

Agenda Item 28.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward	
191010	20/08/2019	Wokingham	Norreys	
Applicant	Wokingham Borough Council C/O WSP			
Site Address	Land at and adjacent to Ashridge Farm			
Proposal	Full application for a section of the Northern Distributor Road through Ashridge Farm, linking Bell Foundry Lane to the west with Kentwood Farm to the east, incorporating a new priority junction on Bell Foundry Lane and associated works including a shared footway/cycleway.			
Type	Full			
PS Category	1			
Officer	Sophie Morris			
Reason for determination by committee	Major application			

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on 14 th August 2019
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place Based Services

<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>The proposal is known as the Ashridge Farm section of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) and has been submitted by Wokingham Borough Council for consideration by the Local Planning Authority. The road is identified with the adopted Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Documents.</p> <p>The Ashridge Farm section of the NDR forms part of an essential piece of infrastructure that is required to mitigate the impact of the effect of additional traffic associated with planned housing growth in North Wokingham. The requirement for a distributor road is identified in the Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy, Strategic Development Location SPDs, Infrastructure Contributions SPD and subsequent planning permissions.</p> <p>The NDR is an essential part of strategic infrastructure and will comprise a new road around north Wokingham from Coppid Beech / London Road in the east to Reading Road in the west, linking with the Winnersh Relief Road. Sections have been completed through existing developments at Matthewsgreen and Mulberry Gove (Kentwood Farm East) and along Bell Foundry Lane while the other sections are under construction, through Keep Hatch site and Kentwood Farm West. Planning permission was recently approved for the westernmost section which will tie in the existing Matthewsgreen section with Reading Road to the west.</p> <p>The section being considered under this application is one of the central sections of the overall route, and is the final section to obtain planning permission. The entire route is due to be open in 2021 and is a key strategic piece of infrastructure which will assist the Council's strategy for managing the highway network up to 2026 and beyond and in improving the environment of existing residents within North Wokingham, in particular along Warren House Road for this section.</p> <p>The North Wokingham Highways study undertaken in 2012 identified a distributor road as being the most appropriate highway scheme to ensure the impacts arising from additional traffic associated with new planned development in North Wokingham would</p>

be suitably mitigated. A public consultation process commenced in 2013, where three alternatives to the route west of Twyford Road were presented. A further Refinement Study was subsequently undertaken to examine options within the preferred route alignment. The outcome of the refinement study recommended a single route for the distributor road termed the 'deliverable route option'. This was presented to and approved by WBC's Executive in September 2015 and forms the basis for the current application.

The application is submitted in full and includes details of the access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale. This report is based on an assessment of the application against relevant policies in the Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy, Managing Development Delivery DPD, other relevant policy and EIA regulations.

PLANNING STATUS

- Within North Wokingham Strategic Development Area
- Bat Roost Habitat Suitability
- Water Utility Consultation Zones
- Contaminated Land Consultation Area
- Ordinary Watercourses Consultation Area
- 7KM Thames Basin Heath SPA
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Flood Risk Zones 1,2, and 3

RECOMMENDATION

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

Conditions:

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).

Approved details

2. This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered in the table below. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

General Arrangement Plan 70039495-ASHF-0100-001 Rev 2
Revised Landscape Plan 70039495-ASHF-3000-003

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

Detailed highway design

3. Prior to the commencement of the construction of the road, full details of the construction of roads and footways, including levels, widths, construction materials, depths of construction, surface water drainage, road signage and lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The lighting details submitted shall include a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” for light sensitive species and shall:

- a) Identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their resting places or along important routes used to access key area of their territory, for example for foraging; and
- b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and maintained thereafter. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads and footpaths are constructed to a standard that would be suitable for adoption as publicly maintainable highway, in the interests of providing a functional, accessible, safe and high-quality development and to maintain favourable conservation status of the site for protected species and species of principal importance. Relevant policies: Core Strategy policies CP3, CP6 & CP7.

Visibility splays

4. Prior to the commencement of the construction of the road, details of the proposed accesses and junctions to include visibility splays for all users shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The accesses shall be formed as so-approved and the visibility splays shall be cleared of any obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height prior to the completion of the development. The access shall be retained in accordance with the approved details and used for no other purpose and the land within the visibility splays shall be maintained clear of any visual obstruction exceeding 0.6 metres in height at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant Policy: Core Strategy policy CP6.

Construction Environmental Management Plan

5. Construction work of the development hereby permitted shall not begin until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which will detail the measures to be implemented to protect site workers, site users, ecology and the environment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be implemented thereafter in accordance with the approved CEMP. The CEMP shall include the following matters:

- i) a construction travel protocol or Green Travel plan for the construction phase including details of parking and turning for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors;
- ii) Loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- iii) Piling techniques;
- iv) Storage of plant and materials;
- v) Programme of works (including measures for traffic management and operating hours);
- vi) Provision of boundary hoarding and lighting;
- vii) Protection of important trees, hedgerows and other natural features, including a scheme for the provision and management of an 8 metre wide (minimum) buffer zone from the top of the bank of the Ashridge Stream;
- viii) Relevant ecological mitigation measures for badger, reptiles, breeding birds, and invertebrates, along with integration of any licence requirements for bats and amphibians.
- ix) Control of rats and other vermin particularly during site clearance
- x) Details of proposed means of dust suppression, fume mitigation and noise mitigation. The CEMP shall include a noise management plan that sets out how construction noise will be minimised to protect residential amenity (including methodology for piling and compaction and use of pumps and generators overnight). Particular attention should be given to protecting dwellings that are likely to be exposed to high levels of construction noise as identified in the application noise and vibration assessment.
- xi) Details of measures to prevent mud from vehicles leaving the site during construction;
- xii) Details of any site construction office, compound and ancillary facility buildings. These facilities shall be sited away from woodland areas;
- xiii) Lighting on site during construction;
- xiv) Measures to ensure no on site fires during construction;
- xv) Monitoring and review of the CEMP;
- xvi) Implementation of the CEMP through an environmental management system;
- xvii) Details of the control of surface water run-off, including protection of the Ashridge Stream, surface water bodies and groundwater from contamination during the construction phase;
- xviii) measures to prevent new contamination from various construction activities such as re-fuelling and operation of welfare facilities
- xix) Details of the excavation of materials and the subsurface construction methodology;
- xx) Details of the haul routes to be used to access the development; and
- xxi) Appointment of a Construction Liaison Officer.

Reason: To protect occupants of nearby dwellings from noise and disturbance during the construction period, in the interest of highway safety and convenience and to minimise the environmental impact of the construction phase in accordance with Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3, CP6 and CP7 and TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy.

Levels

6. 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) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

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

Accommodation of Construction Vehicles and Deliveries

7. No development shall commence until provision has been made to accommodate all site operatives, visitors and construction vehicles loading, off-loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period, in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The provision shall be maintained as so-approved and used for no other purposes until completion of the development, or otherwise as provided for in the approved details.

Reason: To prevent queuing and parking off site, in the interests of highway safety and convenience. Relevant policy: Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3 and CP6.

Hours of operation

8. No work relating to the development hereby approved, including works of ground clearance or preparation prior to commencement of construction operations shall take place other than between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 hours Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank or National Holidays.

Reason: To protect the occupiers of neighbouring properties from noise and disturbance outside the permitted hours during the construction period. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 and CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy CC06.

Noise control

9. Prior to the operational use of the road hereby permitted, mitigation details which demonstrate how attenuation against externally generated noise would be provided to the properties at 1 & 2 Bell Foundry Lane shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The measures to be identified in the scheme shall ensure that ambient internal noise levels for the dwellings meet the BS8233/2014 design range 'good' for living accommodation and these mitigation measures shall be implemented wherever possible prior to the opening of the road.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the existing residents and to ensure those dwellings shown to be at risk are protected from noise nuisance and disturbance. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies, CC03, TB21 & TB24.

Flooding and Drainage

10. No development shall take place until full details of the drainage system for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA in consultation with Highways England. The details shall include:

- i) Results of intrusive ground investigation demonstrating seasonal high groundwater levels for the site and infiltration rates in accordance with BRE365;
- ii) Demonstration that the base of SuDS features are at least 1m above seasonal groundwater level;
- iv) A drainage strategy plan for the proposed development, including swale, basin and outfall details with invert levels and cross sections;
- v) A maintenance management plan for the SuDS features throughout the lifetime of the development, as well as who will be responsible for the maintenance;
- vi) Demonstration that water quality enhancements measures will be included in the scheme to prevent water pollution downstream.

Reason: To prevent increased flood risk from surface water run-off. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

11. The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) 190327-JH-ASHF-FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT, Dated March 2019 and the following mitigation measures it details:-

- The culvert under the road will be a minimum of 3mx1.8m in area which is designed to keep flows within the bank of the stream.
- The minimum soffit level of the culvert is to be set to 49.5m AOD which includes a 600mm freeboard. (The 1%AEP plus 70% climate change water level is 48.91m AOD)

These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding due to impedance of flood flows and reduction of flood storage capacity. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 10 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change), Core Strategy policy CP1 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC09 and CC10.

Landscaping

12. Prior to the commencement of the development, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include, as appropriate, proposed site levels or contours, means of enclosure (including fencing suitable to provide mitigation for otters), other vehicle and pedestrian access, hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts and structure (e.g. furniture, signs, lighting, external services, etc). Soft

landscaping details shall include planting plan, specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable.

Soft landscaping details shall also include locations for retained or restored wildlife habitat, and quantified ecological compensation measures (demonstrating that the rate is sufficient to replace anticipated losses).

All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable approved in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of species, size and number as originally approved and permanently retained.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3, CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Landscape Management Plan

13. Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan, detailing long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules, including for all ongoing ecological mitigation and compensation measures, for all landscape areas, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In order to ensure that provision is made to allow satisfactory maintenance of the landscaping hereby approved. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3, CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Retention of trees and shrubs

14. No trees, shrubs or hedges within the site which are shown as being retained on the approved plans 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 development is being carried out, of trees, shrubs and hedges growing within the site which are of amenity value to the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21.

Protection of trees

- 15.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 otherwise 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 any 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) 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 excavations 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 or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are of amenity value to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policy CP3 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21

Ecological Mitigation Measures

16. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the proposed ecological mitigation measures as stated within Table 5-1 of the submitted Ecology Impact Assessment.

Reason: To ensure that species of principal importance, protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), are not adversely affected by the development, in accordance with CP7.

Archaeology

17. No development shall take place until the applicant or their agents or successors in title have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The written scheme of investigation shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Further work is required to ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded or preserved in situ in the interest of protecting the archaeological heritage of the borough.

Contamination

18. (a) If contamination is found at any time during site clearance, groundwork and construction the discovery shall be reported as soon as possible to the local planning authority. A full contamination risk assessment shall be carried out and if found to be necessary, a 'remediation method statement' shall be submitted to the local planning authority for written approval. Should no evidence of contamination be found during the development a statement to that effect shall be submitted to the local planning authority

(b) Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved 'remediation method statement' (submitted to comply with condition 20) and a final validation report shall be submitted to the local planning authority upon completion of remedial works.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination of the site is identified at the outset to allow remediation to protect amenity of the site and adjacent land. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 11 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) and Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

Informatives:

1. This development may require an Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency under the terms of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2016 for any proposed works or structures, in, under, over or within 8 metres of the top of the bank of designated 'main rivers'. This was formerly called a Flood Defence Consent. Some activities are also now excluded or exempt. An environmental permit is in addition to and a separate process from obtaining planning permission. Further details and guidance are available on the GOV.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits#>
2. The applicant is advised to apply to Environmental Health for 'prior consent' under s.61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 in relation to the control of construction site noise
3. Adequate precautions shall be taken during the construction period to prevent the deposit of mud and similar debris on adjacent highways. For further information contact the Highway Authority on tel.: 0118 9746000
4. Any works/ events carried out by or on behalf of the developer affecting either a public highway or a prospectively maintainable highway (as defined under s.87 New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA)), shall be co-ordinated and licensed as required under NRSWA and the Traffic Management Act 2004 in order to minimise disruption to both pedestrian and vehicular users of the highway.

Any such works or events, and particularly those involving the connection of any utility to the site must be co-ordinated by the developer in liaison with the Borough's Street Works team (0118 974 6302). This must take place AT LEAST three months

in advance of the intended works to ensure effective co-ordination with other works so as to minimise disruption.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
190284	Ashridge section of the NDR screening opinion request	Replied 22/05/19 – Not EIA Development
170083	Reserved Matters approval for Kentwood Farm West (225 dwellings) including a section of the NDR	Approved 23/10/17
172952	Application for Reserved Matters for a section of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) and associated infrastructure, including a cycle and footway, relating to Bell Foundry Lane (pursuant to outline planning permission 161839).	Approved 21/09/18

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Site Area:	4.4ha
Previous land use:	Agriculture/farmland, highway.
Proposed land use:	Public highway, including vehicle carriageway, cycleway and footway.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

South East Water	No comments received
Berkshire Archaeology	No objection subject to condition requiring a programme of archaeological mitigation in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, prior to commencement
Environment Agency	No objection subject to condition development being carried out in accordance with submitted FRA and mitigation measures
Natural England	No comments received
Historic England	Concern over lighting scheme and landscaping
Thames Water	No comments received
National Grid	Response from ESP Utilities Group advising they have no gas or electric apparatus within the vicinity of the site.
SSE Power Distribution	No comments received
Southern Gas Networks	No comments received
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue	No comments received
Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust	No comments received
WBC Biodiversity	No objection
WBC Conservation Officer	No objection
WBC Drainage	No objection
WBC Environmental Health	No objection. Recommends various conditions.

WBC Highways	No objection. Recommends various conditions.
WBC Tree & Landscape	No objection subject to conditions relating to retention/protection of existing trees, a landscaping scheme and landscape management plan.
WBC Public Rights of Way	No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

Town/Parish Council:

Wokingham Town Council – No comments received

Local Members: No comments received

Neighbours:

Consultation letters regarding the proposal were sent to over 300 properties.

One response in respect of the scheme has been received from a resident in Benning Way. The comments raised in the response are summarised as follows:-

- How much more green land is going to be built on?
- This is probably the only remaining green field between St Annes Manor and the Wokingham Reading Road;
- Please stop building on green space – Government policy with local government carrying it out

Officer response: The need for the NDR was established a number of years ago, through the Core Strategy, associated SPD's with the deliverable route being subsequently agreed in 2015. The principle of the development in this location is already established as being acceptable.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
Adopted Core Strategy DPD 2010	CP1	Sustainable Development
	CP3	General Principles for Development
	CP4	Infrastructure Requirements
	CP6	Managing Travel Demand
	CP7	Biodiversity
	CP8	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
	CP9	Scale and Location of Development Proposals
	CP10	Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network
	CP11	Proposals outside development limits (including countryside)
	CP17	Housing Delivery

	CP20	North Wokingham Strategic Delivery Location
Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan 2014	CC01	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
	CC02	Development Limits
	CC03	Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping
	CC06	Noise
	CC09	Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)
	CC10	Sustainable Drainage
	TB21	Landscape Character
	TB23	Biodiversity and Development
	TB24	Designated Heritage Assets
	TB25	Archaeology
	TB26	Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character
Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD		
North Wokingham Strategic Development Location SPD		

PLANNING ISSUES

Application site and surroundings:

1. The majority of the application site is situated within land at Ashridge Farm, which is located approximately 1 mile to the north of Wokingham town centre, and to the south of the A329 (M). The application site extends out to the west to include a small part of Bell Foundry Lane. The site is located within the North Wokingham SDL, as identified within the Core Strategy.
2. The immediately surrounding area comprises the Ashridge Farm house, barns and outbuildings which are located approximately 100m to the south of the application site. The Farmhouse is a Grade II* Listed building fronting on to Warren House Road. The barns which would have originally been associated with the farmhouse include a collection of 6 outbuildings comprising a timber and brick roadside barn, listed individually at grade 2 and a series of predominantly brick and timber outbuildings which are of lesser interest, but are considered curtilage listed. These outbuildings have planning permission and listed building consent for their conversion into 5 dwellings, although this has not as yet been implemented.
3. To the east of the application site is the housing development site of Kentwood Farm West (otherwise known as Mulberry Place), which has planning permission for 225 dwellings. This is currently under construction and includes the next section

of the NDR which would tie in with the section being considered under this application. Beyond the Kentwood West site is the Kentwood Farm East site (Mulberry Grove) which is substantially completed, and this site also includes a section of the NDR running through it.

4. The western boundary of the application site adjoins the Cantley Park recreation ground and to the north west of the site along Bell Foundry Lane, is the Bell Farm development, which has planning permission for 127 units. These are currently under construction. Part of the planning permission for the site included the provision of land to facilitate upgrading works to a section of Bell Foundry Lane to incorporate it into part of the NDR route. These works have been undertaken and this section of the NDR is now open. To the north of the site lies the Thames Water Sewage Treatment works and two semi-detached dwellings. Access to these properties and to the Sewage Treatment works is via a lane off Bell Foundry Lane.
5. The Ashridge Farm building and its immediate curtilage is no longer directly connected with the wider land around it, although the land is currently in use for agricultural purposes and accommodates several large modern agricultural buildings. The Ashridge Stream runs up through the eastern side of the site from south to north, before it heads in a north westerly direction where it joins the Emm Brook at Old Forest Road. The general topography of the site is reasonably flat, although is slightly higher in the west.

Principle of Development:

6. Wokingham Borough Core Strategy policy CP17 establishes a requirement to provide at least 13,487 new dwellings with associated development and infrastructure in the period 2006-2026. The majority of this new residential development will be in four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs), one of which is in North Wokingham.
7. Core Strategy Policy CP20 is amplified by Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy, the North Wokingham Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD, which address the associated infrastructure impacts across the borough. These documents establish the requirement for a mixed-used development and make clear that a co-ordinated approach to the development of the SDL will be required to deliver the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of the expanded community.
8. Policy CP20 seeks improvements to transport capacity along the A321 and A329 and the provision of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR). The proposed NDR route, as outlined in WBC's adopted SPD Masterplan, will run from the A329 (near the M4 over-bridge) Forest Road in the west, through the SDL development and eventually to Coppid Beech Roundabout, where a park and ride facility is proposed.
9. The North Wokingham Highways study undertaken in 2012 identified a distributor road as being the most appropriate highway scheme to ensure the impacts arising from additional traffic associated with new planned development in North Wokingham would be suitably mitigated. A public consultation process commenced in 2013, where three alternatives to the route west of Twyford Road

were presented. A further Refinement Study was subsequently undertaken to examine options within the preferred route alignment. The outcome of the refinement study recommended a single route for the distributor road termed the 'deliverable route option'. This was presented to and approved by WBC's Executive in September 2015 and forms the basis for the current application.

10. The NDR is key strategic road infrastructure considered necessary under the Core Strategy and will link with the Winnersh Relief Road and forms part of the wider strategic infrastructure improvements being constructed such as the Coppid Beech roundabout, Station Link Road, Southern Distributor Road, Arborfield Relief Road, Nine Mile Ride Extension and Eastern Relief Road.
11. The NDR is designed to be an attractive route through the new residential areas of North Wokingham, operating a 30/40mph speed limit. The NDR will take the majority of the new traffic in addition to existing development traffic. This part of the route will provide a key section of the Council's strategic NDR which as a whole is identified as a necessary piece of infrastructure required to facilitate the delivery of housing numbers identified for the North Wokingham SDL. The NDR delivery is therefore part of the Council's strategic response to providing the borough's identified housing needs and associated infrastructure necessary to accommodate the new development. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle.

Description of Development:

12. This application comprises a relatively small section of the NDR which will link the Kentwood West NDR section with the recently completed Bell Foundry Lane section, across land at Ashridge Farm. The alignment would be a single carriageway, approximately 0.5km in length and approximately 7.3m wide. In addition to the proposed highway, the scheme includes provision for pedestrians and cyclists, by way of a shared use 3m wide pathway alongside each side of the carriageway and a 2m green verge along all the areas where these are achievable.
13. The overall NDR route extends around north Wokingham from Coppid Beech / London Road in the east to Reading Road in the west, linking with the Winnersh Relief Road. Sections have been completed through existing developments at Matthewsgreen and Mulberry Grove (Kentwood Farm East) and along Bell Foundry Lane while other sections are under construction, through Keep Hatch site and Kentwood Farm West (Mulberry Place). Planning permission for the western most section of the NDR to the west of Toutley Road and Old Forest Road was approved at planning committee on 8th May 2019 (ref 190198). This section under consideration will complete the central section of the overall route and is the remaining part to obtain planning permission. The entire route is due to be open in 2021.
14. At the western end of the site, this section of the NDR will tie in with the end of the recently completed Bell Foundry Lane improvement works and will then continue south for a short distance along the existing Bell Foundry Lane alignment before turning east to head in a north easterly direction across the Ashridge Farm site. At the point where the NDR would turn to continue over land at Ashridge Farm, a new junction arrangement would be provided on Bell Foundry Lane, whereby the priority would be for traffic travelling along the NDR. The existing access lane off

Bell Foundry Lane which currently serves 2 residential properties and the Thames Water Sewage Treatment works would be stopped up and in its place, a new access would be provided off the north side of the NDR. The road will then continue across the land at Ashridge Farm, including over the Ashridge Stream (which will be culverted) and will tie in with the Kentwood Farm West section of the NDR on the eastern boundary of the site.

Access and Movement:

15. The planning application is supported by a Transport Assessment. The document has fully assessed the nature and extent of transport impacts together with any cumulative impact associated with known future development.
16. The assessment draws upon modelling data derived from the Wokingham Strategic Transport Model and takes into account the SDL developments together with on-site infrastructure provision and known off-site transport interventions. The model was developed to represent average weekday AM peak hour (08:00 - 09:00), Inter peak hour (average 10:00 – 16:00) and PM peak hour (17:00 - 18:00).
17. The forecast year used for this development is 2026. It is accepted practice to carry out an assessment 15 years after the opening year, however it was agreed to assess 2026 as being in line with the end of the current Local Plan period.
18. Due to the design of this scheme, no existing junctions would be amended. However, a new priority junction would be built changing the priority for the southern part of Bell Foundry Lane. The new junction was assessed using standard junction modelling tools for 2026 where it was found that the new junction operated well within capacity.
19. The modelling has predicted that the two-way flows along Warren House Road would reduce by between around 470 vehicles in AM peak hour and by around 320 vehicles in the PM peak hour by 2026. This reduction in traffic would lead to improvements in noise and air pollution and improving the environment for local residents, particularly along Warren House Road and pedestrians and cyclists.

Speed, lighting and highway safety

20. The design speed proposed along the distributor road would be 30mph. The road geometry is considered acceptable for the design speeds proposed.
21. Lighting is proposed along the route, the details and specifications for which would be required to be submitted by recommended condition 3. Such details would also need to take into account any ecological sensitivity considerations as well as the comments received by Historic England with regards to the setting of the nearby Listed Farmhouse.
22. Reflective road markings, high quality road studs and illuminated signs and bollards are proposed along the alignment, the details for which would be required to be submitted for approval under condition 3. There would be two uncontrolled pedestrian crossings along the route enabling pedestrians to cross both the new road and Bell Foundry Lane allowing access to Cantley Park and central Wokingham

23. The Transport Assessment is supported by an independently assessed Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and did not identify any significant issues. Future stages in the Road Safety Audit process will be carried out at later stages where this is appropriate.

24. Therefore, the road alignment, layout and design is considered to be acceptable.

Public Rights of Way:

25. There are no Public Rights of Way through the site which would be affected as a result of the proposal and the PROW officer has made no comment on the application.

Trees and Landscape:

26. Core Strategy Policies CP1 and CP3 require a high quality design that respects its context. This requirement is amplified by MDDL Policies CC03 and TB21 which require development proposals to protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure, retaining existing trees, hedges and other landscape features wherever possible and incorporating high quality - ideally native - planting as an integral part of any scheme, within the context of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. Policy CC02 states that planning permission for proposals at the edge of settlements will only be granted where they can demonstrate that the development, including boundary treatments respects the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside by taking account of the character of the adjacent countryside and landscape'.

27. It is inevitable that a new road across what is currently predominantly an agricultural field will result in some harm to the existing landscape. The accompanying Arboricultural report identifies that the application site contains 40 high quality trees (Category A) of which 36 are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and 32 are identified as notable or veteran species. The scheme would result in the removal of 20 individual trees, 6 groups of trees and partial removal of 5 hedgerows. Of the 20 trees to be removed, 9 are Category A trees, two of which are veteran and six are notable trees. As such, their removal would have a detrimental impact upon the existing landscape due to the importance of these within the wider landscape character of the area. The general alignment of this section of the road has, however, been designed in consultation with WBC Trees and Landscape officer in order to seek to minimise as much as possible, the number of trees which would require removal.

28. However, it is considered that with a suitable programme of landscape mitigation measures proposed in conjunction with the construction of the road, the impacts upon the surrounding landscape can be reduced. Such measures include verge and tree planting along the sides of the road (in the region of 70 new trees), as is consistent along the NDR route as a whole. In addition, the scheme now provides for suitable shelterbelt/woodland planting between the road and Ashridge Farm, in order to maintain a visual and physical separation for the listed building and its curtilage.

29. The originally submitted landscape proposals have been revised to provide for better planting between the road and the listed building, along with tree planting within the verges along either side of the road. The originally submitted details did not provide for this and it was considered that although this section of the road passes through agricultural land, the overall character and appearance of the NDR is one of tree lined verges, so it was considered important to continue that consistent design along this relatively short section of the NDR, which is considered to be located in a semi-rural, urban fringe location. It is considered that the revised Landscape Plan now provides an acceptable overall planting strategy, consistent with the landscaping approach along connecting sections of the NDR and provides sufficient information on the overall type and location of planting proposed. Detailed landscape plans would need to be agreed with the LPA prior to commencement under condition 12. This would be implemented in conjunction with a Landscape Management Plan (LMP), details of which would be provided under the requirements of condition 13.
30. Although the alignment of the road would result in the loss of a number of trees and other vegetation, suitable replacement planting is indicated as part of the landscape proposals. Retained trees and hedges would be protected during the construction process (as required by condition 16) and condition 15 is proposed in order to ensure the new planting establishes successfully within the landscape.
31. In summary, the impact of this section of the NDR is considered to be acceptable in landscape terms, and the benefits of the road, subject to mitigation, are considered to outweigh the harm.

Heritage:

32. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a statutory duty to consider the effect on heritage assets: development should preserve or enhance the character and setting of listed buildings. The NPPF stresses the need to avoid or minimise conflict between the conservation of listed buildings and development (paragraph 190), states that any harm to a listed building needs to be clearly and convincingly justified (paragraph 194) and weighed against the public benefits of the proposals (paragraph 196).
33. In considering designated heritage assets, the NPPF (Para 132) requires 'great weight to be given to the asset's conservation', and that any harm should require 'clear and convincing justification'. The MDD Local Plan (TB24) requires that '...works to or affecting heritage assets or their setting to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building.'
34. The application site itself does not contain any nationally designated (protected) heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings or registered parks and gardens. The site is also not located within a Conservation Area. However, approximately 100m to the south of the proposed alignment of the road is the Grade II* Listed Ashridge Farm and associated barns.
35. Historic England responded to the application consultation, advising that they had concerns in respect of the proposed landscaping details and lighting. They acknowledge that the visual connection between the listed buildings and the land

to the north is not particularly strong, as it has been compromised by the presence of modern farm buildings and sewage treatment works. However, they consider that the proximity of the road, together with the associated noise, and light pollution, would have an appreciable (albeit moderate and less than substantial) impact on the setting of the farm. They referred to there being no lighting details submitted with the application and considered that lighting is too an important issue to leave to a condition, as they consider that it would be unlikely to receive adequate scrutiny at that point. However, an indicative lighting scheme was submitted with the application, which showed potential locations of lighting columns and degree of light spill along the proposed route. Following the above mentioned comments made by Historic England, the lighting plan was sent directly to them for comment, and the Historic England officer responded, advising that there looked to be a lot of lights and that a scheme relating to a more rural setting should be considered.

36. Further lighting details will be expected to be submitted at the detailed design stage, as they form part of the requirement under the construction details to be submitted under condition 3. The lighting proposals are also important in respect of ecological issues, particularly in respect of the likely presence of bat roosts in the locality. As such the details are likely to include lower level lighting provision with cowl fittings which would reduce light spillage and which incidentally would also provide for a lighting scheme more likened to a rural setting, as advised by Historic England. It is therefore considered that the concerns raised by Historic England will be satisfactorily dealt with through the submission of details relating to the lighting strategy for the scheme.

37. With regards to landscaping, Historic England did not consider that the landscaping proposals went far enough to reduce the impact of the road on the farmstead. The landscaping proposals have been revised since receiving these comments, as WBC's Trees and Landscape Officer also considered that a 'shelterbelt' of trees could be provided on part of the southern embankment between the road and the Listed Building, in order to help reduce the visual impact of the road upon the setting of the Listed Farmhouse. A revised landscape plan has been submitted which now proposes such woodland planting as described above. As discussed elsewhere in this report, these revised landscaping proposals are now considered acceptable, consistent with the general landscape strategy for the NDR as a whole, but with additional tree/woodland planting where considered necessary in order to help minimise associated impacts of the presence of the road.

38. Notwithstanding the above, it is noted, however, that although the Listed Farmhouse and associated barn buildings were once part of the working farmstead at Ashridge Farm, this is no longer the case. The Farmhouse and its immediate curtilage is visually separated from and has no direct relationship with the current agricultural related uses associated with the site. The barns which would have originally been associated with the farmhouse have recently received planning permission and listed building consent in 2018 for their conversion into 5 dwellings (in consultation with Historic England). The site is therefore already considered to be fragmented and when considering the presence of the Sewerage Treatment works adjacent, new housing developments and Cantley recreational ground and associated floodlighting nearby, it is therefore considered that the presence of the

road, (subject to the implementation of appropriate landscaping and lighting) would not have a significant harmful impact upon the setting of the Listed Building.

Flooding and Drainage:

39. Core Strategy Policy CP1 and MDDL Policies CC09 and CC10 establish that new development should avoid increasing and where possible reduce flood risk (from all sources) by first developing in areas with lowest flood risk, carrying out a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) where required and managing surface water in a sustainable manner.
40. The majority of the application site falls within Flood Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is low. However, parts of the site are located within flood zones 2 & 3, these areas being located in proximity to the route of the Ashridge stream on the eastern end of the site. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The indicative Surface Water drainage strategy demonstrates that the proposed scheme will be drained via a network of swales located alongside the road which will discharge to attenuation basins located on the north side of the road. The swales located to the south of the road are needed to accommodate the existing greenfield run-off from the land to the south. There is a new culvert proposed under the road to accommodate the stream.
41. The attenuation proposed will cater for the 1 in 100 flood event with a 40% allowance for climate change prior to being discharged at existing greenfield runoff rates. Proposed condition 10 requires the submission of details to demonstrate that the existing rate of discharge would be maintained or improved.
42. WBC as the lead local flood authority (LLFA) have reviewed the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and associated flood modelling details and have raised no objection to the proposal subject to the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted FRA. This is secured through condition 11.
43. The development is therefore considered acceptable in drainage terms subject to further ground investigation surveys, demonstration of SUDs feature levels, and a finalised drainage strategy and maintenance plan with water quality enhancements measures. Such details would be required to be submitted under proposed Condition 10.

Environmental Health and Residential Amenity:

44. Core Strategy Policy CP3 requires that new development should be of a high quality of design that does not cause significant detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users and their quality of life.
45. The applicant has submitted a detailed Noise & Vibration Assessment Report which considers both construction and operational noise.

Construction Noise and Vibration
46. For the majority of dwellings in the vicinity and at other noise sensitive locations, the impact of construction noise will be low if 'best practicable means', as defined by the Control of Pollution Act 1974, are used.

47. The report concludes that properties 1 and 2 Bell Foundry Lane are most likely to be affected significantly by noise during construction and for extended periods of time and therefore recommends the use of localised screening or site hoarding to reduce noise levels at these locations. Condition 5 relating to the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan also includes the requirement to provide a noise management plan that sets out how construction noise will be minimised to protect residential amenity and states that particular attention should be given to protecting dwellings that are likely to be exposed to high levels of construction noise. It is therefore expected that the details submitted under this condition will include suitable noise mitigation measures for the occupants of 1 and 2 Bell Foundry Lane during the construction phase. In addition, a further condition is recommended to limit the hours of work (condition 8) and informative 2 recommends that the appointed contractor applies for 'prior consent' under s.61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (informative 2). The above proposed measures should therefore ensure that the impact of the construction phase in respect of noise upon the occupiers of 1&2 Bell Foundry Lane is minimised. The existing residents along Warren House Road, including the listed building, should benefit from the scheme in that the main flow of traffic will no longer be passing directly adjacent to the front and rear of their properties.

Operational Noise

48. The submitted noise report also considers various scenarios for changes to the noise environment during operation of this section of the road. These scenarios include the 'do nothing' and 'do something' options in 2019 and 2036. In summary, the short term impacts are that 46 dwellings and 1 non-residential sensitive receptor will experience a negligible increase in noise (between 0.1 and 2.9dB). Two dwellings (1 and 2 Bell Foundry Lane) will experience a 'moderate' increase in noise. All dwellings are predicted to experience absolute noise levels above the 'lowest observable adverse effect level' (LOAEL) but below the 'significant observable adverse effect level' (SOAEL). In the longer term (2036) 46 dwellings +1 non-residential receptor are predicted to experience no change in noise but two properties 1 & 2 Bell Foundry Lane will experience a moderate increase in noise.

49. The noise report advises that an assessment of acoustic screening to protect 1 and 2 Bell Foundry Lane has been carried out that could potentially provide between 5dB (just line of site) and 15dB noise attenuation provided that the barriers were suitably designed with correct density and with no gaps. Due to issues concerning the practicalities of installing such a barrier at this location and other planning considerations such as visual impacts, the provision of acoustic screening was not considered a suitable option to pursue. However, a preliminary Noise Insulation Regulations appraisal has been carried out which indicates that there would be no eligibility for a noise insulation grant for these affected properties. As such, it is therefore considered reasonable for a condition to be imposed requiring further details of an assessment of potential noise protection measures to be submitted to the Council for approval, in order to ensure that the existing residential amenities of these two properties are not significantly harmed in terms of noise impacts once the road is operational. Condition 9 therefore refers.

Air quality

50. An Air Quality Assessment has been submitted with the application which considers both construction and operational impacts.

Construction

51. The 'residual' effects of dust (during construction) are considered to be negligible provided there is good site practice and implementation of mitigation measures. As such, a condition is recommended requiring submission for approval, of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to include the control of dust (condition 5).

Operational

52. The air quality impacts of redistributed traffic has been considered, and the residual effect of the scheme is concluded as being negligible. WBC's Environmental Officer advises that the conclusions within the submitted report are acceptable and that there will be no significant detrimental impacts on existing Air Quality Management Areas

Contamination

53. A Generic Quantitative Risk Assessment accompanies the application which considers potential impacts on controlled waters and human health arising from the construction of the new road. The potential mobilisation of contaminants and changes to existing gas migration regimes were considered.
54. The report concludes that there is a very low risk to human health and controlled waters but as a precaution, appropriate health and safety protocols during construction should be implemented to protect construction workers should unexpected contamination be encountered. If unexpected contamination is encountered then remediation may be required and as such WBC Environmental Health Officer recommends the standard condition for dealing with unexpected contamination should this arise (condition 18).

Ecology:

55. Core Strategy Policy CP7, carried forward by MDD LP Policy TB23, requires appropriate protection of species and habitats of conservation value. Design Principle 1b (i-ii) is concerned with protection of ecological habitat and biodiversity features, together with mitigation of any impacts that do arise.
56. An Ecological Impact Assessment has been submitted alongside the application, with the ecological baseline status of the site and wider area being established through desk and field survey. The application site does not include any statutory or non-statutory designated sites. There are no Ancient Woodlands or Habitats of Principal Importance as mapped on Natural England's Habitats Inventory within the site. However, a range of sites, habitats and species were considered in the Assessment including statutory and non-statutory wildlife sites, Habitats of Principal importance, veteran trees, bats, badgers, hedgehogs, Great Crested Newts, reptiles, breeding birds, invertebrates and other Species of Principal Importance.
57. The results of the baseline surveys were used to assess the likely significant ecological effects of the proposed scheme both within the construction and operational phases, taking into account the various mitigation measures that are proposed.

58. In summary, while there are likely to be some moderate adverse effects to habitat during the short term construction phase, there will be residual positive ecological benefits in the longer term as a result of habitat creation. Therefore, the development would not have a significant effect on receptors.

Protected species

59. The surveys undertaken in association with the submitted ecology impact assessment indicated an unlikely presence of some protected species within the application site. This included badgers and amphibians (Great Crested Newts). However, the report advises that precautionary mitigation measures will be included within the Construction Environmental Management Plan (to be submitted under condition 5) in order to ensure that the site is protected during construction and monitored.

60. With regards to bats, the proposed soft landscaping scheme is likely to increase the foraging quality of the site in the medium to long-term. The risk to tree roosts has been assessed and compensation is proposed for the loss of potential roost features (for those features not completely ruled out as bat roosts). The implementation of the mitigation and compensation measures for bats as stated within Table 5-1 of the submitted Ecology Impact Assessment would be secured through the requirement to implement the general ecology related mitigation measures (condition 17). The proposal includes the provision of bat boxes, the number and location of which will need to be agreed, and should therefore be included within the LMP submission (condition 13).

61. The general habitat creation measures associated with the proposal includes the provision of hedgerow planting, amenity grassland, scrub and woodland planting, together with the provision of drainage ditches and attenuation basins to be planted with a wetland meadow mix.

62. Other measures to facilitate ecological permeability through the site includes the provision of a mammal pass in culvert of the Ashridge Stream which crosses the site. This would be detailed within the conditions submission relating to the detailed highway design. A further mammal ledge would be required on the eastern boundary of the site where the road will link with the Kentwood Farm section of the NDR. There is an existing ditch which the road will cross, and as such, a similar provision for mammal permeability will need to be provided in this location also. Again, the details of this would be secured through the details submitted pursuant to condition 3.

Hedgerow

63. The application identifies that circa 550m of hedgerow will be lost at various points along the proposed alignment which would result in habitat fragmentation and a net loss for biodiversity without appropriate mitigation. However, the general proposed landscape mitigation measures which include woodland planting between the new road and the Listed Farmhouse, wildflower grassland planting, scrub and wetland habitat, are considered to satisfactorily demonstrate that appropriate levels of new habitat creation would be provided.

Net gain for biodiversity

64. The NPPF para 170 (d) requires development to provide net gains for biodiversity where possible. The revised landscape strategy would result in the same

conclusions as the original landscape scheme, in that the proposals would result in a net gain of area-based habitats, but a net loss of linear habitats (i.e. watercourses and hedgerows). Such provision would be required to be replaced at a ratio of 3:1 to achieve this. The ability to replace the amount of hedgerow on this site is limited due to the need to limit the land take for the scheme. Therefore, with this in mind, it is considered that the proposal achieves a good balance between the provisions of net gain for biodiversity in terms of area-based habitats, whilst limiting the extent of land which would be required to deliver the project. Demonstration of the area based habitat net gains will also need to be demonstrated through the landscaping details submitted pursuant to condition 13.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

65. WBC commissioned a Habitats Regulations Assessment study to be undertaken in order to assess the cumulative impact of a number of infrastructure projects across the borough, and their potential impact of particulates on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). The application scheme was included as part of the assessment, the results of which have been conveyed to Natural England who have confirmed that after reviewing the assessment they are satisfied that there would not be an adverse impact on designated sites in respect of Predicted Environmental Concentrations.

Archaeology:

66. MDD Policy TB25 requires applicants to provide a detailed assessment of the impact on archaeological remains. If development is likely to affect an area of high archaeological potential or an area which is likely to contain archaeological remains, the presumption is that appropriate measures shall be taken to protect remains by preservation in situ. Where this is not practical, applicants shall provide for excavation, recording and archiving of the remains.
67. As part of the assessment of the impacts of the proposed road, desk-based research, followed by a programme of exploratory archaeological field evaluation were undertaken along the proposed route, the conclusions of which were that there were no finds, features or deposits recovered.
68. However, Berkshire Archaeology comment that the area proposed to be the temporary compound area for the development was not subject to the exploratory field evaluation undertaken. As such works are likely to include significant earthmoving which has the potential to impact on any below ground deposits, Berkshire Archaeology recommend a condition requiring a written scheme of investigation to be submitted and approved by the LPA, prior to works commencing on site. This is therefore secured under condition 17. This is in accordance with Paragraph 141 of the NPPF which states that local planning authorities should *'require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible'*.
69. The development is therefore considered acceptable in archaeology terms, subject to the requirements of proposed Condition 17 being satisfied.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

70. The proposal is infrastructure development and therefore is not CIL liable.

Public Sector Equality Duty

71. In determining this application the Committee is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The duty is to have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

72. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. The Council should give greater consideration to decisions that have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic and this impact may be unintentional. In appropriate cases, this may involve an understanding of the practical impact on individuals so affected by the decision. Regard should be had to the effect of mitigation taken to reduce any adverse impact.

CONCLUSION

The Ashridge Farm section of the NDR forms the central link of the NDR which will run from Coppid Beech / London Road to Reading Road to link with the Winnersh Relief Road. The road would provide an essential piece of infrastructure that is required to support the Council's planned housing growth within the wider area and one which has been adopted as part of the Core Strategy and SPD's.

The development provides for a safe, functional and well landscaped scheme, in keeping with the Council's spatial strategy. Appropriate mitigation is proposed to overcome impacts, where necessary. The proposal would provide benefits to the local area and town centre including benefits to local residents along Warren House Road. The application complies with Development Plan policies and can therefore be recommended for approval.

Enclosures:

- 1) **Site location plan**
- 2) **General Arrangement Plan**
- 3) **Landscape General Arrangement Plan**