



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Land to the Rear of Willowmere, Garden House Lane, Rickingham, IP22 1EA

REF: P303_DAS REV: 000 DATE: 06.09.2022

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PROJECT REF: P303

DOCUMENT: P303_DAS

- 0.0 CONTENTS
- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.0 THE SITE
 - 2.1 SITE LOCATION PLAN
 - 2.2 SITE CHARACTER & PHOTOGRAPHS
 - 2.3 LOCAL CONTEXT & CHARACTER
- 3.0 PLANNING HISTORY
- 4.0 PLANNING STATEMENT
- 5.0 PROPOSALS
- 6.0 LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY
- 7.0 ACCESS & HIGHWAYS
- 8.0 ARBORICULTURE
- 9.0 ARCHAEOLOGY
- 10.0 ECOLOGY
- 11.0 EXTERNAL LIGHTING
- 12.0 FLOOD RISK AND SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY
- 13.0 LAND CONTAMINATION
- 14.0 CONCLUSION

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by TAS Architects on behalf of the applicants, Mr & Mrs Arnold. It supports an application for full planning permission for the erection of 10no. new dwellings and associated garages and outbuildings, with associated highway works, following the demolition of existing storage buildings associated with builder's yard, at Land to the Rear of Willowmere, Garden House Lane, Rickingham, IP22 1EA. It should be read in conjunction with the drawings and documents submitted as part of the application, as listed below. The application is being made on behalf of the applicant, by TAS Architects acting as the agent.

Supporting Documents:

Architect:

TAS Architects - The Forge Main Road, Woolverstone, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP9 1AX

Tel: 0207 043 0727

Documents:

- P303_LP_0.01 - Location Plan
- P303_SP_0.01 - Site Plan & Levels Plan as existing
- P303_BP_0.01 - Block Plan & Levels Plan as proposed
- P303_LA_0.01 - Landscaping Scheme as proposed
- P303_GA_0.01-0.08 - Dwelling plans, elevations & sections as proposed
- P303_GA_0.09 - Outbuilding schedules as proposed
- P303_GA_0.10 - Site sections as proposed

Engineer:

BLI Consultant Engineers Ltd

Tel: 07918 725983

Documents:

- Construction-surface-water-management-plan-CSWMPAA-update - Construction Surface Water Management Plan
- BLI.2020.62_Drainage Statement_Rev02 - Surface Water Drainage Statement
- Construction Method Statement Rickingham Aug22 - Construction Method Statement
- BLI.2020.62-PL-01-P2_SITE ACCESS LAYOUT - Site Access Layout Plan
- BLI.2020.62-PL-02-P2_SITE ACCESS KERBING AND VISIBILITY - Site Access Kerbing & Visibility Plans
- BLI.2020.62_Rev01_Aug22_Technical Note - Technical Note - Site Access

The following documents from relevant consultants are submitted as part of the application:

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement - Oakfield Arboricultural Services
- ref. OAS-22-054-TS01
- Contamination Report - Plandescil Consulting Engineers
- P303_CONTAMINATIONREPORT_20689-REV-A and Appendices A-D as listed therein
- Accompanying letter ref. P303_Letter_contaminationreport_250422
- Financial Viability Assessment - Pathfinder Development Consultants
- ref. P303_Financial_Viability_Assessment_100622
- Flood Risk Assessment - Evans Rivers & Coastal
- ref. 1806/RE/04-17/01
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal - Eco-Check Ltd
- ref. P303_PEA_July2022-V1.2
- Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation - John Newman Archaeological Services
- ref. P303_Rickingham Willowmere_WSI_eval 1.2
- Archaeological Evaluation Report - John Newman Archaeological Services
- ref. RKS 066 Rickingham Superior Willowmere eval report 2.1

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2.0 THE SITE

The site is an existing builder's yard with associated storage buildings (see existing site plan ref. P303_SP_0.01). The site is accessed from Garden House Lane, which in turn meets The Street between Rickinghall and Botesdale. The area is in the Mid Suffolk District, approximately six miles from the market town of Diss, which has rail connections to the cities of Norwich and London. The nearest bus stop is approx. 500m from the site.

The site does not sit within an AONB or conservation area, or in the curtilage of any listed buildings. It is noted, however, that the villages of Rickinghall & Botesdale are rich in high-quality and historic buildings and that the overall character of the villages' conservation area will influence the design of the proposals.

Around the north/north-west boundaries, the site is bordered by the gardens of other residential dwellings which are also accessed from Garden House Lane. The site is bordered by arable land to the south-east, south and south-west. On a wider scale, there is a higher density of residential dwellings to the north of Garden House Lane, and open fields to the south/south west - albeit intersected by the A143.



Aerial view from Google (not to scale)

Approx. site outline

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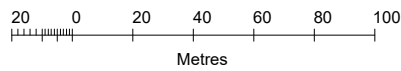
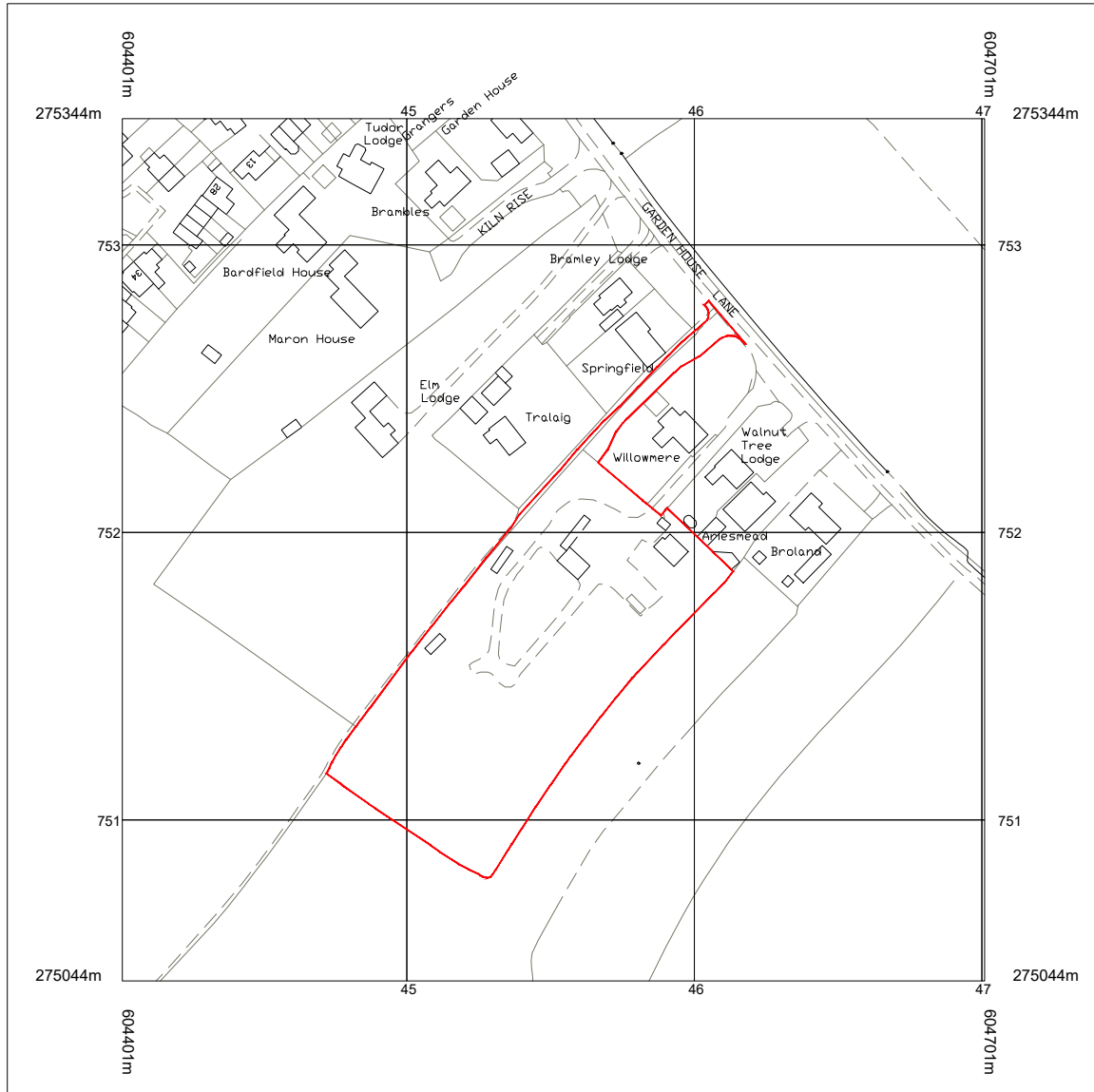
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2.1 SITE LOCATION PLAN

Stanfords VectorMap



1:2500 @A4



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2.2 SITE CHARACTER & PHOTOGRAPHS

The site is characterised by its existing lawful use as a builder's yard, and includes a concrete surface access and yard, storage buildings, polytunnels and other dilapidated temporary storage units & equipment. It benefits from mixed mature hedges and trees to the majority of its boundaries.

Willowmere



View from builder's yard towards existing access from Garden House Lane, between Willowmere (left) and Walnut Tree Lodge (right)

Willowmere



View north-east towards yard and Willowmere



View from access across builder's yard, looking south-west



View of north-west boundary trees/hedge



View of south-east boundary trees/hedge



View of south-west boundary trees/hedge

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2.3 LOCAL CONTEXT & CHARACTER

The proposals have been strongly influenced by the high quality of buildings in the nearby villages, whilst not making an attempt to mimic any one building directly. The principles of good quality, traditional materials and bespoke detailing have been carried through the design process to ensure that the new dwellings sit comfortably in their surroundings and will continue to do so over time. The materials palette takes inspiration from the local character and features a mix of red clay plain tiles, buff brick, red brick and timber. Detailing such as patterned brickwork and entrance door surrounds enhance the quality of the individual dwellings and contribute to the overall character of the new cluster. The layout of the site allows for generous spacing between the buildings, maintaining an impression of openness and connection to the surrounding landscape.

The following key quotes from the Rickingham & Botesdale Conservation Area Appraisal are relevant to the proposals:

“Overall there is an abundance of rendered and brick buildings either painted or left natural as soft ‘Suffolk Reds’. This local red brick features throughout the village, both on cottages dating from Victorian times and on older timber-framed buildings that have been refronted. There are also examples of ‘Suffolk White’ brick, notably on Chilvers shop facing onto the market square and as dressings to parts of the nearby Greyhound public house.”

“Overall there is a good mix of the usual Suffolk vernacular materials around the village, which is also reflected in roofing materials. Most of the buildings are very much the product of their particular era. The prevalent roofing materials are plain tiles on the older timber-framed buildings and slate on the more recent additions. There is some surviving thatch and examples of pantile too.”

“The linear nature of Botesdale and the Rickinghalls’ settlement pattern means that development is mostly one plot deep. Thus, although not often visible, the countryside is never far away.”

“Views of the countryside are important and can be glimpsed through many gaps between the buildings along The Street.”



St Botolph's, Botesdale



Example of jettied first floor, patterned roof tiling



Example of door surround and brick detailing (image from Conservation Area Appraisal)

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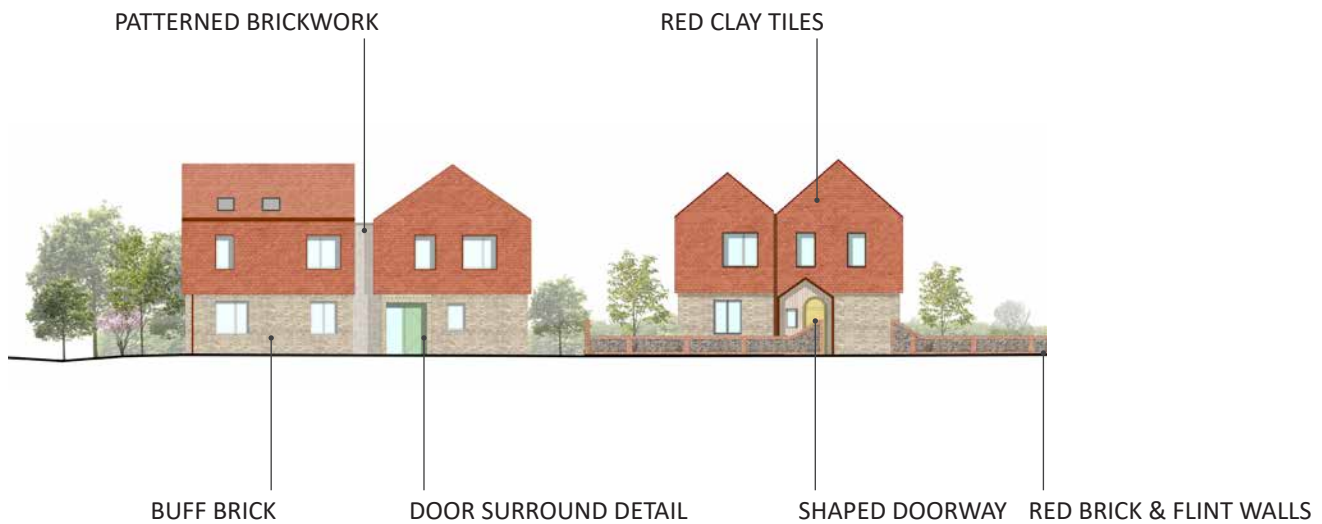
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2.3 LOCAL CONTEXT & CHARACTER cont'd

The proposals incorporate key elements of the characteristics discussed in the Conservation Area Appraisal, whilst having been developed to stand on their own merit as high quality dwellings. Care has been taken to ensure that the dwellings have individual character and that the design will stand the test of time.



Proposed site elevation, plots 8-9 (not to scale)



Examples of brick types and brick detailing, flint walls with brick detailing (images from Conservation Area Appraisal)

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The site has been the subject of the following previous planning applications:

DC/22/01969 - Discharge of Conditions Application for 2798/16- Condition 4 (Landscaping Scheme), Condition 5 (Roads and Footpaths), Condition 6 (Provision of Parking), Condition 12 (Surface Water Drainage Details), Condition 13 (Implementation, Maintenance and Management), Condition 15 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan) and Condition 17 (Archaeological Works)

- GRANTED 23.06.22

DC/22/02016 - Submission of details (Reserved Matters - Appearance, Scale, Landscaping) application relating to Outline Planning Permission 2798/16

- NOT DETERMINED

DC/20/05751 - Submission of details (Reserved Matters - Access) application relating to Outline Planning Permission 2798/16 for the Access only to be considered for the erection of 10no dwellings, garages and off site highway works.

- GRANTED 12.03.21

2798/16 - Application for outline planning permission for the demolition of existing garage and stores associated with builders yard and erection of 10 dwellings and associated garages with off site associated highway works.

- GRANTED 12.01.2018

4116/15 - Application for Outline Planning Permission for the demolition of existing garage and stores associated with builders yard and erection of 29 dwellings and associated garages. Associated highway works.

- WITHDRAWN

4.0 PLANNING STATEMENT

The principle of development on the site, the housing types and density were granted outline planning permission in 2018; ref. 2798/16. A schedule of housing types is included on the proposed block plan ref. P303_BP_0.01. The overall site layout, access road and relationship between houses is based on the sketch site plan approved as part of the outline permission in 2016, and remains as per the approved documents granted permission as discharge of conditions DC/22/01969 (approved site plan ref. P303_SP_2.01). It is our understanding that these arrangements continue to comply with policy as they did in June 2022 when approved.

The vehicular and pedestrian access arrangements, including the junction with Garden House Lane, were approved in 2021 ref. DC/20/05751. The details submitted as part of this application are to match the previously approved details and therefore it is understood that they satisfy Suffolk County Council's requirements. Similarly, access to the dwellings, provision of parking, and cycle storage within the site remains as per the previously approved condition ref. DC/22/01969 (see submitted drawing P303_BP_0.01).

A reserved matters application was submitted to Mid Suffolk in April 2022 (concurrent with the approved conditions application DC/22/01969) for the 'details of the appearance, scale and layout of the building(s),' and 'the landscaping of the site'. This application was not determined because it was found by the LA that the outline permission had expired. This issue arose due to the applicant having been given advice by the previous Area Planning Manager that submitting the reserved access matters application would keep the outline permission 'live.' The applicant was then advised that they would need to submit a new, full planning application, and a pre-application meeting was undertaken on this basis.

During the pre-application meeting, Area Planning Manager Gemma Walker advised that the same proposals should be submitted as a new application and that they would still comply with policy, as they had when originally approved. The applicant was also advised by email that the fee they had paid for the invalid reserved matters application would be transferred to the new full application.

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The following feedback was received from Senior Planning Officer Mahsa Kavyani following review of the dwelling design at pre-app:

“Having reviewed the design aspect of the proposal, the general layout, design and scale of the proposal are suitable, I would only suggest that plots 1 & 10 are pushed slightly back from the access to allow for better amenity for the future occupiers as they are currently too close to the main access onto the site. Perhaps slightly changing the orientation would allow the houses to sit better within the plot. In terms of scale, the houses are larger than what was approved at Outline however as the site is low density at 10 dwellings per hectare, it can comfortably accommodate larger dwellings, whilst still suitably responding to the character of the area.”

The general arrangements and design of the dwellings remain as submitted for this previous reserved matters application. The comments regarding the siting of plots 1 & 10 have been taken on board, and this is reflected in their revised positions shown on the submitted block plan. It is considered that they are now a more comfortable distance from the access road whilst retaining as much private rear garden as possible. It is not considered feasible to move plot 10 further; however, the aspect of this dwelling has been carefully designed to ensure privacy from the road and key views over its own rear garden.

5.0 PROPOSALS & DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The principle of the development, site access and site layout have been previously approved. The design and appearance of the dwellings were reserved at outline planning, and have been developed since based on the approved house type schedule. The site layout, dwelling positions and orientation have been developed to maximise private rear amenity space for every dwelling, sunlight to every amenity space and dwelling, and to mitigate overlooking both within and beyond the site. This is to ensure the wellbeing of occupants of every dwelling.

As discussed in section 2.3 - Local Context & Character, the dwellings have been designed to high standards, using attractive traditional materials externally and providing good quality spaces internally. Orientation and position of glazing have been developed to ensure that daylight is available throughout the day and year, with integral solar shading to south-facing openings to mitigate overheating.

The scale of the proposed dwellings fits comfortably in the site, with ample space for private parking and turning to each dwelling, and generous private gardens. The buildings are spaced appropriately for their context and allow views out to the wide landscape between.



Proposed site elevation, plots 3-5 (not to scale)

6.0 LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY

Both the landscaping within the site, and the impact of the proposals upon surrounding landscapes, have been carefully considered throughout the design process. The proposed details including boundary treatments and soft & hard landscaping are as per the approved details of the Discharge of Conditions Application for application 2798/16 - please see submitted drawing P303_LA_0.01. The site benefits from mature trees and hedging to much of its boundaries, and works will include gapping up of hedges with new native species planting to ensure that the dwellings are screened from wider landscape views. This in turn ensures privacy to the private gardens of the new homes. Existing trees and hedges are largely to be retained, with the exception of some of low quality which are to be removed (please see Arboricultural report for details). Removals will be offset by significantly more planting across the site, both to the boundaries and within gardens. The submitted proposed block plan, ref. P303_BP_0.01, shows proposed changes in level to the south-west end of the site (where it currently slopes up towards the boundary). The excavation will result in plots 3-5 sitting at a lower level than the existing topography (please see submitted proposed site sections ref. P303_GA_0.10). This is to reduce the impact of the development on wider views from the adjacent arable fields.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which is submitted as part of the application sets out recommendations for planting to enhance biodiversity, which will be incorporated into the planting proposals as already set out in the proposed landscaping scheme - please see submitted scheme for details ref. P303_LA_0.01.



7.0 ACCESS & HIGHWAYS

The site currently utilises an existing access from Garden House Lane, which will remain as existing for sole use by the existing dwelling 'Willowmere'. It is proposed to form a new access to Garden House Lane in the north-west corner of the site for use by the new dwellings. The existing footpath to the west boundary of the site will be protected for the duration of the works and retained as existing following the works.

For details of the proposed new junction with Garden House Lane, please see submitted documents BLI.2020.62-PL-01-P2_SITE ACCESS LAYOUT - Site Access Layout Plan and BLI.2020.62-PL-02-P2_SITE ACCESS KERBING AND VISIBILITY - Site Access Kerbing & Visibility Plans. Please note that these details are as per approved application ref. DC/20/05751 - Submission of details (Reserved Matters - Access) application relating to Outline Planning Permission 2798/16.

Provision of on site parking & bicycle storage, and waste & recycling bins, is shown on the submitted proposed block plan ref. P303_BP_0.01. These details are as per the approved application ref. DC/22/01969 - Discharge of Conditions Application for 2798/16 and follow the SCC Suffolk Guidance for Parking. A Transport Network Noise Assessment is not required for this application.



Extract from proposed block plan (not to scale)

8.0 ARBORICULTURE

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been carried out by Oakfield Arboricultural Services (please see submitted document). Tree protection fencing will be installed for the duration of the construction phase as per the report's recommendations. In summary, the AIA concludes that the trees to be removed are of low quality, and do not have a significant impact on arboricultural or landscape values. The proposed landscaping scheme includes planting of new native trees, as well as gapping up of existing hedges with native species (please see P303_LA_0.01 for details). Overall this will represent an increase in native planting within the site. These details are as per the approved application ref. DC/22/01969 - Discharge of Conditions Application for 2798/16.

9.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

A Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Evaluation was prepared by John Newman Archaeological Services and approved as part of the Discharge of Conditions Application for application 2798/16. Subsequently, evaluation work was carried out on site, the results of which are submitted as an Archaeological Evaluation Report to support this application.

10.0 ECOLOGY

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out by Eco-Check Ltd (please see submitted document). The report concludes that the proposed works, in the absence of mitigation, would *"give rise to a minor adverse impact on breeding birds, a minor adverse-neutral impact on terrestrial mammals and a minor-adverse-neutral impact on habitats, invertebrates and foraging/commuting bats."* The report sets out a number of measures for mitigation including avoidance, mitigation and enhancement, which will be carried out in accordance with the recommendations as part of the works. With these measures implemented, the impact is expected to be *"minor adverse-neutral upon breeding birds, common invertebrates, reptiles and terrestrial mammals and neutral upon foraging/commuting bats, water vole, otter and white-clawed crayfish."* Please refer to proposed landscaping details ref. P303_LA_0.01 for proposed planting details.

11.0 EXTERNAL LIGHTING

No external lighting is proposed outside of private domestic gardens and therefore a Lighting Assessment is not required.

12.0 FLOOD RISK AND SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY

A Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out by Evans Rivers & Coastal (please see submitted document). In summary, the Flood Risk Assessment shows the site to be at low risk from fluvial, tidal, groundwater and surface water flooding. This report was prepared to accompany the previous application for outline planning permission for the site, and remains applicable because there have been no material changes to the site, and the proposal remains the same in principle.

A Surface Water Drainage Statement, which includes a surface water drainage strategy/layouts, surface water calculations, and construction details (inter alia) has been prepared by BLI Consulting Engineers - please see submitted document. This is accompanied by a Surface Water Construction Management Plan - please see submitted document. These details are as per the approved application ref. DC/22/01969 - Discharge of Conditions Application for 2798/16. The details in this document should be taken as superceding any proposed drainage strategy in previous reports.

13.0 LAND CONTAMINATION

A Contamination Report was prepared by Plandescil Consulting Engineers in 2016 to support a previous planning application. This is accompanied by a recent letter stating that the findings of the report are still applicable due to there having been no material changes to the site since its original publication.

14.0 CONCLUSION

The principle of the proposal, site layout and access have been previously approved and the details submitted remain as approved. The scheme will provide high quality housing and will contribute positively to its surroundings.