

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL  
DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE CENTRAL  
**24 MAR 2011**

RECOMMENDED FOR PERMISSION

HAYWARDS HEATH

**10/03704/REM**

**PHASE 4A BOLNORE VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PARKFIELD WAY HAYWARDS  
HEATH**

**DETAILS PURSUANT TO PLANNING PERMISSION 09/02101/COND FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF 192 DWELLINGS IN PHASE 4A OF BOLNORE VILLAGE,  
INCLUDING DETAILED ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS.  
CREST NICHOLSON SOUTH**

POLICY: Major Development /  
In Built up Area /

ODPM CODE: Largescale Major Dwellings

8 WEEK DATE: 22nd February 2011

13 WEEK DATE: 14th March 2011

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the recommendation of the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning on the application for reserved matters approval as detailed above.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is a reserved matters submission dealing with the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of phase 4a, Bolnore Village. The details submitted are pursuant to the revised outline planning permission approved under 09/02101/COND.

The layout of the scheme has been well thought out and makes use of the existing landscape features to create a distinctive and well order schemed that will create high quality environment for future residents.

The proposed building designs and use of materials have been considered to have empathy with phases 1 to 3 of Bolnore Village, while ensuring that they will give this phase its own distinctive character. Symmetry and replication have been used to create well defined streets.

While the site is surrounded by ancient woodland, the proposed scheme has taken this into account by ensuring that there is an appropriate buffer zone, of 15m, to all ancient woodland at Reading Wood, Four Acre Wood and King Street Copse.

The applicants made provision for parking that equates to 2.1 spaces per dwelling and this is within the scope of the outline planning permission and current Council policy. Within the overall provision of 408 spaces, a number of visitor spaces have been provided through out the scheme. A total of No.12 affordable houses have been provided in three locations within the proposed development, ensuring suitable integration. The level proposed is in accordance with the revised outline applications that were determined by the Council last year

It is considered that the proposal conforms to the outline planning permission and the policies B1, B2, H4, R3, T5 and T6 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan and policies H45 and T4 of the South East

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That reserved matters approval is granted, along with the details submitted pursuant to conditions 11 (parking), 14 (storage of cycles), 24 (tree protection plan), 25 (buffer zone protection) and 32 (construction management plan), which can be discharged.

## **SUMMARY OF CONSULATIONS**

**WSCC Highways** - No objection

**WSCC Ecology** - to be reported

**Natural England** - No comments to make although reference to current standing advice.

**Southern Water** - to be reported

**MSDC Urban Designer** - No objection, although some minor points of detail highlighted.

**MSDC Landscape Officer** - to be reported.

**MSDC Drainage Engineer** -Satisfied that surface water to be attenuated to maintain existing Green field runoff rates, although some detailed point's needs to addressed.

## **SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS**

128 letters of objection have been received making the following points;

- A 15m buffer to the ancient woodland to King Street Copse must be provided
- A protective fencing to the buffer zones must be provided
- Advertising hoardings erected by the applicants should be removed
- What measures will be in place to ensure reduced speeds along the boulevards ?
- Will the trees impair visibility for crossing pedestrians ?
- Is the position of the play area at the highway junction likely to endanger children ?
- Will the junction at Parkfield Way be returned to its original state once construction has finished ?
- What measures are in place to ensure compliance with the Construction Management Plan (CMP)
- There are no details regarding the provision of a television signal to residents
- Concerned about traffic entering and existing Bolnore Road onto the A272 - traffic lights are required.
- Will a footpath be constructed along Bolnore Road pas Joan Nightingale House ?
- Unnecessary footpaths and planting is proposed within the buffer zone
- The submitted Environmental Statement which accompanies the application is outdated and flawed
- Layout discourages social integration

Local Community Officers (LCO's)

Objects to the application making the following points;

- The most recent ancient woodland inventory has not be used
- Ancient woodland at King Street Copse should have a 15m buffer
- As proposed the development would have severe impact on the ancient woodland and unimproved grassland through increased footfall by residents
- Soft landscaping plans show fences and hedges winding through the buffer zone. These should be removed.
- Inappropriate access routes through the buffer zones
- Crossing points to the bridleway are incorrectly shown.
- Inappropriate locations for 3 storey buildings adjacent to sensitive landmark features.
- No details of site levels are provided
- Section drawing to show how construction work will affect the buffer zones is required.
- Affordable housing should be inside the development, not on the edges.
- Drainage strategy details have not been provided.

The Haywards Heath Society

In the drainage strategy report, pages 1-8 seem to be missing from the ground investigation. We also draw your attention to our previous letter dated the 16th April 2010, referring to application 09/02185/REM. We have no other comments.

## **HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL**

Haywards Heath Town Council would like to strongly OBJECT to this Reserve Matters application on the following grounds; King Street Copse Buffer Zone - Members felt that Crest Nicholson had either ignored the Ancient Woodland Inventory, which classifies Kings Street Copse as Ancient Woodland produced in 2010 or wrongly used the 2007 Inventory. As a result the scheme, as it stands, does not take into account the nature of the woodland along the western boundary of the site, nor does it protect Kings Street Copse from the impact of the development of the site. Members agreed a buffer zone (15m) had to be put in place and that Crest Nicholson has to ensure that it is incorporated into the scheme, along with a scheme that outlined a sensitive fencing regime within the woodland. Car Parking - in light of information informing the Committee that each garage was going to be six metres in length to enable storage and cars, lessons had not been learnt from phases 1,2 and 3, and in conjunction with limited visitor parking on road parking would still be a issue in phase 4A.

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### **Introduction**

This is a reserved matters application for the first of the housing phases within phase 4 of Bolnore Village, known as phase 4a. This application sits under the revised outline application that was approved by the Council under a notice dated the 29th October 2010, reference 09/02101/COND refers.

### **Relevant Planning History**

The history of Bolnore Village has been previously well documented and it is not necessary to repeat it again here, however, there are current planning permissions that affect the application site and it is felt that it is of relevance to outline these.

Under 09/02101/COND, issued under a notice dated the 29th October 2010, the Council revised the terms of the previous outline planning permission that covered the site, which was determined by the Secretary of State following a long public inquiry (HH/04/02676/OUT refers). The revised terms struck a balance between viability and deliverability and gave certainty over the completion of the Haywards Heath Relief Road.

In addition to this, phase 4 is also covered by a full planning permission (HH/04/02964/FUL), issued by the Secretary of State under a letter dated the 27th March 2008, for the infrastructure provision for this part of the development. This included highways and drainage.

The applicants have previously submitted reserved matter applications for phase 4a under 08/03052/REM and 09/02185/REM. These applications have never been determined and are not being progressed.

### **Site and Surroundings**

The site covers approximately 6.15ha and sits to the east of the development in phase 1, separated by a bridleway and a small strip of woodland. The site is made up of undulating fields, which slopes from both the northern and southern ends.

The western boundary of the site is made up of a strip of woodland known as King Street Copse. This contains a bridleway that runs the entire length of the site. The woodland is also designated as ancient woodland. In the northwestern corner of the site is the access to Parkfield Way and phase 1, which sits beyond.

The northern, southern and eastern boundaries of the site are protected by ancient woodland formed by Reading Wood (to the north) and Four Acre Wood (to the south and east).

The entrance to the future development of phases 4 and 5 is located in the northeastern corner of the site and is known as the pinch point.

### **Application details**

As stated earlier, this is a reserved matters application pursuant to planning permission 09/02101/COND and is seeking approval for the following details;

Layout - the way in which the buildings, roads and open space are provided within the development and their relationship to spaces outside the development

Scale - the height, width and length of the buildings proposed in relation to their context.

Appearance - the design of the buildings and the visual impression that they make.

Landscaping - the treatment of public and private space to enhance or protect the site's amenity through hard and soft landscaping measures.

The proposal involves the erection of no.192 dwellings, of which 12 will be affordable. The proposed dwelling mix proposed, is as follows;

6 x 1 bed flats

20 x 2 bed flats

19 x 2 bed houses (6 to be affordable)

61 x 3 bed houses (4 to be affordable)

15 x 3/4 bed houses

59 x 4 bed houses (2 to be affordable)

In addition to the above housing provision, the layout before members shows a total of 408 parking spaces through garages, carports and off street spaces.

The proposal also provides for buffer zones to all adjacent ancient woodland.

In addition, the applicants are seeking the discharge of various conditions attached to 09/02101/COND as part of this reserved matters submission. Information has been provided in order that the Council can consider the discharge the following issues;

Condition 7 - Play areas

Condition 10 - Means of enclosures

Condition 11 - Parking details

Condition 14 - Storage of cycles

Condition 19 - hard and soft landscaping

Condition 21 - Landscaping management plan

Condition 24 - Tree and buffer zone protection  
Condition 25 - Buffer zone protection at 15m  
Condition 32 - Construction management plan  
Condition 35 - surface and foul drainage  
Condition 26 - Existing and proposed site levels.

## **List of Policies**

### **South East Plan**

H5 - Housing design and density; promotes measures to raise the quality of new housing and reduce its environmental impact.

T4 - Parking; encourages the setting of maximum parking standards and ensure sufficient cycle parking is provided within new developments.

### **Mid Sussex Local Plan**

B1 - Design; requires all proposals to demonstrate a sensitive approach to urban design by respecting the character of the locality in which they take, especially their landscape setting. It also requires proposals to show adequate consideration has been given to existing landscape features

B2 - Residential Estate Developments; there is an additional requirement for proposals to establish a design concept for the layout of the estate.

H4 - Affordable Housing; requires the specific proportion of the affordable housing provision to be made on any particular site to take into account local needs, based upon an up-to-date assessments.

R3 - Outdoor Play Space; requires new residential development to provide adequate play space to meet the demands of the development.

T5 - Parking Standards; requires new residential development to be assessed against the standard within the adopted SPD.

T6 - Cycle Parking; requires the provision of cycle parking in all new developments.

CS13 - Land Drainage; permission will not be granted if the site cannot be adequately drained.

## **National Policy**

PPS 1 - Delivering Sustainable Development; emphasis the importance of securing a high standard of design, to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, and sustainability.

PPS 3 - Housing; outlines objectives for new development that include the need to provide a mix of housing, ensure a sufficient quantity of housing and provide housing in suitable locations.

PPG 13 - Transport; recent amendments announced have removed the use of maximum parking standards for residential developments, allowing Local Authorities to determine and appropriate level based on local circumstance. However, paragraph 50 states that "developers should not be made to provide more than they themselves wish."

### **Consideration Of Key Issues**

The principle of housing has already been established through the outline planning permission so consideration must now be given to the 'reserved matters' the applicants are seeking to address.

It is felt that the main issues that members should consider in the determination of this application is the layout and quality of the environment it creates, the design and form of the proposed buildings, the relationship of the development with adjacent ancient woodland, proposed parking levels and the location of the proposed affordable housing.

In addition to the above, there are other elements that members are asked to consider, particularly in relation to conditions that the applicant is seeking to discharge as part of this submission. Relevant consideration will be given to these issues in later sections of this report.

### **Assessment**

It should be noted that the applicants have amended the scheme during the process of the application and it is the revised proposal that is before members. The amendments to the scheme involved that redesign of the schemes layout to the western boundary, to take into account ecological issues, which resulted in the number of units proposed being reduced by No.5, to the current total of No.192.

The report will now address that main key issues of consideration highlighted above.

### **Layout and Quality of Environment**

The layout has been designed with a number of key principles in mind, this include a visual link between the village centre and the ancient oak tree, the location of a green at the confluence of the major routes and that wherever possible, the dwellings face outwards towards the woodland the buffer zones.

The two boulevard axis's through the site, with a single coherently designed square at the central point, form a strong and legible core to the scheme, from which the remainder of the layout is generated on a largely orthogonal plan (away from the edges), which approximately follows the northwest to southeast slope of the northern half of the site.

The main axis is characterised by building frontages that employ rhythm through replication and this is particularly effective on the slopes where the steeping effect is achieved. The height and rhythm, together with the disciplined spacing of the trees and the consistent building line provides a degree of formality that is appropriate for the gesture being created by the core of the layout (axis boulevards and square). The form of buildings around the central square ensure that it is appropriately defined and enclosed. The central square also provides the location for an equipped area of play, where it is considered that this location is extremely well supervised and there is no objection to this location from your Leisure Officers.

The scheme is generally organised as a series of perimeter block with open frontages that face on to the public realm and at the rear provide generally secure private gardens/space. A slightly more fragmented configuration of buildings can be found around the edge, rather than the orthogonally organisation of the middle of the site, as this reflects the more informal nature of the surrounding woodland. The only exception being the crescent housing around the ancient oak in the northeastern part of the site, which reinforces the importance of the tree as a punctuating point within the scheme.

It is considered that the layout of the scheme is well considered and ordered and can be commended. The layout creates a distinctive form of development that responds well to its environment, with due consideration given to how the development will respond to both the change in levels across the site and the surrounding woodland. It is felt that the layout embraces the requirements of PPS 1, in respect of the need to create a high standard of environment for residents, which is also reflected in the requirements of Local Development Plan Policy B1. In addition, it is also felt that the proposal establishes its own design concept, as required by Policy B2 of the Local Development Plan. In this respect, the proposed development should be supported.

### **Design and form of buildings**

The proposed building designs and use of materials have been considered to have empathy with phases 1 to 3 of Bolnore Village, while ensuring that they will give this phase its own distinctive character.

The applicants have created a series of building types, which they have, in main, applied symmetrically along the key street frontages, to generate the rhythm and enclosure of the proposed layout. The buildings will have traditional elements of hipped and gable roof forms, with punctuating bays and features. Where dormers are proposed, these will be simple flat roof forms. The applicants are proposing a series of facing treatments of brick, render, tile hanging and boarding, with render and white boarding used to emphasise corner buildings and other detailed features.

The proposed buildings will generally be of 2-storey height, with the 3 storey buildings, containing the flats, concentrated around the central square to create its definition and enclosure. There is also the use of 2-½ storey buildings on the southern side of the square and in key locations, to create greater emphasise at these points, however, these are the exception rather than the rule. There is also a limited number of dwellings, sitting in the northeastern corner of the site, which will be split level, utilising the natural changes in levels to create differing dwelling types, while limiting the need for enforced engineering solutions (like retaining walls) in undesirable locations, such as rear gardens.

While the Urban Designer is supportive of the proposal, he has identified some minor detailed points, in relation to specific elevations, which would help improve the scheme further. These points do not affect the overall acceptability of the scheme and the applicants have already agreed to do a number of the necessary changes. Some substitute plans are awaited

It is considered that the applicant, while taking the fundamental elements that form the foundation of the design and appearance of the first three phases, have applied in them in a much simpler way

that gives this particular scheme its own identity and will feel distinctly different in character, to the earlier phases and it is felt that the scheme demonstrates the sensitive approach to urban design required by Policy B1 of the Local Development Plan.

### **Ancient woodland and ecology**

The site is surrounded by ancient woodland, with Reading Wood (to the north), Four Acre Wood (to the south and east) and King Street Copse (to the west). It was established during the previous public inquiry on the site that the ancient woodland should be protected by a buffer zone, to ensure that the development did not encroach into the ecological sensitive margins of the woodland.

After much debate, a condition was attached that identified the appropriate size of the buffer zone being 15m. At the time of the public inquiry only Reading Wood and Four Acre Wood were designated ancient woodland.

The application as originally submitted showed a 15m buffer zone to both Reading Wood and Four Acre Wood, as required by the approved master plan attached to the outline planning permission. A buffer zone was not originally included to King Street Copse, as the outline planning permission did not require one, either through the approved master plan or specifically through conditions. However, the applicants recognised the concerns of local residents and the western side of the site was reorganised, with the loss of No.5 dwellings, to provide the appropriate 15m buffer zone. All surrounding ancient woodland is protected by a 15m buffer zone. This is in accordance with the outline planning permission.

At the time of writing the report, there are a couple of outstanding issues relating to the potential fencing off of the buffer zones and connectivity paths through to the adjacent woodland. Comments are awaited from WSCC Ecologist, in order for this issue to be taken forward with the applicant. While members will be updated at the committee meeting, these are matters that are already controlled by condition and do not affect members ability to determine the reserved matters application that is before them.

### **Parking and highway issues**

It has been recognised that one of the draw backs of the earlier phases of Bolnore Village have been the lack of parking facilities and the revised planning permission that was granted last year by the Council sort to address this by allowing a maximum of 2.5 spaces per dwelling, increased from the previous 1.5 allowed by the Secretary of State appeal decision.

The proposed layout shows a total of 408 parking spaces, of which a large proportion will be provided in the form of garages, which will be 6m in length to also allow the storage of cycles. A number of visitor's parking spaces have also been provided throughout the development, again to try and address the problems that are evident in the earlier phases. In total the proposed level of parking represents a provision of 2.1 spaces per dwelling.

Parking provision at this level is in accordance with the outline planning permission and policy T5 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan. PPG 13 states that the "developer should not be made to provide more than they themselves wish", and while it is recognised that higher levels of parking are always desirable, the wording of the guidance note is important and it is felt that the scheme strikes an appropriate balance between parking provision and ensuring that the scheme is not over engineered and designed around the motor vehicle.

In general highways terms, the Highways Authority has highlighted a couple of minor points in their latest comments, which have been passed onto the applicant to address. Members will be updated at the committee but these are not issues that again fetter members determining the reserved matters details that are before them. There is no objection to the proposal from the Highways Authority and the application can be supported.

### **Affordable Housing**

As members will recall from the determination of the two revised outline planning applications last year, there is not a requirement to provide the normal 30% affordable housing provision on this site. It is not necessary to revisit the complex details of viability that were discussed under the previous applications but in line with the details of the outline planning approval the applicant is providing for NO.12 affordable units within this phase.

The affordable units are to be located in 3 clusters, one containing 4 units towards the western side of the site, a second containing 4 units in the southwestern side of the site and a third containing 4 units to the southern part of the site. As members will know, the guidance set out in the Council's adopted SDP, requires clusters of no more than 10 affordable units, in order to ensure appropriate integration.

While the concerns that have been raised relating to the location of the affordable units have been noted, the 3 clusters are in accordance with the Council's adopted SDP and your housing officer is content with the proposed locations. The application is in accordance with the outline planning permission, policy H4 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan and the Council's adopted SDP and should be supported.

### **Condition clearance**

As mentioned earlier, the applicants have submitted information pursuant to a number of the planning conditions attached to the outline permission, in order to obtain their discharge at this stage. The list of relevant conditions was set out in the earlier section.

On basis of the information provided a number of the conditions can be discharged and these include conditions 11, 14, 24, 25, 32 and 35. Officers are still working on a number of the submissions and again an update will be given to members at the committee and the relevant conditions will only be discharged once officers are satisfied with the details. This does not fetter members determining the reserved matter submission that is before them.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed reserved matters submission deals with the design and layout of phase 4a and it is considered that the proposal provides for a distinct and well ordered development that makes use of existing landscape features and will create a high quality environment for future occupiers. The scheme has taken into account the ecological constraints and provided the necessary buffer zones to all the adjacent ancient woodland. It is considered that the proposal conforms to the outline planning permission and the policies B1, B2, H4, R3, T5 and T6 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan and policies H45 and T4 of the South East Plan.

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## **APPENDIX A – RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

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### **INFORMATIVES**

1. You are advised that the District Council determined this application on the basis of the following drawings:

To be reported.

## **APPENDIX B – CONSULTATIONS**

### **WSCC Highways**

The WSCC Local Development Group has previously offered comments in support of this proposal. Further information has now been prepared by the Applicant's in order to address concerns raised. As appropriate comments are made on the additional information provided by the Applicants in conjunction with the comments previously made.

### **Highways**

A number of detailed highway comments were made in connection with the earlier reserved matters submission. For the most part these detailed design comments have been appropriately addressed. There remain a number of points that would benefit from further consideration,

- Swept paths have now been provided for refuse vehicles, buses and a fire tender which for the most part demonstrate that a refuse vehicle can negotiate the proposed adoptable internal layout and, where provided, turning is possible. Swept paths have been provided showing two refuse vehicles passing, which perhaps is not anticipated as a frequent occurrence but would still represent the situation of a refuse vehicle and bus passing. However there are several instances where the swept paths are confusing, especially where more than one path is shown for a single junction or on the approach to the pinch point. There are also locations where the swept paths conflict with other features, notably parking spaces and landscaping. The swept paths provided do show some of the planting particularly in the radii of certain junctions conflicting with vehicle movements. The point was previously raised regarding the planting within verges around junctions as this could potentially restrict visibility as well as conflicting with vehicles. Again, this planting does need to be assessed along with the swept paths in certain location needs to be reassessed.

- The Planning Authority may also wish to obtain the comments of the Waste Authority in terms of waste collection arrangements, especially as turning arrangements are shown for some but not all private driveway areas. Reference is made particularly to the private drive at the bottom southeast corner of the site.
- Visitor parking has been suitably reassessed with spaces now more evenly spread throughout the development site. MSDC may wish to consider parking layout.
- The pinch points across the bridleways have been included in the current reserved matters scheme, which accords with the existing approval. The Section 38 agreement for the temporary turning heads is also understood to have been amended with these areas no longer to be adopted as public highway.
- Amendments have been undertaken to the cycleway (with some off road sections removed) and some connections with the bridleway also removed. No further comments would be offered in these respects.
- Changes have as appropriate been made to the surfacing within the development or further explanation given as to the reasoning behind the inclusion of certain elements. The materials used within the development site should be further considered at the detailed design/S38 stage. A Stage 2 Safety Audit has also been submitted to review the internal layout. This Audit does consider detailed design and as such is considered more appropriate for review as part of the S38 application with the Designers Responses incorporated into the design as necessary.

With regards to those conditions sought to be discharged, it is considered that the information provided satisfactorily addresses the concerns relating to the distribution of visitor parking. Condition 12 of permission 09/2101 may therefore be discharged.

Further information has also been provided in respects of condition 14 (cycle parking). It is appreciated that for most dwellings, the garage will be used to accommodate cycles. Sheds are indicated for those units without car parking spaces. This in principle is acceptable although the level of detail is still relatively light. It is considered satisfactory for this condition to be discharged.

A revised Construction Management Plan has been provided to address condition 32. Again details for other related elements of the construction mitigation (namely wheel washing, site setup, timing of access for vehicles of a certain size, etc) are to be addressed by way of separate discharge of condition submissions although references are still included within the CMP. It is considered that the revised CMP does address the points previously revised and with the Applicant now progressing the necessary agreements to implement the temporary access works to enable development to progress. Works in relation to the pinch point are being progressed separately to this current application with matters relating to construction vehicle access being considered by way of a separate application. WSCC would recommend that this condition relating to the CMP may be discharged. As stated above further discharge of condition applications would be appropriate for the other construction related items.

Comments were made by WSCC in relation to a revised travel plan submitted with the application in December. It seems that no formal response has been made to these comments. Presumably, a separate discharge of condition application will be made to satisfy the condition related to the travel plan. It would be anticipated that the comments made by WSCC in relation to the TP are incorporated into the next TP revision when this condition is being sought to be discharged.

In conclusion, whilst there remain a number of comments in relation to the detailed layout and the ability to accommodate the swept path of refuse vehicles, the majority of the previously raised highway concerns have now been addressed.

Further comments on ecological matters are awaited and will be provided in due course.

### **WSCC Ecology**

To be reported.

### **Natural England**

Natural England has no comments to make on this planning proposal. However we would like to stress that the absence of comments or direct involvement on individual plans or proposals is simply an expression of our priorities. It should not be taken as implying a lack of interest or indicating either support for, or objection to, any proposal.

However, we would expect the Local Planning Authority to assess and consider the possible impacts resulting from this proposal on the following when determining this application:

#### **Landscape outside AONB**

Natural England has considered the landscape and visual impacts of this proposal and concluded that this application does not meet our criteria for involvement with casework. We would stress that this should not necessarily be taken to indicate that the effects on landscape and visual amenity are appropriate, but are a matter for the Local Planning Authority to consider.

#### **Local wildlife sites**

The application site falls close to Bolnore Woods Local Nature Reserve. Such sites are of county wide importance and are identified by the Sussex Wildlife Trust who should be consulted in relation to any potential impacts this application may have upon the site. They can be contacted at The Sussex Wildlife Trust, Woods Mill, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9SD. Tel: 01273 492630. Fax: 01273 494500.

#### **Protected species**

If representations from other parties highlight the possible presence, or the Council is aware of a protected or Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species on the site, the Council should request survey information from the applicant before determining the application. Paragraph 98 and 99 of ODPM Circular 06/2005 and Paragraph 16 of Planning Policy Statement 91 provide information on BAP and protected species and their consideration in the planning system.

We would draw the Council's attention to our protected species standing advice, which provides guidance on when protected species may be impacted by a proposal. The advice can be found at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningtransportlocalgov/spatialplanning/standingadvice/default.aspx>

#### Ancient Woodland

Natural England refers you to our Standing Advice on ancient woodland which can be found at the following link:

[http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/south\\_east/ourwork/standingadvice/ancientwoodland/consultation-nov10/default.aspx](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/south_east/ourwork/standingadvice/ancientwoodland/consultation-nov10/default.aspx)

#### Biodiversity enhancements

This application may provide opportunities to incorporate features into the design which are beneficial to wildlife, such as the incorporation of roosting opportunities for bats or the installation of bird nest boxes. The Council should consider securing measures to enhance the biodiversity of the site from the applicant, if it is minded to grant permission for this application. This is in accordance with Paragraph 14 of PPS9. Additionally, we would draw your attention to Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) which states that *'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'*. Section 40(3) of the same Act also states that *'conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat'*.

#### Southern Water

To be reported.

#### MSDC Urban Designer

As reported in August, the main design issues were resolved in the negotiation of the previous planning application 09/2185. The comments below are therefore to some extent a reiteration of previous observations. However, I have also highlighted remaining detailed issues.

#### The Layout

The layout has largely remained the same as 09/2185 and therefore my overall comments are the same: The scheme can be commended for its legibility. This is provided by a strong NE / SW and NW / SE "boulevard" axis with a single coherently designed square at the central point from which the rest of the layout is generated on a largely orthogonal plan (away from the edges) that approximately follows the NW to SE slope of the northern half of the site.

#### Boulevard / Main Axis

The main axis are characterised by building frontages, which employ rhythm through replication - this is particularly effective on the slopes where the stepping effect is achieved. The height and the rhythm together with the disciplined spacing of the trees and consistent building lines provides a degree of formality that is appropriate to the grand gesture of the square and main axis.

At 22m, the face to face distances of the houses along the axis is more than generous. While this provides a weak street enclosure, it is compensated for by the generally ordered and continuous frontages and by the regular line of kerbside trees, that will provide the sense of a boulevard. To ensure this formal arrangement is achieved, the tree planting should be kept to a single species. To

get sufficient immediate impact the trees need to be at least 3m high mature stock. The gap in the trees in front of the block of flats (60/62-66) on the north side and the houses (91-92) on the south side is unfortunate. The architect has agreed (at meeting on 17/2/11) to introduce trees on the south side but it will not screen the larger 3 storey block on the other side which will stick out in the street.

### Central Square

The scheme appropriately concentrates the higher frontages around the open space / square. The symmetry of the square has not been carried all the way through but because of the slope, complete symmetry is always going to be an impossible goal. However through a series of revisions, the Square is now appropriately defined / enclosed.

### Perimeter Block Arrangement

The proposal can also be commended because it generally organises development in to a series of perimeter blocks with open frontages that face on to the public realm and at the rear provide generally secure private gardens / backs.

### Development/Woodland Edge

The denser more orthogonally organised development is located within the middle of the site with a more fragmented configuration of buildings around the edge that appropriately reflects the more informal / natural character of the surrounding woodland. An exception to this is the crescent housing around the oak tree at the south west corner which appropriately reinforces the importance of the tree as a punctuating point within the scheme while formally allowing the main axis to be deviated towards the NE exit/entrance point of the site.

To avoid a series of cul de sacs that go nowhere around the perimeter of the site, it is important that these connect up with the accessible surrounding woodland. A condition also needs to be included to cover the perimeter boundary treatment as close-boarded fencing at the rear of the gardens facing the buffer is not acceptable in design terms; the choice of boundary treatment will also need to integrate appropriately with the more open treatment where buildings face the buffer zone.

### Parking

The parking is mostly discreetly accommodated. The exception is the right angle parking in front of some of the houses. This can be imposing particularly where no defensible space is provided. Tree planting has been employed to soften the impact; however further trees may help in some situations.

### Elevations

#### Main Axis

The rhythm of the main two axis works well by employing the replicated rhythm of the gabled type J and P's (mostly) connected by garages that naturally allow these frontages to step down the slopes. The main junctions are punctuated by the type N's and the end of the axis by the type Q's. This provides a strong order that helps define the scheme. Unfortunately it breaks down at the northern end of NW/SE axis with different building types/configurations that sit incongruously adjacent to the formality of the remainder of the street frontage. The symmetrical configuration of the 3 house terrace at 154-156 and the pair of semi's at 162-163 defy the replicated arrangement of the remainder; the symmetrical arrangement also does not work well on the slope.

### Blocks of Flats

The blocks of flats (51-66, 172-6, 180-184) now benefit from more underlying order that adequately addresses the formal layout of the Square and Boulevard. In particular, their scale has been reduced and more order achieved by treating the frontages as a series of bays that approximately replicate each other.

It is a shame that flat 174/176 + 182/184 has not been organised (as it could have been) with the living/kitchen at the front to facilitate the same symmetry achieved at 172/173/175 and 181/183/184 respectively. It also means that the living room does not benefit from direct access onto the balcony. There is also an error on 184, which needs to be shown with a French window rather than a window on to the balcony.

Bearing in mind its greater scale, the return frontage of 66 facing the main axis would nevertheless benefit from the continuation of the avenue of trees in front

### The Square

The buildings that face onto the Square are mostly rendered to reinforce the distinctiveness of the Square. They also have appropriately formally ordered frontages

### Other Streets

The other street frontages have a more irregular configuration, some of which appear to be accidental juxtapositions. I have largely accepted this partly because they are back streets and partly because their informality echoes the natural woodland setting to some extent. I nevertheless have the following issues which concern mostly street frontages with the exception of rear elevations that are clearly visible from the street:

142-145 - The asymmetric cat slide gable on 145 has improved this elevation. However the symmetrical gable at 142 still looks rather out of place, and at the rear, where it will be clearly visible from the street, the gable is clumsily truncated and subsumed by the pitched roof of 143. Therefore, 142 needs to be reconfigured as a double pitch frontage that replicates the configuration of 143/144 – the architect agreed to change this at the meeting on 17/2/11.

146-149 - This terrace is better but still does not work as well as it could. In particular the front doors of 147 and 148 appear to spill over on to the neighbouring house. This can be resolved by pushing the roofs of 147 and 148 approximately 300mm across – the architect agreed to change this on 17/2/11. (NB: 102-106 shows how this can be made to work).

### Other Details

Type N's and K's gutter arrangement underneath the dormer windows still has not been resolved. Incorporating the gutter alongside the cill of the dormer could be clumsy detail. Bearing in mind these houses are employed in some numbers and in prominent positions throughout the scheme, this is a concern. A solution lies in pulling the dormer window up the roof slope away from the eaves. The architect has agreed on 17/2/11 to provide a detail prior to the committee meeting.

Type N dummy windows will need to have a deep reveal (at least 100mm) otherwise they will not read properly and consequently look silly.

Type H+D have inconsistent glazing panels which look odd and undermine their architectural integrity.

Type D's rw downpipe is clumsily located in the middle of the frontage. It needs to be tucked away in the corner

Type F's that feature in 21-28 present a fairly formal rhythm; 22 and 24 would therefore benefit from the same weatherboarding treatment (as appears to be shown in the street section BB) as 21 and 28.

Type G's, K's and N's fenestration has been designed to evoke the classical language of Victorian houses, and have the appearance of sash windows. It would therefore work better if they were sash windows rather than casements. The margin also bars result in busy looking windows and would be better omitted. This also applies to the block of flats.

48-49+120-121 would benefit from rw downpipe being located in the middle so that it defines their plot width and the vertical rhythm of the frontage.

Chimneys - It is a shame that, except for the type Q's (shown with a through flue), the chimneys on the other houses appears to be purely decorative.

#### **MSDC Landscape Officer**

To be reported

#### **MSDC Leisure Officer**

We note the proposal to provide outdoor playing space on site in the form of 5 LAP's - a double LAP in the central open space with railings and Playdale equipment for children up to 6 years in age plus three further LAPs with low guard rails, low planting and seating for carers as discussed with Simon Hardy.

#### **MSDC Drainage Engineer**

To assess the drainage for this site generally I have viewed the Environmental Statement's relevant parts listed below:

Flood Risk Assessment

Chapter 18 Hydrology, Drainage & Utilities

Chapter 11 Pinch Point - Section 10

Chapter 11 - Ecology

I see that the plan is to attenuate the surface water to maintain existing Greenfield runoff rates and I am satisfied with this approach. All surface water drainage systems on the site should be able to cope with a 1 in 100 year storm + 30% volume for climate change.

It is mentioned that any overland flows would be projected down to the proposed balancing ponds but I understand that the EA have objected to the use of balancing ponds due to Ecological Conservation reasons. Now the plan is to attenuate surface water drainage in oversized pipes and

underground storage areas with some areas of permeable paving also being used. Overland flood flows will be directed along the road surface so it can discharge into the stream (Tributary A).

The highway drainage should go through interceptors prior to discharge into the stream to ensure there will no build up of nutrients and biodiversity can be maintained.

1. Please can the route of both the foul sewer requisitions be supplied, as they are not shown on the submitted plans and conservation is a major concern for this site?

2. Also with regard to the foul sewers please can calculations be provided showing that they will have adequate capacity for the proposed number of dwellings?

3. I do not have a problem with the drainage going through the pinch point as long as the pipe construction is far enough away from the ancient trees. I see that originally it was planned to have a 1.5m diameter culvert at this point (to allow an animal corridor) but now the proposal is for 3 number 450 mm diameter culverts. Please could the reasons for this be clarified?

4. The access road from Bolnore Road is to have the drainage constructed beneath it for future phases 4B and C. The surface water has a separate outfall into the stream but there have been no calculations provided indicating what the outfall flow rate will be. Please can this detail be provided including the pipe numbers on drawings C561 to C563?

5. Drawing number P300 (Proposed Drainage Strategy) clearly shows the areas of porous paving but the detailed drainage plans C561 to C567 do not show these areas. Please can these areas be added to the detailed plans?

6. No construction details of the storm water storage crates have been provided. How deep are they to be, what size are they in area, are they to be wrapped in impermeable membrane?

7. Who will be responsible for the future maintenance of the storage crates?

Having compared the Drainage Strategy for phase 4A to the overall Flood Risk Assessment and the Hydrology, Drainage & Utilities documents I see that the drainage strategy has changed. I understand that the site is steep so surface SuDS are trickier to design but I do not find the statement 'there is no room on the site' an acceptable reason for not using SuDS. The mention of using pipe storage systems to minimise capital and maintenance costs is not acceptable either. In order to gain the best amenity value from SuDS systems they should be an integral part of the design of the whole site and should be thought of at the earliest stage of development.

For future reference referring to Phase 5. The stream (Watercourse C) running through this site currently links into a surface water drainage system that runs south from Wealden Way and then links into the railway drainage system. This system is already over capacity and considerations could be made for rerouting the culverted section of stream (from Wealden Way) into the new drainage system for the site. This would ease pressure on the system, which currently takes the entire house and road drainage from Wealden Way, Climping Close and Duncton Close and also

the outfall from the balancing ponds at Great Heathmeads. I will not agree to any additional drainage being added into this watercourse without hydraulic modelling being undertaken.