

Planning and Heritage Statement

**Bob's Farm, Vyne Road,
Sherborne St John, RG24 9HX**

Prepared For
Shorewood Homes Ltd

2629
February 2023



bell cornwell

CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

Bell Cornwell LLP, Unit 2, Meridian Office Park, Osborn Way,
Hook, Hampshire RG27 9HY



CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Site and Surroundings	2
	Relevant Planning History	8
2	PLANNING POLICY	10
	Housing Land Supply	11
	Principle of development	12
	Heritage	14
	Landscape and Design	18
	Amenity	19
	Access and Parking	20
	Housing Mix	20
	Affordable Housing	21
	Biodiversity	21
	Trees	24
	Sustainable Water Use	25
	Infrastructure Contributions	25
3	PLANNING BALANCE/CONCLUSIONS	26
	Planning Benefits	26
	Planning Balance	26



1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The statement supports an application for the erection of 9 dwellings and associated landscaping and car parking following the demolition of existing agricultural and B8, Storage and distribution use buildings and hardstanding at Bob's Farm, Vyne Road, Sherborne St John, RG24 9HX.
- 1.2 This Statement provides a proportionate assessment of the impact of the application proposal on the significance of the identified heritage asset considering the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation areas) Act 1990, national policy in the NPPF and local planning policy for the historic environment alongside all other planning policy considerations.
- 1.3 The remainder of this section will set out the character of the site and surrounding area and the planning history of the site to be read alongside the Design and Access Statement submitted.
- 1.4 Section 2 sets out the Development Plan and provides the justification for the principle of the residential development and the continued need and support for housing. Section 4 provides a planning balance and considers the development plan as the starting point for consideration and then other material considerations of weight to justify the proposal and concludes the statement.
- 1.5 Documentation accompanying this Statement includes:

Application Forms

CIL Forms

Design and Access Statement

Arboricultural Impact Appraisal and Method Statement

Tree Constraints Plan

Tree Protection Plan



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Net Gain and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report.

Highway Technical Note

Landscape Strategy & Maintenance Plan

Landscape Maintenance Plan

Drawings:

- 8160 D01 to D024
- 8160 E01 to E04

THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 1.6 The site is located to the north of Sherborne St John, with access off Vyne Road. The site is located outside of the settlement policy boundary and is therefore situated within the countryside and outside of, but adjacent to Sherborne St John Conservation Area.
- 1.7 The site is characterised by large agricultural and B8 storage buildings and hardstanding which has fallen into disrepair.
- 1.8 The B8 use was granted planning permission under reference BDB/62418 on 9th February 2006. The entire site, including the agricultural buildings, has since approved for residential use as detailed in the planning history below.
- 1.9 The site is well screened by mature trees and hedgerows and is bounded by residential dwellings to the North and the Parish Council sports field to the South. There is open countryside to the East and a mix of residential dwellings and Kestrel Court offices to the West.
- 1.10 The Sherborne St John Conservation Area was designated in 1983 by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the village. Adjacent to the site are a number of notable buildings identified below (marked yellow). None of which are statutory listed.



Notable buildings:



(No.13 Vyne Road)



(No.s 15 & 17 Vyne Road and Kestrel Court)



(28 & 30 Vyne Road)

1.11 The views of note, for this application are that across the Chute Recreation Ground and looking south east along Vyne Road as follows:





(identified vista across Chute Recreation Ground)



(Identified Vista along Vyne Road)

- 1.12 The village of Sherborne St John is located three miles north-west of Basingstoke. The Conservation Area is divided into two parts, which represent the historic pattern of development within the village. The western part includes the original nucleus of development at West End, situated astride the A340. The eastern area includes the older historic core of the village, around St Andrew's Church. It also extends to include properties along Vyne Road and the open countryside to the north of the village.
- 1.13 The development of the village was strongly influenced by Wey Brook, which passes through the centre of the main village area. The majority of the buildings in the Conservation Area are centred around the three sources of Wey Brook. The main historic core of the village is focused on the two easterly sources of the brook and towards the point where they merge at the site of Sherborne Mill. Watercress was a significant industry within the village, with beds still surviving adjacent to Dark Lane.
- 1.14 The village is a rich mix of building styles, watercourses, tracks, road patterns, open spaces and vegetation. Its topography is one of its most distinctive features, as it enables important views through, into, and out of the historic centre of the settlement.
- 1.15 There are 15 buildings located within the Sherborne St John Conservation Area that are included on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. All the buildings are listed as being of local or regional special interest (Grade II), apart from St Andrew's Church which is of outstanding national importance (Grade I). None



of these are within the vicinity of the application site. The development of the application site will not therefore impact upon the setting of these statutory listed buildings.

- 1.16 There are a variety of building types, mainly dating from the 16th and 19th centuries, which are dispersed throughout the village. Often located at key visual points within the streetscene, they make a significant contribution to the special qualities of the Conservation Area. Some of these older buildings have been altered over successive periods to accommodate changes in their use or contemporary architectural fashions.
- 1.17 The re-fronting in brick of existing timber-framed buildings was particularly common in the 18th century (examples include Spring Cottage (Cranes Road) and April Cottage (Dark Lane)). Other buildings have retained more completely their vernacular form and materials. The village is predominantly residential in character, focused around The Square and along West End. There is a variety of building forms and styles, but a degree of cohesion is derived from small groups of similar building types, particularly on Vyne Road, Dark Lane, Kiln Road and parts of West End.
- 1.18 The Chute Recreation Ground at the top of Vyne Road is formally laid out and offers views over the surrounding farmland. The private space around Hill House, on the opposite side of Vyne Road, provides an important setting to the building. It is defined by tall trees around its boundaries. These trees are also important in framing and narrowing the views along Vyne Road. They create a contrast between the open spaces and views across the countryside to the north of the Conservation Area, and the intimate spaces in the village.
- 1.19 There are many brick walls in the Conservation Area that, together with tall belts of trees, define important boundaries to buildings and spaces. Their prominence in the streetscene makes them an important element in the character of the area. Notable examples are the tall walls to the rear of Edernish House and Nos 1-3 Vyne Road (clearly visible from the fields along the stream valley to Mill House); the walls along Vyne Road from the centre going down the hill and around the bend; those going up the hill towards the Vyne; and those already described at The Haye and along Dark Lane.



- 1.20 The predominant local building materials are brick and clay tile, reflecting the proximity of the local clay fields. The varied use of bricks in particular demonstrates the changes in vernacular traditions and architectural fashion over the development of the settlement. Examples include the 18th century decorative glazed grey headers and the Victorian development of manufactured 'specials'. Other vernacular materials include timber-framing (often combined with later brick infill), and thatch. Slate is limited to 19th century buildings, particularly those for ancillary purpose. Given the domestic scale and simple vernacular architecture of the buildings in the Conservation Area, historic joinery (such as sash or casement windows, doors and door hoods) are often the features that define the appearance of properties. Although some buildings have been modernised, the use and overall effect of inappropriate replacement windows and doors is limited.
- 1.21 The Setting of the Conservation Area - The village of Sherborne St John is generally well contained by the surrounding landform. It rests within a hollow on the spring line, where the upper chalk to the south abuts the mottled clay to the north. The centre of the village is low lying and the area to the north and south is generally on higher land. This topography is an important characteristic of the Conservation Area as it creates many of the special open spaces and views into, and out of, the area.
- 1.22 The open areas of the Conservation Area range from Manor House to Mill House and beyond the Recreation Ground. This results in long views to the area from the surrounding countryside. However, the village centre is hidden and is only gradually revealed on the Vyne Road and Cranes Road approaches. The modern developments that define much of the southern and eastern boundaries to the Conservation Area help retain the essential character of the local streetscene. These include front hedges, large plots, and buildings set back from the road. They preclude the longer views into the area that would once have made the village more prominent from the south.



RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

1.23 The following applications are relevant to this proposal:

BDB/48965 Change use of agricultural barn to B8, storage and distribution.
Permitted 12 January 2001

BDB/54368 Change of use from agriculture Barn to Class B8 (storage and distribution). Permitted 9th February 2006.

16/00949/FUL – Erection of 2 no. 5 bed and 2 no. 2 bed dwellings with new access, following demolition of existing buildings restoration of the southern part of the site to a grassed area of recreational open space – Granted: 12 August 2016

18/00814/GPDADW – Notification of proposed change of use of agricultural building to 3 no. two bedroom dwellinghouses (Class C3) – Granted 28th September 2018

18/02071/FUL – Erection of 2 no. 5 bed and 2 no. 2 bed dwellings with new access, following demolition of existing buildings restoration of the southern part of the site to a grassed area of recreational open space (renewal of application ref: 16/00949/FUL) - Granted: 24th October 2018

18/03679/FUL - Erection of 4 no. 2 bedroom dwellings and associated landscaping and car parking following the demolition of existing buildings and hardstanding. Granted 19 August 2019.

19/02740/FUL - Erection of 4 no. 3 bed dwellings and 1 no. 4 bed dwelling with associated landscaping and car parking following the demolition of the existing agricultural buildings. Permitted 10th March 2022.

20/00593/CONDN - Discharge of condition 5 and 22 of 18/03679/FUL.
Discharged 22nd June 2020.



21/02194/FUL Erection of 4 no. 2 bed dwellings and associated landscaping and car parking following the demolition of existing B8, storage and distribution use building and hardstanding (renewal of application 18/03679/FUL). Permitted 24th December 2021.

22/00801/ROC Variation of condition 1 of planning consent 21/02194/FUL (Erection of 4 no. 2 bed dwellings and associated landscaping and car parking following the demolition of existing B8, storage and distribution use building and hardstanding) to allow rooflights to plots 1-4. Permitted 10th May 2022.



2 PLANNING POLICY

- 2.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) states that in dealing with an application for planning permission the LPA shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and any other material considerations.
- 2.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.3 The development plan for Basingstoke and Deane Council consists of the Adopted Local Plan 2011-2029 and the Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted on 18th May 2017.
- 2.4 The main material consideration is the adopted Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Design and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document, Housing SPD, Parking Standards 2018, the Sherborne St John Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 2.5 The NPPF outlines a presumption in favour of sustainable economic, social and environmental development (paragraph 11). These roles are mutually dependent and should be jointly sought to achieve sustainable development. Paragraph 126 of the NPPF sets out that 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.
- 2.6 In respect of housing in rural areas, paragraph 78 sets out that planning decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. To promote the underpinning presumption of sustainable development that resonates throughout the NPPF, paragraph 79 goes on to state that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and



paragraph 80 states that decisions should avoid development of isolated homes in the countryside unless it applies to one or more of the following:

- a) there is an essential need for rural workers;
- b) the development represents the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve subdivision of an existing residential dwelling;
or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality.

HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

- 2.7 The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to identify a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites to meet housing needs. In addition, and in line with the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) published in January 2021, a 5% buffer should currently be added to the borough's supply due to a high level of completions over a three year period which resulted in an over-delivery of dwellings in the borough when compared to the ALP requirement of 850 dwellings per annum.
- 2.8 The council published its Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) in December 2022 with a base date of 1 April 2021 to 31st March 2022. This confirmed a housing land supply of 4.5 years can be demonstrated, applying a 5% buffer. The council is therefore unable to demonstrate 5 years of deliverable sites. Significant weight should be given to this in the determination of the application.
- 2.9 The application will therefore need to be considered in line with paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (the 'tilted balance'). This states that where relevant policies are considered out of date permission will be granted unless the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.



PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 2.10 The principle of development for 9 dwellings has been established in the relevant planning history identified in para 1.22 of this statement.
- 2.11 The Sherborne St John Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for housing development in order to meet the identified requirements of the village. The application site currently being considered does not fall within this allocation. In respect to new dwellings outside of the allocation, the Neighbourhood Plan is silent. Furthermore, as this plan was made in May 2017 this plan being more than 2 years old is also out of date in respect of housing site policies.
- 2.12 Policy SD1 sets out that the council will take a positive approach to determining proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development within the NPPF, working proactively with applicants to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. The Policy also establishes that applications which are in accordance with the policies in the Local Plan, will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.13 Policy SS1 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029 (the Local Plan) sets out a spatial strategy for the Local Authority to meet its full housing need over the plan period. The strategy is principally based upon the development of allocated greenfield sites and the development of land in the towns and villages (defined Settlement Policy Boundaries). Development in the countryside is generally restricted.
- 2.14 In respect of this application, Policy SS6 of the Local Plan is of relevance due to the site's location within designated countryside. Policy SS6 outlines the exceptional circumstances where it is appropriate to allow new housing development in the countryside. Policy SS6 states that development in the countryside will only be permitted if the site is (a) on previously developed land; (b) is part of a rural exception scheme; (c) is for the re-use of an existing building; (d) involves the replacement of an existing dwelling; (e) is small scale to meet a locally agreed need; (f) is required to support an existing rural business; or (g) is allocated by a Neighbourhood Plan.



2.15 In this case, the site is a storey of two halves based on the planning history provided. The area outlined in red below relates to a number of previous planning applications which establish a non-agricultural storage use within the barn and immediately to the front of the barn. This use is not an exclusion as part of the definition of previously developed land within the NPPF. In addition, part of the site also includes surfacing / access roads, which are considered to be 'associated fixed surface infrastructure' and previously developed land, as per the NPPF definition. It has historically therefore been accepted that the majority of this part of the site can be stated to be previously developed land. In respect of the land marked blue in the plan below, it is accepted that this is not previously developed land but benefits from extant planning permissions which are significant material planning considerations in this case.

2.16 Those small areas that were not considered to be previously developed land or benefiting from the extant permissions is discussed in the planning balance later in this statement.



Extract from application 21/02194/FUL

2.17 In terms of isolation the site has already been assessed in terms of whether it is isolated development or not and it has previously been concluded that it is not considered that this site would result in an isolated form of development when assessed against the intended meaning of isolated in the context of the NPPF.



- 2.18 Therefore, as set out above and as concluded by the LPA in previous extant planning permissions, as the Local Plan Policies SS1 and SS6 are currently considered to be out of date, given the Council's inability to demonstrate 5 years' worth of deliverable sites, the weight afforded to Policies SS1 and SS6 is reduced in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF.
- 2.19 In the absence of heritage impacts, considered later, which would outweigh the benefits of 9 dwellings at the site based on the planning history and partial PDL nature of the site, the principle of the development is acceptable in the current circumstances.

HERITAGE

- 2.20 The heritage policy and guidance context for consideration of the proposals is considered above. This includes the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 2.21 Paragraph 194 notes that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted.
- 2.22 Importantly, Annex 2 of the NPPF defines "conservation" as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. It is not a process that should prevent change where proposals, such as these, would not result in harm to the significance of the heritage assets but have the potential to deliver enhancements.
- 2.23 What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.



- 2.24 Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgement for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.
- 2.25 A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage interest for their significance to be a material consideration in the planning process. (NPPG).
- 2.26 A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.
- 2.27 Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.
- 2.28 The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of, or from, an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.
- 2.29 When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of



cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

Significance

- 2.30 'Significance' is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts are identified and compared, both absolutely and relatively. It is essential for effective conservation and management, because the identification of areas and aspects of higher and lower significance, based on a thorough understanding of a place, enable proposals for change to be developed which protect, respect and where possible enhance, a building's character and cultural values.
- 2.31 The assessment of significance can assist in identifying areas where only minimal changes should be considered, as well as locations where change might be acceptable and enhance understanding and appreciation of the building's significance. Changes need to be carefully designed to ensure that significant features are not compromised and will be judged within the legislative context governing the historic environment. This section describes the building and its context and assesses its 'significance'.

Statement of Significance

- 2.32 This assessment of significance is intended to describe the buildings and their key features in sufficient detail to understand its special interest. With that in mind it focuses on those areas which are most affected by the proposed changes.
- 2.33 Those heritage assets have been detailed in Section 1 of this report under the heading "Site and Surroundings".
- 2.34 These amount to the setting of the Sherborne St John Conservation Area (designated heritage asset) and the nearby namely No.13 Vyne Road, No.s 15 & 17 Vyne Road, Kestrel Court and 28 & 30 Vyne Road (non-designated heritage assets).



Impact of the proposal on significance

- 2.35 As required by the development plan Policy EM11 requires all development to conserve or enhance the quality of the borough's heritage assets (statutory or not) in a manner appropriate to their significance. This is in accordance with the NPPF.
- 2.36 Development proposals which would affect designated or non-designated heritage assets will be permitted where they:
- a) Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, how this has informed the proposed development, and how the proposal would impact on the asset's significance. This will be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and the potential impact of the proposal;
 - b) Ensure that extensions and/or alterations respect the historic form, setting, fabric and any other aspects that contribute to the significance of the host building;
 - c) Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the significance, character and setting of conservation areas and how this has informed proposals, to achieve high quality new design which is respectful of historic interest and local character;
 - d) Conserve or enhance the quality, distinctiveness and character of heritage assets by ensuring the use of appropriate materials, design and detailing; and
 - e) Retain the significance and character of historic buildings when considering alternative uses and make sensitive use of redundant historic assets.
- 2.37 This statement and the accompanying Design and Access Statement establishes an understanding of the area and design qualities. Whereby it is considered that the significance of the designated heritage assets is that which relates to the setting of nearby notable buildings and the character of the Conservation Area.
- 2.38 In this regard, the application site is not recognised as having a positive contribution with the Conservation Area or the adjacent buildings.



- 2.39 The proposal represents a low-density scheme of larger plots characteristic of the area amounting to an overall density of only 11 dph.
- 2.40 The proposed layout has been informed by the constraints of the site and the existing urban grain and the scheme imitates a layout of a farmstead to address an agricultural character of the area.
- 2.41 All units along Vyne Road are well set back from the road allowing for an extension of a green buffer at the northwest corner and the proposed scheme aims to retain, enhance and/or replace existing vegetation with native planting along the perimeter of the site.
- 2.42 The proposed buildings have been informed by the local mix of building types and aim to reflect agricultural character of the area. The proposed scheme comprises two storey dwellings with pitched hipped roofs, gables, and dormers. Properties across the site will share the same agricultural form and a simple palette of materials, which includes red brick, flint, slate or clay roofs and black timber cladding.
- 2.43 The development accords with the character of the Conservation Area and does not disturb or negatively impact upon identified important views and fully compliant with Policy EM11.

LANDSCAPE AND DESIGN

- 2.44 The site is located within the North Sherborne Landscape Character as defined within the Borough's Landscape Character Assessment. The primary characteristics being gently undulating landform, pattern of predominantly arable farmland and improved grassland, modern intervisibility across the area, variety of woodland and distinctive areas of parkland.
- 2.45 The site and its surroundings are strongly influenced by its countryside and agricultural use and the rural nature of the surrounding area.
- 2.46 The modest dwellings have been designed to reflect the styles and appearance of other rural buildings in the local area and along Vyne Road as discussed previously and expanded upon within the accompanying Design and Access statement. The dwellings



will not be visually dominant within the landscape and provide for a more comprehensive and cohesive approach compared to the extant permission across this site.

- 2.47 The proposal removes large unattractive storage/agricultural buildings and replaces them with buildings which are smaller in scale and providing areas of amenity space which enhances the North Sherborne Landscape Character Area.
- 2.48 The site plan illustrates that the proposal provides dwellings with large gardens and sited within areas of significant landscaping with hedging and trees to be retained along the southern boundary to screen the development from the recreation ground with native hedging throughout as detailed in the accompanying Landscape Strategy and protection of existing established vegetation.

AMENITY

- 2.49 Whilst the Council does not have a specific policy proscribing minimum internal space standards of new residential dwellings, Policy EM10 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that proposals for new development are of a high standard of design. Full consideration of the Nationally Described Space Standards has been given and all units accord with this.
- 2.50 Policy EM10 b) outlines that “provide a high quality of amenity for occupants of developments and neighbouring properties, having regard to such issues as overlooking, access to natural light, outlook and amenity space, in accordance with the Design and Sustainability SPD.”
- 2.51 The nearest residential dwellings to be affected by the proposal would be over 30m away on the opposite side of Vyne Road. The proposed dwellings are modest with no windows that can cause any undue impact and are therefore acceptable in respect of outlook, loss of light and privacy.
- 2.52 In accordance with the Design and Sustainability SPD the proposal provides large gardens with natural light and the dwellings are orientated to prevent overlooking and sense of enclosure.



2.53 The proposal is acceptable in neighbouring amenity terms and complies with Policy EM10 b)

ACCESS AND PARKING

2.54 Policy CN9 sets out that development should integrate into existing movement networks, provide safe, suitable and convenient access for all users; provide appropriate parking and servicing provision; and should not result in inappropriate traffic generation or compromise highway safety. Policy EM10 requires developments to provide appropriate parking provision (including bicycle storage), in terms of amount, design, layout and location, in accordance with the adopted parking standards.

2.55 The Highway Technical Note has been commissioned in support of the planning application. This concludes that the site is to be served by an existing access which is to be improved, and which has visibility in accordance with the LHA's document Technical Guidance 3.

2.56 Car and cycle parking is to be provided slightly in excess of the adopted parking standards.

2.57 The layout has been designed to accommodate the turning requirements of a large refuse freighter.

2.58 The likely additional traffic impact from the development is considered to be minimal and will not lead to any detriment to highway safety.

2.59 The development is acceptable from a highway point of view.

HOUSING MIX

2.60 In preparing the Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council undertook a needs survey which has resulted in the adoption of Policy SSJ1 which demonstrates that new housing developments should include a mix of dwelling sizes, including smaller dwellings (with two or three bedrooms). The policy further outlines that proposed development proposals will normally only be permitted provided that at least half of all the dwellings (measured on a net basis) have two or three bedrooms.



2.61 The proposal provides for 3 x 2 bed, 2 x 3 bed and 4 x 4 bed properties. Over 50% of the properties provided are “smaller dwellings” contributing towards the supply of smaller properties in Sherborne St John and satisfy policy SSJ1.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

2.62 Local Plan Policy CN1 requires the provision of 40% affordable housing as part of new residential development with a tenure split of 70% rented and 30% intermediate products. In July 2018 the council adopted a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Housing for the determination of planning applications from 1 August 2018. The Housing Supplementary Planning Document has been produced to expand upon the housing policies in the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan (2011-2029).

2.63 The NPPF was published after the adoption of the Housing SPD. The NPPF is an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

2.64 The NPPF updates the threshold for the size of planning applications that can provide affordable housing. It requires that affordable housing 'should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas'. Major development, for housing, is defined as developments of 10 or more homes, or sites with an area of 0.5ha or more.

2.65 The proposed site is in the countryside, greater than 0.5ha thereby Policy CN1 is of relevance.

2.66 As part of this submission a Viability Assessment is to be undertaken to justify a reduction/ non-payment of an affordable housing contribution as per the extant permissions.

BIODIVERSITY

2.67 Policy EM4 requires that significant harm to biodiversity from a development should be avoided and if that is not possible adequate mitigation is to be provided. In this case there is no adverse impact on the integrity of designated and proposed European



designated sites, nationally designated sites or locally designated sites such as SINCs and LNRs.

- 2.68 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PBRA) has been undertaken.
- 2.69 Amphibians including Great Crested Newt *Triturus Cristatus* (GCN) are a potential receptor to the proposed works due to nearby records and the presence of suitable terrestrial habitat within and adjacent to the Site, however, the risk remains low due to the lack of suitable waterbodies. As such, the works may proceed under a Precautionary Method of Working (PMoW). If a GCN is encountered during the works, the works must cease immediately, and an ecologist be contacted for advice.
- 2.70 The site provides suitable habitat for foraging & commuting badger *Meles*. There is a low risk of sett creation within the site due to a lack of suitable habitat. The works must adhere to Ecological Best Practice Guidelines (BPG) throughout.
- 2.71 Roosting, foraging and commuting bats may utilise the site and therefore be impacted by the proposed works. No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the external and internal building inspections. Building B5 was assessed as having Moderate potential to support roosting bats, due to the number and nature of PRFs present.
- 2.72 In accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's best practice guidelines (Collins 2016), two dusk emergence surveys of the existing B5 building will be required. The surveys must be undertaken between May-September (inclusive) and spaced at least two weeks apart. In order adequately cover the building and the features identified, it is recommended that two surveyors would be required to cover different aspects and features. Where roosting bats are recorded, an additional dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey would be required in order to determine the species of bat, roosting locations and type of roost present.
- 2.73 If building B5 is confirmed as a bat roost following the completion of the surveys recommended above, an EPS Mitigation Licence from Natural England will need to be obtained prior to the commencement of works, in line with the current legislation on



bats. Where no roosts are recorded, no additional surveys will be required and there will be no need to apply for an EPSM Licence.

- 2.74 Two trees within the site were previously confirmed as having suitability for roosting bats (Ecus 2018). It is recommended the trees be subjected to an aerial tree climbing survey, whereby a licenced ecologist uses an endoscope to assess any potential roosting features for bat activity. In light of the extant consents allowing for demolition of these buildings a suitably worded condition can be imposed to secure such surveys prior to the commencement of this development.
- 2.75 The buildings, scrub, and scattered tree habitats were suitable for a common assemblage of nesting birds, including pigeons, which may nest year-round.
- 2.76 If any active nests are identified during the works, an exclusion zone must be implemented by an ecologist or suitably experienced person. The nest(s) will be left undisturbed until the young have been confirmed to fully fledged or the nesting attempt be determined to have concluded.
- 2.77 If vegetation clearance is due to take place during the bird nesting season (March – September inclusive, weather dependent), a pre-works nesting bird check will be required. An ecologist or suitably experienced person will be required to inspect any suitable areas within the site, for breeding birds and their active nests, no more than 48 hours prior to any vegetation clearance works being undertaken. If any active nests are identified during the nesting bird check, an exclusion zone will be implemented. The nest(s) will be left undisturbed until the young have been confirmed to fully fledged or the nesting attempt be determined to have concluded.
- 2.78 Western European hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* and brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, may occasionally use the site. Ecological BPG should be followed throughout the works.
- 2.79 If butterfly bush *Buddleia davidii* is to be cleared, measures should be put in place to limit or prevent its spread.



2.80 The calculated gain of 81.70 % in Habitat Units means the proposed development achieves a quantitative no net loss of biodiversity in its present design, therefore no further recommendations are required at this stage.

2.81 Currently the proposed development produces now gain in Hedgerow Units within the site, as such further enhancement options are considered and could provide an increase of 216.13%.

TREES

2.82 Policy EM1 demonstrates that “development proposals must respect, enhance and not be detrimental to the character or visual amenity of the landscape likely to be affected, paying particular regard to:

e) Trees, ancient woodland, hedgerows, water features such as rivers and other landscape features and their function as ecological networks.”

2.83 The trees that could be affected by the development have been surveyed. Information has been supplied to the client on the constraints that trees impose upon the use of the site. The site layout has evolved, following consultation and taking full account of these constraints.

2.84 Many of the trees on the site can be retained and protected. Tree loss is restricted to a single poor grade ash tree. Planting of new trees is proposed within the submitted landscape details.

2.85 Some construction activity will be necessitated within the root protection areas of the retained trees. However, the use of protective measures will ensure that these areas will not be subjected to significant ground disturbance.

2.86 If adequate precautions to protect the retained trees are specified and implemented through the arboricultural method statement provided, the development proposal will have no significant adverse impact on the contribution of trees to amenity or character in the wider setting. Therefore, the proposal is in accordance with Policy EM1.



SUSTAINABLE WATER USE

- 2.87 Policy EM9 of the Local Plan sets out that development for new homes will need to meet a water efficiency standard of 110 litres or less per person per day. The applicant in this case is content for a condition to secure this provision.

INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTIONS

- 2.88 Affordable Housing has already been considered in this Statement.
- 2.89 Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has implemented its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on the 25th June 2018. The required forms have been submitted for CIL contributions to be calculated.



3 PLANNING BALANCE/CONCLUSIONS

PLANNING BENEFITS

- 3.1 The provision of 9 dwellings would be a clear benefit in contributing to the Boroughs current and future unmet housing need, as demonstrated by the lack of a 5-year housing Land Supply.
- 3.2 Over 50% of the properties provided are “smaller dwellings” contributing towards the supply of smaller properties in Sherborne St John.
- 3.3 A significant Biodiverse Net Gain is proposed and an increase Hedgerow units of 216.13% with additional tree planting/cover.
- 3.4 A more comprehensive and considered approach to the site than the extant permissions proving for an enhanced layout and design in respect of the impact on the Conservation Area and landscape character.
- 3.5 Removal of a vehicular access onto Vyne Road.
- 3.6 It is pertinent to note also that the developments, individually or in combination would bring economic and social benefits, in the form of both direct and indirect employment, and through increased local expenditure and support for local businesses and services, including public transport. These beneficial economic and social impacts in themselves, in my opinion carry moderate weight.

PLANNING BALANCE

- 3.7 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (and paragraph 47 of the NPPF) require that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.8 The Proposed Development has been carefully considered in the context of all the relevant national and local planning policies.



- 3.9 The ‘tilted balance’ in this case is engaged and is not disputed by the LPA. Unless the claimed harm significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits planning permission should be granted.
- 3.10 We have demonstrated in this statement and accompanying documentation that no harm arises in respect of its impact on heritage assets, landscape, highways, trees, neighbours or biodiversity matters.
- 3.11 A large part of the site is previously developed land with extant permissions comprising a total of 9 dwellings on the site. Those small areas of the site that fall outside of the extant permission which are encompassed in this proposed to not contain any built form rather open amenity land and in any event, in our view the overall package of benefits of the developments is entitled to very significant weight and outweighs any possible claimed harm of development in the countryside contrary to policy SS6, when those possible claimed harms are properly analysed, as we have done here.
- 3.12 The benefits of the proposed development are material considerations which add convincingly to the case for the approval of this application in a location that is sustainable. No harm arises which would be capable of ‘significantly and demonstrably’ outweighing the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole. As such permission should be granted.
- 3.13 Concluding on the planning balance, the extent of the policy objection to the countryside location when seen in its proper context does not begin to outweigh the very considerable benefits of the proposal.