F/2005/3962.4. Noise attenuation scheme.17.Timetable for the demolition of office block. (Approved 20/04/2010)

C/2010/0529 - Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent F/2005/3962:- 5 7 8 9. Submission of details of surface water drainage works.- 14. Formation of vehicular access and visibility splays. (Approved 20/04/2010)

F/2008/0308 - Application for renewal of planning consent O/2003/0586 for a further 3 years for the extension to factory building residential development (14 dwellings) and ancillary development. (Refused: 25/06/2008)

RM/2007/0882 -Reserved Matters Application on Outline consent O/2003/0586 for the proposed erection of 14 x 2 bedroom dwellings with associated parking and access. (External appearance layout landscaping and scale to be considered). (Withdrawn 29/01/2009)

RM/2007/0881 - Reserved Matters on Outline application O/2003/0586 for the erection of 14 x 2 bedroom dwellings with associated parking and access. (Withdrawn 29/01/2009)

F/2006/9217 - Proposed erection of 14 two bedroom dwellings with associated parking (Withdrawn 25/01/2007)

F/2005/3962 - Proposed extension to factory buildings and ancillary works. (Approved 29/04/2005) (**Officers Note:** Condition 10 required the retention of the pond)

O/2003/0586 - Outline application for the extension to factory building residential development (14 dwellings) and ancillary development (Approved 13/04/2004)

O/2003/8931- Outline application for the proposed residential redevelopment (approximately 50 dwellings) of site with ancillary works and replacement factory building (Refused 26/08/2003. Appeal withdrawn)

F/1998/67553 - Proposed Erection Of Building For B8 Storage Use (Renewal Of Approval 40894) (Approved 29/07/1998)
 F/1996/64830 - Proposed Single Storey Extension To Industrial Building For B8 (Storage Use) (Approved 03/04/1997)

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area – 2.6 ha / 1.34 ha (within settlement boundary)
 Existing Units – 0
 Proposed Units - 38
 No of bedrooms - 133
 Proposed density (dwellings per hectare) 14.6 / 28.3 (within settlement boundary)
 Proposed density (habitable rooms per hectare) 91.9 / 178.3 (within settlement boundary)
 Existing density (dwellings per hectare) N/A
 Existing density (habitable rooms per hectare) N/A
 No of affordable: 6 (shared ownership)
 Previous land use: Mixed B1/B2/B8
 Public Open Space: circa 1ha
 Existing car parking: N/A
 Proposed car parking: 113

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

<p>Swallowfield Parish Council</p>	<p>Objects for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a sustainable location • Flooding and drainage. Does not believe the data is reliable or accurate, supports the views of the FRG • Unreliability of traffic data • Inadequate provision has been made for cars • Excessive in terms of scale and the density • Lack of village integration (believes that there should be better links to the village) • Unacceptable transition between settlement and countryside • Parking in front of affordable housing is out of keeping with village, units should be integrated • Ecological data is out of date and therefore not reliable • Use of Management Company to maintain open space and balancing ponds is unacceptable. Believe this should be a commuted sum and run by Parish or WBC • No suitable SANG facility exists within the necessary distance from Swallowfield.
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Highways	<p>Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of visitor/unallocated parking within the affordable housing parking courts is sufficient • The provision for the 32 private houses does not satisfy the council's recommended provision; only 6 spaces have been provided. • Does not however, consider that the reduced level of formal dedicated visitor/unassigned parking spaces will lead to a highway safety issue. The principal roadway is to be 5.5m wide which is wide enough to safely accommodate an element of on street parking. Furthermore, many of the properties could accommodate three cars parked in front of the garages. <p>Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Transport Statement includes an evaluation of the accessibility of the application site by walking, cycling and public transport provision to local facilities. Whilst the site is within a reasonable walking distance of the village; the village facilities are very limited with a small general store, post office, a pub and a doctors' surgery. There are no primary or secondary schools within convenient walking distance and employment opportunities in the area are also limited. Additional retail facilities/services in a reasonable cycle distance such as at Spencers Wood are generally of a similar nature to those available in the village. The village is served by bus services 72, 82 & 82K, however, the frequency/timing and choice of destinations of these services does not provide a good level of provision. • Whilst footway improvements are proposed, the scope of the improvements is restricted by land ownership. Furthermore, the existing provision in the vicinity of the site and in village is in the main narrow and will not enable all types of pedestrians or wheelchair users to comfortably use these routes. The proposal does not include any measures to improve cycling or public transport facilities/provision. Swallowfield Street is for the most part unlit, as are other roads in the vicinity of the site; this will provide a further discouragement to walking and cycling especially given the distances involved. Therefore concerned that the proposal will result in an unacceptable level of car travel/dependence. (Officers note: The applicants transport assessment compares the

	<p>predicted traffic generation of the residential development with the existing uses. This resulted in an estimated 7 – 10 additional movements per hour (or one additional vehicle every 6 – 9 minutes). By comparing the traffic generation of the proposed use with the potential traffic generation of the extant uses on the site the report concluded that residential development of the site is likely to result in a small reduction in vehicle trips in the morning and evening peak hours and approximately 100 fewer vehicle trips over the course of a 12 hour day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If minded to recommend approval of this application the Section 106 Agreement should secure the following off-site works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I) A 2m wide footway fronting the application site and adjoining Swallowfield Street II) A new section of footway to be constructed along Swallowfield Street near the junction with Basingstoke Road as indicated on drawing No. ITB9178 Rev D entitled Proposed Footway Improvements <p>(Officers note: A S106 agreement is being prepared which secures the footway construction)</p> <p>(Conditions 10, 11, 12,18 apply)</p>
Affordable Housing	Affordable housing is 40% of total, of which 6 units are being provided on-site and remaining 25% being provided as a commuted which will need to be reflected in a Section 106 agreement.
Policy	<p><i>Development Limits</i></p> <p>All of the proposed dwellings are within the development limit boundary of Swallowfield. (Officers note: This issue was subject of pre-application discussion where the applicants previously proposed 3 units outside the settlement)</p> <p>Swallowfield is designated under Core Strategy policy CP9 as a Limited Development Location. Under Core Strategy policy CP17, those sites within Limited Development Locations should not generally exceed 25 dwellings. The proposed quantum of 38 houses on this site is therefore significantly more than the amount envisaged within Swallowfield set within the Core Strategy. Therefore the case officer will need to take into consideration further assessments of the character, design and density assessments regarding the layout in</p>

order to be able to justify this number of dwellings in a Limited Development Location.

CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths SPA

The site lies within 5km linear of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area. The development proposal is therefore subject to Core Strategy policy CP8. In order to accord with this policy, the case officer will have to ensure that the applicant makes a SANG provision at the Clare's Green Field site, if the application is minded for approval. The overall SANG provision that the applicant should be making is approximately 0.792ha. (**Officer Note: Addressed in Section 106 agreement**)

Flooding

There were originally some concerns regarding flooding considering the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment highlighted the site as being within flood zone 3a. However, Council has received a copy of the hydraulic modelling work which shows that the site is in flood zone 1. The hydraulic modelling has been approved by the Environment Agency and therefore, on the basis of the information submitted, the planning policy team are satisfied that the site is not at a high risk of flooding.

Loss of Employment Land to Residential

Winkworth Machinery vacated the Willowtree Works site in August 2014 and have now re-located to a new site 10 miles away in Basingstoke. The buildings on the site are therefore now vacant, but it is still classified as consisting of 4,000sqm of B1, B2 and B8 land uses. The site is therefore subject to Core Strategy policy CP15, which states that:

Any proposed changes of use from B1, B2 and B8 should not lead to an overall net loss of floorspace in B Use within the Borough.

While recognising that the application if approved would contribute to the Borough's housing supply, the October 2014 SHLAA demonstrates that the Council has a 5.4 year housing land supply which is equivalent to a surplus of 460 dwellings. The calculation for the Council's five year land supply figure includes a 20% buffer in light of MDD Inspector's conclusions that we had a persistent record of under delivery. The October 2014 SHLAA also shows that the expected 5 year supply at April 2015 will be 5.6 years - surplus of 829 dwellings.

In light of the comments above in relation to CP15, the additional housing proposed by this application should be weighed against the loss of employment land.

	<p><i>CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction and CC05 – Renewable energy and decentralised networks</i></p> <p>Policy CC04 of the MDD states that:</p> <p>Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that seek to deliver high quality sustainability designed and constructed developments</p> <p>Policy CC05 of the MDD states:</p> <p>Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that deliver a minimum 10% reduction in carbon emissions through renewable energy or low carbon technology where the development is for:</p> <p>a) Schemes of more than 10 dwellings</p> <p>The submitted Energy Statement on page 24 states that Code Level 4 will be achieved by the housing development and that a 10.88% saving in carbon emissions will be provided by renewables. On page 16 of the submitted Sustainability Statement, the applicant states that will achieve the internal potable water consumption targets of 105 litres or less per person per day (this was based on 39 units, the scheme has subsequently been reduced to 38). Therefore the proposed development is in accordance with policies CC04 and CC05.</p>
Thames Water	<p><i>Waste Comment</i> Advises no objections in terms of sewer capacity</p> <p><i>Water Comments</i> Advises no objections in terms of water infrastructure capacity.</p> <p>Recommends the following informative be attached to this planning permission.</p> <p>“Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx. 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development. (Informative)”</p> <p>Supplementary Comments</p> <p>Peak flow calculations provided by the developer indicate that the development will result in a net reduction in peak flows, providing betterment to the receiving foul sewer</p>

	<p>network.</p> <p>Officer comment: A meeting to discuss these issues took place between Thames Water and local residents / Parish Council on 24th October 2014. During that meeting residents expressed the view that the data TW is relying on is inaccurate. TW maintains no objections.</p>
<p>Drainage Consultant (WSP)</p>	<p>Hydraulic Modelling Scope The revised modelling undertaken by Odyssey Markides appears to have been undertaken in accordance with the agreed scope. The modelling includes extension of the catchment to take greater account of flows potentially presented to the site from the south and to include modelling of a wider variety of conditions to test the sensitivity of the model results.</p> <p>Further to a meeting with Odyssey Markides on the 3rd February they have also included the significant elements of the site drainage network that will convey surface water through the site (from off-site areas to the south).</p> <p>Assessment of Model Results The modelling demonstrates that the proposed development will not exacerbate flood risk to neighbouring properties. The sensitivity testing demonstrates that the results are largely insensitive to variations in hydraulic model parameters (urban / rural catchment type) (fluctuations of +/- 4 cm) and as such can be considered robust. The scale of change in flood levels as a result of the proposed development is effectively measured in millimetres and is therefore considered to be well within the confidence that can be associated with such a hydraulic model and the base data used to construct it.</p> <p>On the basis of this information WSP recommends approval of the application subject to the following condition(s): The development shall be delivered in accordance with the approved FRA and supplementary Flood Flow hydraulic analysis detailed/ documented in the Odyssey Markides Technical Note dated 6th February 2015. No development shall take place until full details of the Drainage System(s) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full details of all phasing and/or measures proposed to mitigate risks of flooding and/or pollution incidents arising to receiving watercourses/bodies or neighbouring development throughout construction.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstration of where and how surface water attenuation and infiltration shall be provided across the site and that the attenuation features are adequately sized to serve the development (i.e. will not flood any of the proposed dwellings or neighbouring development) for all events up to the 1 in 100 year storm plus allowances for the effects of climate change, taking account of achievable discharge rates over the lifetime of the development. ■ Demonstration that the design of the drainage system accounts for the likely impacts of local groundwater levels (including seasonal variation), climate change and changes in impermeable area, over the design life of the development. ■ Demonstration that the proposed development will not exacerbate the risk of surface water flooding off-site for all surface water flood events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event. ■ Full details of all components of the proposed drainage system including source control, conveyance, storage, flow control and discharge. Details shall include dimension, locations, reference to storm simulation files, gradients, invert and cover levels and drawings as appropriate. This shall be identified for all catchments. ■ Full details of water quality treatment components of the proposed drainage strategy. Details of component(s) including type, dimension, locations, capacity, maintenance requirements and frequency, gradients, invert and cover levels and drawings as appropriate. This shall be identified for all catchments. ■ Full details of the maintenance and/or adoption proposals /agreements for the development covering every aspect of the proposed drainage system including a schedule of inspections and issue of an annual inspection report. <p>Conditions are recommended (conditions 23-27)</p>
Countryside Officer	<p>Has considered the implications of this application against EC Habitats Directive 1992 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. It is considered that subject to the application of the following conditions the actions authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the great crested newts or bats concerned at a Favourable Conservation Status in their natural range.</p>

	<p>The mitigation and enhancement measures contained within the submitted Ecological Assessment – 5516.EcoAss.vf1 (Ecology Solutions, October 2014) shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority (Condition 22)</p> <p>Advises that an on-site play area is not required and the 39 dwellings would only generate a policy requirement for 234m² (38 x 2.4/1000 x 0.25ha). The Wokingham Borough Council Open Space, Sport & Recreation Facilities Strategy (Adopted 28th November 2013) states that the minimum acceptable size for a children’s play area is 600m² (page 16) other than in exceptional circumstances. This size is also below the standard FIT guidance on minimum size of facility (400m²)</p> <p>Consequently the developer will need to agree to either the provision on site of a 600m² children’s play area (which would be controlled in the s106 or payment of the PAN contribution for children’s play (which is currently missing from the draft s106. Officer note: This aspect is subject of further discussion and an update will be given.</p>
Natural England	<p>Assume that the proposals are meeting the requirement of that plan (e.g. with regard to Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) contributions) and provided that there is sufficient capacity at Clare’s Green SANG. If the applicant is complying with this Strategy, then Natural England do not object to this application. (Section 106)</p>
Trees and Landscape	<p>The Landscape Architect has raised no objections subject to conditions and submission of an amended landscape plan to respond to a number of issues which have been discussed with the applicant. An amended plan has been received and is subject of consultation. An update will be given at Committee (Conditions 4,5,6,22)</p>
Environment Agency	<p>No objections subject to conditions. Note: The EA has been re-consulted as a result of subsequent amendments to the drainage strategy and comments will be reported to the Committee in the update sheet. However, if not, approval is recommended subject to no objection being received.</p>
Berkshire Archaeology	<p>No objection subject to condition to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be approved by the Local Planning Authority. (Condition 16)</p>

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REPRESENTATIONS

Officer note on consultation: Following ongoing negotiations with the Councils Drainage consultants (WSP) further hydrological work has been undertaken by the applicant. As a number of residents have commented on these issues a further period of consultation has been undertaken in order to allow residents to express their views. In addition minor changes and clarification of garden lengths have been submitted by the applicant. This further period of consultation is in addition to previous periods undertaken on receipt of the application and as a result of receipt of earlier amended details which reduced the number of units proposed from 39 to 38 no. dwellings. Any additional comments and issues raised after completion of this report will summarised in the Members update.

Ward Members	Concerns expressed about development principle and drainage of the site.
Neighbour comments	<p>45 letters of comment or objection were received at the time of writing. The following is a summary of the material planning issues raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle of development (see paras 1-9) • Unacceptable impact on character / locality (see paras 19-35) • Too high a density (see paras 19-35) • No construction management plan has been submitted with the application. Without this there will be risks during construction (see condition 7 – hours of construction and condition 10 - construction management) • More traffic on the junction of Swallowfield Street and the B3349 increasing risk (see para 50) • Insufficient car parking is being provided given the unsustainable location, this will result in on-street parking (see para 58) • Disturbance of wildlife (see para 64) • Culverting of ditches could threaten the Rivers Blackwater and Loddon (see para 54 onwards) • The SUD proposal does not sound well thought out, the siting of a deciduous willow tree beside the pond will not aid the ecological balance within the pond. (see para 54 onwards) • There is an existing pond on site, (which residents suggest has been in existence for over 100 years) and provides drainage from adjoining properties through and across the site. The loss of this pond without appropriate compensatory measures will result in localised flood risk (see para 54 onwards) • Foul Drainage: During periods of heavy or prolonged rainfall, the sewers in The Street and Swallowfield

	<p>Street back up and overflow from the manholes in the street. The problem is caused by too many storm water drains being connected to the foul sewage system, which overwhelms the pumping station capacity (see para 54 onwards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existing foul water system cannot cope with the additional activity (see para 54 onwards) • the proposed balancing pond will overflow during spells of extreme weather and residential properties will be put at risk (design standards are falling below rainfall levels) (see para 54 onwards) • the additional roof area will exacerbate problems (see para 54 onwards) • culverting of open-ditches is unacceptable (see para 54 onwards) • a performance bond is suggested were the developers calculations to prove inaccurate (see para 54 onwards) • Play area and open space liable to flood (see para 54 onwards) • The local infrastructure (schools, medical facilities, village shop, bus services etc. cannot handle the additional development) (see para 65) • The dual intention to establish parkland and a wildflower hay meadow on the parcel of amenity land demonstrates a lack of understanding of these features (see para 64) • New householders may seek to remove trees (see conditions 4-6) <p>Officer note: Any further comments received as a result of the further period of consultation will be reported in the Member's update</p>
Swallowfield Flood Resilience group	<p>Officer Note: A meeting took place on 9th March 2015 as part of ongoing discussions between the FRG, WBC and WSP as advisors to WBC. A summary of this and further comments received is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.</p>

APPLICANTS POINTS

The Applicants points in support of the application are summarised in Appendix 2 of this report

PLANNING POLICY

National policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Policy (NPPG)

Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework

Core Strategy

- CP1 – Sustainable development
- CP2 – Inclusive communities
- CP3 – General Principle for development
- CP4 – Infrastructure Requirements
- CP5 – Housing mix, density and affordability
- CP6 – Managing Travel Demand
- CP7 – Biodiversity
- CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
- CP9 – Scale and location of development proposals
- CP10 – Improvements to Strategic Transport Network
- CP11 – Development outside settlement limits
- CP17 – Housing delivery

Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Document

Cross Cutting Policies

- CC01 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CC02 – Development Limits
- CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
- CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC05 – Renewable energy and decentralised energy networks
- CC06 – Noise
- CC07 – Parking
- CC09 – Development and Flood Risk
- CC10 – Sustainable Drainage

Topic Based Policies

- TB05 – Housing Mix
- TB07 - Internal Space Standards
- TB09 – Residential Development for vulnerable groups
- TB21 – Landscape Character
- TB23 – Biodiversity and development

Other guidance

- Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Sections 4 and 8)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Swallowfield Village Design Statement SPD
- Planning Advice Note (Infrastructure Impact Mitigation Contributions for New Development)

PLANNING ISSUES

APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

1) This is a full application and proposes redevelopment of site to provide 38 dwellings including affordable housing, hard and soft landscaping, open space, parking provision and associated infrastructure. The principle means of access is via the existing main access onto Swallowfield Street with six dwellings served by two independent accesses, also from Swallowfield Street.

2) The developed part of the site is within Swallowfield which identified in Policy CP9 of the adopted Core Strategy as a Limited Development Location where development is acceptable in principle. Policy CP17 states that in Limited Development Locations where sites should generally not exceed 25 dwellings. Limited development locations are those containing a basic range of services and facilities and are physically and socially cohesive. Within the development limits of these settlements, limited development would be acceptable.

3) A number of factors have influenced the recommendation to approve this development. Firstly, the NPPF aims, within the context of a presumption in favour of sustainable development, to boost significantly the supply of housing. It is considered that no harms have been identified to justify refusal purely because the number of dwellings exceeds the number generally identified under Policy CP17.

4) The NPPF promotes sustainable development, which has economic, social and environmental dimensions. Core Strategy policy assumes that Swallowfield has a degree of sustainability since otherwise it would follow that no development would be allowed. It must be concluded that since Policy CP17 states 'generally' that circumstances can apply where this level of development can be exceeded.

5) Concerns have been expressed about the sustainability of the site in terms of reliance on the private car. In the context that Swallowfield has been identified for modest development and taking into account the comparative traffic generation position between the existing and proposed uses, it is considered that the proposed development is appropriate. The applicant has advised that the previous owner did not operate the site at full capacity and that none of the staff lived locally, with many commuting from the Reading area. The site does not have any restrictive conditions and could be occupied by one or a number of businesses over which there would be limited control. The S106 will secure infrastructure and service contributions which will mitigate against the impacts of the development. On balance, it is concluded that the development is acceptable in social sustainability terms.

6) The site is partly located within the Limited Settlement of Swallowfield and partly in the countryside outside of the settlement. However, the built development (brownfield site) is located wholly within the settlement. The countryside area is devoted to access, open space balancing ponds and children's play space. The development uses an existing access and modified access road in the countryside. The impact on countryside is therefore not considered to be significant.

7) The NPPF states a presumption in favour of brownfield land. This is a site that is already extensively developed by large buildings and substantial areas of hard standing. There is a footprint of approximately 4000 sq metres of existing buildings and 7250 sq metres of hardstanding. This compares with a footprint of 3625 sq metres and 4880 sq metres proposed in the development. There is therefore a betterment in terms of the openness of the site and the opportunities for environmental improvement.

8) Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for residential development providing a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes. In the context that a site is best developed comprehensively and that the development provides a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures, it is considered that the overall approach is appropriate to the comprehensive development of the site.

9) On the basis of the above it is concluded that the development is acceptable in principle.

10) The adopted Core Strategy policy CP3 provides general principles for all development, with the primary remit that development should be appropriate in terms of scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

11) The adopted Borough Design Guide provides guidance for residential schemes under Section 4 and development in rural locations and settlement edge in Section 8. Criterion RD9 of the Borough Design Guide states that the location, siting and design of new development on the edge of settlements must be carefully designed to:

- Create an edge to the built up area with a character that relates to the local pattern; and
- Incorporate soft landscape to soften the edge of settlements and to help integrate new housing into its rural setting.

12) The area of the site outside the settlement (incorporating the open space, structural landscape, ponds and children's play area falls to be determined within the remit of Core Strategy Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy which states that development outside defined settlement boundaries will be strictly controlled. Where acceptable in principle the countryside can accommodate some forms of development without detriment provided that the development type, form and design are sensitive to the location. The NPPF indicates that Local Planning Authorities should seek to protect the intrinsic beauty of countryside locations.

13) The NPPF requires that proposed dwellings should be well integrated with, and complement local buildings in relation to scale, density, layout and access. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy outlines that development should be appropriate to the surrounding street scene and without detriment to the amenity of neighbouring residents. Planning policy overall encourages character led development. The Borough Design Guide provides substantial advice on layout best practice. It is considered that the development is acceptable under both local design policy and guidance

Housing Land Supply

14) While recognising that the application if approved would contribute to the Borough's housing supply, the October 2014 SHLAA demonstrates that the Council has a 5.4 year housing land supply which is equivalent to a surplus of 460 dwellings. The calculation for the Council's five year land supply figure includes a 20% buffer in light of MDD Inspector's conclusions that we had a persistent record of under delivery. The October 2014 SHLAA also shows that the expected 5 year supply at April 2015 will be 5.6 years - surplus of 829 dwellings. The site is not allocated for housing. The proposal is

therefore a windfall development and should be balanced against the loss of employment and other material issues

Loss of employment

15) Winkworth Machinery vacated the Willowtree Works site in August 2014 and has now re-located to a new site 10 miles away in Basingstoke. The buildings on the site are therefore now vacant, but it is still classified as consisting of 4,000sqm of B1, B2 and B8 land uses. The site is therefore subject to Core Strategy policy CP15, which states that:

16) Any proposed changes of use from B1, B2 and B8 should not lead to an overall net loss of floorspace in B Use within the Borough. Provision will be made for a range of sizes, types, quality and locations of premises and sites in order meet incubator/start up, move on, expansion and investment accommodation needs and having regard to the needs of specific sectors of the business community.

17) Paragraph 4.70 to policy CP15 of the Core Strategy refers to an Employment Land Study (2005) which sets out that the supply of floor space for industry and warehousing needs to increase by 51,000sqm to meet forecast B use growth in the Borough over the Plan period to 2026.

18) The Employment Land Monitoring Report for April 2013 – March 2014 demonstrates that there has been a net gain of 3,649 sqm of Class B use floor space in the Borough since 1st April 2006. The report also shows that the borough has 88,099m² of extant permissions for B use floorspace this monitoring year which could be completed in the next six years based on historic completion rates, but the likelihood of this rate of completion being realised is uncertain due to the recent recession. Therefore if the proposal is to be given permission; this would lead to a loss of 4,000sqm of employment land floorspace and would therefore lead to an overall net loss of B use floorspace. Furthermore, the loss of employment land at the Willow Tree Works site would lead to a loss in the range of sizes, types and locations of B use premises. Therefore the proposed change of the Willow Tree Works site to residential would contravene policy CP15.

19) The Council however recognises that the site has been widely marketed since the end of 2013 as illustrated by the submitted marketing strategy from Haslams written in April 2014. This report shows that there has been no interest in the site from alternative occupiers. It is therefore concluded that there is no realistic prospect for re-use for employment purposes.

20) Policy CP15 of the Core Strategy seeks most employment being concentrated in the Core Employment Areas. Other sites, such as the application site, are seen as having limited scope for expansion. The site currently has 4,000sqm of Class B1, B2 and B8 land uses. The site could be- used for these purposes. The planning history of the site suggests that the uses are relatively unrestricted. This is a relevant consideration when assessing the relative sustainability of the existing and proposed uses.

Housing mix

21) The proposal for 38 dwellings incorporates the following mix:

- 5 x 2 bed dwellings
- 15 x 3 bed dwellings

- 18 x 4+ bed dwellings

22) This incorporates several different house types to cater for a range of household sizes. It includes the following affordable housing dwellings

- 4 x 2 bed dwellings
- 2 x 3 bed dwellings

23) The Affordable Housing Officer is satisfied that the mix above allows for adequate housing to meet local need and as such is acceptable together with an off-site contribution to reflect the 40% requirement.

Impact on the character of the area

24) The site occupies an edge of village location and its current authorised use is general industry. The long term occupiers have recently vacated the site and have relocated to Basingstoke. The distance they have moved is 10.18 miles door to door.

25) The new site is a large commercial industrial park close to the M3 & A33 that is fully serviced and accessible for heavy industrial businesses with room to expand and all under 1 roof. Their new site is less than 5 minutes from the mainline station to London Waterloo.

26) The existing site is long established and in that sense is a part of the character of the area. However, the prevailing character of this part of the village is residential and in this regard residential re-use is considered to be appropriate in principle.

27) The density of the development (excluding the open space which is regarded as structural landscaping and would normally be excluded from calculations and is also outside the settlement) is 28dph. This is slightly higher than the village as a whole, which the applicants have calculated as between 10 and 21dph. However, density alone is not a good basis on which to judge the impact of a development in terms of its overall impact or character. This is recognised in criterion R10 of the Borough Design Guide which comments that, of itself, density does not help with assessing whether a proposal will fit into a place since it takes no account of the size of each dwelling. In practice a block of flats or a single dwelling can have a similar floorspace and create a similar scale building, although the density could be very different.

28) This development must be seen in the context of the NPPF which encourages the efficient use of land and in this respect, the site is brownfield land which comprises a series of large scale existing buildings and substantial hard surfacing. The existing site coverage in terms of buildings and hard surface is 43% which compares with 32% for the proposed development. Their replacement of large buildings will also allow for long views through and across the site and opportunities for new planting. In this regard there is a significant betterment.

29) A useful comparison would be the target density for the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) of 30-35dph much of which will be built on greenfield sites adjoining existing settlements. This is also a relevant consideration in terms of best use of brownfield land. It is also material that due to substantial screening around much of the site that there is a significant level of self-containment.

Scale Layout and Design

30) The layout takes a modern form. The development responds to the need to contain dwellings within the settlement area and to the need to retain trees and other mature landscape.

31) The proposed dwellings are of traditional scale using materials reflective of those found in the village. The applicant's *Design and Access Statement* sets out how the detailed design has been approached.

32) The developer explains that development will provide a sense of local character and identity relevant to its setting and location to Swallowfield Village.

33) General Key features identified include:

- Visually 'strong' and varying roof forms with hipped roofs, cropped gable roofs and gable ends.
- Varying roof finishes, clay plain tiles and natural slates.
- Dormer windows with lower roof eaves heights.
- 'Rich' detailing of eaves, dormers, windows, doors and porches.
- Window head and sill detailing.
- Variety of external materials to be found on one house, brick, tile hanging and render surfaces.
- Soft red/orange clay face brick to elevations with contrasting decorative face brick 'banding'.
- Large chimneys in prominent locations throughout the development.
- Houses orientated to overlook Open Space.

34) The use of these local architectural features and materials will reinforce the richness of detail and thus the quality of the development.

35) There have been several comments by the Parish Council and others on the character of the affordable units fronting Swallowfield Street. The applicants state that it is proposed that the dwellings should follow the siting of the existing houses to this road thereby supporting the character of buildings along the historic linear routes through Swallowfield Village.

36) The cottages are therefore set well back from the highway edge to retain the existing building line (there is an administrative block currently on this frontage albeit partially hidden by trees).

37) The cottages are set as pairs to increase their 'footprint' area and mass to replicate the size of the surrounding existing houses. The introduction of brick faced dormer windows with a lower roof eaves level to these dwellings duplicates a typical Swallowfield village detail which additionally provides the benefit of reducing the proposed ridge heights to that of the existing two storey building facing Swallowfield Street, and reduces its overall visual impact from the street scene. Comments have been made about the communal car parking spaces. It is noted that there is a group of four cottages (Russell Cottages – which are pictured on page 8 of the Swallowfield Village Design Statement SPD) just to the east along Swallowfield Street which have an extensive level of hard-standing to the frontage. As such it would be extremely difficult to defend a refusal based on harm to the character of the village.

38) At the entrance to the site the developer is retaining a mature Oak tree with open space. They consider that this creates an appropriate assimilation of the housing with the open countryside; in particular, it creates a fitting sense of arrival to the village when approaching from the west along Swallowfield Street. They have also sought to ensure that all housing fronts the open space in the western half of the site. This again allows for a suitable transition from open countryside to built form. The retention of the open land allows for a transition to the more natural countryside beyond. This approach is considered to be appropriate in terms of the guidance in criterion RD9 of the Borough Design Guide.

39) Various roof materials of natural slate and clay plain tiles are proposed, and these are indicated on the site plan. In addition areas of tile hanging and rendered elevations have been introduced as identified by the village character assessment to some of the houses, which have been shown on the street elevations.

40) Where the proposed houses are in proximity to the surrounding existing houses, the Design and Access Statement confirms that care has been taken to introduce gable end walls with cropped or hipped roofs to reduce the visual height and additional to ensure that no first floor windows are introduced which might introduce material overlooking.

Impact on the countryside

41) The western part of the site is located within the designated countryside outside of the settlement limit. This part incorporates the open space for the site, utilising land already in open use and an existing access. This also includes a swale, balancing ponds and a children's play area. These are considered appropriate uses and will maintain the open character of the countryside. As such no conflict with Core Strategy Policy CP11 is considered to arise.

Amenity space and internal space standards

42) The Borough Design Guide establishes requirements for private amenity space. Amenity space should generally have a 'roughly rectangular shape' and good access to sunlight, with usable garden of at least 11 metres in depth. The development follows this approach and it is considered that an appropriate level of amenity space is proposed, with some dwellings substantially exceeding the minimum standard. Coupled with the substantial area of open space which is within two or three minutes' walk of all properties, it is considered that this element of the proposals is acceptable. **Officer note:** Drawing 2521-24F shows garden dimensions.

43) MDD policy TB07 seeks to achieve minimum internal space standards in new dwellings. This requirement is reflected in the guidance in Section 4 of the Borough Design Guide. These standards have been met or exceeded on all units including the affordable units.

Residential amenities

44) The Borough Design Guide sets out minimum recommended separation distances between dwellings in order to preserve amenity and character. The recommended distances are as follows:

- Front to front across street 10m
- Rear to rear of dwellings 22m
- Flank wall to boundary 1m
- Flank wall to rear of dwelling 12m

45) All the dwellings meet or exceed this standard. Residents adjoining the site have raised issues of potential loss of privacy, particularly if existing screening and/or fences were to be removed. There have been some references to ownership of screening (boundary dispute). Whilst this is not a matter for consideration by the Council, it is worth commenting that irrespective of this, there is sufficient distance between properties to retain privacy and also to provide additional intervening screening if required and the matter can be dealt with by conditions covering both boundary treatment and retention of and new planting.

Noise Disturbance and other Environmental Health considerations

46) The proposals are unlikely to have any significant impact on the existing residential properties with regards to noise and disturbance. It is worth commenting that the site enjoys a relatively unrestricted General Industrial Use meaning that the potential for noise and disturbance could be that much greater were it occupied by another or several businesses.

47) The proposed properties are not considered to cause any significant or unusual impacts compared to other residential developments. If any out of the ordinary noise arose, for instance during construction, this would be separately controlled by Environmental Health legislation. Impacts in terms of construction can be controlled by an hours and days of construction and construction management conditions.

Land affected by contamination

48) The proposal site has been occupied by a number of commercial and industrial land uses including a depot and engineering works. Such land uses have the potential to cause significant contamination at the site. The proposed end use is sensitive in nature being residential with private gardens. In accordance with Paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 the Local Planning Authority must be satisfied that the land will be suitable for this proposed new use.

49) A contamination risk assessment including a Phase 1 Desk Study and Preliminary Phase 2 Site Investigation has been carried out and submitted as part of the application (Report Ref: J12151/c01/DB dated 11th February 2013 by Wilson & Bailey Geotechnical & Environmental).

50) The report presents a basic conceptual site model which identifies that potential pollutant linkages may exist on site which could present a risk to controlled water resources and current/proposed end users. A preliminary intrusive investigation comprising 11 windowless sample boreholes and 6 hand dug pits was undertaken and samples submitted for a range of chemical analysis. Olfactory evidence of hydrocarbon contamination was observed in soils during the investigation and exceedances of the residential guideline values were recorded in several locations. The report recommends that further detailed instructive investigation is undertaken following demolition of the existing buildings to further delineate the hydrocarbon contamination encountered and to investigate areas not previously investigated. Where contamination is found the report states that this would need to be remediated. Gas monitoring wells were installed in 6 locations on site but that these had not been monitored at the time the report was written. No specific further works in this regard have been mentioned and no further submissions made.

51) The Councils' Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that the applicant has made

a sufficient preliminary assessment of the risks posed by contamination at the site and is aware of the level of works and potential costs associated with making the site fit for the proposed end use. Further intrusive investigation with soil sampling, chemical testing and gas monitoring is required and it is likely that remediation will be necessary. Conditions and informatives are advised and are included in the Recommendation.

Air quality

52) Having regard to the nature of the proposal the Environment Health Officer not consider it necessary for a detailed air quality impact assessment to be undertaken (the number of dwellings proposed and predicted traffic impact are below the threshold that would trigger the need for assessment).

53) The demolition and construction phases are likely to give rise to significant dust and particulate generation. No information has been provided in this regard. In accordance with Wokingham Borough Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD the proposal would require a Construction Environmental Management Plan, and the demolition and construction phase air quality mitigation, could be managed in this plan. A Condition is advised and is included in the Recommendation.

Light

54) External lighting has the potential to cause light nuisance and affect the amenity of neighbours. Details of external lighting have not been submitted with the application. The Environmental Health Officer has recommended inclusion of a condition. The proposal is a residential scheme with the majority of the units being private. A condition of this nature is unusual and potentially onerous since it would potentially apply to each individual household. The only other envisaged form of lighting is street lights which is generally a matter for the Highway Authority. As such no condition is recommended.

Access and movement

55) These matters have been subject of ongoing discussions with the applicant during the life of the application and a series of amendments were made to the layout.

56) A central issue of this proposal is the sustainability of the site. In traffic terms both the existing and proposed uses produce comparable traffic generation. The applicant compared the predicted traffic generation of the residential development with the traffic survey results of the existing site access and estimated that the proposed development will result in a small amount of additional traffic over and above that generated by the previous occupier. The applicant suggests that this will equate to approximately 7 – 10 additional movements per hour (or one additional vehicle every 6 – 9 minutes). The applicant confirms that in discussion with the former occupiers, advice was given that the majority of employees did not come from the Village (it was suggested that most came from the Reading area) meaning that the existing use was of itself an unsustainable activity which must be given weight in determination of this application, as must the fall-back position that the site could be re-occupied by industrial uses at some point in the future. .

57) The Core Strategy identifies Swallowfield as a Limited Settlement where development of sites should not generally exceed 25 dwellings. In identifying this level of development there would have been an assumption of a level of sustainability. It is

also relevant that Policy CP17 refers to 'sites' not a finite number of additional dwellings within the Village or on any one site

58) The previously refused renewal of the outline planning permission envisaged a mixed development both retaining and extending the employment development in addition to 14no new dwellings (F/2008/0308). Currently the entire site is now subject of redevelopment. The previous decision precedes the NPPF and the adoption of the Core Strategy and MDD Local Plan. This is a brownfield site, The NPPF expects previously developed land to be used in an efficient and effective manner.

Flood risk, Drainage and Water

59) It is clear that this remains a major concern for local residents and this has been strongly expressed in most of the letters of representation and in a major report from the Swallowfield Flood Resilience Group (SFRG). Examination of the planning history also indicates that this has been an ongoing concern for many years, although clearly the recent flood events have provided further focus on this matter which, quite rightly, is a major consideration in determination of this application.

60)The applicants have responded to the deferral and to ongoing concerns expressed by residents by undertaking full hydrodynamic modelling of all surface water routes on site for both the pre and post development levels to be submitted and considered by the Council's drainage consultants, WSP. The SFRG has been kept fully informed of ongoing discussions and both the applicants report and WSPs conclusions have been made available to them. A meeting held between the parties on 9th March 2015. Following this meeting SFRG were invited to submit a summary statement of their position. This is set out in full in Appendix 1

61) Both the Environment Agency and Thames Water have raised no objection in principle. In determining this application it remains the position that in order to justify refusal it would need to be demonstrated that the development is not capable of managing the risk of flooding.

62)Since the item was deferred, the matter has been the subject of extensive negotiation with the applicant and further discussion with the FRG. WSP has considered the full hydrodynamic modelling of all surface water routes on site for both the pre and post development. WSP concludes that the revised modelling undertaken by Odyssey Markides appears to have been undertaken in accordance with the agreed scope. The modelling includes extension of the catchment to take greater account of flows potentially presented to the site from the south and to include modelling of a wider variety of conditions to test the sensitivity of the model results. and has no objections and recommends a number of conditions (Conditions 23-27)

Car parking

63)The amount of visitor/unallocated parking within the affordable housing parking courts is sufficient. The provision for the 32 private houses does not satisfy the council's recommended provision; only 6 spaces have been provided. However, it is not considered that the reduced level of formal dedicated visitor/unassigned parking spaces will lead to a highway safety issue. The principal roadway is to be 5.5m wide which is wide enough to safely accommodate an element of on street parking. Furthermore, many of the properties could accommodate three cars parked in front of the garages. Overall, the level of car parking proposed is appropriate in terms of the

standards set out in the MDD Local Plan. Conditions are included in the Recommendation to ensure provision and retention of car parking. (Conditions 11,12,18)

Sustainable Design and Construction

64) Core Strategy Policy CP1 and the MDD Local Plan policy CC05 requires new development to contribute towards the goal of achieving zero carbon development by including on-site renewable energy features and minimising energy and water consumption. These requirements are amplified in the Council's adopted Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and accompanying Developer's Guide.

65) The applicants Design and Access Statement consider Energy Efficiency in Section 18. This confirms the following design philosophy:

- The orientation of the houses has been informed by the shape of the site and the access from Swallowfield Street. However, all the principal habitable rooms have been provided with windows, the position and proportions of which have been designed to maximise both solar gain and natural light to penetrate into these rooms.
- The houses will be constructed to meet the thermal standards of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. These standards require that carbon emissions due to the energy requirements for heating and cooling are minimised by ensuring that the whole building envelope incorporates a building fabric that is thermally efficient, and building properties of low emission glass and light fittings, heat recovery systems and boiler systems with individual zones and controls.
- Micro-renewable technology in the form of roof mounted solar thermal panels to assist in the provision of energy to each of the houses has been included within the submission drawings, and which it is considered will not have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the houses.
- Full consideration will be made of the BRE Green Guide for the embodied environmental impact of construction materials. The external wall construction of the houses will achieve an 'A+' rating, the timber roof construction will achieve an 'A' rating or better and the intermediate floors will achieve a 'B' rating.
- To meet the consumption of potable water within the house, water efficiency fittings and appliances will be installed to meet the minimum requirements of the current Building Regulations.
- All houses will have the provision for the storage of waste and recycling containers.
- All fitted white goods within each house will be energy efficient to a minimum of 'An' energy rating.
- The private driveway areas will be constructed in a permeable block pavior finish with the hard landscape finishes of the patio areas designed to discharge surface water onto the adjacent soft planting areas.

These provisions are considered to be acceptable under the terms of Policy CC05. (Condition 15)

Archaeology

66) An archaeological desk-based assessment has been submitted in support of this application (Wessex Archaeology, reference 103410.01, dated March 2014). This is a thorough and authoritative report that sets out the archaeological background to the application site and makes a thorough assessment of its archaeological potential based on currently available information. The report concludes that, while no known heritage

assets are recorded within the site, there is an archaeological interest in the site by virtue of the known archaeological resource within the wider area.

67) The site lies close to the confluence of the Rivers Loddon and Blackwater, where increasingly there is evidence demonstrating that these river valleys were the focus of prehistoric and Roman settlement and agriculture.

68) The report therefore comments that exploratory archaeological investigation through a programme of trial trenching may be merited. Berkshire Archaeology concurs with this conclusion. In view of current land use within the site, Berkshire Archaeology advises that such a programme of archaeological work could be secured through an appropriately worded condition following the granting of planning consent. Berkshire Archaeology therefore recommends that a condition requiring an archaeological investigation is attached to any planning permission granted, to mitigate the impact of the development. (Condition 16)

Biodiversity

69) The Council's Ecologist has considered the implications of this application against EC Habitats Directive 1992 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. It is considered that subject to a condition the actions authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the great crested newts or bats concerned at a Favourable Conservation Status in their natural range. (Condition 23)

Infrastructure Mitigation and Affordable Housing

70) In line with Policy CP4 of the Core Strategy and the Planning Advice Note (PAN) contributions would be required for this scheme based on the provision of a net 38 dwellings. The applicant is currently finalising a Section 106 agreement with the Council. The required levels of contributions are set out below.

Affordable Housing	£1,314,000 (allowing for the 6 units provided on site) *
Education:	
Primary mainstream:	£212,100.00
Primary SEN	£50,444.00
Secondary mainstream	£157,472.00
Secondary SEN	£24,876.00
Post 16	£38,940.00
Highways	Measures to secure off-site footpath improvements.
Library	£9,170.80
Children's Play	£74,068.80
Pitches and recreation ground	£8,060.52
Country Parks	£13,572.00
Biodiversity	£2,184.00
Countryside access	£6,786.00
Swimming pool provision	£10,027.29
Sports Hall provision	£18,871.32
SPA Access Management	£29,868.25

SANG Delivery & Management Contribution	£178,080.39 (towards Clare's Green)

Affordable Housing

71) To meet the requirements of Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy a minimum of 40% of the total number of units (net) should be provided as affordable housing. The developer is proposing 6 no. affordable units on site and the remaining will be subject of a commuted sum.

Community Infrastructure Levy

72) Wokingham Borough Council will adopt CIL on 6th April 2015. As such, this would replace the infrastructure mitigation provided through the signing of a section 106 agreement. In addition Vacant Property Credit has now come into force and the figure for affordable housing will need to be reviewed since the buildings have become vacant since the application was submitted. **Officer comment:** The S106 agreement is currently being amended to allow for the changes in circumstances if the decision is taken post 6th April 2015 and an update will be given.

CONCLUSION

This is a full application and proposes redevelopment of this employment site to provide 38 dwellings including affordable housing, hard and soft landscaping, open space, parking provision and associated infrastructure. The principle means of access is via the existing main access onto Swallowfield Street with six dwellings served by two independent accesses, also from Swallowfield Street.

The developed part of the site is within Swallowfield which identified in Policy CP9 of the adopted Core Strategy as a Limited Development Location where development is acceptable in principle. Policy CP17 states that in Limited Development Locations sites should generally not exceed 25 dwellings.

The development exceeds the general limit of 25 dwellings. However, the policy does not state a maxima for any site. There is no realistic prospect of the site being re-used for employment purposes. This is previously developed land which the NPPF identifies redevelopment for residential purposes as acceptable in principle.

Turning to whether the proposed development is sustainable, the NPPF identifies three sustainability roles, environmental, social and economic. The determining issue is whether any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstratively outweigh the benefits.

Environmental

It is considered that the development will result in an appropriate design which would not materially harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not undermine the spatial distinction between the settlement and the countryside. The applicant has produced a detailed character assessment which has sought to demonstrate how the development has taken account of local design characteristics. Although this has been criticised by the Parish Council and some objectors, no issue is taken over the design of the development in terms of its layout, use of materials and mix

and style of units.

The development would make full and effective use of previously developed land. The scheme would deliver an acceptable density whilst ensuring that the development would have its own private amenity space conforming to Council standards and many of the properties would look out onto an area of open space that would occupy a large proportion of the site. All of these factors would ensure that the proposal would not appear cramped or out of keeping with the existing built environment and would help assimilate the development into the village. The opportunities to provide landscaping along all the boundaries of the site and within the open space area will help to provide a defined edge between the village boundary and the countryside beyond. This accords with the guidance set out in Section 8 of the Borough Design Guide.

It would provide an area of open space and a play area for use by the whole community.

Whilst the distance from a full range of services and facilities would weigh somewhat against the proposal, this must be balanced against the fact that the Core Strategy identifies Swallowfield as a village that accommodate developments of generally 25 units. Therefore, the Core Strategy accepts that Swallowfield is not unsustainable, albeit that this is limited. It must therefore follow that the general location of the site is acceptable for residential development. In addition, available evidence suggests that the most recent use of the site was unsustainable with heavy reliance on the private car. There are no highway safety issues and the developer has agreed to make contributions to improve the local footpaths to the front of the site.

The commitment to Code 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, thereby moving to low carbon energy is positive.

Whilst this aspect of the development has caused most local concern, the Council's consultants, WSP confirm that the development would not pose a flood risk.

Social

The development would contribute to the support and strengthening of the local community and would provide housing to meet local needs by providing a mix of housing types and tenures. Concern has been expressed by several residents and the Parish about physical linkages to the centre of the village. Whilst this would be an ideal, it would require acquisition of third party land which the applicant has confirmed is not available. However, the development would not preclude this being achieved in the future were an opportunity to arise. Additionally, it is not an isolated location and the development proposed is within the developed edge of the village. The Section 106 agreement will deliver an appropriate level of contributions to mitigate against the impacts of the development.

Economic

The development would enhance the economy of the community. New residents are likely to support local services and businesses.

In conclusion, the benefits of the social and economic elements of the scheme weigh heavily in favour of this application where there are no adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits.

The application is before the Committee as it is major development. The proposals are

considered to be acceptable and therefore it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions and completion of a satisfactory Section 106 Legal Agreement.

CONTACT DETAILS		
Service	Telephone	Email
Development Management and Regulatory Services	0118 974 6428 / 6429	development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

MEETING WITH SWALLOWFIELD FLOOD RESILIENCE GROUP HELD 9TH MARCH 2015

Cris Lancaster WBC	Chair
Steven Riley	WSP on behalf of WBC
Andy Keith	SFRG
Lee Atkins	SFRG
Bill Fitzpatrick	SFRG
Ryan Saul	Odyssey Markides on behalf of Bellway Homes
James McConnell	Bellway Homes

AGENDA

- 1 Latest submission of flood modelling to WBC
- 2 Absolute depths of flood modelling results, with and without drainage features
- 3 Plots of differential flood depths without drainage features
- 4 Results of groundwater level survey

QUESTIONS CONSIDERED

- 1 Modelling: How has the outflow from the site to the floodplain been treated in the model?
- 2 Modelling: What groundwater level has been assumed in the model?
- 3 How has the model been calibrated against the 2007 flood event?
- 4 Please explain why the 100mm “discard” level has been applied
- 5 When the FRG met Bellway on 4th December 2014, an on site sewage holding facility was agreed. We cannot see this on the revised scheme. Are we right?

As a result of the meeting the SFRG issued the following comments:

Scheme Design

Swallowfield Flood Resilience Group were first introduced to the scheme proposals at a public consultation in 2013, following which a meeting occurred between the Chair of the SFRG in February, 2014 and Roger Gibbs of Bellway Homes, the applicant. Despite requests to be consulted formally prior to the planning submission, Bellway submitted a formal application to WBC without doing so citing their concerns that until an application was submitted other statutory stakeholders, notably WBC would not put the scheme to the top of the pile.

Since the early design concept was shown in the public meeting SFRG have not seen a substantive change in respect to the flood measures or sewer design at all. In this respect, as a group, we cannot see any of our requested proposals or concerns properly addressed. Consultation has taken the form of the SFRG comments being made via WBC Planning Department and then replies relayed via Bellway’s consultants,

most recently a meeting occurred in March 2015 at which Bellway's flood risk consultants Odyssey Markides and WSP acting for WBC were present.

The proposed scheme sits across a historical pluvial flood / drainage route heading in a northerly direction along Trowes Lane, across The Street through existing houses and along the eastern site fringes to Swallowfield Street where the drainage is culverted across to the Blackwater and Loddon flood plain beyond.

We are proposing what was requested at the outset that the applicant and the planning authority to provide not just neighbouring properties but also the properties subject to the planning application with the best possible chance of avoiding future flooding events, both pluvial, fluvial, ground and from foul sewer discharge. The current scheme does not achieve this and we believe it can and should.

WBC is currently being asked to review plans where potentially some fifteen or so homes out of a planned thirty eight have designed floor heights at or below flood heights previously measured in properties at the perimeter of the site. In addition there is no emergency capacity in the scheme sewer designs for periods when the main sewers are inundated and backed up, this is a situation which the developer has been informed about but chooses instead to rely on a theoretical peak flow design calculation which TW have accepted.

We suggest that WBC request the applicant to relocate some of the proposed properties away from the eastern boundary line such that the historic flood route could be re-opened and be properly designed and improved for the benefit of both existing and the proposed new homes. Soil from this area could be re-used within the site obviating the need for excessive lorry movements. This change would require WBC to provide an exception to the village boundary and permit this limited development only to sit outside. The applicant would inevitably seek some compensation for the additional time and design costs which may be provided with the provision of one further market priced dwelling back into the scheme.

This proposed solution would, subject to design, meet with the local residents objectives and provide the new occupants of the site and the village with a proper, positive design legacy.

Foul Sewers

The SFRG believes that the proposed development will have a material and detrimental effect on the foul drainage system in the village. We consider that the criterion for assessing the betterment being claimed by the developer is seriously flawed. It is based on the Sewers for Adoption design guide for modern industrial sites and does not reflect the actual discharge from the factory site. Our main criticism is that the betterment only considers peak flow rates. The sewage system has for many years been at full volumetric capacity. There will be more than 3 times the volume of sewage entering the system from the new housing development every day, which will increase the number of times and the length of time the sewers are overloaded, all of which will make matters worse. This is not betterment.

Flooding

Fluvial flood risk to the site and to neighbouring properties is not changed by the proposed development. Bellway have commissioned modelling work that shows the site could in fact be classified as Zone 1, rather than Zone 3 as at present. FRG do not

dispute this and intend to build on this work to challenge the EA flood zone assessment for other parts of the village.

In contrast, FRA believes the pluvial flood risk to the village, and to neighbouring properties in particular, is significantly increased by the proposed development. The modelling carried out by the developer ignores the extreme transient nature of recent flood events, such as that in 2007. It also ignores the likely physical effect during such transient events of raising the site by as much as a metre on the southern and eastern boundaries.

While strongly supporting the residential development of the Willowtree site, FRG believe that there are alternative solutions to the surface drainage issues that should be adopted to avoid exacerbating the consequences of pluvial events.

Flood Modelling

We have reviewed the additional flood modelling work that has been carried out in January, and have provided a report on our findings. In summary, we have low confidence because:

- The model has not been calibrated. We have taken professional advice and have been told that this is an essential first step in any hydrological modelling process.
 - The modelling has not been rigorous, e.g. mixing summer and winter events. The model gives inconsistent results when changing landscape.
 - If anything, the model supports concerns that improvements in flooding at Swallowfield Street are to the detriment of the rear gardens of The Street.
- The model results have not been reviewed by the Environment Agency, the statutory consultee on flooding.

We are awaiting a third party professional review of the material submitted. This will be completed by 27th March.

APPENDIX 2 APPLICANTS POINTS

Loss of employment

The previous occupiers vacated the site in September 2014. The site has been continuously marketed for over a year with little interest received.

Core Strategy Policy CP15 states that any proposed change of use of B1, B2 and B8 uses should not result in a net loss of B use within the Borough. The Council's analysis, contained in the Employment Land Monitoring Report (Aug 2014) shows a net gain of 3,649sqm of B use floorspace within the Borough since 2006 against the baseline figure. In addition, there is a further 88,000sqm of B class floorspace with planning permission but not yet implemented. This confirms that the Borough has a surplus of Class B employment floorspace and that even if all employment land allocated for residential development in the Managing Development Delivery DPD is re-developed, in addition to this site, there would remain a surplus. The redevelopment of this site would not therefore result in a net loss of employment floorspace and the proposal does not conflict with Policy CP15.

The NPPF encourages the use of previously developed land and taking account of the ability to overcome the loss of employment policy, it is considered that the re-use of the land for residential development is appropriate.

Limited Development Location (Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy)

Whilst CP9 identifies Swallowfield as a limited development location, Policy CP9 does not restrict the number of dwellings to be built in these locations and it is noted that the Inspector in examining the Core Strategy removed the restriction on the number of dwellings from the wording of Policy CP9. Policy CP17 refers to "sites to be identified (emphasis added) in Limited Development Locations where they should not generally (our emphasis) exceed 25 dwellings". The application site is not an 'identified' site and as such, as a windfall site, the proposed development should be assessed on its merits and against other material considerations. This was discussed and agreed with policy officers during the pre-application process.

Character and density

The design of the proposed development has been developed having regard to the Borough Design Guide and the Swallowfield Village Design Statement. Trinity Architecture has carried out a village character assessment to analyse the existing development within the village in order to develop the design of the proposed development so that it reflects the character of Swallowfield.

The density of the proposed development is 28dph or 14.6dph when taking account of the open space. The density study shows that the density of the Curley's Way development is 16dph and Foxborough is 21dph. The 'Village Core' is 15dph and 'The Street' is 14.5dph.

The density of the Strategic Development Locations is between 30-35dph, which is considered to be a useful benchmark for new development

Flooding and drainage

Hydraulic modelling has demonstrated that the site is within Flood Zone 1 (low risk – outside the floodplain), and even if we apply the exception test, there are wider sustainability benefits to the community, the proposals are for the redevelopment of a brownfield site, and there will be no safety issues arising from the development that cannot be mitigated through the use of planning conditions. The EA has raised no objections to the proposed application.

The risk of flooding from the rivers, groundwater, sewers, surface water ditches has been assessed and mitigated through the development proposals and supporting Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage strategy to ensure that the new development is not at risk of flooding and the risk of flooding elsewhere does not increase as a result of the new development.

Odyssey Markides on behalf of the applicant has undertaken detailed overland flood flow analysis to assess the impact of the proposed development to flood risk offsite. This involved creating a 3D model of the existing and proposed development allowing for drainage in each model. The proposed drainage model excluded the attenuation provided by the proposed filter drains, permeable paving, swales and pond reflecting a worst case proposed scenario.

The 3D models were set within a circa 50 hectare offsite upstream catchment, with the entire model assuming a 50% urban and 50% rural ground surface. The existing upstream catchment is predominately rural and the proposed development will reduce the hardstanding area. Therefore the 'mixed' urban and rural assumption in the model further assessed a worst case scenario and reflected the likely maximum overland flows which could pass through the site during extreme flood events. These models were subject to intense rainfall events to assess the routes and depths of flood waters from overland flow through the site. A comparison of flood depths pre and post development for several flood events were determined.

All comparison models were undertaken at the request of WSP (acting on behalf of WBC) and the SFRG. The modelling scenarios included the comparison of 3 no. SFRG recorded flood levels from the 2007 flood event vs flood depths generated in the existing site model. The 1 in 100 year plus 30% climate change 8 hour duration event flood depths provided the closest matches to the SFRG recorded 2007 depths, resulting in further confidence in the model results and providing an element of validation. For this storm analysis, the impact of the proposed development showed reductions to flood risk in Swallowfield Street and land east of the site.

In summary, across all modelled storm events and scenarios modelled (including modelling a surcharged outfall to represent groundwater), the results demonstrate that the site will not exacerbate flood risk to neighbouring properties during the lifetime of the development. WSP has undertaken a comprehensive audit of all modelled events. WSP concluded that the modelling was robust and that the findings demonstrate that the development will not increase flood risk offsite.

With regard to foul drainage, due to the removal of the existing surface water connections and the change in operational hours as a result of the proposed development (commercial to residential), the estimated peak foul flow discharging

downstream into the existing Thames Water system will be reduced. As a result, Thames Water has no objections to the foul drainage proposals.

In response to this additional work, WSP has confirmed that it has no objections to the proposed development subject to the imposition of planning conditions.

Six dwellings are proposed to be served from two private driveways onto Swallowfield Street. The remainder of the proposed dwellings will be accessed via the existing site access onto Swallowfield Street. Visibility splays have been provided that are acceptable for the recorded speed of traffic using Swallowfield Street.

Highways and Traffic

Car and cycle spaces meet WBC standards.

By comparing the predicted traffic generation of the residential development with the traffic survey results of the existing site access, it is estimated that the proposed development will result in a small amount of additional traffic over and above that generated by the previous occupier. The increase however is minimal, equating to approximately 7 – 10 additional movements per hour (or one additional vehicle every 6 – 9 minutes).

The NPPF is clear that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe. By comparing the predicted traffic generation of the residential development with the traffic generation of the permitted use on site, in our view, there is no case that the residential redevelopment of the site will create significant additional traffic movements.

It should be noted that this application proposes the redevelopment of a brownfield site located within the settlement boundary of Swallowfield to provide new housing. The existing use of the site generates a significant level of vehicular movements as a result of employees, deliveries and customers. The proposed development will not increase the number of vehicular trips to an extent that would have a material impact on the capacity or operation of the local highway network, these trip levels have been agreed with the Council's Highways Officer.

James Winkworth, former owner of the application site has confirmed that when the site was in employment use, the staff travelled to work by car. We believe that the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes would result in more use of public transport services than when the site was in employment use. This is on the basis that the 72 bus service goes directly into Reading, which is the main employment and transport hub (for access into London) for the sub-region and therefore likely to be the main location where future residents would travel to work. This bus service is every 30 minutes both in the morning peak into Reading and from Reading in the evening peak from Monday to Saturday and so is quite a frequent service.

These services operate in the early morning and late evening and so provide a realistic opportunity for future residents to be able to access Reading for daily employment purposes. Also, the 82/82K service operates in the evening throughout the week, so that Reading is accessible in its capacity as the key sub-regional shopping and cultural area of the sub-region.

The sustainability of the site will be enhanced in the following ways:

A new length of new footway along the frontage of the site to connect the development with the existing footway network within the village. This enables residents of the development to walk to services in the village and provides easy access to the bus stop adjacent to the site;

A new length of footway to complete the existing footway provision between Swallowfield village and the Basingstoke Road. This is to enable both residents from the proposed development and existing residents of Swallowfield village to walk to neighbouring services and facilities including those within Spencers Wood; and A Travel Plan Pack will be provided to new residents of the proposed development to inform them of opportunities to travel by means other than the private car. This will include a package of measures to encourage sustainable travel including both information on local services and facilities and promotional vouchers for discounted bus travel.

Open space, amenity space, trees and landscape

The proposed development meets the WBC standard in respect of private amenity space.

In addition, the proposal provides a large piece of open space to the west of the proposed dwellings. This will be publicly accessible and managed by the management company for the development, delivering a key benefit to the village.

The proposed site layout allows for the retention of the key trees within the site and those that are considered of value with a long life span. Where it has not been possible or appropriate to retain trees, semi mature replacements are proposed.

In addition, the proposals include extensive tree and hedge planting and the management and maintenance of this will be secured by condition.

The open space within the development will include a new permanent pond and landscape feature at the site entrance.

Surveys have been carried out across the site and there is little of ecological value and the pond to the rear of the site has no species of ecological importance within it.

The proposed development will provide extensive open space and planting, together with the pond which will provide ecological and biodiversity enhancements in accordance with paragraphs 109 and 118 of the NPPF.

Bellway are prepared to provide for a full range of payments provided in the Heads of Terms.

A management company will be appointed to maintain communal areas of the development and also to ensure future maintenance of any drainage systems that traverse individual properties. There will be the relevant positive obligations put upon individual plot purchasers by way of the plot transfer which are protect by a Deed of Covenant.

Infrastructure and services mitigation

WBC has adopted its CIL charging schedule which will come into force on 6th April 2015. As outlined under Part 40 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), the existing floorspace can be offset against the proposed development when calculating the CIL liability provided that it has been in lawful use for a continuous period of 6 months within the three years before planning permission is granted. In this regard, there is approximately 4,967.9sqm of existing floorspace on site. The previous

occupiers vacated the site in September 2014. They had previously occupied the site for at least the preceding three years.

The application proposals will result in an additional 5,552.8sqm (4,402sqm private housing) of floorspace. Within WBC's CIL charging schedule, new private residential floorspace is charged at £365 per sqm and as such the proposed development is liable to pay £206,553.50 of CIL. This takes account of the potential to apply for affordable housing relief on the 6 shared ownership units within the scheme.

Due to short length of time between planning committee and the CIL coming into force, the s106 agreement has been drafted to include an appropriate mechanism to allow flexibility for CIL to replace the agreed s106 contributions covered by the Regulation 123 list should CIL come into force in advance of the decision notice being issued.

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