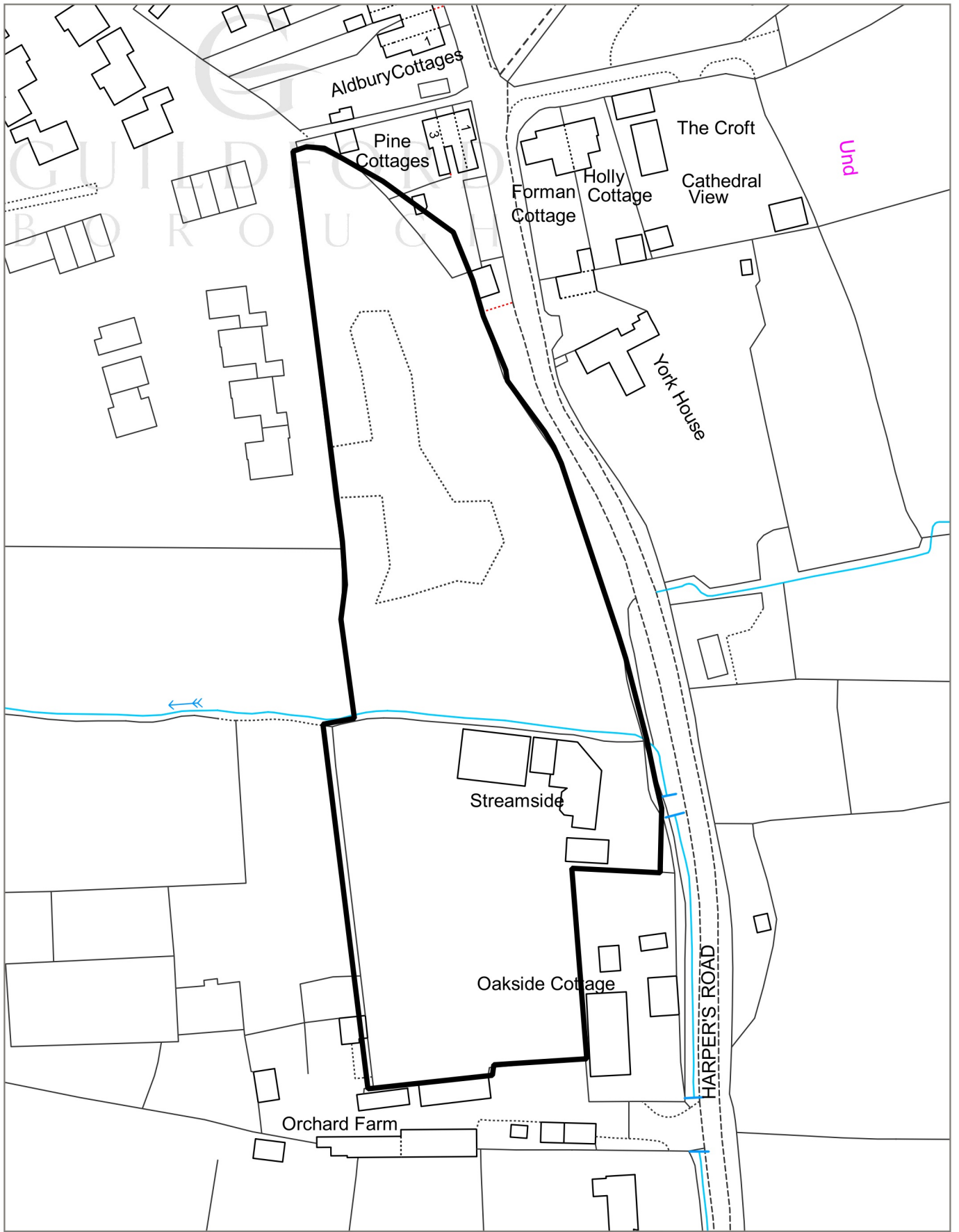


22/P/00977 - Streamside, Harpers Road, Ash, Guildford



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Print Date: 13/06/2023



Not to Scale



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

22/P/00977 – Streamside, Harpers Road, Ash, Guildford, GU12 6DB



Not to scale

App No: 22/P/00977 **EoT Deadline:** 30 June 2023
App Type: Outline Application
Case Officer: Peter Dijkhuis
Parish: Ash **Ward:** Ash Wharf
Agent : Mr Laurence Moore **Applicant:** Mr A Kamm
Woolf Bond Planning Bourne Homes Ltd
Basingstoke Road Farnham, Surrey
RG7 1AT GU10 4PY

Location: Streamside, Harpers Road, Ash, Guildford, GU12 6DB
Proposal: Outline application for the demolition of existing house and outbuildings and erection of 22 dwellings with associated parking and creation of new vehicular access (all matters reserved except, access, layout, and scale).

Executive Summary

Determination

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because more than 20 letters of objection have been received, contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation.

Key information

- a) This is an **Outline Planning Application** for the provision of 22 dwellings with associated private open space, habitat and landscape creation and enhancement, and financial contributions to physical, social, amenity, and community infrastructure, at Streamside, Harpers Road, Ash.
- b) The site benefits from being part of the wider Policy A31 'Land at the south and east of Ash and Tongham' allocation in the adopted Guildford Borough Council Local Plan for c.1,750 dwellings and related infrastructure. While the site currently benefits from an enclosed semi-rural/ countryside and woodland setting it is acknowledged that current development and applications for the surrounding sites that make up this strategic allocation will fundamentally change the character of the landscape setting. This approach is accepted in policy. It is noted that surrounding sites have made planning submissions and that Wildflower Meadows (16/P/01679) to the immediate north-west of this site is currently under construction as part of this allocation.
- c) This application will have sole access off Harpers Road. It is noted that the adjacent site, Orchard Farm (22/P/01083) is currently at appeal (June 2023) for non-determination. Although Officer's recommended the approval of this application, at its meeting in April 2023, the Council's Planning Committee resolved that if they had had the right to determine the application, it would have been refused. One of the reasons for refusal was on Highway Safety: *'the application is refused on the basis that it does not adequately demonstrate that pedestrian and cyclist safety on Harpers Road and additional vehicle movement on Harpers Road as a public highway is sufficiently mitigated'*. SCC Highways as statutory authority had no objection to the application on these grounds. The Council's decision was against the Officer's recommendations. This position is set out for full disclosure regarding an adjacent site accessing off Harpers Road, but the highway safety of the proposal will be considered afresh and on its own individual merits in the report below.

d) It is noted that there has been no statutory authority' objections to this application.

Summary of considerations and constraints

a) The site is an allocated site within the Guildford Local Plan as identified in Policy A31 'Land at the south and east of Ash and Tongham' and forms part of Policy S2 'Planning for the borough - our spatial development strategy' to inform and enable the Guildford Local Plan as adopted. The collective Strategic Site is now designated as being part of the urban area of Ash and Tongham. Whilst there would be an inevitable change in the character and appearance of the area, the principle of development has already been found to be acceptable.

b) The application as evidenced accords with the Guildford Local Plan and supporting policy. The application does not conflict with any policies that protect surrounding (immediate and distant) heritage assets (York House; Ash Manor Grade II* and setting), and/or environmentally sensitive areas (Thames Basin Heaths SPA etal), and the proposed SANG mitigation is in line with policy.

c) The provision of 22 dwellings (8 affordable dwellings) would continue to address the supply of local housing, which should be afforded moderate planning weight. Due to its scale, the associated benefits including short-term employment to the construction industry; supporting Guildford and Ash's growth as an employment, commercial and retail centre; and, further economic benefits from the spend of future occupants, should be afforded limited weight in favour of the application. NPPF Paragraph 81 suggests significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities generated by development.

d) The layout proposes development within two different landscape character areas, namely, the northern portion is woodlands and treed hedgerows to the boundaries, while the southern portion is a more open, former grassland/ countryside. The two sites are separated by a stream and steep vegetated embankments to the north. The layout responds differently to each context to address and/or enhance their landscape setting.

e) It is noted that the site was brought forward previously by the Applicant as an outline planning application (matters of scale, layout and access fixed) (17/P/02616) and was refused. The decision was appealed by the Applicant (APP/Y3615/W/19/3225673). The Inspector's Reports notes that *'there are three main issues in the determination of this appeal. These are the effect of the proposed development on a) the character and appearance of the area; b) the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA); and c) whether the proposed development would make adequate contributions towards infrastructure having regard to its impacts and the requirements of the development plan'*. The Inspector dismissed the appeal. Subsequent to the appeal, to address reason for refusal (a) as raised by the Inspector, the Applicant has worked with the Council's Urban Design Officer to address the concerns of scale (reducing the number of dwellings), and character and appearance by changing the layout to allow for inter-connectivity to Orchard Farm, located on the immediate western and southern boundary of the site. Reasons (b) and (c) are procedural and can be addressed via Conditions and a s106 Agreement.

f) Issues raised in objection to this application dealing with the increased traffic on Harpers Road and related pedestrian and cyclist safety have been mitigated through a series of traffic calming measures designed and approved by SCC Highways (who have raised no objection); and, through the provision of a network of pedestrian and cyclist footways to surrounding development sites (Orchard Farm and Wildflower Meadows) taking such movement off Harpers Road to provide a safe pedestrian and cyclist route to Ash Station and Ash.

g) Overall, the limited heritage impact of the application would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework and the Guildford Local Plan taken as a whole.

RECOMMENDATION: it be resolved

(i) That a s.106 agreement be entered into to secure:

- the delivery of 8No. affordable housing units;
- provision of SAMM contributions;
- provision of SANG land to mitigate the impact of the development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area;
- contribution towards early years, primary and secondary education projects;
- contribution towards open space provision infrastructure in the area;
- contribution towards highway safety improvements and pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure improvements in the area;
- contribution towards Ash Road Bridge; and,
- provision that the Applicant, and successor in Title, gives free and unfettered access to the estate roads, pathways, and cycleways.

If the terms of the s.106 or wording or the planning conditions are significantly amended as part of ongoing s.106 or planning condition(s) negotiations any changes shall be agreed in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee and lead Ward Member.

(ii) That upon completion of the above, the application be determined by the Executive Head Planning Development / Strategic Director Place.

The recommendation is to APPROVE planning permission, subject to conditions and informatives.

CONDITIONS & INFORMATIVES
(set out at end of report)

Officer Report

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is an Outline Planning Application for the provision of 22 dwellings with associated private open space, woodland and riparian habitat enhancement, and financial contributions to physical, social, amenity, and community infrastructure, at Streamside, Harpers Road, Ash.
- 1.2 The site benefits from being part of the wider Policy A31 'Land at the south and east of Ash and Tongham' allocation in the adopted Guildford Borough Council (GBC) Local Plan for c.1,750 dwellings and related infrastructure. While the site currently benefits from a semi-rural/ countryside and woodland setting it is acknowledged that current development and applications for the surrounding sites that make up this strategic allocation will fundamentally change the character of the landscape setting. This approach is accepted in policy. It is noted that surrounding sites have made planning submissions and that Wildflower Meadows to the immediate north of this site is currently under construction as part of this allocation.
- 1.3 There have been no statutory authority's objections to this application.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site lies on the eastern edge of the Policy A31 allocation, which will see the construction of around 1,750 homes, together with associated open space and infrastructure, to the immediate north-west, west and south of the application site. While the site currently benefits from a semi-rural/ woodland and countryside setting it is acknowledged that current development and applications for the surrounding sites that make up this strategic allocation will fundamentally change the character of the landscape setting, over time forming an urban extension to Ash. This approach is accepted in policy.
- 2.2 The application site is approximately 1.25 hectares in area; adjoining Oakside Cottage to the south and east, located and abutting Harpers Road to the east, and is located east of the currently under-construction Wildflower Meadows (16/P/01679) and application for Orchard Farm (22/P/01083). The site is known locally as Streamside.
- 2.3 The layout proposes development within two different landscape character areas, namely, the northern portion is woodlands and treed hedgerows to the boundaries, while the southern portion is a more open, former grassland/ countryside. The two sites are separated by a stream and steep vegetated embankments to the north. The layout responds differently to each context to address and/or enhance this landscape setting.
- 2.4 The northern portion rises to the north and is a central open grassland with one protect tree centrally located, framed by boundary trees. The southern portion is currently a single dwelling with a large domestic garden framed by fragmented hedges of low landscape quality. A broken treed hedgerow screens Oakside Cottage located to the east which will be augmented to retain and enhance this screening.

- 2.5 The central woodland between the two portions along the existing stream is a very distinctive landscape to Harpers Road and to the proposed long meadow in the Orchard Farm application and will be retained, enhanced, and managed. Generally, both portions are well screened from Harpers Road.
- 2.6 The application's two sole point of access will be off Harpers Road, the southern portion using an existing access point, while the northern portion will create a new access point onto Harpers Road. Harpers Road is relatively narrow (4.1 to 4.5m wide), framed by trees, residential fencing/ hedging, and a ditch; it has a 30mph speed restriction. The road has no pavement and is used by pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders as an informal shared route.
- 2.7 The site lies on the north-east boundary of Ash. Ash hosts a range of commercial, social, and community services accessible to the development. Ash Station is c.575m away from the site, accessible on foot through Wildflower Meadows and the Public Right of Way. There are several bus stops along Guildford Road to give broader public transport accessibility.
- 2.8 The site lies within the 400m to 5km buffer of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. As part of the Local Plan preparation, the strategic allocation (Policy A31) was subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment.
- 2.9 The Environment Agency (April 2023) has identified the site as Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding).
- 2.10 The landscape character assessment identifies the site as a) National Character Type 114: Thames Basin Lowlands; and, b) Guildford Landscape Character Assessment: E1 Wanborough Wooded Rolling Claylands. In terms of NPPF Paragraph 174(a) the site is not considered a valued landscape.
- 2.11 The site is located within the immediate (York House (Grade 2)), to distant (namely, Ash Manor (Grade II*), Old Manor Cottage (Grade II*), Church of St Peter (Grade II*), Ash Manor Oast (Grade II), The Oast House (Grade II), and Oak Barn (Grade II) setting of various heritage assets. It is recognized that the site sits within the distant heritage assets noted and will be assessed accordingly.
- 2.12 There is a Tree Preservation Orders (GBC TPO 3 2017) protecting the trees and tree groups across the north portion of the site. There are no Veteran Trees within the site.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This is an Outline Planning Application for the demolition of an existing house and outbuildings and the provision of 22 dwellings with associated private open space, woodland and riparian habitat enhancement, and financial contributions to physical, social, amenity, and community infrastructure, at Streamside, Harpers Road. All matters are reserved except for access, layout, and scale.

- 3.2 The indicative masterplan shows two development areas, a) the northern portion of eight dwellings set-out in a horseshoe layout, framed by landscaping and the existing woodlands; a mix of detached and semi-detached houses with private rear gardens; b) the southern portion of 14 dwellings set to frame a central streetscape allowing for visual and functional connectivity to adjacent Orchard Farm; a mix of apartments, detached and semi-detached houses with private gardens, car barns, and parking area; c) new boundary and street landscaping to allow the development to settle into the existing landscape; and, d) retention and enhancement of the woodlands and stream landscape between the two portions.
- 3.3 The application retains the central woodland between the two portions along the existing stream to retain and enhance a very distinctive landscape to Harpers Road, and to the proposed long meadow in the Orchard Farm application. This will create a unique landscape and riparian habitat, potentially forming a new wildlife corridor between the various sites coming forward and extending from Ash station eastwards into the Green Belt.
- 3.4 The application extends the network of pedestrian and cycleways that will integrates with adjacent developments to enable permeability across the Strategic Site allocation to encourage modal shift and address sustainable development.
- 3.5 The application will deliver 8No. affordable housing on , provided in broad compliance with policy requirements and addressing local need; in principle, the tenure and dwelling type mix is supported by GBC Housing Officer subject to conclusion of a S106. The affordable housing (Affordable Rent, Affordable Shared Ownership, and First Homes) is pepper-potted across the southern portion of the site.

3.6 **Table 1: APPLICATION DETAILS**

Dwelling description		
Dwellings	Number	Percentage
Market	14	62%
Affordable	8	38%
Total	22	(on nett gain of 21 dwellings)

Tenure Details / Property Size						
Tenure	1 bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed	4/5-bed	Total
Market	0	1	5	6	2	14
Affordable	2	2	4	0	0	8
Total	2	3	9	6	2	22

- 3.7 It is noted that, while the application addresses the delivery of market and affordable housing, in the strictest sense it does not accordance with Policy H2 (Affordable Housing) in delivering 40% Affordable Housing. Taking the application at 21 nett additional dwelling at 40% equates to 8.4 units, applying the rounding down, equates to 38%. This approach is supported by the Housing Officer.
- 3.8 The proposal includes a range of one to four/five-bedroom house types, all two-storey, semi/detached with dedicated car barns/ parking and rear gardens; and, two apartment buildings in a similar architectural style, two-storeys, with access to private outdoor space.

- 3.9 The application provides: 47 parking spaces; of which 5 visitors parking; and makes provision for SMART EV charging points to each dwelling; and, cycle storage (sheds/garages) at a rate of one/bedroom.
- 3.10 The application makes financial contributions to the Ash Road Bridge infrastructure, public highways, SANG land off-set, SMM tariff, off-site open space provision, and education in support of policy requirements. These are set out in greater detail further in this report.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 Application site's history

Reference:	Description:	Decision Summary:	Appeal:
17/P/02616	Streamside: erection of 24 new dwellings with associated parking and creation of new vehicular access (see appeal above)	Refused; leading to appeal against decision	Appeal dismissed (August 2019)

- 4.2 **APP/Y3615/W/19/3225673** (Appeal) Land adjoining Streamside, Harpers Road: the appeal was against the refusal of an outline planning application (with matters of scale, layout, and access fixed) for the erection of 24 new houses with associated parking and creation of new vehicular access (17/P/02616). The Inspector's Reports notes *'the Council refused planning permission for four reasons. In summary, and as referred to in my separate decision, these related to the effect of the proposed development on a) the character and appearance of the area; b) ecology and biodiversity interests; c) the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA); and, d) infrastructure through the lack of financial contributions to mitigate the impacts thereon'*. The Inspector dismissed the appeal.

- 4.3 In terms of this application (22/P/00977 - Streamside) it is important to review the Inspector's reasons for refusal as they form a significant material consideration in their address within this application. The four reasons were:

- a) The character and appearance of the area: *'the development proposed, particularly that on the southern section of the site, by reason of its scale and layout would be out of character with the rural, low-density development in the immediate locality, forming an overly urban pattern of development, incongruous in the area. The proposal erodes the countryside and landscape surrounds of Harpers Road and would be to the detriment of the visual and spatial quality of the existing area. In addition, the proposal forms a piecemeal development of this part of the wider A19 allocation, failing to make the best use of the allocated land which would compromise the comprehensive development of the site and the wider area'*.

The Inspector's comments '*Whilst I accept that the design or outward appearance of the proposed development is not for consideration at this stage, the structured, linear, high density and suburban layout of the southern section gives me cause for concern. Facing the back edge of Harpers Road, it would appear somewhat anomalous against predominantly low-density rural style housing and jar with the equally narrow rural lane that runs out from the main built-up parts of the settlement. The site is wooded, and existing and future planting would provide some screening, but the scale and amount of new development would still be noticeable. In any event, I would not be persuaded by an argument in favour of an unacceptable form of new development if it could be hidden.*'

'As I have alluded to above, the appeal site is part of a wider housing allocation and thus the principle of housing development in the general area is acceptable, but this does not mean at the cost of the defining characteristics of this semi-rural part of the settlement edge. New housing across the remainder of the allocation will, as the appellant has pointed out, change the character of the area to one more built up. However, and as I have said, the appeal site is where most of the eastern edge of the allocation abuts the edge of the settlement and Harpers Road, the remainder of the allocation would be set noticeably back and behind the lower density rural style housing development I have mentioned. The appeal site is therefore more sensitive in character and visual terms and whilst I do not object particularly to how the northern section of the appeal site has been treated, I feel that the southern section, for the above reasons, would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.'

[Officer Note: it is worth noting that the Inspector was not against development, as allocated, coming forward on this site; he was supportive of the layout of the northern portion; but he expressed concern regarding layout and character of the southern portion. As noted, the Applicant has worked with the Council's Urban Design Officer to address these issues as now presented in the Proposed Site Plan].

- b) Ecology and biodiversity interests: *'the development as proposed would result in further deterioration of deciduous woodland which is identified by Natural England as a Habitat of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity in England. In addition, from the information submitted with the application the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that there will not be any detrimental impact on protected species'*

[Officer Note: the Applicant has submitted an Arboricultural Method Statement, an Ecological Impact Assessment, a Biodiversity and Enhancement Strategy, and a Woodland Management Strategy; has agreed to a SANG land agreement and SAMM financial contribution; and, has accept conditions relating to an Ecological Management Plan and a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to address this reason for refusal. We suggest that this collectively discharges this reason for refusal].

- c) The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA): *'the site lies within the 400m to 5km zone of the SPA. The Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that there will be no likely significant effect on the Special Protection Area and, in the absence of an appropriate assessment, is unable to satisfy itself that this proposal, either alone or in combination with other development, would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Special Protection Area and the relevant Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)'*

[Officer Note: We refer to the Applicant's EIA Report Appendix 6, Appropriate Assessment; Pg. 16; (dated May22): *'subject to a full payment of SAMM contributions in line with the tariff set out in GBC's 2017 TBH Avoidance Strategy (factually updated in 2021), and the securing of at least 0.4ha of SANG capacity in one of the three nearby privately provided SANG areas, the Proposed Development will not contribute towards an adverse effect on the integrity of the TBH SPA, and an Appropriate Assessment can therefore be passed'*; Natural England have no objection (subject to an HRA which is already discharged); and, see Section 7.12 Impact on ecology. We suggest that this collectively discharges this reason for refusal].

- d) Infrastructure through the lack of financial contributions to mitigate the impacts thereon: *'in the absence of a completed planning obligation the development fails to mitigate its impact on infrastructure provision'*.

[Officer's Note: it is noted that the Council has been in correspondence with the Applicant regarding the drawing up of a s.106 agreement or undertaking to secure this commitment but this has yet to be concluded and engrossed. It is recognised that this reason for refusal would fall away once the s.106 agreement or undertaking had been completed and the mitigation has been secured. We suggest that this discharges this reason for refusal].

- e) It is important to note that in both the planning application (17/P/02616) and the appeal, the highways matter of additional traffic movement along Harpers Road was not raised as a reason for refusal. We suggest that this is a significant material consideration in determining this application.

4.4 Surrounding context
(Applications in the surrounding area which may be of some relevance to the determination)

Reference:	Description:	Decision Summary:	Appeal:
23/P/00067	Land at May and Juniper Cottages: Reserved matters application pursuant to outline permission 18/P/02308	Registered	
22/P/01083	Orchard Farm: erection of 51 dwellings with associated open space, landscaping, and parking (Duplicate application 22/P/02121 registered but yet to be determined)	Non-determination Appeal submitted.	Appeal hearing June 2023

21/P/01211	Land at May and Juniper Cottages: Reserved matters application pursuant to outline permission 18/P/02308	Awaiting decision	
20/P/01461	Land at Ash Manor: erection of 69 dwellings with associated vehicular and pedestrian access from Ash Green Road, parking, and secure cycle storage, on site open space, landscape, and ecology management and servicing.	Non-determination Appeal submitted	Appeal dismissed (2021)
19/P/01460	Ash Road Bridge	Consented	
18/P/02308	Land at May and Juniper Cottages: Outline application for development of 100 dwellings (including 40 affordable homes) with access to be determined, with associated garages, parking, open space, landscaping and play areas (layout, scale, appearance, and landscape to form the reserved matters).	Consented	
16/P/01679	Land south of, Guildford Road: Outline planning permission for 154 units, including 54 affordable units with associated internal access, streets, car parking and landscaping. Matters to be considered: Appearance, landscaping, layout, scale, and the details of accesses within the site.	Consented (Wildflower Meadows)	

5. PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021: the following policies are relevant to the application:

- Chapter 2. Achieving sustainable development
- Chapter 4. Decision-making
- Chapter 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Chapter 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Chapter 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 11. Making effective use of land
- Chapter 12. Achieving well designed places
- Chapter 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding, and coastal change
- Chapter 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Chapter 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide (2021)

The South East Plan (2009): (revoked 2013); Retained Policy NRM6 Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA).

Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies (LPDMP) (2023):

Policy H6 Review mechanism (Housing)
Policy H7 First Homes
Policy P6 Protecting important habitats and species
Policy P7 Biodiversity in new developments
Policy P9 Air quality and air quality management areas
Policy P10 Water quality, waterbodies, and riparian corridors
Policy P11 Sustainable surface water management
Policy D4 Achieving high quality design and respecting local distinctiveness
Policy D5 Protection of amenity and provision of amenity space
Policy P6 External servicing features and stores
Policy D7 Public realm
Policy D11 Noise impacts
Policy D12 Light impacts and Dark Skies
Policy D14 Sustainable and low impact development
Policy D15 Climate change adaption
Policy D16 Carbon emissions from buildings
Policy D18 Designated heritage assets
Policy ID6 Open space in new developments
Policy ID9 Achieving a comprehensive Guildford Borough cycle network
Policy ID10 Parking standards for new development

Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015-2034 (LPSS) (2019):

Policy S1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy S2 Planning for the borough - our spatial strategy
Policy H1 Homes for all
Policy H2 Affordable homes
Policy P4 Flooding, flood risk and groundwater protection zones
Policy P5 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)
Policy D1 Place shaping
Policy D2 Climate change, sustainable design, construction, and energy
Policy D3 Historic Environment
Policy ID3 Sustainable transport for new developments
Policy ID4 Green and blue infrastructure
Policy A31 Land to the south and east of Ash and Tongham

Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance:

Parking Standards for New Developments (2023)
Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy Supplementary Planning (2020)
Surrey County Council Vehicular and Cycle Parking Guidance (2018)
Public Art Strategy (2018)
Planning Contributions SPD (2017) and (2023)

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy (2017)
Guidance on the storage and collection of household waste for new developments (2017)
Surrey County Council - Vehicle, electric vehicle, and cycle parking guidance for new developments (2012) as amended
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)
Guildford Landscape Character Assessment (2007) Residential Design Guide SPG (2004)

The Strategic Development Framework (SDF)(2020): Chapter 7 Ash and Tongham.

Five Year Housing Land Supply (updated January 2023)

The above individually or cumulatively form a material consideration.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Members are reminded that the consultation responses are available to view in full on the Council's website.

Statutory consultees

- 6.2 Surrey County Council Highway Authority (CHA): No objection (subject to Conditions and Agreement)

The CHA's response is subject to conditions requiring financial contribution '*to go towards highway safety/highway improvement schemes within the vicinity of the site*' and contributions towards the Ash Road Bridge. The application has been considered by the CHA who recommend an appropriate agreement should be secured before the grant of permission. Conditions and Informatives as required by CHA are incorporated into the Officer Report and recommendations.

[Officer Note: The application has motivated that Harpers Road is suitable for the increased vehicle traffic generated by this application (and that generated by the Orchard Farm application), and that any concerns regarding pedestrian and cyclist movement on Harpers Road is addressed by the provision of a network of pedestrian and cycle routes that connect from the site through the surrounding development sites and the Public Right of Way (PRoW) to Ash. Officers have worked with the CHA to ensure that this network across various development sites is deliverable and provided in perpetuity. This would address the requirements of NPPF Paragraph 8 'Sustainable development and accessibility'].

- 6.3 Surrey County Council Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA): No objection (subject to Conditions and Agreement)

The LLFA stated that '*We are not satisfied that the proposed drainage scheme meets the requirements set out in the aforementioned documents; however, in the event that planning permission be granted by the Local Planning Authority, suitably worded conditions should be applied to ensure that the SUDs Scheme is properly implemented and maintained throughout the lifetime of the development*'.

[Officer Note: the conditions as required by the LLFA to make it acceptable have been incorporated into the Officer Report].

6.4 Surrey County Council Archaeologist: No objection (subject to Condition)

[Officer Note: condition as requested has been incorporated into the Officer Report. Applicant acknowledged acceptance of condition (email 23 December 2022)].

6.5 Surrey County Council Education Infrastructure: No objection (subject to financial contribution)

[Officer Note: contributions set out elsewhere in this report].

6.6 Environment Agency: The Environment Agency were approached but noted that as this site is Flood Zone 1, they do not wish to be consulted on this application.

6.7 Natural England: In line with the Habitat Regulation (2017), the LPA have submitted an Appropriate Assessment. Natural England have reverted that the proposal will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of the sites in question and that SANG and SAMM contributions are appropriate measures to be secured.

6.8 Network Rail: No objection (subject to an informative).

[Officer Note: the informatives as requested have been incorporated into the Officer Report].

6.9 Thames Water: No objection (subject to an informative) [Officer Note: the informatives as requested have been incorporated into the Officer Report].

Guildford Borough Council internal consultees

6.10 Urban Design Officer: no objections (subject to Conditions).

[Officer Note: the Applicant has been involved with the Council through a pre-application process to address and resolve masterplan layout, landscape issues, connectivity, and materials. The UD Officer's comments have been addressed by the applicant and are incorporated into this report].

[Officer Note: issue relating to ensuring the delivery of pedestrian and cycle connections between adjoining development parcels to be addressed in a S106 Agreement].

6.11 Waste and Recycling (Environmental Services): No objection (subject to Condition)

[Officer Note: dwellings should incorporate bin storage area (3-4No. 240lt wheeled bins) for +3bed units. Suggest that this is a Reserved Matter, but layout has been reviewed to ensure that bin storage can be addressed].

6.12 Housing Officer: No objection (subject to S106 Agreement)

'Within the context of providing a policy compliant tenure mix of affordable homes, including First Homes, the Housing Service would support the bias towards more larger family homes in the application overall, including in the affordable tenure, but also given the specific context and viability of the development overall'.

6.13 Environmental Protection Officer: No objection (subject to Air Quality Report to be submitted as a Reserved Matters Condition).

6.14 Arboricultural Officer: Supportive (subject to Condition)

[Officer Note: to be conditioned that they work in accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP); Conditions as requested have been incorporated into the Officer Report].

Non-statutory consultees

6.15 Surrey Police: No objection (subject to Condition – Secure by Design).

6.16 Surrey Wildlife Trust: No objection (clarification sought prior to determination; subject to Conditions)

[Officer Note: Conditions as requested have been incorporated into the Officer Report. Some conditions as requested to be addressed within Reserved Matters application].

Parish Council

6.17 Ash Parish Council: The Parish Council (PC) raise an objection to the proposal. The comments are summarised below.

[Officer Note: the PC submitted a letter of objection and/or issues of concern (July 2022). Officers have reviewed these comments against the Applicant's documentation to ensure that the issues raised have been addressed and/or mitigated in the application. Of particular concern has been the issue of pedestrian and cyclist safety on Harpers Road. The Applicant are providing new connectivity across this site that will link with adjacent developments and the PRoW to provide an alternative, traffic-free route to Ash and public transport options along Guildford Road. This strategy is endorsed by the County Highways Authority (CHA) and funding to enable such secured from the Applicant. Flooding and environmental address and/or mitigation has been tabled and endorsed by statutory authorities]. PC comments:

- a) Out of character with the area [Officer Note: Applicant has worked with GBC Urban Design Officer to address issues raised by the Inspector and is in agreement with the current layout and density];
- b) Not in keeping with the immediate street scene [Officer Note: as above];
- c) Concern over loss of trees and the maintenance of those that are left [Officer Note: extensive tree management strategy has been put in place];
- d) Overdevelopment [Officer Note: as per a) above];
- e) Concern over the effect on wildlife, especially endangered species left [Officer Note: extensive habitat strategy has been put in place];
- f) Concern over access road being too narrow and without sufficient drainage [Officer Note: no objection has been raised by the CHA with regard to highway safety or capacity];
- g) Concern over effect on local amenities - schools, medical facilities [Officer Note: addressed through planning obligations];
- h) Within the SPA buffer zone [Officer Note: addressed through planning obligations];

- i) Risk of flooding - concern about possible effectiveness of proposed SUDS scheme [Officer Note: no objections have been raised by the LLFA or Environment Agency];
- j) Site not easily accessible except by car - Reliance on access to PRoW 356 which is in ownership of SCC and which has no lighting, is narrow, unmade up. Concern of possible safety issues [Officer Note: pedestrian and cyclist accessibility network addressed across all development sites];
- k) Possible overlooking of Oakside Cottage - loss of privacy;
- l) Concern for the impact of construction vehicles on Harpers Road Road [Officer Note: a construction transport management plan is to be secured by RM condition and will manage the movement of construction traffic into and from the site]; and,
- m) Concern for the impact of additional traffic entering/exiting Harpers Road at junction with Guildford Road [Officer Note: no objection has been raised by the CHA with regard to highway safety or capacity].

6.18 **Third party comments**

Letters of objection have been received. The following is a summary of the issues raised. We note that some of the issues raised are the same as the Parish Council and are consequently addressed above.

- a) Development should only be permitted after the Ash Road Bridge has been constructed [Officer Note: Grampian condition to be included];
- b) Piecemeal development delivery of Local Plan's housing allocation (various applications been brought forward) [Officer Note: this has been addressed by Officers to ensure integrated and inter-connected development across the various applications is delivered];
- c) Traffic and pedestrian, cyclist, horse rider risk at site's proposed (shared) entrance and along Harpers Road (Harpers Road has no footpath and is unlit) [Officer Note: see PC above];
- d) Increased traffic on Harpers Road, Wyke Lane and Ash Green Road; at the junction Harpers Road and Guildford Road (visibility at junction); application and cumulative impact from applications on roads. [Officer Note: no objections in this regard have been raised by the CHA];
- e) Out of keeping with the local area in density and design. Harpers Road represents the transition between a semi-rural area to Greenland and the design represents over development of the area and does not respect the transition from urban to rural [Officer Note: see comment regarding GBC Urban Design Officer above];
- f) The site would lead to deterioration of deciduous woodland and the destruction of habitats for several species in the area. Having read the developers ecological and biodiversity statements I would like to point out that the data they used is largely based on the 2017 surveys done by Peach Ecology for application 17/P/02616 [Officer Note: review undertaken by Applicant; conditions set in place to address habitat monitoring];
- g) Increased flood risk to road and surrounding area [Officer Note: no objections have been raised by the LLFA or Environment Agency];
- h) Impact on immediate residential amenity (noise, dust, light, construction activity, etc.) [Officer Note: a construction transport management plan is to be secured by condition and will manage the movement of construction traffic into and from the site]; and,
- i) Copperwood – no discussion regarding hostage strip access through to Wildflower Meadows [Officer Note: legal issue and not a planning consideration].

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main Outline Planning (access, layout and scale) considerations in this application are:

- The principle of development (Planning policy)
- Housing need
- Impact on the character of the area and design of the proposal
- Impact on the setting of listed buildings and heritage assets
- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Private amenity of proposed dwellings
- Highways, accessibility and parking
- Flooding and drainage
- Sustainability
- Open space provision
- Impact on trees and vegetation
- Impact on ecology
- Impact on air quality
- Thames Basin Heaths SPA
- Planning contributions and legal tests
- Balancing exercise and public benefit

(These considerations will be reviewed against planning policy, the evidence submitted by the Applicant, and the Planning Officer's review).

7.1 The principle of development (planning policy)

- 7.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires applications to, at a principal level, to accord with Paragraph 7: *'The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of **sustainable development**'*; Paragraph 8 *'three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways a) an **economic objective**; b) a **social objective**; and, c) an **environmental objective**'*; and, Paragraph 11 the *'presumption in favour of sustainable development'*. In reviewing the application, it is considered that it accords with the intent of the NPPF (as bolded).
- 7.1.2 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that, in dealing with an application for planning permission, regard is to be had to the development plan so far as material to the application; and, regard to any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004, as amended) requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Guildford Borough Council comprises the: Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015- 2034 (adopted April 2019), and the Guildford Local Plan: Development Management Policies (adopted March 2023) – collectively these will be referred to in the Officer Report as the Guildford Local Plan.
- 7.1.3 Local Plan (2019) - Policy A31 Land to the south and east of Ash and Tongham: this Policy identifies the applicant site as part of a broader strategic allocation.

7.1.4 With the adoption of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015-2034 (LPSS), this site is no longer designated as being within the Countryside Beyond Green Belt. The LPSS has allocated this site under policy A31, which is an amalgamation of separate sites around Ash and Tongham. In total the allocation is expected to deliver approximately 1,750 homes. Policy A31 sets out that development of these sites should incorporate the following requirements (inter alia as applicable):

- a) Appropriate financial contributions to enable expansion of Ash Manor Secondary School by additional 1FE (form entry);
- b) Appropriate financial contributions towards expansion of existing GP provision in the area or land and a new building for a new GPs surgery;
- c) Development proposals in the vicinity of Ash Green to have recognition of the historic location of Ash Green village. The properties along Ash Green Road form part of Ash Green village. Proposals for the land west of this road must respect the historical context of this area by preventing the coalescence of Ash, Tongham and Ash Green. Any development as a whole will not be of a size and scale that would detract from the character of the rural landscape. This must include the provision of a green buffer that maintains separation between any proposed new development and the properties fronting onto Ash Green Road. This will help soften the edges of the strategic development location and provide a transition between the built-up area and the countryside beyond [Officer Note: not applicable to this application];
- d) Sensitive design at site boundaries that has regard to the transition from urban to rural;
- e) Sensitive design at site boundaries with the adjacent complex of listed buildings at Ash Manor. Views to and from this heritage asset, including their approach from White Lane, must be protected [Officer Note: not applicable to this application];
- f) Land and provision of a new road bridge which will form part of the A323 Guildford Road, with an associated footbridge, to enable the closure of the level crossing on the A323 Guildford Road, adjacent to Ash railway station; and,
- g) Proposed road layout or layouts to provide connections between both the individual development sites within this site allocation and between Ash Lodge Drive and Foreman Road, providing a through road connection between Ash Lodge Drive and Foreman Road, in order to maximise accessibility and to help alleviate congestion on the A323 corridor.

In reviewing the application, it accords with the policy requirements (1) to (12) where applicable, Opportunities (1), and Key Considerations (1) to (12).

7.1.5 Strategic Development Framework SPD (2020): the SPD was produced as Paragraph 1.2.1 'a guide for future masterplanning, planning and development of the strategic sites and to establish the Council's expectations of design quality'; and, Paragraph 1.2.2 'the SPD will be a material consideration in determining the appropriateness of planning applications and in moving forward through implementation, including the preparation of master plans by the developers to inform their planning applications as required by Policy D1 of the Local Plan. ...For the avoidance of doubt, the guidance provided within this SPD is applicable to all types of planning applications (i.e. outline, full and reserved matters)'. In reviewing the application, it accords with policy requirements as set out in Chp7, addresses the development principles as illustrated in Fig.49, and landscape framework as illustrated in Fig.50. This is discussed in greater detail in the main body of the report.

- 7.1.6 In terms of NPPF Paragraph 74 it is noted that the Council has identified a **6.46-year housing land supply**, currently has an up-to-date Development Plan, and consequently the NPPF Paragraph 11(d) titled balance is not enacted.
- 7.1.7 In terms of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, the Act requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.1.8 It is noted that various technical reports include the previous layout; this inclusion should be seen as for broadly illustrative purposes only. This position is confirmed by the Applicant as such and that the current layout (dwg. Proposed Site Plan – Streamside Option 3 - 6502-SK-002 Revision E; dated 26 May 2023)) is applicable in all cases (see Applicant letter 31 May 2023).
- 7.1.9 As the site is allocated for residential development in the GBC Local Plan (LPSS), the principle of 22 dwellings on this site accords with policy and is deemed acceptable, subject to general compliance with Policy A31, and relevant local and national policies as enacted.

7.2 Housing need

Planning requirement – delivery

- 7.2.1 NPPF Paragraph 60 states that *'to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay'*; and, Paragraph 62 goes on to note that *'the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disability, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes)'*. As part of the allocation under Policy A31, the application will make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement, and housing mix, as identified in the Guildford Local Plan.
- 7.2.2 In terms of NPPF Paragraph 73(d) *'make a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery, given the lead-in times for large scale sites, and identify opportunities for supporting rapid implementation'*. In terms of deliverability, the Applicant's company has evidence of delivery of similar schemes which gives some certainty to the delivery of this application (see file letter, 15 May 2023). The Applicant is in broad agreement regarding the Conditions that sets the programme regarding the submission of Reserved Matters and construction delivery. This will ensure the continued provision of dwellings in the plan period, which is a significant benefit in terms of delivering the allocation set in Policy A31.

Affordable housing

- 7.2.3 Policy H2 of the Guildford Local Plan requires H2(2) 'the Council seeks **at least 40%** of the homes on application sites to be affordable'; and, H2(4) 'the tenures and number of bedrooms of the affordable homes provided ...must contribute, to the Council's satisfaction, towards meeting the mix of affordable housing needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2015, or subsequent affordable housing needs evidence' as concluded with the Council's Housing Officer.
- 7.2.4 The application delivers 38% on nett gain of dwellings (as rounded; see justification set out in 3.7 above). In terms of the tenures, the applicant proposes a 70/30% split between affordable rented and other affordable intermediate homes (now including First Homes). The proposed affordable units are integrated within the development across the southern site.
- 7.2.5 The Council's Housing Officer notes (May 2023) 'within the context of providing a policy compliant tenure mix of affordable homes, including First Homes, the Housing Service would support the bias towards more larger family homes in the application overall, including in the affordable tenure, but also given the specific context and viability of the development overall'. The Council's Housing Officer is satisfied that the Affordable Housing mix accords with Policy H7 First Homes.
- 7.2.6 As such, the proposal is considered to be non-compliant with policy, but acceptable in justification due to rounding.

Dwelling mix

- 7.2.7 Policy H1(1) states that 'new residential development is required to deliver a wide choice of homes to meet a range of accommodation needs as set out in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). New development should provide a mix of housing tenures, types, and sizes appropriate to the site size, characteristics, and location'. The proposed dwelling mix and the SHMA requirement is set-out below.

Table 2			
Overall Housing Mix	No.	SHMA Req	Provided
1 bed	2	40%	10%
2 bed	3	30%	14%
3 bed	9	25%	40%
4 bed+	8	5%	36%
Total	22		

Table 3			
Market Mix	No.	SHMA Req	Provided
1 bed	0	10%	0%
2 bed	1	30%	8%
3 bed	5	40%	35%
4 bed+	8	20%	57%
Total	14		

Affordable Mix	No.	SHMA Req	Provided
1 bed	2	40%	25%
2 bed	2	30%	25%
3 bed	4	25%	50%
4 bed+	0	5%	0%
Total	8		

- 7.2.8 It is noted that, while the affordable housing unit mix is not strictly compliant with policy, the mix is skewed towards larger properties to address the need for family housing and is supported by the Housing Officer (Note: average length of wait for applicants for 2 and 3bed dwellings in Guildford is 6years 6 months).
- 7.2.9 In this regard, it is noted that in the Inspector's Final Report (Paragraph 48) on the LPSS he stated '*as regards housing mix, the policy is not prescriptive but seeks a mix of tenure, types and sizes of dwelling, which the text indicates will be guided by the strategic housing market assessment. The policy also seeks an appropriate amount of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings*'. While it is acknowledged that the proposed mix is slightly different to the SHMA guidance, it is noted that the SHMA mix is to be achieved over the whole of the housing market area and over the lifetime of the Plan. The flexibility set out in the policy must be used to achieve an acceptable mix across the borough. The application is not likely to cause any material harm to the Council's ability to deliver a compliant SHMA mix on a wider basis and overall, the proposed mix is deemed to be acceptable.

Accessible units

- 7.2.10 Policy H1(4) requires that on residential developments of 25 dwellings or more 10% of new dwellings will be required to meet Building Regulations M4(2) Category 2 (Accessible and adaptable dwellings), and 5% to meet Building Regulations M4(3)(b) Category 3 (Wheelchair user accessible dwellings standard). This is not a requirement of this application as it delivers 22 dwellings.

7.3 Impact on the character of the area and design of the proposal

Planning policy

- 7.3.1 NPPF (2021) Chp12 'Achieving well-designed places' sets out the expectation regarding Good Design: Paragraph 126 '*The creation of high-quality, beautiful, and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. **Good design** is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*'.
- 7.3.2 The National Design Guide (2021) and National Model Design Code (2021) (as referenced in NPPF Paragraph 129 – thus forming a material consideration) defines the Ten Characteristic for good design as follows: context; identity, built form, movement, nature, public space, uses, homes & buildings; resources; and lifespan. These should be seen as guidance notes on NPPF Paragraph 130.

- 7.3.3 Guildford Local Plan Policy D1 Place (LPSS) shaping, requires all new development to: *'...achieve high quality design that responds to distinctive local character (including landscape character) of the area in which it is set'*, and Policy D4 (Achieving high quality design) (LPDMP) which collectively sets-out the essential elements of place-making. Both these policies align with the NPPF and National Design Guide.
- 7.3.4 The Strategic Development Framework SPD (2020) envisages the establishment of an extended 'garden' settlement to Ash set within a strong green and blue infrastructure framework with good access to outdoor play and open space. The Framework recognizes the historic rural/ countryside character of the area and requires new developments to be informed by a landscape-led approach to ensure that new development settles into the surrounding historic and riparian landscape. The design of the public realm should encourage active travel, including walking and cycling to local schools, shops, and public transport stops/ stations. Strong and legible pedestrian and cycle links between the various strategic sites should be included to encourage cohesion and integration over the longer term. While the Framework does not suggest a Design Code, the intent suggests the creation of a sympathetic architectural style with possibly some variation to reinforce the idea of cohesion within this garden settlement.

Planning Officer's review

Impact on character of the area

- 7.3.5 It is material to note that the Applicant has been in extensive pre-application dialogue with the Council's Urban Design Officer leading to reviews and comments that have shaped the application's approach, masterplan/ layout, dwelling arrangement regarding streetscape, and landscape.
- 7.3.6 Harpers Road is an existing rural lane. Settlement alongside the lane is interspersed and/or opposite to fields, woodland and hedgerow. To the north of the application site, the hamlet of Harpers comprises roadside cottages, detached houses set back from the road, a recreation ground, hall and allotment gardens. Further south along Harpers Road are individual, detached properties, which include Streamside house (within the application site), Oakside Cottage and Harpers House.
- 7.3.7 While the site currently benefits from an enclosed semi-rural/ countryside and woodland setting it is acknowledged that current development and applications for the surrounding sites that make up this strategic allocation will fundamentally , and irreversibly change the character and setting of the area and the Applicant site. This approach was accepted in policy.
- 7.3.8 There is a distinct visual and physical gap between Harpers and Harpers House and Oakside Cottage to the south, which the SDF masterplan clearly retains. The SDF Fig. 50 Illustrative Landscape Framework prescribes that the northern part of the application site would be retained as woodland; the central area would be retained as open space with new tree planting; and development would be set back from the lane behind Oakside Cottage, forming a development parcel with Orchard Farm. The SDF plan illustrates a new public footpath that is intended to extend through the open space as part of an east west green corridor through the wider allocation.

7.3.9

- 7.3.10 It is noted that the intent of the green woodland separation between north and south portion has been retained, allowing for the extended habitat corridor from the adjacent western site to extend up to Harpers Road; the extended public footpaths network is enabled by the application.
- 7.3.11 The site is made up of three distinct characters, described below.
- 7.3.12 The northern portion is framed by treed hedgerows, a central grassland, and bounded by mature woodlands to the south, eastern and northern edges adding to the semi-rural/ countryside character that abuts the Green Belt (along the eastern edge of Harpers Road). This portion is the most open to view, and hence impact, to Harpers Road, Harper hamlet, and the heritage setting, albeit that the northern portion is screened from view by existing cottages and planting on Harpers Road. The entrance into this portion is presented with a landscaped-framed view towards the retained mature Oak (T49) and semi-mature Ash (T50,51) and further over rear gardens and retained boundary trees (Oak and Ash) west towards the proposed meadows at Orchard Farm.
- 7.3.13 The southern portion is a large domestic garden framed by poor hedgerows collectively low in habitat value, this portion is partially screened from Harpers Road by Oakside Cottage and mature tree planting. This portion will eventually be surrounded by new development to the west enclosing the site. The entrance view into the site is framed through retained mature Oak (T66, 67) and Field Maple (T70) and will be enhanced with new tree planting to contribute to the detached dwelling setting of the immediate area.
- 7.3.14 Separating the two portions is a very wooded, sunken stream that takes water off Harpers Lane and drains west between the Orchard Farm and Wildflower Meadows towards Ash. This landscape is to be managed and enhanced to continue to add a valued landscape character to Harpers Road and surrounding setting.
- 7.3.15 These three distinct landscape and habitat characters contribute to the local setting, and have been used to inform the layout of the application.
- 7.3.16 The application and surrounding emerging development have the potential to significantly **enhance** the landscape setting, improve the biodiversity/ habitat context, and create a new landscape framework for the area – this opportunity is welcomed. The application has the ability to contribute to the Strategic Development Framework SPD (2020)'s vision of creating an extended 'garden' settlement to Ash.
- 7.3.17 However, to manage the impact, the layout and design of individual applications must be of high quality, delivering development which positively contribute to the existing built form and landscape setting/ character of Ash and surrounds.

Design and layout

- 7.3.18 The application, described in the Applicant's Design and Access Statement (May 2022) comprise 8 dwellings located on the northern portion, arranged in a crescent around the retained Oak, with frontage facing outwards towards the woodlands and Harpers Road; and, 14 dwellings arranged to frame a L-shaped street central to the layout on the southern portion, with rear gardens facing the site boundaries. Parking is located immediate to the dwellings in car barns, surface bays and visitor bays are located within the streetscape.
- 7.3.19 A substantive landscape edge is retained to the southern edge of the stream on the southern portion to enable new development to settle into this landscape edge, affording long-views across and along the stream.
- 7.3.20 The layout establishes a coherent masterplan across the two sites and inter-relationship with adjacent new development and the existing dwellings. The layout has good permeability and a clear structure of public fronts facing the street, and secure rear gardens.
- 7.3.21 The Applicant's indicative elevation drawings (dwg. 6502/020/Rev. E; July 2020) illustrates the residential buildings as two-storey with 45° pitched roofs; the massing is broken-down into groundfloor (predominately red brick), and first floor and gable ends a mix of tile-hung and brickwork with some banding detail between ground and first floor. Single and double car barns are single storey with 45° pitched roofs – dressed in shingle and brick. Overall the built form is a sympathetic 'country' detailing, and the materiality of buildings is very relatable in terms of human scale. Overall the built form is acceptable.
- 7.3.22 The footpath/cycle routes allow for connection to the open space within the adjacent Streamside and Wildflower Meadows schemes to ensure that connectivity and accessibility is deliverable in accordance with the SDF 'key pedestrian and cycle route' policy requirement.
- 7.3.23 Officers are supportive of the way car parking is mostly tucked between dwellings to not visually dominate the streetscape. Provision for cycle and bin storage is addressed to be within the rear gardens/ curtilage of the dwelling plot to ensure that these elements to not distract and create visual clutter to the streetscape.
- 7.3.24 The streetscene submitted well illustrates a low-density development with subtle variation in house detail and sufficient space for street trees to mature to create visual and spatial interest. The buildings are relatively traditional in their form with the use of clay red bricks facades, some tile hanging to accentuate detail, clay tiled roofs, and PVs. Car barns use the same building materials to ensure continuity and urban coherence. The different orientation of buildings, responding to different street edges, creates a variety of pitched and hipped roofs throughout the scheme.
- 7.3.25 Officers note that a similar house type, material and landscape palette have been used at Wildflower Meadows and are proposed at Orchard Farm which has the collective benefit that the schemes over time will read as a singular extension, rather than as fragmented applicant sites. The common palette further strengthens the reading of the landscape and stream that runs between the developments, creating a common visual character. This approach is supported.

7.3.26 The general layout and scale to both portions are supported. A S106 Agreement will be necessary to ensure that connectivity with the adjoining development sites within the allocation can be achieved. Detailed resolution can be enabled at Reserved Matters.

7.3.27 Overall, the retention of the existing trees on site, the proposals to enhance the woodlands and stream landscape, and the introduction of structured street tree and hedge planting within the southern portion will allow the dwellings to settle into this existing and changing landscape; the proposed landscape and built form providing a feathered development approach from the more suburban Wildflower Meadows layout to the west, blending into the countryside character of Harpers Road and the Green Belt further east. As such, the layout and scale, dwelling form and materials, and landscape/ habitat proposal are deemed to be acceptable and compliant with Policy D1 and Policy D4.

7.4 Impact on the setting of listed buildings and heritage assets

Planning policy

- 7.4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2021): in terms of the NPPF Chapter 16 (Paragraph 194, 199 to 203) an assessment of the acceptability of an application in relation to impact to the historic environment is required to assess potential harm to the historic environment and setting, and review mitigation if appropriate. NPPF Paragraph 199 applies *'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to **substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance**'*. This policy reflects the statutory duty in Section 66(1). NPPF Paragraph 200 goes on to note that *'any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification'*.
- 7.4.2 For applications affecting the setting of a listed building Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 confers a statutory duty to Local Planning Authorities *'in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'*
- 7.4.3 Guildford Local Plan Policy D3 (Historic environment) requires that *'the historic environment will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to its significance. Development of the highest design quality ...positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness will be supported'*; and it states:
- a) *'the historic environment will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to its significance. Development of the highest design quality that will sustain and, where appropriate, enhance the special interest, character and significance of the borough's heritage assets and their settings and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness will be supported'*; and,
 - b) *'the impact of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets and their settings will be considered in accordance with case law, legislation and the NPPF'*.

- 7.4.4 Policy D18 (Designated Heritage Assets) and Policy D19 (Listed Buildings) requires that applications address proposals affecting designated heritage assets and their setting to inform an assessment of harm.
- 7.4.5 The listed buildings in the vicinity of the application include:
- a) Ash Manor complex (Ash Manor (Grade II*), Old Manor Cottage (Grade II*), Ash Manor Oast (Grade II), The Oast House (Grade II), and, Oak Barn (Grade II)), and Church of St Peter (Grade II*) which are either 500m or 700m away from the site respectively; and,
 - b) York House (Grade 2): C16 with early C19 extensions. Timber framed, frame partly removed and rebuilt in red brick across the front, brick cladding and infill to rear; incised render cladding on extension. Plain tiled roof with catslide across rear. L-shaped plan. Two storeys, with large ridge stack to left, central stack on extension to right. Irregular casement fenestration on the older half, one window on the first floor, two below. Regular fenestration to right, two windows on each floor. Planked door to re-entrant angle (Listing NGR: SU9045850889). The application falls within the setting of the heritage asset, located as immediate western neighbour on Harpers Road.
- 7.4.6 Consideration must be given to the fact that the construction of the railway in the 19th century resulted in a significant new feature in the landscape which physically severed the agricultural fields of Ash Manor and its agricultural complex from the application site; that Wildflower Meadows and future allocated sites effectively sit between the heritage cluster and the applicant site screening any impact; and, the site would be viewed as with the distant setting, in this regard we consider the impact of the application to be less-than-substantial harm identified at the **lower end of the spectrum**.
- 7.4.7 In terms of York House, its main orientation is south, slightly elevated over tree framed countryside/ mature garden including the trees to Harpers Lane. The house is well screened by this mature treed landscape and is not immediately evident from Harpers Road. The application retains the screening along the site with Harpers Road and the woodland north of the stream, both elements contributing to the broader setting of York House. In this regard, we consider the impact of the application to be less-than-substantial harm identified at the **lower end of the spectrum**.
- 7.4.8 The Applicant's Heritage Statement (May 2022) concludes that the '*proposals meet the relevant tests in paragraphs 194 and 195 in the NPPF as they lead to [much] less-than-substantial harm to the designated heritage asset*'.
- 7.4.9 GBC's Local Plan and Policy A31 enables considerable urban development within the surrounding context of heritage assets (refer to planning applications: 16/P/01679 (Land at Guildford Road), consented; 18/P/02308 (Land at May and Juniper Cottages), consented); and, the elevated Ash Road Bridge and new road by-pass will further erode the rural setting of the heritage assets. Consequently, this should be assessed as an evolving rural landscape that can be protected through the introduction of structured landscaping to mitigate the visual impact of development on the setting of heritage assets. An appropriately worded Condition to ensure that boundary landscaping is retained, introduced, and maintained in perpetuity to address the protection of the setting of the various Listed Buildings is to be secured.

7.4.10 The Conservation Officer supports the Officer's view is that the proposal would result in less-than-substantial harm identified at the **lower end of the spectrum** to the heritage assets listed above, and it has therefore been advised that NPPF Paragraph 202 will need to be engaged. i.e. weighed against public benefits. An assessment of the public benefits will be considered below.

7.4.11 As regards archaeology, it is noted that the Applicant submitted an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (Dec17)(updated July22) which concluded in the Summary:

- a) *'This Desk based Assessment has established that there is no known evidence for activity throughout prehistory. A possible Roman road may run through the site, although this is only postulated and has not been found nearby on this route. The probability of archaeology being present is assessed as low for most periods, and slightly raised to moderate for the Roman, medieval and Post medieval periods.'*
- b) *'The proposed development will have a low negative impact on the setting of the nearby Listed Building, York House, whilst the development will have no impact on the setting of other Listed Buildings in the wider landscape. The proposed development will be consistent with other similar developments in the wider landscape, and will thus not be out of character in its landscape setting.'*
- c) *(§6.2.4) 'To the south-west three Grade II listed buildings are co-located at Ash Manor; the Oast House & Stable (Ash Manor House) (MSE8295), a timber framed barn, Old Barn (MSE8296) and Ash Manor/Old Manor Cottage (MSE8653), all positioned around 0.6km away from the Site. This site originated in the 13th century. The main outlook from the Manor House is more to the north-west, towards Ash, with trees/hedges around the property largely screening the location of the development site, which is thus on the periphery of its vista.'*
- d) [Officer Note: SCC Archaeological Officer has requested an Archaeological Watching Brief Condition, to implement a trial trench across the northern portion of the site at commencement to investigate any Roman evidence].

Public benefits and balancing exercise

7.4.12 NPPF Paragraph 202 states that *'where a development proposal will lead to less-than-substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'*. Guidance in the form of the Historic Environment PPG explains the concept of 'public benefit' stating that *'public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social, or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit'*.

7.4.13 To address this requirement, the public benefits of the application are set-out below:

- a) The proposal would deliver a total of 22 dwellings in a mix which is generally compliant with the Guildford Local Plan. The Applicant has evidenced delivery through their (webpage) portfolio which gives some certainty to ensure that dwellings are delivered early in the plan period, where there is projected to be significant demand for additional homes.
- b) The proposal delivers 8 affordable houses. While it is acknowledged that this is what is required by policy, nevertheless, the provision of affordable dwellings with an acceptable mix, in a borough where there is significant demand for such dwellings is deemed to be a public benefit.
- c) The application will deliver a network of pedestrian and cycling routes, including financial contributions to public highway improvements, to connect with adjacent sites to enable safe pedestrian and cycling accessibility towards Ash Station, Ash, and bus stops along Guildford Road.
- d) The application retains and enhances the woodland and stream, which are an integral part of the character of Harpers Road and setting to York House.
- e) The application provides an extensive woodland habitat and framework surrounding the development which will increase biodiversity, provided new native hedgerows on the site, and, installing a range of ecological features including bat boxes. The proposal would therefore improve the ecological value of this part of the site and improve open space provision for the existing site and local community.
- f) This application will make financial contributions which will help to improve infrastructure (Ash Road Bridge) and community facilities in the area. While it is acknowledged that these contributions are required to mitigate the impacts of the development, nonetheless they will result in public benefits.

7.4.14 Overall, the public benefits of the application are wide ranging. It is considered that the scale of public benefits is sufficient in this instance to outweigh the identified heritage harm. In terms of Policy D3, *'the impact of the development proposal on the significance of heritage assets and their settings has been considered in accordance with case law, legislation and the NPPF*, the application is considered to be compliant with the requirements of policy.

7.5 Impact on neighbouring amenity

7.5.1 Policy D5 requires that *'Development proposals ...avoid having an unacceptable impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or resulting in unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of a) Privacy and overlooking; b) Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; c) Access to sunlight and daylight; d) Artificial lighting; e) Noise and vibration; and, f) Odour, fumes and dust'*. It is acknowledged that issues d) - f) will be addressed in detail at Reserved Matters, but in principle they are reviewed in terms of layout of the Outline application.

- 7.5.2 The northern portion has no immediate neighbouring residential properties, apart from the furthest northern boundary point, Pine Cottages (albeit that Wildflower Meadows will form a future residential edge, but this is assessed as under-construction, and consequently impact from this application on Wildflower Meadows is not a material consideration).
- 7.5.3 The southern portion has an immediate neighbouring residential property, Oakside Cottage, to the eastern boundary which will be assessed (albeit that Orchard Farm will form a future residential edge, but as this is undetermined it is not a material consideration).
- 7.5.4 Oakside Cottage is separated from the applicant site by mature treed hedgerows, trees, and a domestic garden. Due to the considerable mature landscape enclosure, and retention and enhancement of this screen planting, impact from the application on this dwelling in terms of a) - c) above will be very limited.
- 7.5.5 The layout has been designed to afford the new dwellings a degree of privacy and restricted overlooking typical of suburban developments; the dwellings are placed within a strong landscape framework to limit visual dominance of the dwellings on the site and the surrounding context; and, the distance of separation is such that there would be no material loss of amenity to the surrounding occupants of these properties. It is considered that the application will have no to very limited impact in terms of a) Privacy and overlooking; b) Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; and, c) Access to sunlight and daylight, as so assessed. In terms of issues d) – f), the layout has been assessed as acceptable, and is such that any detailed issues arising can be dealt with at Reserve Matter application.
- 7.5.6 Given the above, the application is deemed compliant with policy in this regard.

7.6 Private amenity of proposed dwellings

- 7.6.1 Policy H1(3) states that '*all new residential development must conform to the nationally described space standards as set out by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)*'. Policy D5 (Protection of amenity and provision of amenity space) is similarly applicable to this application.

7.6.2 **Table 5: Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)**
(Applicant's Planning Statement, pg24)

House Type	Occupancy	GIA (min sqm std)	Proposed GIA (sqm)	GIA Comply Y/N	Built-in storage Comply Y/N
1Bed flat	1B2P	50	50	Y	Y
2 Bed house	2B4P	79	80	Y	Y
3 Bed house	3B5P	93	95-105	Y	Y
4 Bed house	4B6P	112	122	Y	Y
4/5 bed house	4B7P	115-119	138	Y	Y

- 7.6.3 The Applicant has committed to comply with the NDSS in terms of GIA sqm; internal built-in storage; and, adequate private amenity space (with most dwellings having front garden space and compliant rear gardens).

7.6.4 This matter forms part of any Reserved Matters application and is not a consideration for this Outline planning application.

7.7 Highway, accessibility, and parking

7.7.1 The overriding requirement from national policy, is NPPF Paragraph 8 'Sustainable development' which requires applications to ensure that they promote sustainable transport options.

7.7.2 NPPF Paragraph 110 '*In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that: a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflect current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and, d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree*'.

7.7.3 NPPF Chapter 9 Promoting sustainable transport: in this regard we refer to Paragraph 104(c) 'opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued', and Glossary '**Sustainable transport modes:** *Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra-low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport*. i.e. the transport assessment needs to review all forms of modal options accessible to and enabled by the application in order for the application to be viewed as achieving 'sustainable development'.

7.7.4 Surrey Transport Plan (2022-2032) (LTP4): the Plan sets out four Objectives (zero emissions; support growth; well connected; well-being). The application broadly supports the Plan's objectives.

7.7.5 Guildford Local Plan (2015-2034): the application accord with the Local Plan's Policy ID3(1,2,4a,5,6,7,8 & 9) (Sustainable transport for new developments) which requires new development to contribute to the delivery of an integrated, accessible, and safe transport system, maximizing the use of sustainable transport modes. The Applicant will be required to submit a Travel Plan Statement to promote sustainable means of movement; to be secured by Condition.

7.7.6 Policy A31: in terms of key transport-related requirements, the application accords and makes financial contributions to enable policy: 'Land and provision of a new road bridge which will form part of the A323 Guildford Road, with an associated footbridge, to enable the closure of the level crossing on the A323 Guildford Road, adjacent to Ash railway station'. Further, the intent of the bridge is to remove 'rat-running' off local roads, for example Harpers Road, as the bridge offers a more convenient route. Note that SCC Highways make specific reference to the delivery of the bridge as a condition of their support.

- 7.7.7 Policy ID10 (Parking Standards for New Development): the application references Policy ID10(2), namely: a) *The provision of residential car parking, for use by residents themselves, will not exceed the maximum standards set out in [Appendix B]Table B1;* b) *the provision of additional unallocated parking, to allow for visitors, deliveries, and servicing, at the ratio of 0.2 spaces per dwelling will only be required where 50% or more of the total number of spaces, provided for use by residents themselves, are allocated;* c) [not applicable to this application]; d) *the provision of electric vehicle charging will provide at least the minimum requirements set out in the Building Regulations (Part S); and, e) the provision of cycle parking will provide at least the minimum requirements set out in Table B3.*
- 7.7.8 GBC Parking Standards for New Developments SPD, Table B1 (2023): the application accords with the on-and off-street car parking, cycle parking/storage, electric vehicle charging points for new development on strategic sites.

Table 6: Parking Provision (Applicant Car parking Schedule; May 2023)

Description	Units	Vehicles		Bicycles	EV
		Required	Compliant	Compliant	Application
1Bed (1s/unit) (apartment)	2	2	Y	Y	1EV point/unit: Unit compliant
2Bed (unit) (1.5s/unit)	3	4.5	Y	Y	
3Bed (2s/unit)	9	18	Y	Y	
4Bed (2.5s/unit)	6	15	Y	Y	
4/5Bed (2.5s/unit)	2	5	Y	Y	
Visitors (0.2/dwelling)		4.5	Y		
TOTAL	22	49		(47No. provided)	

Note:

- Car barns are included in the above parking provision and should have a minimum internal dimension of 6x3m to accord with Policy ID10(5b).
 - EV charging points (Building Regulations: one EVCP/ dwelling); specification to meet the Local planning Authority's Policy. Issue to be secured by Condition.
 - Cycle storage (one space/ bedroom): Issue to be secured by Condition.
 - SPD (2023) Designated accessibility parking bays (to accord with national guidance);
- 7.7.9 SCC Highway Authority have reviewed the application and have no objection, subject to Conditions and Informatives (set out in this report). Their review notes (Letter dated 3 March 2023):
- 'A trip rate analysis has been undertaken as part of the proposal and the proposed development of 22 dwellings is likely to generate 15 and 14 two-way vehicular movements during the AM (08:00 – 09:00) and PM (17:00 – 18:00) peak hour periods respectively [Officer Note: i.e. assessed by the CHA as not having a 'severe transport impact' on the operational and safety characteristics of the local highway network].*
 - The proposed access points to Harpers Road will be provided with sufficient visibility. Vegetation should be regularly maintained at the site access to ensure maximum visibility splays are achievable at all times. Tracking has been provided which demonstrates that vehicles can enter and leave the site effectively.*
 - The contribution of £25,200 has been calculated for the net increase of 21 dwellings at the site with a contribution amount of £1,200 per dwelling.*

- d) *Pedestrian/cycle links to neighbouring land will be provided, which will increase permeability in the local area [Officer Note: to be secured by s106 Agreement in perpetuity].*
- e) *The assessment of this planning application is based on the Ash Road Bridge (ARB) scheme being implemented which should reduce the overall number of vehicles using Harpers Road to avoid the existing level crossing, this site will benefit from the new road bridge and suitable contributions will be sought by GBC' [Officer Note: Grampian Condition to be included regarding delivery programme].*
- f) (Letter dated 6 July 2022): *'There is an existing road safety issue at the junction of Harpers Road and Ash Green Road. Our Road Safety Audit Team have designed an improvement scheme which should improve all approaches to the junction. The cost of the scheme is £25,000, it is deemed reasonable to request the developer to contribute this through a S106 Agreement. The development will add vehicles to this junction so the improvement scheme is directly related to the site and the contribution is deemed reasonable in terms of scale and kind to the development. Please can the applicant confirm they will contribute £25,000 for a road safety improvement scheme'.*

7.7.10 Harpers Road is a D-class road (D67), and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The available carriageway width, to function as a shared space if required, was deemed acceptable by SCC Highways.

7.7.11 Correspondence with the SCC Highways (18 May 2023) notes that their assessment has been undertaken in reviewing both the individual application's impact, and the cumulative impact of other developments taking access off Harpers Road, and that the highway and related safety assessment 'was considered that the implementation of the Ash Road Bridge should reduce the overall number of vehicles using Harpers Road to avoid the existing level crossing, resulting in a redistribution of traffic on the local highway network. Meaning that the impact of the new development on [Harpers] road is not thought to be severe'. The Applicant has similarly acknowledged that their Transport Statement addresses both singular and cumulative impact.

7.7.12 In assessing Harpers Road traffic flows, SCC Highways notes that in the unlikely event that Harpers Road encounters issues in regards to traffic, the financial contribution sought by them would go towards mitigating any negative impacts [Officer Note: a package of road safety measures has already been drawing up by the Orchard Farm Applicant in consultation and to the approval of the CHA (see Orchard Farm application (22/P/01083) Transport Statement (Dwg. ITB16016-GA-013/ Rev. C; dated 27 April 2022)). A similar package of measures could be adopted to address this application should the Orchard Farm application not be consented. Financial contributions have already been identified and will be secured by s106 agreement].

7.7.13 SCC Highways noted that the application makes provision for pedestrian and cyclist connections to the neighbouring Orchard Farm and Wildflower Meadows (adjacent developments) as part of a broader network to promote safe accessibility of travel within the wider area, specifically directing pedestrian and cyclist movement off Harpers Road [Officer Note: should Orchard Farm not be consented, the southern portion has access through the northern portion of the site to then access the PRoW].

7.7.14 The site is in proximity to Ash Railway Station, the pedestrian/cyclist connections provided within the site through to the neighbouring developments would provide higher permeability and offer a direct link to the station and other bus stops nearby. It is these routes that SCC Highways considers to be key, which would limit pedestrian and cyclists use of Harpers Road to travel north to those bus stops. The cycle voucher provision, as part of the S106 contributions, would further encourage sustainable travel to/from the site and this is in recognition of LTP4.

7.7.15 [Officer Note: SCC Highways has reviewed and responded specifically to the objection letter submitted by Copperwood Developments (Bridge) Ltd which sets out four key points of objection, namely a) Carriageway width; b) Visibility at Harper's Road junction with Guildford Road (A323); c) Harper's Road traffic flows; and, d) Shared Surface nature. SCC Highways note that the highway package of measures proposed will address the objections raised].

7.7.16 [Officer Note: for the purposes of this report, we reference the response from SCC Highways in regards to the Orchard Farm application (22/P/01083) as this will illustrate SCC Highways' address to the cumulative highway impact on Harpers Road, namely inter alia: '*...subject to an identified package of measures, SCC have no objection to the [Orchard Farm] progressing. The assessment, and subsequent 'no objection' from SCC has identified that:*

- a. *Delivery of pedestrian and cycle connections, which provide onward connections to the existing and future network of streets, paths, and Public Rights of Way, enhancing the ability to access day-to-day facilities and public transport infrastructure and reducing the need for existing and future residents to walk along Harpers Road.*
- b. *Delivering a traffic calming scheme on Harpers Road which would improve the environment for all users locally (Traffic calming measures along Harpers Road as identified in Drawing No. ITB16016-GA-013A. These include: 30mph roundels along Harpers Road between Ash Green Road and the Guildford Road; a slight narrowing and surface treatments to Harpers Road in the vicinity of the exiting Public Right of Way to make this more prominent and improve pedestrian safety; and Signage at the Guildford Road junction warning of the potential for pedestrians to be 'in the road'.*
- c. *A financial contribution (as agreed with SCC) towards improvements such as: improving existing PRoW; improving the Ash Green / Harpers Road junction; and, local highway improvement schemes (A highway and transport contribution secured through the S106, which could be used towards: improving Local Public Rights of Way (PRoW); improvements at the Harpers Road / Ash Green Road junction; and, local highway improvement schemes in the vicinity of the site.*
- d. *A contribution towards the New Bridge Road which will reduce queuing at the existing level crossing and remove rat running traffic locally'.*

The matters raised address cumulative impact of both application on Harpers Road and consequently SCC Highways response and stated requirements above are a material consideration on this application].

7.7.17 The applicant has confirmed that the estate roads and parking areas will be retained in private ownership but constructed to adoptable standards.

7.7.18 The Officer has reviewed the refuse vehicles and fire tender tracking to ensure required movement is enabled and have no objection (see Tracking Plans).

- 7.7.19 Following concerns raised by GBC Urban Design Officer regarding ensuring pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between the individual sites that make up the strategic allocation, the Applicant has made provision for these routes to connect into the Orchard Farm site on the southern and western boundary. This commitment between Parties, to be secured by S106 Agreement, removes the concern raised.
- 7.7.20 In order to address issues raised by the local community regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety along Harpers Road; to address NPPF requirement to promote sustainable transport options; and, to address Policy A31 to ensure connectivity between individual development sites, the Applicant has submitted a 'Propose walking and cycling plan' (Dwg. 6502/SK003/Rev.C; May 2023) to illustrate the pedestrian and cycling network to be delivered and/or make financial contributions to enable evidence of promoting sustainable travel options.
- 7.7.21 The above plan illustrates a series of site specific and surrounding networks, including improvements to the PRoW that will enable relatively car-free and safe accessibility from the site towards Ash Station, Ash centre, bus stops along Guildford Road, and connection for ramblers along Footpath 356 PRoW towards Guildford. Officers suggest that this enabled network addresses concerns raised and evidences that future residents of the scheme will be able to avail of sustainable travel options and is strongly supported. Measures as set-out to be secured by Condition in consultation with SCC Highways.
- 7.7.22 Increasingly it is recognized that to encourage modal shift requires a step-change at point of journey origin. To enable this, the application will provide (safe and dry) bicycle stores to all dwellings, making access to the bicycle easier, and offer cycle vouchers to each household. These measures promote convenience of cycling as a day-to-day modal option.
- 7.7.23 NPPF Paragraph 111 states that 'development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be **severe**'. SCC Highways, as statutory authority, has no objection to the application.
- 7.7.24 The application provides car barns, on-driveway parking spaces, on-street parking for visitors, and cycling storage sheds. The application is deemed compliant with Policy ID10 (Parking standards for new development).
- 7.7.25 In terms of highways impact, it is concluded that the application does not result in any material increase in traffic in the area and no capacity concerns are raised. It is noted that this conclusion is reached taking into account all approved, committed and likely development in the immediate area. With the mitigation measures proposed, there would be no adverse impact on highway safety. As such, the proposal is deemed to be acceptable to SCC Highway Authority and the Officer Report.
- 7.7.26 It is noted that the Inspector did not refuse the appeal on highway grounds, nor have SCC Highways as statutory authority objected to any application on this site or at appeal on highway grounds. This is a significant material consideration in determination.

7.8 **Flooding and drainage**

- 7.8.1 The Environment Agency Mapping identifies the site as Flood Zone 1 - land assessed as having a less than 1-in-1,000 annual probability of river flooding.
- 7.8.2 The Applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (May 2022; Rev. 2) which has been supplemented with additional information requested by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). This is required to address Policy P4 (Flooding, flood risk and groundwater protection zones). Issues addressed/ arising:
- a) [Officer Note: the Applicant's statement that the 17/P/02616 Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as previously submitted remains '*supportive of the current application*' should be read against on-going correspondence, and is consequently to be viewed as having limited weight in this application];
 - b) (4.4.2) Site wholly within EA Flood Zone 1;
 - c) (5.2.2) '*Whilst the Guildford Borough Council's Level 1 SFRA identifies Harpers Lane to be at risk of surface water flooding in accordance with the national surface water flood risk mapping, it does not identify any historic flood records for the Site*';
 - d) Surface Water Drainage: '*Surface water is proposed to be attenuated via soakaways (plot and highways) with surface water discharging via infiltration*'.
 - e) (5.3.13) '*The maximum levels adjacent to the proposed road during the 1 in 100-year plus climate change (14%) event are 75.82-76.05m AOD. The road levels will be raised above this maximum level to ensure that the road is flood-free for all events up to the 1 in 100-year event plus climate change (14%) to allow for safe access and egress. If flooding on the road does occur this will be shallow and would be unlikely to pose a risk to life*' [Officer Note: detail consideration at RM];
 - f) (5.3.14) '*The finished floor levels of the proposed properties will be >300mm above the 1 in 100-year plus climate change maximum water levels which are denoted in Figure 5-9*' [Officer Note: detail consideration at RM];
 - g) (6.4.3) '*the proposed development and associated surface water drainage scheme has been designed to sustainably manage the run-off from the critical 1 in 100-year storm event with a 40% allowance for climate change*';
 - h) Appendix (FRA2): Indicative Surface Water Drainage Strategy (dwg.06153-A-0101/P3; March22) [Officer Note: we raise concern that the 'indicative locations of proposed geocellular soakaways' in some cases will be within tree TRZs and/or proposed new tree planting which could impact on root damage during installation / long term growth. This issue can be addressed at Reserved Matters].
- 7.8.3 Broadly, the Applicant's strategy is that all road and roof runoff will drain into a series of geocellular soakaways located within the landscape areas and/or by the use of porous paving. The soakaways have been sized to store and release all surface water runoff from the proposed development at a rate as required to and including the 1 in 100-year plus 40% climate change event [Officer Note: this would address Policy D15(3c)(4) – Climate change adaptation].

- 7.8.4 Planning conditions have been recommended to ensure that the 'principles' set as part of the Outline application are followed through at detailed design, at the construction phase, and 'in-operation'. The development will need to demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed as designed, with any minor amendments picked up.
- 7.8.5 The flood and drainage strategy and measures as tabled are acceptable to the LLFA (subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions). In this regard, the application is compliant with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and the Guildford Local Plan.
- 7.8.6 Given the above, the application is deemed compliant with policy in this regard.

7.9 Sustainability

- 7.9.1 National planning policy requires policies and decisions to be in line with the Climate Change Act 2008 and NPPF Paragraph 152 which requires the planning system to '*shape places in ways that contribute to **radical reductions** in greenhouse gas emissions*'.
- 7.9.2 Guildford Local Plan Policy D2 (Climate change, sustainable design, construction, and energy) requires that (4) '*Proposals for major development are required to set out in a sustainability statement how they have incorporated adaptations for a changing climate...*' and, (9) '*New buildings must achieve a reasonable reduction in carbon emissions of at least 20 per cent measured against the relevant Target Emission Rate (TER) set out in the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended) (Part L)*.' Further, the application should be read against Policy D14(1)(4) (Sustainable and low impact development). Requirements within Policy in some cases require detailed construction resolution and are to be addressed as part of a Reserved Matters application.
- 7.9.3 Climate Change, Sustainable Design, Construction and Energy SPD (2020): the SPD provides guidance for planning policy and sets out the requirements for energy statements and sustainability statements for major developments. The applicant's evidence is reviewed against these requirements.
- 7.9.4 The application has submitted an Energy Statement (February 2022) to address current and emerging policy requirements. They note that the proposed development will be built under the Building Regulations (Part L 2021):
- a) '*Building Regulations Part L 2021 and the associated Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP 10) calculations make assumptions regarding the inclusion of Solar PV as well as fabric improvements to calculate the Target Emission Rate, which in turn will make it harder to achieve a pass. Part L 2021 represents a 31% improvement over current regulations (Part L 2013)*'.
 - b) '*Dwellings will be designed to pass Part L 2021 with either solar PV or air source heat pumps (ASHP). Either solar PV or ASHP, or a mix of the two technologies across the development would be used to satisfy Planning Policy D2*'.

- 7.9.5 The Outline planning commitment by the Applicant is that the development will reduce regulated CO2 emissions by integrating a range of passive design ('fabric first') and energy efficiency measures throughout the dwellings. In terms of this issue, the layout has been assessed as acceptable, and is such that any detailed issues arising can be dealt with at Reserve Matter application.
- 7.9.6 Detailed issues relating to efficient use of resource, management of waste, and sustainable design/ climate change adaptation as set out in Policy D2, D14, D15, D16(4)(5) and the SPD are to be addressed through either Reserved Matters and/or Building Regulations.
- 7.9.7 The application as submitted for Outline is consequently, as read, compliant with policy in this regard.

7.10 Open space provision

Planning policy

- 7.10.1 As part of Chapter 8 'Promoting healthy and safe communities, NPPF Paragraph 92(c) requires applications to '*enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, ...walking and cycling*'; and, Paragraph 93(a) '*planning policies and decisions should...a) plan positively for the provision and use of open space*'. It is important to note that such open space is not defined solely as active sport areas such as sport fields, increasingly it is recognised that landscape spaces that accommodate informal play/leisure have both an educational, recreational, and well-being importance and should be encouraged.
- 7.10.2 Policy ID6 (Open space in new developments) requires that 'Development proposals that would result in a net increase in number of residential units are required to provide or fund open space based on the expected occupancy of the new development and the quantity standards set out in Table ID6a and ID6b. The cumulative policy requirement is 2.68ha/1,000 people. The occupancy rate is defined in Paragraph 6.19 relating to average occupancy rate for size of dwelling (taken as 2No. 1bed: 1.5p; 5No. 2bed: 2p; 11No. 3bed: 2.5p; 4No. 4bed: 4p) circa. 57 people [Ref. interpreted Nomis 2011 QS413EW - Guildford]. The application would need to provide circa 0.15ha (1,500sqm) open space.
- 7.10.3 In the Design and Access Statement (May 2022), supported by the Proposed Site Plan (Dwg. 6502/SK002 Rev. A; January 2023), the application evidences the open space provision as a hierarchy of natural play (*Pockets of green space including areas of informal public open space are provided... An existing tree belt through the centre of the site and trees to the north of the site provide informal recreation opportunities for both existing and proposed residents*); and pedestrian and cycle pathways that support the open space strategy.
- 7.10.4 The Site Plan (landscape masterplan) has been designed to provide a range of informal, habitat play areas for all abilities and ages. The activity strategy focuses on a woodland landscape and exploratory features using more natural play, encouraging interaction with diverse site habitat as an educational informative. This approach is strongly supported, and enacts Policy ID6(10).

- 7.10.5 The site is approximately 1.25ha including the central woodlands. In terms of open space provision, a total area of approximately 0.14 hectares of land is required by policy. In the Design and Access Statement Map 3 (Post-development habitats) the application is providing c.0.45ha of habitat areas and informal play opportunities which will form the main amenity space for residents. These areas would provide a) Amenity space/ natural green space; b) Play space (children); c) Play space (youth); and make a land contribution to informal play as required by Policy ID6 (Table ID6a). Due to this provision, a reduced financial commitment for public open space is sought.
- 7.10.6 There is some concern expressed that the provision for more structured play and related play areas for very young families and more active sport-orientated families is not provided. In terms of Policy ID6, the application site is not of a sufficient size to deliver 'Park and recreation grounds, including playing pitches' i.e. formal playing field space.
- 7.10.7 Consequently, to address these concerns, it is recommended that a) the Applicant provides some timber play equipment complimentary to the natural setting within the landscape areas, preferably in closer proximity to the dwellings to promote natural surveillance; and b) the Applicant makes an apportioned financial contribution towards the provision or improvement of playing pitches in the vicinity of the site. This is deemed to be acceptable to mitigate the impacts of the development and will ensure that an appropriate facility is available for residents of the site to use.
- 7.10.8 It must be noted that the approach to create a more nuanced landscape that promotes habitat diversity, provides for alternative forms of outdoor activity that promotes active lifestyle and well-being across diverse age-groups and abilities, and takes a more informed approach to how developments provide a landscape and open space framework to respond to creating local biodiversity, is most welcome and strongly supported. This landscape approach sits well with the adjacent Orchard Farm meadows to extend this informal landscape along the stream corridor.
- 7.10.9 Detailed matters of informal play equipment can be addressed at Reserve Matters application. The application is consequently, as read, compliant with policy in this regard.

7.11 Impact on trees and vegetation

- 7.11.1 The Guildford Local Plan Policy P6 (Protecting important habitats and species), and BS5837 (2012) 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction' sets out the requirement to address the impact of development on existing trees and treed hedgerows within or framing the site. In this regard, the existing landscape has local value in terms of the setting to the Listed Building (York House) adjacent to the site along Harpers Road and contributes to the overall character of Harpers Road.
- 7.11.2 There is a Tree Preservation Order (GBC TPO 3 2017) protecting the trees and tree groups across the north portion of the site. There are no Veteran Trees within the site.

- 7.11.3 The Applicant has submitted an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (report and dwg./ Rev. E; May 2022), supported by a Tree Protection Plan (dwg./ Rev.H; May 2022) and an Arboricultural Method Statement (May 2022), which concludes that *'The proposed houses can be built with minimal impact [on the tree] surrounds. Full provision can be made for the protection of existing trees to ensure their continued viability following the completion of construction works'*.
- 7.11.4 It is noted that the application conserves and enhances the woodlands to the site, allowing for the management, succession, and biodiversity habitat enhancement of the existing landscape to be retained and augmented. The landscape strategy further addresses the screening of the development with the introduction of new tree and treed hedgerow planting which over time will contribute to the woodland setting. That a significant site area is given over to woodlands is to be welcomed.
- 7.11.5 It is considered that the Assessment complies with the objectives of policy; where applicable, recommendations and/or identified matters will be secured by Condition.

7.12 Impact on ecology

- 7.12.1 In terms of surrounding context, there are several designated ecological sites located in close proximity to the site, including <1km statutory designated Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA); and <2km of the Ash to Brookwood Heaths SSSI located approximately 700 m to the north of the Site and the Basingstoke Canal SSSI located approximately 1.2 km to the northwest of the Site; Lakeside Park Local Nature Reserves (LNR); and, non-statutory designated Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI).
- 7.12.2 A Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening was undertaken by the Local Planning Authority to consider the likely significant impacts arising from the delivery of Policy A31's strategic site allocation (then applicable to this application) on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA), as protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations). It was agreed that any mitigation could be addressed through a SANG land agreement for individual applications. It is noted that an Appropriate Assessment has been submitted by the LPA to Natural England (see Thames Basin Heath SPA matter below).
- 7.12.3 [Officer Note: the Local Plan has been subject to a Habitat Regulations Assessment. This concluded that the development of this site, given it is allocated within said Local Plan, will not have a significant effect upon the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC. The closest SSSI, Ash to Brookwood Heaths, is also covered by the above-mentioned SAC designation, as such, for the same reasoning as provided above for the SAC, no significant impact on the SSSI from the proposed development is predicted].

Ecological Impact Assessment and surveys

- 7.12.4 The application has submitted an Ecological Impact Assessment (May22) and supporting surveys (bats, breeding birds, badgers, hazel dormouse, reptiles; initial survey 2017, updated 2019 and 2022). *'The report sets out an assessment with regards to the Important Ecological Impact Features and includes measures to avoid, mitigate and, if necessary, compensate for significant residual effects. Ecological enhancement measures are proposed to provide biodiversity net gains in line with local and national planning policy.'*
- 7.12.5 The Applicant notes that *'the Biodiversity Management and Enhancement Strategy has been produced considering the 2017 Ecological Assessment [and surveys] , the 2019 and 2022 Ecological Appraisal, as well as a detailed desktop study undertaken in 2022'*. It is suggested that monitoring surveys, mitigation, and enhancement measures are reviewed as conditions.
- 7.12.6 A recent site visit by the Case Officer did identify renewed badger activity of the outlying setts which was identified for closure. The Applicant would need to apply for a license to close and relocate this sett.
- 7.12.7 Renewed surveys may be required to identify activity levels of badgers, bats, and nesting birds on site; establish presence/likely absence of bats in the buildings proposed for removal or that could be impacted by the proposed development and ascertain the presence/likely absence of GCN and reptiles. SWT in their response (8 August 2022) *'recommend that prior to determination of this planning application, **clarification** is obtained on whether the applicant is proposing to undertake additional updated surveys (e.g. for reptiles, bats and breeding birds) to help determine the current status of ecological features on site, which could be adversely affected by the proposed development works either now or at the reserved matters stage in order to provide more detailed and updated mitigation strategies. All surveys should conform to best practice guidance'*. The SWT sets out a range of recommendation measures (Table 1 Summary of Recommendations) and suggest at what planning stage they should be undertaken, including 'prior to determination', to inform the determination by the Local Planning Authority.
- 7.12.8 In light of the fact that this application has not been determined within the statutory period; that the Applicant has **clarified** in their EIA report (Chapter 6 and 7) that renewed survey will be undertaken; and, that this is an Outline application, it is considered that the SWT's Summary of Recommendations can be addressed as conditions to the Outline and discharged prior to the Applicant making a Reserved Matters application as required, and attached to the Reserved Matters application as required.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.12.9 Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) except for small sites will have to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) from November 2023. BNG will be required for small sites from April 2024. BNG will be measured using Defra's biodiversity metric and habitats will need to be secured for at least 30 years.

- 7.12.10 In terms of Policy P7(12) to deliver biodiversity net gain, 'Qualifying development proposals submitted after the national scheme comes into effect are required to achieve a biodiversity net gain of at least 20 per cent'.
- 7.12.11 The Applicant (see letter and supporting information 9 May 2023) notes, 'The Layout of the Site has ...the additional provision of newly created woodland habitat south of the existing woodland to be retained by way of compensating for this small loss. Following the revised layout an updated Biodiversity Net Gain Metric 3.1 calculation has been undertaken. The Site now demonstrates a biodiversity net gain of 10.44% for habitat units and 126.79% hedgerow units. More importantly though due to the introduction of this additional woodland creation the trading rules of the metric have now been satisfied'.
- 7.12.12 The Officer notes that the application is compliant with BNG policy.
- 7.12.13 The Assessment identifies that the application would require 0,40ha of SANG as mitigation. The Applicant has agreed that this will be addressed by legal agreement.
- 7.12.14 It is recommended that the ecological enhancement measures, as well as the maintenance and monitoring to ensure the long-term success of the enhancements, are detailed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which is to be secured through Reserved Matters condition.
- 7.12.15 It is considered that the submitted evidence complies with the objectives of policy; where applicable, recommendations and/or identified matters will be secured by condition and/or Reserved Matters conditions.

7.13 Impact on air quality and noise

- 7.13.1 The Guildford Local Plan Policy P9 (Air quality), Policy D11 (Noise impacts), and Policy A31(12) inter alia sets out the requirement to address the impact of development on and from the surrounding context. In this regard we note the impact of the A31 and A331 in the vicinity of the site
- 7.13.2 The Environmental Health Officer has not objected to the application but states 'if the application is being considered for approval, I will ask the developer to submit an Air Quality Report. The report does not need to carry out modelling/monitoring exercise to assess the air quality impact of the proposed development, but must focus on air quality measures to control emissions during construction phase and good design principles (air-quality-planning-guidance.pdf (iaqm.co.uk)) so that the proposed development will have least impact on the existing air quality in the area'. In a similar regard, a Noise Assessment should be undertaken.
- 7.13.3 It is considered that both assessments do not affect the access, layout, and scale here for determination and can consequently be undertaken as a Reserved Matters condition.

7.14 Thames Basin Heaths SPA

- 7.14.1 The Council has adopted the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy SPD 2017 which provides a framework by which Applicants can provide or contribute to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) within the borough which along with contributions to Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) can mitigate the impact of development.
- 7.14.2 The proposed development is located within the 400 metres to five-kilometre buffer of the SPA. As there are no Council owned SANGs in the catchment of the site, the applicant has indicated that they will secure SANG capacity in one of the SANGs which are operational in the Ash and Tongham area. This will provide the mitigation for the proposal.
- 7.14.3 An Appropriate Assessment was submitted by the LPA to Natural England which concluded that as long as the applicant is to comply with the requirements of Guildford's Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy for the Thames Basin Heaths SPA (through a legal agreement securing contributions to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM)), Natural England would have no objection to the application.
- 7.14.4 It is noted that a Grampian style condition is recommended which states that the development cannot be implemented until the SANG capacity identified for this application has been delivered, secured and is in operation. The applicant will also be responsible for paying the SAMM contribution to be secured through legal agreement.
- 7.14.5 Given the Grampian condition, it is considered that the proposal would be compliant with the objectives of the TBHSPA Avoidance Strategy SPD 2017 and Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan 2009.

7.15 Planning contributions and legal tests

- 7.15.1 The three tests as set out in Regulation 122(2) require s106 agreements to be: (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (b) directly related to the development; and, (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. If all other aspects of the application were deemed to be acceptable, then the following contributions to be secured by way of a s106 agreement.
- 7.15.2 Ash Road Bridge infrastructure (nett gain of dwellings): the application is required to make a financial contribution to Ash Road Bridge, infrastructure required to unlock the strategic allocation and re-direct pressures on the surrounding roads (refer to SCC Highway's position in this regard). On this basis, the contribution is directly related to the application to enable accessibility and mobility. These measures all help to mitigate the impact of the proposal on the surrounding highway network and are necessary, directly related to the development and reasonable and therefore meets the requirements of the Community Infrastructure Levy (2010) Regulation 122(2). Sum: £10,000/unit plus indexation (RPI) since March 2019 (£262,372 as at June 2022)

- 7.15.3 Affordable housing: the requirement for affordable housing has been set out in the Housing Need section. A legal agreement would secure the provision of eight affordable dwellings, as well as their tenure and mix, so that the application is compliant with local and national policies, as justified. The obligation is necessary, directly related to the development and reasonable and therefore meets the requirements of Regulation 122.
- 7.15.4 SANG land (nett gain): this is required as a combination of two avoidance and mitigation measures (SANG and SAMM) put in place to protect the Thames Basin Heaths SPA from the impacts of new residential development. The Applicant has agreed to commit to a private SANG land agreement to address this requirement from Natural England to protect and mitigate sensitive landscapes of importance. The development would require 0,40ha of SANG.
- 7.15.5 SAMM tariff (nett gain): this tariff is required as a combination of two avoidance and mitigation measures (SANG and SAMM) put in place to protect the Thames Basin Heaths SPA from the impacts of new residential development. The tariff is a requirement from Natural England to protect and mitigate sensitive landscapes of importance. Based on the Council's Planning contributions for Open Space and Special Protection Area (2023 to 2024). Sum: £23,276.
- 7.15.6 Off-site Open Space Provision (gross gain): while the application provides a range of informal, on-site children's play area, the application will make use of surrounding facilities and put pressure on existing children's play spaces in the area. It is considered reasonable to require an apportioned contribution to mitigate this impact. Based on the play space tariffs set out in the Council's Planning Contributions SPD (Planning contributions for Open Space and Special Protection Area (2023 to 2024) calculator). Sum: £66,689.
- 7.15.7 SCC Highways: SCC have identified measures towards highway safety/highway improvement schemes within the vicinity of the site. Sum: £25,200 (3 March 2023).
- 7.15.8 SCC Cycle voucher scheme at £100/dwelling. Sum: £2,200.
- 7.15.9 The SCC S106 will include a requirement that the adjoining developments and general public are given free and unfettered access to the application's estate roads (private) so that the accessibility requirements set out in the Strategic Development Framework SPD can be achieved.
- 7.15.10 These measures all help to mitigate the impact of the proposal on the surrounding highway network and are necessary, directly related to the development and reasonable and therefore meets the requirements of Regulation 122.
- 7.15.11 SCC Education: the application is likely to place additional pressure on school places in the area at early years, primary and secondary level. The application consequently makes financial contributions to address/ mitigate these impacts. Surrey County Council as the Education Authority provides a list of projects which contributions would be allocated to, and these are considered to be reasonable and directly related to the application. The total education contribution has been agreed with the applicant. Sum: a) Early years contribution £19,125; b) Primary contribution £97,943; c) Secondary contribution £88,595: Total sum: £205,663.

7.15.12 The above financial contributions and land agreement have been accepted by the Applicant.

8. FINAL BALANCING EXERCISE

- 8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires decisions to be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This requires a broad judgement regarding whether the development accords with the plan read as a whole. NPPF Paragraph 11 states that *'plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development...For decision-taking this means...approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay'*. This is itself a substantial material consideration. The application forms part of allocated site A31 and is important for helping to deliver the housing identified in the Development Plan for this area. Overall, and taken as a whole, the proposal is considered to accord with the development plan. Therefore, the presumption is that the application should be approved without delay.
- 8.2 The heritage harm identified in this report, as less-than-substantial harm identified is at the **lower end of the spectrum**, must be considered and balanced against the benefits of the application as submitted. NPPF Paragraph 202 requires a balance of the heritage harm against the public benefits of the scheme. That balance has been carried out, and the assessment concludes that the public benefits of the application outweigh the heritage harm identified, even taking account of the great weight and considerable importance afforded to the heritage harm.
- 8.3 In light of recent challenge, the harms resulting from the application as identified by objectors is assessed and is balanced against the benefits of the application as submitted. This final balancing exercise is set out below. In assessing the weight to be afforded to harms / benefits, Officers have applied a scale which attributes **moderate, significant, or substantial** weight to each identified harm / benefit. Having attributed such weight, an overall judgement is then required regarding the balance of harm vs benefit.
- 8.4 The provision of 22 dwellings, and specifically 8 affordable dwellings, is a timely, much required contribution to the housing supply of the area against policy objectives; attribute – positive **significant weight**.
- 8.5 The application provides a very considerable woodland and riparian habitat and landscape open space on the site which will be accessible to both existing and future residents of the area. The application delivers BNG habitat value to the site and contributes to a new landscape narrative for the broader A31 strategic allocation; attribute - positive **moderate weight**.
- 8.6 The application delivers on and off-site ecological conservation and enhancement. It is acknowledged that there will be short-term harm to the environment/ landscape setting during construction activity, however, this has been addressed in a mitigation strategy. There would be the introduction of native tree and hedgerow planting, improvements to the stream, and, bat and bird boxes, in total retaining and enhancing habitat diversity to the site; attribute - positive **moderate weight**.

- 8.7 The associated benefits including short-term employment to the construction industry; supporting Guildford and Ash's growth as a local employment, commercial and retail centre; and, further economic benefits from the spend of future occupants, which should be afforded positive **limited weight** in favour of the application in light of overall scale of dwellings being delivered. Paragraph 81 of the NPPF suggests significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities generated by development.
- 8.8 While it is acknowledged that the contributions secured through this application are required to make the proposal acceptable in planning terms, they do nonetheless result in wider public benefits. The contributions will help to improve local facilities and will also assist in the delivery of the new road bridge to remove the level crossing at Ash station; attribute - positive **moderate weight**.
- 8.9 The application would help to improve and deliver pedestrian and cyclist accessibility and highway safety in the strategic allocation area by delivering a network of routes in conjunction with surround development, allowing unfettered access by the general public. It is important to note that the issue of pedestrian and cyclist safety on Harpers Road was the central concern raised by local residents and the Parish Council which has been addressed; attribute - positive **significant weight**.
- 8.10 The benefits of the application are wide ranging and long lasting. As noted above, the harm identified to the heritage assets and short-term harm to the environment is clearly outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Overall, it is considered that the benefits associated with the proposal do outweigh the identified harm.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 It is considered that the application accords with planning policy and delivers against the objectives of NPPF Paragraph 8 'Sustainable development'. The site is an allocated site within the Guildford Local Plan as identified in Policy A31 'Land at the south and east of Ash and Tongham' and forms part of Policy S2 'Planning for the borough -our spatial development strategy' to inform the Guildford Local Plan as adopted. The collective Strategic Site is now designated as being part of the urban area of Ash and Tongham. Whilst there would be an inevitable change in the character and appearance of the area, the principle of development has already been found to be acceptable.
- 9.2 The application would contribute to the Council's objectives of delivering homes, enabling inward investment, and securing long-term environmental gains within the designated strategic site and surrounds as identified in the Local Plan.
- 9.3 While it is acknowledged that the proposal results in less-than-substantial harm to the setting of York House and the buildings within the Ash Manor complex, it has been concluded that this is outweighed by the public benefits which flow from the proposal. In addition, it is noted that the heritage harm has been reduced through the retention and enhancement of the site woodlands and boundary landscaping to retain the overall character of the setting.

- 9.4 The application does not conflict with any policies that protect surrounding and/or environmentally sensitive areas (Thames Basin Heaths SPA etal), and proposes SANG mitigation in line with policy.
- 9.5 The application would provide 22 residential units, which would be in accordance with housing delivery commitments in the Guildford Local Plan. This includes the provision of affordable housing, which are of a size and mix which is acceptable to the Council's Housing Officer. The proposed dwellings are considered to provide a good level of internal and external amenity for future residents, fully compliant with the NDSS. There would be no unacceptable harm to neighbouring residents.
- 9.6 The application is acceptable to the statutory authorities in terms of highway safety, drainage (flooding), ecology, archaeology, and landscape, subject to conditions as noted. No statutory authority has objected to the application.
- 9.7 Overall, the Officer Report's assessment concludes that the adverse impacts of the application would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework and the Guildford Local Plan taken as a whole. As such, the application is deemed to be compliant with the Development Plan and subject to the conditions and s106 agreement securing the contributions set out above, the application is deemed to be acceptable and is **recommended for approval**.

CONDITIONS

1. **Reserved matters:** details of the appearance, landscaping, and materials (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority not later than one-years from the date of this permission prior to the commencement of development and the development shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: In accordance with section 91 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. **Time limit:** the development as hereby permitted shall commence not later than the expiration of two-year from the date of approval of the reserved matters permission.

Reason: In accordance with section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

3. **Approved documents:** the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings as set out below.

Location Plan – dwg. 6502-LOC1A; 30/05/2023.

Proposed Block Plan – dwg. 6502-BLOC Revision C; 30/05/2023.

Proposed Site Plan – Streamside Option 3 – dwg. 6502-SK-002 Revision E; 30/05/2023.

Proposed Walking & Cycling Plan – Streamside Option 3 – dwg. 6502-SK-003 Revision C; 30/05/2023.

Indicative Elevations – dwg. 6502-020 Revision E; 29/07/2020.

Proposed Access Arrangements – dwg. 22055/001 Revision C; 05/2022.

Tracking Plans: Refuse Lorry Vehicle Swept Path Assessment – dwg. 231684/TR/01; 05/2022.

Tracking Plans: Fire Appliance Swept Path Assessment – dwg. 231684/TR/02; 05/2022.

Reason: to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in the interests of proper planning.

4. **Site Waste Management Plan:** no development shall take place until a site waste management plan and demolition strategy of the existing building as identified in the Outline Building Survey (dwg. 4924/02; dated April 2015) and the removal of foundations and hard standing has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All of the resultant demolition materials and debris that are not to be reused in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall be removed from the site. The strategy will address, inter alia:
- Programme of works (to address habitat requirements).
 - Disposal of waste off-site and receptor sites.
 - Programme for the installation of bat and bird box (to enable relocation)

Reason: in the interests of the character and appearance of the area / and neighbouring amenities in accordance with Policy D5(1e,f) and D14(5) of the Guildford Local Plan.

5. **Surveys:** no development above DPC level (excluding any demolition and site clearance works) shall take place until survey as identified to mitigate the impact of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The surveys will address, inter alia:
- Up-to-date surveys for reptiles, bat roosts in buildings, nesting birds.
 - Survey for badgers including ground level tree assessment for bats.
 - Clarification of impact on great crested newts.
 - Provision of adequate compensation for loss of deciduous woodland Habitat of Principal Importance

All surveys should conform to best practice guidance;

Reason: to ensure that the habitat is developed in a way that contributes to the nature conservation value of the site in accordance the NPPF and Policy D6 and P5 of the Guildford Local Plan.

6. **Time limit on development before further surveys are required:** if the development hereby approved does not commence (or, having commenced, is suspended for more than 12-months) within two-year from the date of the planning consent, the approved ecological measures secured through condition(s) shall be reviewed and, where necessary, amended and updated. The review shall be informed by further ecological surveys commissioned to a) establish if there have been any changes in the presence and/or abundance of badgers, bats, reptiles, and protected species as identified; and, b) identify any likely new ecological impacts that might arise from any changes.

Where the survey results indicate that changes have occurred that will result in ecological impacts not previously addressed in the approved scheme, the original approved ecological measures will be revised and new or amended measures, and a timetable for their implementation, will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the re-commencement of development. Works will then be carried out in accordance with the proposed new approved ecological measures and timetable.

Reason: to ensure that the habitat is developed in a way that contributes to the nature conservation value of the site in accordance the NPPF and Policy D6 and P5 of the Guildford Local Plan.

7. **Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) Agreement:** no development above DPC level (excluding any demolition and site clearance works) shall take place until written confirmation has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority that Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) to mitigate the impact of the development has been secured and no dwelling shall be occupied before written confirmation has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority that the works required to bring the land up to acceptable SANG standard have been completed.

Reason: Grampian condition as the development is only acceptable if the impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area can be mitigated. This is reliant on the provision of SANG. Avoidance works associated with development need to be carried out prior to the occupation of the development so that measures can cater for increased number of residents to avoid adverse impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area in accordance the NPPF and Policy D5 and P6 of the Guildford Local Plan.

8. **Highway Works:** No dwelling shall be occupied until the proposed vehicular accesses to Harpers Road hereby approved have been constructed and provided with visibility zones in accordance with the approved plans, Drawing No. 22055-001 Rev C, and thereafter the visibility zones shall be kept permanently clear of any obstruction over 0.6m high.

Reason: in order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other highway users in accordance with Policy ID3(6) of the Guildford Local Plan.

9. **Roadworks (Estate Roads):** no above ground works shall take place (excluding ground works and construction up to damp proof course and the construction of the access) until detailed drawings, including levels, sections and constructional details of the proposed estate roads, surface water drainage, outfall disposal and street lighting to be provided, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The estate roads shall be designed and constructed to a standard approved by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the Highway Authority's standards.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety to secure satisfactory standards of access for the proposed development and for the benefit and convenience of the public at large in accordance with Policy ID1 and ID3 of the Guildford Local Plan.

10. **Vehicle parking:** the development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless and until vehicle parking areas in accordance with the approved plan (Proposed Site Plan – Streamside Option 3 - 6502-SK-002 Revision E; May 2023) for vehicles to be parked and for vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear in accordance with the Highway Authority's standards hereby as submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority have been constructed and provided and the vehicle parking spaces shall thereafter be retained for the sole benefit of the occupants of the dwelling for that use.

Reason: a first-occupation condition to provide adequate space for the parking of vehicles and to ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway in accordance with Policy ID10 of the Guildford Local Plan.

11. **Electric vehicle charging points:** the development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless and until each of the proposed dwellings and 50% (SCC) of all visitor spaces are provided with a fast-charge Electric Vehicle charging point (current minimum requirements - 7 kw Mode 3 with Type 2 connector - 230v AC 32 Amp single phase dedicated supply), the remaining visitor parking bays should be provided with cabling for the future provision of charging points. To be in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter retained and maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure that the development meets the objectives of sustainable development and carbon neutral objectives and to encourage the use of electric cars in order to reduce carbon emissions in accordance with Policy ID10 of the Guildford Local Plan.

12. **Surface Water Drainage Scheme:** the development hereby permitted shall not commence (excluding ground works and construction up to damp proof course and the construction of the access) until details of the design of a surface water drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. The design must satisfy the SUDs Hierarchy and be compliant with the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SUDs, NPPF and Ministerial Statement on SUDs. The required drainage details shall include:

- a) The results of infiltration testing completed in accordance with BRE Digest: 365 and confirmation of groundwater levels.
- b) Evidence that the proposed final solution will effectively manage the 1 in 30 & 1 in 100 (+40% allowance for climate change) storm events and 10% allowance for urban creep, during all stages of the development. If infiltration is deemed unfeasible, associated discharge rates and storage volumes shall be provided using a maximum discharge rate equivalent to the pre-development Greenfield run-off.
- c) Detailed drainage design drawings and calculations to include: a finalised drainage layout detailing the location of drainage elements, pipe diameters, levels, and long and cross sections of each element including details of any flow restrictions and maintenance/risk reducing features (silt traps, inspection chambers etc.). Confirmation is required of a 1m unsaturated zone from the base of any proposed soakaway to the seasonal high groundwater level and confirmation of half-drain times.
- d) A plan showing exceedance flows (i.e. during rainfall greater than design events or during blockage) and how property on and off site will be protected from increased flood risk.
- e) Details of drainage management responsibilities and maintenance regimes for the drainage system.

- f) Details of how the drainage system will be protected during construction and how runoff (including any pollutants) from the development site will be managed before the drainage system is operational.

Reason: to ensure the design meets the national Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SUDs and the final drainage design does not increase flood risk on or off site in accordance with NPPF and Policy P4 and P11 of the Guildford Local Plan.

13. **Implementation:** the development hereby approved shall not commence unless and until the construction contract for the Ash Road Bridge scheme (as approved through planning application 19/P/01460, as amended) has been entered into and construction works have been commenced on site pursuant to that contract.

Reason: to ensure the delivery of essential infrastructure required to enable the development in accordance with Policy ID1(1-5) of the Guildford Local Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1. If you need any advice regarding Building Regulations, please do not hesitate to contact Guildford Borough Council Building Control on 01483 444545 or buildingcontrol@guildford.gov.uk.
2. This statement is provided in accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Guildford Borough Council seek to take a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. We work with applicants in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - a) Offering a pre application advice service;
 - b) Where pre-application advice has been sought and that advice has been followed, we will advise applicants/agents of any further issues arising during the course of the application; and,
 - c) Where possible officers will seek minor amendments to overcome issues identified at an early stage in the application process.

However, Guildford Borough Council will generally not engage in unnecessary negotiation for fundamentally unacceptable proposals or where significant changes to an application is required.

In this case pre-application advice was sought and provided which addressed initial issues, the application has been submitted in accordance with that advice, however, further issues were identified during the consultation stage of the application. Officers have worked with the applicant to overcome these issues and the proposal is now deemed to be acceptable.

3. Lead Local Flood Authority

If proposed site works affect an Ordinary Watercourse, Surrey County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority should be contacted to obtain prior written Consent. More details are available on their website.

4. Surrey County Council Highway Authority

- a. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any works on the public highway. The Applicant is advised that prior approval and agreement must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, or verge to form a vehicle crossover or to install dropped kerbs. The Applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the agreement being in place. Please see www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-permits-and-licences/vehicle-crossovers-or-dropped-kerbs.
- b. In the event that the access works require the felling of a highway tree not being subject to a Tree Preservation Order, and its removal has been permitted through planning permission, or as permitted development, the Applicant will pay to the Council as part of its license application fee compensation for its loss based upon 20% of the tree's CAVAT valuation to compensate for the loss of highway amenity.
- c. The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out any works (including Stats connections/diversions required by the development itself or the associated highway works) on the public highway or any works that may affect a drainage channel/culvert or water course. The Applicant is advised that a permit and potentially a Section 278 agreement must be obtained from the Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge, or other land forming part of the highway. All works (including Stats connections/diversions required by the development itself or the associated highway works) on the highway will require a permit and an application will need to be submitted to the County Council's Street Works Team up to three-months in advance of the intended start date, depending on the scale of the works proposed and the classification of the road. Please see <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-permits-and-licences/the-traffic-management-permit-scheme>. The applicant is also advised that Consent may be required under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. Please see www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/emergency-planning-and-community-safety/flooding advice.
- d. The Applicant is reminded that it is an offence to allow materials to be carried from the site and deposited on or damage the public highway from uncleaned wheels or badly loaded vehicles. The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to recover any expenses incurred in clearing, cleaning, or repairing highway surfaces and prosecutes persistent offenders (Highways Act 1980 Sections 131, 148, 149).
- e. The Applicant is expected to ensure the safe operation of all construction traffic in order to prevent unnecessary disturbance obstruction and inconvenience to other highway users. Care should be taken to ensure that the waiting, parking, loading, and unloading of construction vehicles does not hinder the free flow of any carriageway, footway, bridleway, footpath, cycle route, right of way or private driveway or entrance. Where repeated problems occur the Highway Authority may use available powers under the terms of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the safe operation of the highway.

- f. The Applicant is advised that as part of the detailed design of the highway works required by the above conditions, the Highway Authority may require necessary accommodation works to street lights, road signs, road markings, highway drainage, surface covers, street trees, highway verges, highway surfaces, surface edge restraints and any other street furniture/equipment – this will be at the Applicant's own cost.
- g. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the electricity supply is sufficient to meet future demands and that any power balancing technology is in place if required. Electric Vehicle Charging Points shall be provided in accordance with the Surrey County Council Vehicular, Cycle and Electric Vehicle Parking Guidance for New Development 2022. If an active connection costs on average more than £3,600 to install, the developer must provide cabling (defined as a 'cabled route' within the 2022 Building Regulations) and two formal quotes from the distribution network operator showing this.
- h. The Applicant is advised that Public Footpath Number 356 runs to the north of the application site where highway improvement works are proposed, and it is an offence to obstruct or divert the route of a right of way unless carried out in complete accordance with appropriate legislation.
- i. The Highway Authority has no objection to the proposed development, subject to the above conditions but, if it is the Applicant's intention to offer any of the roadworks included in the application for adoption as maintainable highways, permission under the Town and Country Planning Act should not be construed as approval to the highway engineering details necessary for inclusion in an Agreement under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980. Further details about the post-planning adoption of roads may be obtained from the Transportation Development Planning Division of Surrey County Council.
- j. The Highway Authority would wish to see the roads within the site that are not to be offered for adoption be laid out and constructed to standards at, or at least close to, adopted standards.

5. Surrey County Council SUDs

If proposed site works affect an Ordinary Watercourse, Surrey County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority should be contacted to obtain prior written Consent. More details are available on our website. If proposed works result in infiltration of surface water to ground within a Source Protection Zone the Environment Agency will require proof of surface water treatment to achieve water quality standards. If there are any further queries please contact the Flood Risk, Planning, and Consenting Team via SUDS@surreycc.gov.uk.

6. Thames Water

- a. The Applicant should enter into a formal agreement with Thames Water Company to provide the necessary sewerage/ foul and surface water infrastructure required to service this development. The extent of the network proposed for adoption will be addressed at detailed design stage and agreed with Thames Water. Any remaining shared infrastructure will be maintained by an appointed management company which will include SUDs features and landscaping. The Applicant is advised that prior approval and agreement (Water Industry Act 1991) must be obtained from Thames Water before any works are carried out.

- b. A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures he will undertake to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 020 3577 9483 or by emailing trade.affluent@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed on line via www.thameswater.co.uk. Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.

7. Natural England

- a. Should continue to be consulted on all proposals where provision of site specific SANGS (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space) or other bespoke mitigation for recreational impacts that falls outside of the strategic solution is included as part of the application. Natural England strongly recommend that Applicant proposing site specific infrastructure including SANGs seek pre-application advice from Natural England through its Discretionary Advice Service.
- b. The Applicant is reminded that it is an offence to damage or destroy species protected under separate legislation. Planning permission for a development does not provide a defense against prosecution under European and UK wildlife protection legislation. Separate licenses and consents may be required to undertake work on the site where protected species are found, and these should be sought before development commences.
- c. This planning permission does not authorise any interference with animals, birds, marine life, plants, fauna, and habitats in contravention of the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) and other legislation.