

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN PART 2

HEARING STATEMENT (MATTER 10)

**Colden Common: Policy CC1
ID: 50282**

Pro Vision Planning and Design
June 2016
Prepared on behalf of: Bargate Homes



1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Pro Vision Planning & Design on behalf of Bargate Homes in relation to Matter 10 Colden Common and specifically Policy CC1 Sandyfields Housing Allocation. The representations relate to Matters 10 i) and ii) which state:

- i) Are the policies and proposals for growth and change in this area appropriate and justified, including in relation to the NPPF/PPG, and in terms of environmental, economic and social impacts?
- ii) Are they clear and deliverable, including in respect of the associated infrastructure requirements?

1.2 In our view, the resolution to grant planning permission on the Sandyfields site does not negate the need for the Inspector to consider how LPP2 deals with Colden Common, not least because of the significant doubts about whether the CC1 and CC2 can deliver the numbers required.

1.3 We accept that LPP1 makes provision for *about 250 dwellings* in Colden Common over the plan period, however we object to the proposed development strategy for Colden Common set out in LPP2 which proposes to concentrate development at Sandyfields Nurseries. This is a clearly an exercise in retrofitting a residual housing requirement for the Settlement into a single site; but that site is not suitable for the number of units proposed nor does it have the necessary infrastructure to support it. The proposed allocation at Sandyfields does not represent an appropriate extension to the existing built up area. It is overly large and appears as an illogical and alien addition to the well-defined pattern of development, which will have an adverse impact on the SDNP. There is significant doubt regarding whether highway issues can be resolved and whether Natural Green Space can be provided at **Stratton's** Copse Woodland to the satisfaction of the SDNPA without having a significant adverse impact on the Ancient Woodland.

1.4 We object to the process, **undertaken by 'Commonview' (Community Engagement Group)**, by which the development strategy for Colden Common was produced, and in particular to the way in which at the 11th hour the Main Road site (2494) (one of those favoured by residents in the survey) was excluded. **In our view the LPA's own site selection process** relied too heavily on the unsatisfactory Common View process and failed to objectively assess the potential sites available.

1.5 Our clients have an interest in both land at Main Road 2494 and Lower Moors Road 1870. Both sites have been promoted for housing **through the Council's** SHLAA and the Common View exercise. Both sites are suitable, available and achievable in the plan period. Both sites are now subject of a pending conjoined public inquiry (Ref: APP/L1765/W/16/3141664 & 3141667).

1.6 The remainder of this statement discusses why the policies and proposals for housing growth and change for Colden Common are not appropriate or justified; why the plan is not deliverable and why there is a need to allocate additional sites to meet the housing numbers required.

2.0 Policy CC1 Sandyfields Housing Allocation

Process

- 2.1 There is no adopted or emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Colden Common. However, as part of the LPP2 preparation process a Local Community **Engagement group known as "Commonview" was established**. The result of this process led in September 2013 to the Parish Council endorsing a development strategy for Colden Common, endorsed by the Parish Council, which proposed to focus development on the B3354 across a number of smaller sites. The Main Road site was identified in this Strategy as a preferred site to accommodate 40 dwellings.
- 2.2 The Strategy then underwent further public consultation, during which comments were received from only 30 residents in comparison to the 550 received for the original strategy. Of these just 11 objected to the inclusion of the Main Road site.
- 2.3 Subsequently, in March 2014 Commonview reported to the Parish Council with a recommendation that the Development Strategy should be revised and that the Main Road site should be excluded ***"provided that the required number of homes can be achieved on sites 275/2495 and 888/889, the relevant planning permissions from WCC and agreement with the SDNP can be obtained"***.
- 2.4 The revised Development Strategy, endorsed by the Parish Council and recommended to WCC therefore relied on increasing the capacity of Sandyfields from 125 to up to 165 dwellings. This 11th hour revision to the Development Strategy **was apparently "justified"** by the further public consultation which produced a statistically insignificant response.
- 2.5 **In contrast to a Neighbourhood Plan, the outcome of the "Commonview" process was not put to a referendum; it lacked technical rigour and failed to demonstrate a clear local consensus. Nevertheless, it is clear that the LPA gave considerable weight to Commonview's recommendations, which were effectively "cut and pasted" into the draft LPP2.**
- 2.6 In summary, the LPP2 process was an unsatisfactory process which relied too heavily on a local process which, produced a bias and unrepresentative result and culminated in the selection of two sites (CC1 and CC2) which are highly unlikely to deliver the number of dwellings required (and in the case of Clayfields is unlikely to deliver any housing with the next 5 years) a

Are the sites allocated appropriate?

- 2.7 Sandyfields Nurseries and land fronting Main Road (275/2495) together form the proposed site allocation CC1 for the development of *about 165 dwellings*.
- 2.8 There have been significant doubts regarding the number of units proposed and capacity of the site throughout the current planning application (14/01993/OUT) both by objectors and Council **Officer's** (confirmed by a recent FOI request Appendix A).

- 2.9 Notwithstanding this and following comprehensive revisions to the original submission, WCC resolved to grant outline planning permission (subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement) for up to 165 dwellings at Sandyfields on 21st April 2016. At the time it went to Committee, and despite the comprehensive amendments, it was still subject to significant objections including from the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) (see Committee Report – Appendix B and the SDNPA consultation response in Appendix C). Both Bargate Homes and Wellbeck (promoters for an alternative site) raised objections to the merits of the planning application and the **Council’s determination of the application. Wellbeck submitted a solicitor’s** letter suggesting that it would be unlawful for the Council to grant planning permission (see Appendix D). The **SDNPA’s** consultation response also draws attention to flaws in the thoroughness of the Committee reports assessment of the impact of the development within the Copse on the purposes and duty of the National Park and the Development Plan, in particular the limited assessment of the protected landscape.
- 2.10 It is important to recognise that **the Council’s resolution to grant** does not in itself demonstrate that 165 units at the site is deliverable, not least because **the description is for ‘up to’ 165 units**. We have significant doubts about whether the S106 agreement can be completed, given doubts about the viability of releasing the site for less than 165 units. In any event, whether the site is suitable for 165 will only be determined at reserved matters stage. It is not therefore possible in our submission for the LPP2 Inspector to conclude at this stage that the site is suitable to accommodate 165 dwellings (or indeed any other specific number).

Access

- 2.11 With regard to access Policy CC1 states that:
- *proposals should provide a single point of access for Main Road with junction arrangements designed to facilitate safe vehicle, pedestrian and cycle access and crossing arrangements along with any wider traffic management and mitigation measure necessary*
- 2.12 Local Plan Part 1 includes a requirement for the location of development to reduce the need to travel. The DPD should be consistent with this objective.
- 2.13 The current planning application is still subject to significant unresolved highways issues, confirmed by the recent Highways consultation response (Appendix E). Further information in respect of the impact of the proposals on the highway network including updated capacity assessments, which currently use the wrong data, and appropriate mitigation are yet to be provided and agreed.
- 2.14 There are also significant concerns about the low or ‘adequate’ level of access to services as concluded in the WCC Transport Assessment.

- 2.15 Whilst the outstanding highways issues were not considered insurmountable and did not lead to the **LPA's** refusal of the application, the lack of sufficiently detailed information casts uncertainty over whether the additional information sought can be provided and the issues adequately dealt with. We consider that the proposed development of 165 dwellings via a single access point in this location would have significant adverse effect on the highway network, in this locality.
- 2.16 We note the intention of the policy to:
- ***provide a footpath link through the site to the adjacent Stratton's Copse Woodland in the east and provide for future possible links to Colden Common Park.***
- 2.17 **Stratton's Copse Woodland forms** part of a larger block of ancient, semi-natural woodland, important for its rich biodiversity, cultural and historic importance. There are significant outstanding objections from the SDNPA to the proposed public access to the Woodland, not least the proposed method of access. The SDNPA consider that access should be via a through route linking to the wider footpath network and not a circular walk as proposed. This outstanding objection raises significant doubt that a suitable access, which the Park will support, can be achieved.

Environmental

- 2.18 Policy CC1 seeks that any proposals deliver a number of environmental benefits, we have significant doubts about the delivery of the following:
- *Manage access to adjacent woodland **at Stratton's Copse in National Park** for public use as Natural Green Space;*
 - *Prepare an ecological assessment setting out how biodiversity interests will be protected and enhanced.*
- 2.19 **Stratton's Copse** forms part of a semi-natural ancient woodland and is ecologically sensitive; containing a number of protected species, forming part of a SINC and lying within the impact zone of a SSSI.
- 2.20 The current Sandyfields application seeks to provide POS on-site and public access to the adjacent Stratton's Copse. The on-site POS provision is not sufficient for the scale of the development given the existing shortfall in the village, and we have concerns that this will put pressure on the use of the woodland, which should only complement the POS provision, not be relied upon, the SDNPA concur with this view.
- 2.21 Whilst the SDNPA consider sensitive access may be facilitated, a reliance on the woodland could further degrade the ground flora and sensitive northern areas of the Copse contrary to providing ecological enhancements required by CC1. Great weight is afforded to the protection of wildlife in national parks by the NPPF (Para 115) which advises that permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including Ancient Woodland (Para 118).

- 2.22 WCC are satisfied that no adverse impact will occur to the SINC, protected species or wider woodland, however, we agree with the SDNPA's that information and **specialist's comments provided** to-date are not comprehensive enough. An appropriate balance between public access and enhanced biodiversity has not been demonstrated (SDNP/16/00225/PRE Appendix F). These significant concerns all clearly point towards a reduction in numbers.
- *Promote a housing density and layout which respects the location of the site in relation to the National Park.*
- 2.23 The eastern boundary of the site abuts the SDNP. The Woodland lies entirely with the Park. **WCC's** Landscape Sensitivity Appraisal highlights that the proximity of the SDNP to the eastern boundary of Colden Common and setting of the SDNP and development within or adjacent to woodlands on the eastern edge are key issues for Colden Common.
- 2.24 Whilst illustrative, the current layout for the Sandyfields application demonstrates that an appropriate density is not achievable. It fails to respect the character and setting of the settlement and due to its size and shape results in a large, uncharacteristic extension of the settlement, encroaching adjoining open countryside and for the most part appearing poorly related to the settlement, its only attachment being a tenuous narrow link to Main Road. The layout demonstrates unacceptable relationships with and subsequent adverse impact on the setting of adjacent listed buildings along Main Road and inadequate garden sizes for properties located on the northern side of the access.
- 2.25 Due to the extent, scale and density of the proposed housing development and its position immediately adjacent to the SDNP, the proposed scheme will have a significant adverse and harmful impact on the scenic beauty and landscape character of the SDNP and its setting in which circumstances the NPPF advises that development should be refused where there are no exceptional circumstances.
- 2.26 In summary, Policy CC1 is not appropriate or justified as it cannot suitably accommodate the number of units allocated due to the significant outstanding highways issues; inadequate provision of POS, outstanding objections by the SDNPA and failure to illustrate an appropriate housing density and layout can be achieved which respects the character and settlement pattern of the village and NP, thus posing significant adverse social and environmental impacts.

The Deliverability of the Sandyfields site

- 2.27 There are significant doubts about whether 165 units can be delivered in line with the proposed requirements of Policy CC1. The footnote to para 47 of the NPPF **states that "to be considered developable sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect**

that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point **envisaged**".

- 2.28 We have significant concerns that the site cannot be viably developed for anything less than 165 given the **site's** existing use value.
- 2.29 There are also doubts about the deliverability of the future possible link to Colden Common Park required by CC1. Any future access would cross land outside of the ownership of the site and consent from landowners would need to be gained to implement this which could impede delivery.
- 2.30 In light of the above, we consider that the number of units allocated to Sandyfields is not deliverable and should be reduced and further sites outside of the settlement should be allocated to ensure that the LPP2 housing numbers are met.

3.0 Allocation of further sites

- 3.1 Our client has an interest in two sustainable sites which are available, achievable and deliverable in the plan period, demonstrated in recent planning applications made to the Council (15/01151/OUT and 15/01149/OUT).

Land at Main Road (2494) and Land off Lower Moors Road (1870)

- 3.2 Both sites lie on the northern edge of Colden Common, adjoining, but outside of the settlement boundary. Both site layout plans are included in Appendix G.

Land at Main Road (2494)

- 3.3 The Main Road site lies on the north eastern edge of the village with a frontage on to Main Road and adjoining the existing built up area to the west and south. It is rectangular in shape and extends to about 1.45ha. To the north and east a mature landscape framework physically and visually contains the site. The site is down to permanent grassland and in use for keeping horses. The recent application submitted to the Council demonstrates that the site can deliver 31 dwellings.

Lower Moors Road (1870)

- 3.4 The Lower Moors site lies on the northern edge of the village, to the east of Lower Moors Road. It is roughly rectangular in shape and extends in total to approximately 2.46 ha. It adjoins the main body of the built up area to the south, including part of the village recreation ground, and to the east abuts the rear gardens of the frontage development that extends north along Main Road. The site together with the adjoining land to the north, is down to permanent grassland and in use for keeping horses. The recent application submitted to the Council demonstrates that the site can accommodate 45 dwellings.

- 3.5 Neither of the sites are subject to any statutory ecological, environmental or historical designations. Neither site adjoins or lies within the SDNP.

- 3.6 Both sites are well related to the existing built up area and their development in the manner proposed would represent a logical rounding off and completion of the settlement pattern. The density of development would be consistent with surrounding development and appropriate to the edge of settlement position, whilst making efficient use of land. Existing and proposed connections ensure that the development will be assimilated into the village with good levels of permeability, **ensuring that residents have 'good' access** to

existing services and facilities by walking and cycling and 'excellent' access to public transport (Transport Assessment 2013 and update August 2015).

- 3.7 Appropriate POS of a suitable type and scale can be provided on-site. Ecological enhancements and mitigation can be appropriately provided along with an acceptable form of access, drainage and housing density and mix providing 40% affordable housing. Proposals will not have a harmful impact on the adjacent listed buildings or their settings.
- 3.8 **The Council's Public Open Space, Highways and Transportation, Strategic Housing, Archaeology, Drainage and Ecology Officers** all raised no objection to the planning applications submitted. Hampshire County Council Flood and **Water Management Team and Children's Services Department, Southern Water** and the Environment Agency also raised no objections to the proposals.
- 3.9 **Notwithstanding the Council's conclusions that the proposals will result in harmful impact on the character of the Landscape, and in the case of Lower Moors Road result in harm to the tranquility of the footpath and the context of the SDNP by extending into the countryside, we consider that the proposals have an acceptable impact on the Landscape as demonstrated in the LVIA's submitted with the planning application.**
- 3.10 We do not consider that the release of either or both sites would cause an adverse impact so as to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of meeting the OAN for market and affordable housing within the District. Both sites are available now and development is deliverable in the short term.
- 3.11 Both sites are suitable and sustainable sites for the allocation of housing development and there is a need to allocate further sites that have limited constraints and that can deliver in the short term i.e. the first five years of the plan period, whilst also making an important contribution to the overall housing requirements given that the proposed allocation of 165 dwellings at Sandyfields is not justified or deliverable.
- 3.12 **Our client's** sites should therefore be identified as additional sites for development. Their allocation for housing will contribute to making the Housing Site Allocations DPD sound from a housing supply perspective ensuring sufficient land is made available in Colden Common to meet identified need.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 In summary, Colden Common is confirmed as a sustainable location for further growth by LPP1. We consider that LPP2 is unsound in that it does not allocate sufficient suitable sites to adequately meet the identified need for Colden Common. Specifically, the proposed allocation of Sandyfields CC1 is unsound because the current proposals demonstrate that 165 Dwellings cannot suitably be accommodated nor delivered due to the significant doubts that:

- Additional highways information sought cannot be provided and issues adequately dealt with;
- Adequate POS and suitable **access to Stratton's Copse Woodland** cannot be provided and delivered;
- An appropriate housing density and layout which respects the location of the site in relation to the National Park cannot be provided; and
- The delivery of anything less than 165 units is unlikely to be viable and the allocation and affordable housing therefore undeliverable.

4.2 The DPD can be made sound by allocating additional housing sites, specifically the land at Main Road and Lower Moors Road and revising Policy CC1 to reduce the number of dwellings at Sandyfields.

4.3 The sites, due to their position and adjoining nature to the settlement boundary, relate well to the existing settlement of Colden Common. We consider that the landscape impact of both sites would not be significant and can be mitigated through good design and appropriate landscaping.

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Appendix A: Extracts from FOI confirming Council Officers concerns

Appendix B: Sandyfields Nurseries 14/01993/OUT Committee Report and update

Appendix C: South Downs National Park Authority consultation response to Sandyfields Nurseries 14/01993/OUT

Appendix D: Solicitors Letter from Osbourne Clark to WCC (on behalf of Wellbeck)

Appendix E: Hampshire Highways consultation response to Sandyfields Nurseries 14/01993/OUT

Appendix F: South Downs National Park Authority pre-application response SDNP/16/00225/PRE

Appendix G: Illustrative Site Layout Plans for 15/01151/OUT Land at Main Road (2494) and 15/01149/OUT Land off Lower Moors Road (1870).

Appendix A

Extracts from FOI confirming Council Officers concerns

Simon Avery

From: Simon Avery
Sent: 26 January 2015 15:49
To: 'Ian Donohue'
Cc: Linda Jewell; Nicholas Parker
Subject: RE: Sandyfields

Dear Ian,

Further to our discussion last week, I can advise that additional information is required in order for the LPA to be able to assess this application. While it is an outline application it does seek approval for 165 dwellings as shown on the illustrative layout. You need to demonstrate that this layout is informed by the various constraints of the site and therefore that the proposed numbers are achievable. Please can you provide the following contextual information/parameter plans:

Land Use: the site uses proposed for the development (in this case housing and open space) and any distinct development/neighbourhood zones/phases within the site.

Areas of built development: identifying the scope within the site for the proposed buildings and areas or factors which limit development. In this case this needs to include:

- an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement to set out the root protection zones and areas of shading;
- the required buffer/stand off between the Ancient Woodland and the proposed development;
- an ecological assessment of the site including full survey and mitigation information.

Landscape & open space structure: identifying strategic areas of open space, landscape and other facilities. This needs to include:

- a strategy for appropriate access to the woodland to demonstrate it can be used as open space;
- plans showing that landscape features such as large trees, can be accommodated on site/within streets.

Access & movement: identifying proposed access point/s, movement across the site including strategic highway, pedestrian and cycle routes. As you are aware, HCC have asked for more information in regard to the Transport assessment which needs to correlate with this.

Other key structuring elements: such as character areas, a parking strategy, a sustainability strategy and a sustainable drainage strategy.

Ideally also the application would be supported with an analysis of important views into and within the site and a rationale for architectural design/style for each area. This will give confidence that the scheme would make a successful contribution to this part of the village.

Once all this information has been collated then we need to see how it informs the layout etc and clarify whether or not 165 can be achieved.

In addition to these points, we also discussed reducing the redline area of the application site to exclude the woodland (which would need to be marked in blue). Otherwise a corresponding application will need to be made with the SDNP as the woodland is within their authority. Given that all of the development is within the WCC boundary it seems like a sensible change to avoid unnecessary duplication.

I am happy to discuss any of these points further – please get back to me as required.

Kind regards

Simon Avery

Simon Avery

From: Linda Jewell
Sent: 04 March 2015 15:55
To: 'Ian Donohue'
Cc: Nicholas Parker; Simon Avery; Jenny Nell; Steve Opacic
Subject: Sandyfields - planning application and LPP2 allocation

Dear Ian

I believe that you may not yet have responded to Simon on these issues of further information required. I am writing, therefore, to ask if you can do so as soon as possible.

As well as needing to assess the planning application we (Strategic Planning) are considering the representations on the Local Plan Part 2 and how to respond. Summaries for Colden Common are being reported to the Cabinet (Local Plan) Committee on 12 March. You may access the report from this page on our web site: <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/meetings/details/1452>. Colden Common is at Appendix 1.

You will see that the officer recommendation with regard to policy CC1 the Main Road Housing (Sandyfields) Allocation, is a holding response referring to further work required to consider the various points raised in the representations and reporting back to a future meeting. You will also see that representations have been made by promoters of alternative sites seeking to have their site allocated instead of, or as well as, the Sandyfields site. These objections refer to constraints on the site that will reduce the capacity of the site, hence the need to allocate other sites to make up the housing numbers.

The time to complete this further work is very limited given the need to undertake Sustainability Appraisal of any alternatives before reporting back to the Cabinet (Local Plan) Committee in May.

I am keen, therefore, to receive your response to Simon as a matter of some urgency in order to clarify whether or not the 165 dwellings can be achieved.

If you wish to meet to discuss your emerging further information and evidence I am happy to do so but time is limited due to the approach of the Easter holidays and officer leave as we would need a joint meeting with both Planning Management and Strategic Planning officers involved.

Hoping to hear from you very soon,
Kind regards

Linda Jewell
Principal Planner, Strategic Planning
Winchester City Council
Colebrook Street
Winchester
SO23 9LJ
T: 01962 848086 (Direct)

Please note that I'm part time (2 days per week), usually Monday, and alternate Wednesdays/Fridays.

Simon Avery

From: Steve Carrington <steve@foremanhomes.co.uk>
Sent: 13 March 2015 09:23
To: Simon Avery; Linda Jewell
Cc: Ian Donohue
Subject: Land at Sandyfields, Colden Common (14/01993/OUT) - DRAFT SITE PLAN (140 units, with POS coloured green)
Attachments: att00001.jpg.htm; site_d a1.pdf.htm
Importance: High

Dear Simon and Linda,

Thank you for hosting Ian and I yesterday afternoon, and for talking things through in detail.

As per your request, please find attached an updated - but still draft - copy of the site layout plan that shows both a reduction in unit numbers (from 165 to 140), and the areas of public open space coloured in green.

I hope that this will help to bring our latest aspiration to life, and very much look forward to hearing your thoughts about its content.

Kind regards,

Steve.

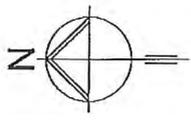
Steve Carrington
BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI
PLANNING DIRECTOR



Click [here](#) to report this email as spam.

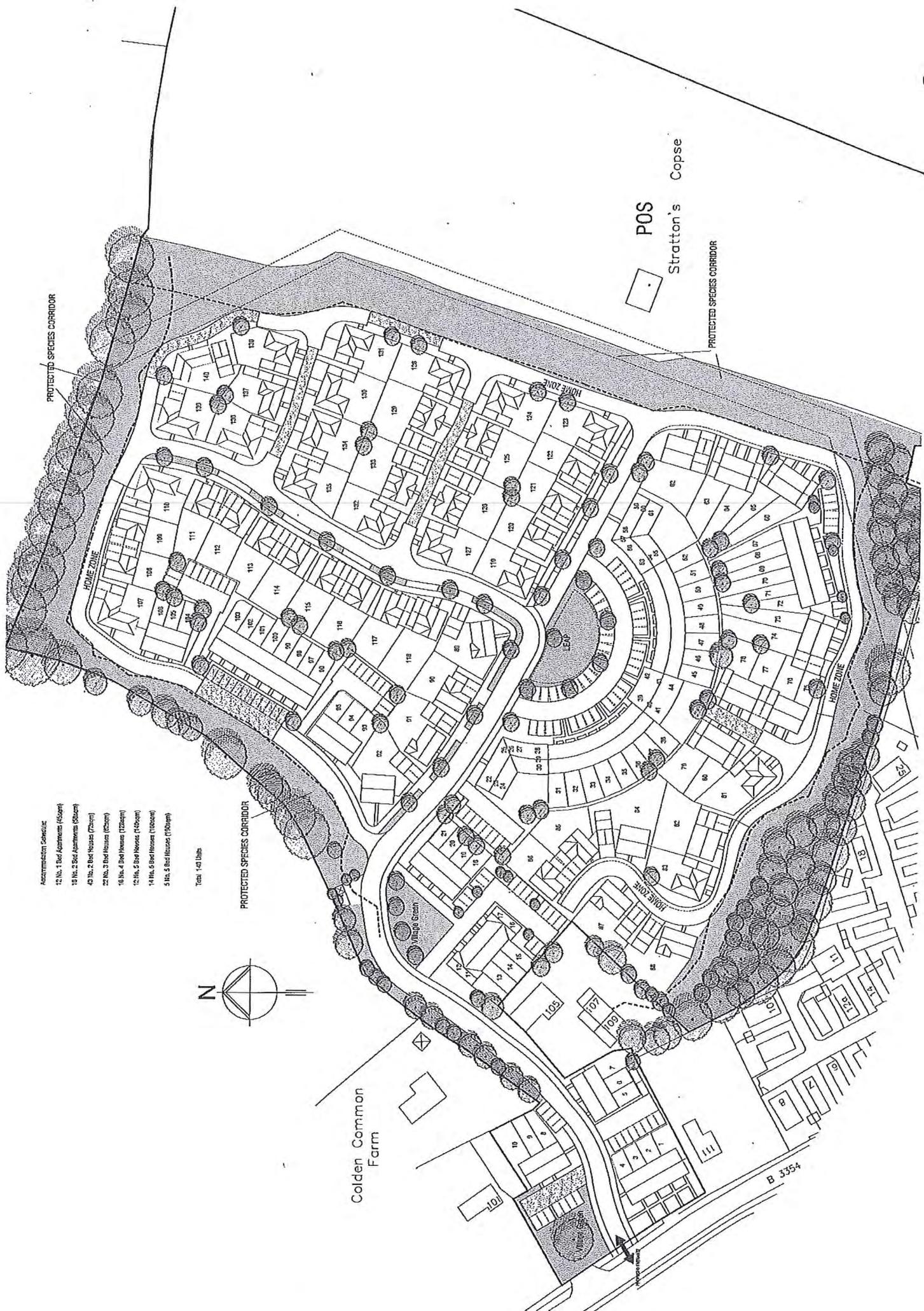
- Accommodation Schedule
- 12 No. 1 Bed Apartments (160sqm)
 - 19 No. 2 Bed Apartments (200sqm)
 - 43 No. 2 Bed Houses (220sqm)
 - 22 No. 3 Bed Houses (250sqm)
 - 16 No. 4 Bed Houses (280sqm)
 - 12 No. 5 Bed Houses (310sqm)
 - 14 No. 6 Bed Houses (340sqm)
 - 5 No. 8 Bed Houses (380sqm)

Total 143 Units



Colden Common Farm

POS
Stratton's Copse
PROTECTED SPECIES CORRIDOR



Simon Avery

From: Steve Carrington <steve@foremanhomes.co.uk>
Sent: 01 June 2015 09:38
To: Simon Avery
Subject: RE: Land at Sandyfields, Colden Common (14/01993/OUT)

Good morning Simon,

Just to confirm that, at Thursday's meeting, our draft-scheme will be back up to 165 units (with the land-take encompassing the frontage neighbour, and the replacement of the 3 existing on-site units too, albeit in a *ghosted-in* fashion, so as not to change our red-line).

As such, I look forward to seeing you again in a few days time.

Kind regards,

Steve.

From: <SAvery@WINCHESTER.GOV.UK>
To: <steve@foremanhomes.co.uk>,
Date: 26/05/2015 12:25
Subject: RE: Land at Sandyfields, Colden Common (14/01993/OUT) - DRAFT SITE PLAN (140 units, with POS coloured green)

Steve,

Good to meet this morning.

Just to say also – in working the design up if it is possible to have an idea of the number of units it will provide that would be very helpful for the next meeting.

Thanks

Simon Avery
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Management
City Offices
Colebrook Street
Winchester SO23 3DD
Tel 01962 848 572
Fax 01962 841 365

From: Steve Carrington [mailto:steve@foremanhomes.co.uk]
Sent: 13 March 2015 09:23
To: Simon Avery; Linda Jewell
Cc: Ian Donohue
Subject: Land at Sandyfields, Colden Common (14/01993/OUT) - DRAFT SITE PLAN (140 units, with POS coloured green)
Importance: High

Dear Simon and Linda,

Simon Avery

From: Simon Avery
Sent: 19 June 2015 08:35
To: 'Steve Carrington'
Subject: RE: Sandyfields: NEW 165 SKETCH
Attachments: 14/01993/OUT Sandyfields Nurseries Main Road Colden Common Winchester Hampshire SO21 1TB Ecology Ref 14 1496; image001.jpg.htm; sandyfields, colden common.pdf.htm

Steve,

There are lots of positive aspects to this layout as previously discussed.

Comments on the latest layout are as follows:

Central Open Space Area

The main area of concern relates to how you are dealing with the central open space. I am not convinced that the buildings fronting onto this space with no back gardens will work. You need to be very clear what type of housing this is i.e. flats or houses, market or affordable. If any houses are proposed then private garden spaces are needed. If it is all flats, then it would be a rather urban arrangement and not seemingly appropriate to this rural context. The line of parking spaces to the rear of the blocks is also inappropriate in terms of impact on living environment and appearance (The arrangement to the east of this where properties have back gardens and then a small parking courtyard works much better). The public open space also has to be for public access and not just for the buildings which front it. I have discussed the layout with our housing team and they were not happy about the prospect of affordable units in this block. They are unlikely to be acceptable without private gardens and if the occupiers of the units rely on the open space for their amenity area then it likely that it won't be as accessible for the whole of the development.

So I think there are lots of unresolved issues with this part of the plan. The main change in this area from the sketch provided previously appears to be placing the roadway to the rear of these units fronting the open space. It may be that you need to revert to the suggested layout although this may affect the number of units.

Entrance

The entrance is much improved with buildings fronting Main Road. I think you could explore how to break up/move the line of parking behind this though as this is not going to be an attractive feature as you drive into the site.

Trees/Planting

Generally across the site there still seems to be opportunities to get big trees in at corners etc. and if there are few opportunities then you should seek to carve out some larger spaces for significant trees at strategic points.

A lot of the trees shown on the green fingers are directly in front of elevations and may be unfeasible. If there realistically is not room to provide these then it may be better to provide large trees at the ends of each green finger and supplement these with strong hedgerows/other green features along the fingers. The open space is one of the best opportunities for some large trees and if these are going to interfere with buildings then perhaps moving the trees into the middle of the open space would ensure some big specimens can be provided.

sopacic@winchester.gov.uk

From: Simon Avery
Sent: 04 August 2015 08:42
To: Linda Jewell; Steve Opacic; Julie Pinnock
Subject: 14/01993/OUT - Sandyfields

Linda / Steve / Julie

The latest layout for this scheme went to the design review panel in July and I now have their comments back (attached).

This isn't very positive and the panel have highlighted a number of shortcomings – which officers have also raised at various points of the process. The biggest issue is that they cast doubt about the numbers again which is the one thing we have wanted the developers to demonstrate.

Aside from the design issues they have now submitted revised ecological information and a woodland management plan but still need to provide SuDS information and address highway issues, so we seem to be a long way from a scheme we can support and I don't have any confidence it is going to get there.

We could however go to plan B which was to remove any layout from the scheme and to approve just the number. I think they would need to provide some parameter plans showing the area of housing and areas of open space and setting limits on building heights etc. We could then apply conditions asking for a masterplan / landscape framework based on sound urban design etc

Just wondering what you thought of this approach? The problem with it of course is that the numbers are still a bit fuzzy and if they haven't demonstrated they can provide 165 units we might be in a weak position if rival developers challenge this? Is it possible to approve this permission with a range of numbers i.e. between 140 to 165 units and notionally include the land at 111 Main Road or would that not help the LPP2 situation?

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CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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sopacic@winchester.gov.uk

The Government Standard

From: Simon Avery
Sent: 04 August 2015 14:23
To: Steve Opacic
Subject: RE: 14/01993/OUT - Sandyfields

Ok, I'm not in tomorrow and next Monday is all booked up next Wednesday maybe?

Simon Avery
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Management
City Offices
Colebrook Street
Winchester SO23 3DD
Tel 01962 848 572
Fax 01962 841 365

From: Steve Opacic
Sent: 04 August 2015 11:54
To: Simon Avery; Linda Jewell; Julie Pinnock
Subject: RE: 14/01993/OUT - Sandyfields

Thanks Simon,

Yes, a shame that the numbers question is the first point made by the Panel. I'm trying to remember whether the adjoining pieces of land within the CC1 allocation were included within the 165 covered by this application?? If not I presume we would not want to grant 165 for the smaller area anyway.

I think maybe the safest thing seems to be to remove references to numbers and illustrative plan. We are currently advising that LPP2 sites should not be approved until after Local Plan Cttee on 16th Sept, so Members can decide that they want to stick with the site. That gives us a bit of time and perhaps we can discuss a way forward when Linda is in (tomorrow or on Mondays/Weds). Assuming the Bargate schemes are out of time for appeal I wouldn't necessarily have a problem with refusing it, although that would be unfortunate.

Regards,

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Steve Opacic
Head of Strategic Planning
Winchester City Council

Colebrook Street
Winchester, SO23 9LJ
T 01962 848101 (Direct)
F 01962 841365

The Government Standard

Simon Avery

From: Stuart Dunbar-Dempsey
Sent: 05 October 2015 17:15
To: Simon Avery
Cc: Richard Smith; John Hearn
Subject: RE: 14/01993/OUT Sandyfields, Colden Common

Simon

Apologies for the time it has taken to get back to you on this.

On Landscape: I have been through the LVIA and agree that, with provisos, harm to the wider landscape would be negligible. Open Space however is concerning me.

It has been assumed in the allocation of the site, and the preparation of the draft policy in LPP2, that Stratton's Copse, despite its sensitivity, would be suitable as the open space provision.

I have previously taken the same view and said that if the woodland were accessible, then it would serve as the open space provision for the site. The applicant's woodland management plan proposes that there could be some limited public access.

However, I am now learning from Rick that the woodland might not be suitable for resident access after all and the advice from HCC earlier was that access to the woodland would harm its ground flora. HCC were advising that there should be a 15m buffer between development and ancient woodland and were requesting further details as to how the proposed access would avoid harm to the woodland.

Colden Common has a shortfall of POS. LPP2 suggests that the preferred and only realistic way of addressing this shortfall is to provide open space on the allocated site.

But, if access to the woodland is not an option, then a re-think will be required on open space provision. It will not be feasible to provide 165 houses and the required quantum of open space on the same site.

It would be useful I think if we could sit down together to try and resolve this.

Stuart

Stuart Dunbar-Dempsey CMLI
Landscape Team
Winchester City Council
Council Offices, Colebrook Street
Winchester SO23 9LJ
Ext: 2425
Direct line: 01962 848 425

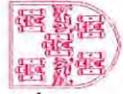
From: Simon Avery
Sent: 14 September 2015 15:54
To: Stuart Dunbar-Dempsey
Cc: Richard Smith
Subject: 14/01993/OUT Sandyfields, Colden Common

Appendix B

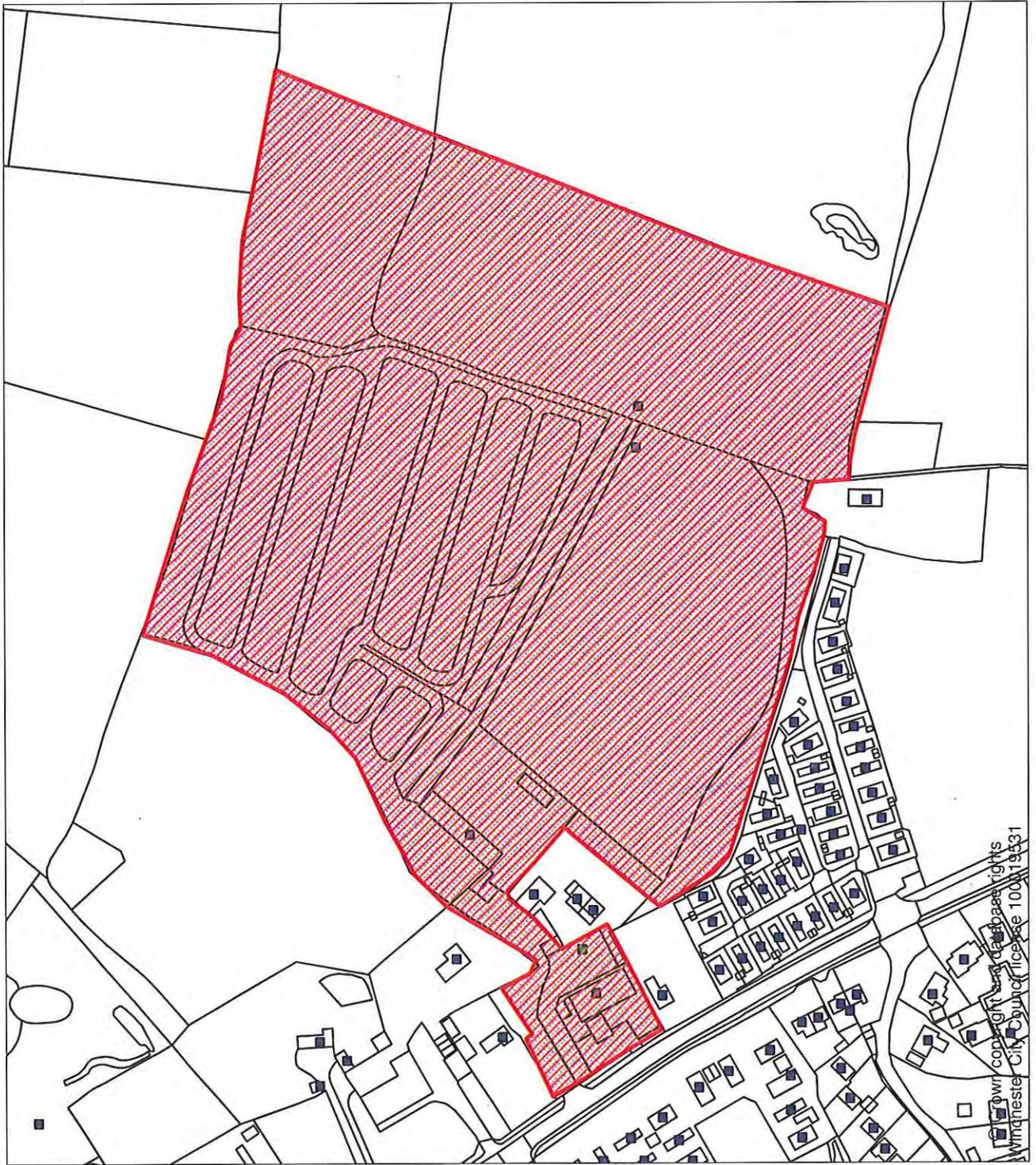
Sandyfields Nurseries 14/01993/OUT Committee Report and update

Sandyfields Nurseries, Main Road, Colden Common, Winchester, Ha

14/01993/OUT



Winchester
City Council



Legend

Scale: 0 0.0275 0.055 0.11 KM

Organisation	^Organisation
Department	^Department
Comments	^Comments
Date	06/04/2016
MSA Number	^PMSA Number

WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

Item No: 06
Case No: 14/01993/OUT / W23240/02
Proposal Description: AMENDED PLANS INCLUDING REVISED INDICATIVE SITE LAYOUT FOR UP TO 165 DWELLINGS, LANDSCAPE STRATEGY AND OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS. 165 no. dwellings and associated works (OUTLINE)
Address: Sandyfields Nurseries Main Road Colden Common Winchester Hampshire
Parish, or Ward if within Winchester City: Colden Common
Applicants Name: Mr S Carrington
Case Officer: Mr Simon Avery
Date Valid: 26 August 2014
Site Factors: Civil Aviation
Recommendation: Application permitted

General Comments

This application is reported to Committee because of the number of objections received contrary to the officers recommendation.

Amended plans have been received showing a revised illustrative layout and providing additional information in respect of the proposed public access to the adjoining woodland, landscape and public open space strategy, ecology, drainage, highways affordable housing and housing design.

Site Description

This site is located on the eastern edge of Colden Common, outside the settlement boundary, to the north east of the B3354 Main Road. Only a small section of the site fronts Main Road and this contains a garden centre (now closed), parking forecourt and the vehicular access. Immediately behind this are three dwellings and some nursery buildings which are set back into the site.

The rest of the site is set back from the road behind these buildings and Glen Park Mobile Home Park and there is a bank of trees separating the mobile park from the site. The northern half of this part of the land is used for the storage of caravans. The southern part of the land is currently an open field which also has permission to be used for the storage of mobile homes or caravans.

To the north of the site are paddocks and to the east is a section of woodland which is part of Stratton's Copse and is classified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). There is a telecommunications mast within this section of woodland. Stratton's Copse to the east and land to the north of the woodland are within the South Downs National Park (SDNP), but the field immediately to the north is not with the SDNP.

The boundaries of the site are generally enclosed by hedgerows and trees. The land is fairly flat and mostly open within the site, apart from a line of trees and hedgerow dividing the caravan park from the southern field and a less substantial line of planting running east-west across the middle of the caravan park.

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At the front of the site there is a neighbouring property located to the south east of the garden centre (no. 111 Main Road). This is not included within the application site but is part of the overall site which is allocated within the emerging Local Plan Part 2 for the development of about 165 dwellings (policy CC1 of the LPP2). The section of land within the site containing 3 dwellings is also excluded from the redline area but within the CC1 allocated area.

Proposal

- This is an outline application for about 165 dwellings with only access and the number of units to be considered.
- The illustrative masterplan shows a framework for how this development can be brought forward at reserved matters stage.
- This plan and the supporting documents include two smaller sections of land outside of the application site (land within the site currently containing 3 dwellings and land at 111 Main Road) to demonstrate how the CC1 site as a whole can be comprehensively developed and can deliver the estimate of 165 dwellings.
- The application includes the provision of public access into the adjoining woodland at Stratton's Copse and on site open space and play areas.

Relevant Planning History

86/00566/OLD - Use of land for storage of touring caravans. Permitted 24th June 1986.

91/00481/OLD - Use of land for storage of caravans, alterations to access. Permitted 26th March 1991.

91/00482/OLD - Change of use of land for storage and extension to car park. Permitted 29th May 1991.

95/00475/OLD - New vehicular access and closure of existing vehicular access. Permitted 3rd July 1995.

97/01080/TCP - Erection of free standing 15 metre high pole with 3 no cross polar sector antennas and dish antenna, equipment cabin and ancillary equipment. Permitted 10th July 1997.

98/01618/CHU - Change of use from agricultural land to open storage for touring caravans. Permitted 4th December 1998.

01/02056/FUL - Telecommunications equipment comprising 22.5 metre high lattice tower, antennae and associated equipment cabinets, concrete bases and compound. Permitted 19th October 2001.

11/01153/FUL - Change of use of existing field to caravan and mobile home storage site (B8); to provide an additional 196 spaces to the existing caravan and mobile home storage facility and erection of a new office building. Permitted 24th November 2011.

12/02370/FUL - Demolition of existing nursery building and erection of 4 no. three bedroom dwellings with associated parking. Refused 22nd April 2013. Dismissed at appeal.

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14/00179/SCREEN - Request for a screening opinion under the EIA Regulations for proposed residential development comprising in the region of 150 dwellings. Not Required 11th February 2014.

Consultations

Head of Strategic Planning

- The Submitted LPP2 represents the Plan that the Council would wish to adopt including the allocation of the application site through policy CC1 and the drawing back of the settlement boundary to accommodate the proposed allocation.
- The site has been critically assessed and found to be within a sustainable location to facilitate the growth of the settlement.
- However, there has been further public consultation which has resulted in objections to the proposed allocation.
- The Council has now submitted the Plan for Examination and it is expected that the hearing part of the examination process will take place late June / early July 2016.
- In the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF there is an argument that the application should be approved if the proposal fully conforms to the requirements of the policy.
- The latest indicative site layout shows how the overall number of dwellings expected in LPP2 Policy CC1 of about 165 dwellings can be accommodated on the site.
- Subject to other consultee / expert comments the proposal broadly conforms to the requirements of Policy CC1 and it is concluded that there are arguments in favour of granting permission in this case.

Urban Design

- The developer has used urban design, landscape and ecological guidance provided by officers and has completely revised the layout and the design of the buildings, spaces, landscape (including access to and management of the adjacent woodland).
- This has resulted in an acceptable urban design solution, which if followed at reserved matters stage, will result in a development which is sympathetic to and connects with its surroundings and which has a unique identity and character and sense of place.
- The revised layout and supporting information and landscape strategy clearly show that 165 dwellings can satisfactorily be accommodated on the site in a positively way which will enhance the area.
- The developer has stated that it is his intention to submit reserved matters applications which follow the revised design and include good quality materials and detailing which can be seen in traditional buildings in the area and the recent development in Boyes Lane.

Strategic Housing

- The applicant has provided an indicative affordable housing mix that is acceptable and which is welcomed to provide a wide range of affordable homes.
- An indicative tenure split has also been provided, with 70% of the affordable properties as rented accommodation and 30% as intermediate accommodation.

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This is policy compliant.

- A reserved matters application should include a high level of integration to support an inclusive, mixed community for the whole site.

HCC Education

- Contributions of £784,575 are required towards the expansion of places at Colden Common Primary School.

HCC Flood and Water Management

- No objections

HCC Highways

- No objection in principle but further information / analysis required on some highway issues.

WCC Highways

- Given the numbers involved the highway implications of this application are strategic and highway advice must be provided by HCC.

Head of Landscape – Landscape and Open Space

- No objections

Head of Landscape – Arboriculture

- No objections

South Downs National Park

- Objection due to concerns about open space being provided partly by allowing access to Stratton's Copse which is sensitive ecologically.
- Concern that it has not been demonstrated that the site has the capacity to accommodate 165 dwellings.
- Implications for the dark night sky given the nocturnal species likely to be present.
- The SDNP have not yet responded to the revised plans / documents and their comments will be provided as an update to the committee report.

Environment Agency

- No objections

Drainage Engineer

- Foul water drainage will go to the public foul sewer albeit via a pump station and this is acceptable.
- Storm water is to a SuDS and HCC as Lead Local Flood Authority must comment on this aspect of the drainage layout.

Southern Water

- Additional off-site sewers, or improvements to existing sewers, will be required.
- The layout for the proposed pumping station needs to be revised.
- Arrangements for the long-term management of the SUDS will need to be provided.
- Southern Water can provide a water supply to the site.

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Natural England

- The existing green infrastructure could be enhanced by providing more extensive public access through the wood, linking the development to the wider public right of way network as it enters the north east tip of the wood (Park Copse).
- Much of the proposed woodland is "wet woodland", and is likely to be significantly less suitable for recreation than dry woodland.

Head of Landscape – Ecology

- No objections

WCC Archaeology

- The proposed development may impact on buried archaeological remains; however appropriate archaeological mitigation measures (archaeological investigation and recording) can best be secured by the placing of linked conditions on any planning consent granted for the site.

Environmental Protection

- Given the scale of the development and its location within a residential area, a Construction Environmental Management Plan is required.
- Further research on contamination is also required.
- This information can be secured by conditions.

Representations:

Representations received in response to the original submission:

Colden Common Parish Council

- Although endorsed by the Parish Council to fulfil the target for new housing in Colden Common, the Parish Council feels that this application is premature as site allocations for housing outside the existing settlement boundary will be dealt with by the Winchester District Local Plan Part 2.
- As an application for development outside the existing settlement boundary this application should be refused as it is contrary to existing policy.

27 letters received objecting to the application (including 2 from consultants representing other developers)for the following reasons:

- Overdevelopment / overly large and incongruous extension of the built up area into open countryside.
- Failure to respect the character and setting of the area / poorly related to the settlement pattern / surrounded on three of its four sides by open countryside.
- The proposed extent, scale and density of development would have a significant adverse impact on the setting of the National Park.
- Failure to provide housing in other areas / other smaller sites in Colden Common should take some of the development.
- Smaller developments would ease the traffic flow and construction is easier to control.
- Increase in traffic congestion and highway danger.
- Plans do not show new access and transport statement is not available online.
- Noise disturbance to Glen Park.
- Impact on wildlife and nature areas, through development and construction

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activity.

- Site is poorly related to the village centre.
- The 'Welbeck' site opposite the village centre would be a better option for building on.
- Poorly connected to facilities, school and public transport, resulting in more car journeys, congestion and highway dangers.
- Lack of parking at the school.
- Part of the proposed development is still a green field site.
- Loss of the caravan storage facility to many families.
- Concern about re-siting of mobile phone mast.
- Access to the woodland / use as open space / lack of future management plan will be detrimental to ecology / biodiversity.
- The woodland will not be easily accessible for villagers.
- Inadequate surface water drainage from this site.
- Commonview does not accurately reflect the community's aspirations.
- Site is not accessible for pedestrians due to narrow pavements and fast road.
- Concern about dwellings near electrical pylons due to adverse effect on health.
- There is not a clear Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
- Adverse impact on the setting of listed buildings / heritage assets to the north.
- The development will undermine the Local Plan Part 2.
- Unacceptable in advance of LPP2 / Following the Welbeck and Bargate Homes refusals this should be refused on the same grounds.
- It would be legally unsafe to place weight on the outcome of the Commonview exercise and the emerging LPP2.
- The supporting information provided at this stage is inadequate for the Local Planning Authority to assess the impact of the proposals.

1 letters of support received.

- This is one of the sites identified by Colden Common residents as being most favoured for development.
- We would support the building of houses in the front of the property, where the old shop currently stands.
- Sandyfields would provide an excellent site for larger 5 bedroom houses.
- It would be secure, good views, secluded and good access to many towns and cities with the motorway links.
- It is a brownfield site, which is exactly what we should be using for new homes.
- It will result in an area of woodland being handed to the Parish for use by the Parish.

Representations received following re-advertisement of revised plans and documents:

Colden Common Parish Council

- Commonview and the Parish Council have identified the most appropriate sites for development are along the eastern side of the village with good transport links and access to village amenities and Sandyfields Nurseries and adjoining site fronting Main Road is the preferred sites to fulfil the target for the new housing in the village.
- The Sandyfields site is a brownfield site.
- Strattons Copse is a privately owned area and over the past 30+ years has

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received no protection whatsoever and as such the area is in great need of sensitive, corrective management.

- As part of this planning application it is proposed that future care of this old woodland area be passed to public ownership.
- Colden Common Parish Council would welcome working alongside SDNP, the Woodland Trust and the Hampshire Wildlife Trust to fully protect the true character and appearance of the woodland and to properly enhance the area for the future benefit of wildlife and local community enjoyment.
- The Parish Council feels that the plan for development has been positively produced in accordance with principles of localism and fully satisfying the housing supply target for the village contained in Local Plan Part 2 and as such this application should be approved by the Council.

8 letters of objection (including 3 from consultants representing other developers):

- The LPP2 process underpinning the proposed allocation is flawed.
- 165 units cannot be supported on reasonable planning grounds when there are acceptable alternative sites available.
- Consent prior to the LPP2 examination in public would be premature.
- Overdevelopment / the village, facilities, school and road network cannot cope with this increase in numbers.
- Loss of caravan storage.
- This is a congested area and the assessment on transport is outdated and should be revised in light of the current houses in the area.
- Risk of flooding.
- The public transport links / bus service need to be improved.
- The proposed size and density of units is almost indistinguishable from the adjoining caravan park.
- It is the 'wrong side' of Main Road to provide an inclusive community.
- It is unsustainable due to distance from village facilities / centre / park.
- Highway safety concerns about Main Road.
- This number of people living next to the National Park, Ancient Woodland and SINC will cause serious adverse impacts.
- The POS strategy is poor and does not address the shortfall in Colden Common or meet the required standards.
- Great weight needs to be attached to the protection of the National Park and the "exceptional circumstances" test for the National Park is not passed.
- The mix does not suit an edge of village setting.
- Winter time caravan storage will have substantially less impact than housing, including in relation to light pollution
- The shade and orientation do not suit solar gain for passive energy.
- The proposed scheme is a crammed town-like scheme.
- The 'artificial' promotion of one site, Sandyfields, to detriment of good planning appears flawed.
- The negatives for Sandyfields do not appear to support the high, urban density.
- The Layout and Scale indicates that the scheme can only ever be poorly resolved.
- The cumulative impact of the proposals will harm the site's setting and fail to promote positively sustainable development.
- The streetscape is not an active shared space.
- The layout shows the street as a car-park with continual parking.

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- There is no sequential need to cram Colden Common's future into an 'out of village' dormitory site.
- Negative impact on the character and settlement pattern of Colden Common
- A number of the gardens offer a poor level of amenity for occupiers.
- Negative impact on Landscape and SDNP
- The LVIA submitted is based on a scheme of 140 units not 165 and is outdated and inadequate.
- Negative impact on Ancient Woodland and Biodiversity.
- Development would encroach into the 15m buffer from the woodland.
- Detrimental impact on the wider setting and significance of listed buildings.
- Proposals would have significant implications for the road network and highways safety.
- The proposals would increase flows to the public sewerage system and existing property and land may be subject to a greater risk of flooding.
- A satisfactory foul drainage system to serve the development cannot be achieved.
- It would be unreasonable to grant planning permission having argued elsewhere that allowing potential alternative sites would predetermine decisions about the emerging LPP2.
- This site is demonstrably worse in sustainability terms than other potential sites at Colden Common.
- If there is a 5-year supply of housing land then there is no imperative for this application to be approved.
- 105 to 111 Main Road are not included within the application and the illustrative layout plan should be amended to refer only to the application site.
- Stratton's Copse is included within the red line site on the illustrative layout which is misleading.
- The majority of the site is not brownfield.
- Loss of employment land / conflict with Policy CP9 of the LPP1.
- Conflict with the Village Design Statement in that development east of Main Road will encroach into countryside.
- Conflict with the SDNPA concerns about use of Stratton's Park.
- Use of the woodland outside the site as open space is not appropriate / acceptable and is not of the type required to meet a shortfall in Colden Common.
- Cramped and urban layout.
- The proposed access may be substandard.
- There is no updated Design and Access Statement.

8 further letters of support received from 6 households:

- This application is within the plan for Colden Common, agreed by it's residents.
- It is within the boundary and uses land already having been in use for buildings or storage rather than green fields.
- There is direct access to the Main Road and it does not impinge on or look over a building in the National Park.
- This site compliments the area and does not impose a radical change to the area.
- If the development does not go ahead, the only way this village can meet housing requirements is to build on wild flower meadows.
- The Sandyfields site would not have a great visual impact.

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- Access onto the B3354 will change the main road geometry, reducing speeds and making it a safer road through the village.
- Brownfield site should be developed for housing before any greenfield sites are used.
- There has been overwhelming support from the villagers in favour of developing Sandyfields for housing.
- The scheme will provide the additional housing the area needs.
- The B3354 is an easier route in and out of the village with the 30 mph already in place, making this a safer option for development.

Relevant Planning Policy:

Winchester District Local Plan Review

DP3 – General Design Criteria

DP4 – Landscape and the Built Environment

DP5 – Amenity Open Space

CE19 - 24 – Residential Developments in the Countryside

H3 – Settlement Boundary

HE1 – HE2 – Archaeology

T2 - T4 – Transport and Parking

Winchester Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy

DS1 – Development Strategy and Principles

MTRA1 – Development Strategy for Market Towns and Rural Area

MTRA2 – Market Towns and Larger Villages

MTRA4 – Development in the Countryside

CP1 – Housing Provision

CP2 – Housing Mix

CP3 – Affordable Housing

CP4 – Affordable Housing on Exception Sites

CP7 – Open Space, Sport & Recreation

CP10 – Transport

CP11 – Sustainable Low and Zero Carbon Built Development

CP13 – High Quality Design

CP14 – Effective Uses of Land

CP15 – Green Infrastructure

CP16 – Biodiversity

CP17 - Flooding and Water Environment

CP19 – South Downs National Park

CP20 – Heritage and Landscape Character

CP21 – Infrastructure and Community Benefit

Winchester Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management and Site Allocations (LPP2)

CC1 – Sandyfields Housing Allocation

DM1 – Location of New Development

DM5 – Open Space Provision for New Developments

DM14 – Local Distinctiveness

DM15 – Site Design Criteria

DM16 – Site Development Principles

DM17 – Access and Parking

DM22 – Rural Character

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DM23 – Special Trees, Important Hedgerows and Ancient Woodlands
DM25 – Archaeology

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:
National Planning Policy Framework

Supplementary Planning Guidance

The Colden Common Village Design Statement December 2012

High Quality Places March 2015

Affordable Housing February 2008

Residential Parking Standards December 2009

Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment (South Winchester Downs
Character Area) March 2004

Planning Considerations

Principle of development

The application site is currently within the countryside but is included within the proposed settlement boundary for Colden Common as shown in the Submitted LPP2. The Submitted LPP2 represents the Plan that the Council would wish to adopt and land at Sandyfields Nurseries and fronting Main Road is identified in Policy CC1 of the LPP2 as a sustainable location for the development of about 165 dwellings in order to facilitate the growth of Colden Common.

The Council can demonstrate an adequate 5-year housing land supply (confirmed in the Annual Monitoring Report 2015), so there is no compelling justification for the early release of this site to meet any local or district wide housing requirements. However, in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF there is an argument that the application should be approved if the proposal fully conforms to the requirements of policy CC1 and meets other general planning requirements. The Council has already approved a number of other sites in advance of LPP2 being adopted where they have met all the specific LPP2 policy requirements and have demonstrated that they are high quality schemes, providing the appropriate mix and type of housing, a robust landscaping framework, a layout based on good urban design principles, as well as satisfying other important requirements such as highways and drainage.

In this case, Policy CC1 sets out a number of specific development requirements for the site, which in summary are:

- A masterplan establishing principles for the disposition of housing, open space, access points and linkages.
- A single point of access from Main Road.
- A footpath link through the site to the adjacent Stratton's Copse woodland.
- Retention of planting / green areas along existing boundaries to accommodate public open space and ecological connections.
- On-site open space
- Managed access to the adjacent woodland at Stratton's Copse for public use as Natural Green Space.
- An ecological assessment.
- A housing density and layout which respects the location of the site in relation to the National Park.

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- Contributions to the expansion of Colden Common Primary School.
- Provision of a connection to the nearest point of adequate capacity in the sewerage network.

It is considered that the proposal satisfies all of these criteria to the degree required for an outline application as follows:

- The layout, design and landscaping of the scheme has been developed through negotiations with the Council's Urban Design officer and Landscape team and the revised masterplan now provides the basis for a very high quality scheme. While the detail of the layout would be subject to reserved matters, the masterplan provides the framework for creating a successful place. It is based on sound urban design principles and demonstrates that housing, open space, access points and linkages can be accommodated on this site in an appropriate fashion. The layout shows how 165 dwellings can be accommodated, with 157 illustrated within the application red line and 8 without. Based on this masterplan it is considered that the housing density and layout respects the location of the site in relation to the National Park.
- The masterplan shows a single point of access from Main Road, a footpath link providing managed access to Stratton's Copse woodland, the retention of planting along existing boundaries, and on-site open space.
- The application is supported by an ecological assessment which also covers the woodland area.
- Contributions to the expansion of Colden Common Primary School will be provided through a S106 Legal Agreement.
- The applicant will be required to liaise with Southern Water in order to provide additional off-site sewers, or improvements to existing sewers, in order to ensure adequate capacity in the sewerage network.

In addition to these requirements the housing mix and tenure of the scheme also meets the policy requirement of providing 40% affordable units. As such, it will help meet identified local housing needs.

It is therefore considered that the scheme meets all the CC1 requirements and satisfies other relevant planning criteria (some of which are discussed further below). It will provide much needed housing in what is considered to be a sustainable location in the village. On this basis, given the Government guidance in the NPPF in presumption in favour of sustainable development, the principle of permitting this development in advanced of the adoption of LPP2 is considered acceptable.

Design/layout

The amended masterplan includes land at 111 Main Road and properties at 105 to 109 Main Road. These were not covered by the original masterplan submitted with the application and are also outside the redline of the application. They are however part of the LPP2 allocated site and it is considered essential that the masterplan demonstrates how they and the application site can be developed comprehensively. The masterplan therefore identifies that they are outside of the redline but part of the emerging scheme. Separate applications will need to be submitted to secure outline permission for these two plots of land in due course to tie in with this larger application and subsequent reserved matters.

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The masterplan also excludes the woodland area (which is in the SDNP) from the application site but identifies it as land in the ownership of the applicant (and therefore is outlined in blue). Removing the woodland from the redline of the application simplifies the application process as the site now sits solely within the boundary of one Local Authority but allows for a S106 Obligation to ensure the woodland is made available for public access.

The masterplan shows housing fronting Main Road and then addressing the main street running into the site. The housing within the site is then split up into 6 perimeter blocks with a large central area of open space. The streets link into pedestrian routes into (and around) the woodland. The plan also shows a 5-15m peripheral public open space that surrounds the site providing a multi functional natural green area.

The application is also supported by a Landscape and Public Open Space Strategy which describes the approach and concept behind the landscape zones, and illustrates how the layout can handle the incorporation of trees and other planting, greening the streets with species that can provide food for residents and wildlife and provide an appropriate transition to the adjacent SDNP at Stratton's Copse. This document establishes the design principles and also sets out the approach to the future management of the adjoining Stratton's Copse. Management of the woodland is also explained in the Proposed Woodland Trail and Woodland Management Plan.

The masterplan also makes provision for possible future pedestrian access from the site northwards to link up to the Colden Common recreation ground. Public access to all footpaths/cycle ways and future possible access to the footpath network is to be secured through a S106 Obligation.

A supporting affordable housing plan indicates that the appropriate number, mix and tenure of affordable houses are being provided. It is likely that these could be better located to ensure a more inclusive mix of affordable and market housing but that is a detail which can be further addressed at reserved matters stage.

Overall, it is considered that the design and layout of the proposal as shown on the masterplan and other supporting documents is of high quality will result in a development which is sympathetic to and connects with its surroundings, is sustainable and inclusive, and which has a unique identity and character and sense of place.

Impact on character of area and neighbouring property

The site is not highly visible in public views being mainly set back from Main Road and enclosed on other boundaries by trees and planting. The smaller section of the site along Main Road will present an ordered form development fronting the road with trees to the front of buildings, continuing the green character of the street at this point. The street leading into the site has a particularly strong rhythmic character of buildings and trees curving round to head eastwards towards the woodland. As noted above, once in the site, the masterplans provides the framework for distinctive and ordered scheme. The development will relate sensitively to the adjacent woodland, providing managed access which will be controlled by the Parish Council. On the basis of the masterplan and supporting documents it is considered that the proposal will result in a scheme which has a very positive impact on the character of the area, providing much needed housing and a distinctive and attractive place.

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While the land is proposed to be used efficiently, it is not considered that the site represents an overdevelopment, but rather that there is a good balance and mix of unit sizes and types being provided. The layout proposes a lower density arrangement to the north (on the edge of the countryside) with larger gaps between buildings, and a tighter arrangement of houses in the southern half. The revised layout and supporting information and landscape strategy clearly show that 165 dwellings can satisfactorily be accommodated on the site in a positive way which will enhance the area and respect the location of the site in relation to the edge of the settlement and the National Park.

In terms of its impact on neighbouring properties, the majority of the site is either adjacent to woodland or paddocks or is separated from the adjacent mobile home park to the south by a dense band of trees. There are neighbouring properties on either side of Main Road, but the proposed layout shows new housing sufficiently set away from these to avoid any adverse impacts on residential amenity.

The layout internally indicates adequate distances between properties and sufficient private amenity space for appropriate living conditions to be achieved for future occupants.

Landscape/Trees

As part of the LPP2 process of site allocation, the site, along with other sites around the settlement, has been assessed for its sensitivity in terms of the local landscape. The site was found to be 'moderately sensitive', suggesting that it is one of the best development opportunities outside the current settlement boundary in terms of visual impact and reflects the fact that the site is well screened from most viewpoints and already contains development of various types.

The landscape strategy for the development has been to retain and reinforce the perimeter of mature trees, with particular attention given to the relationship with the adjacent Stratton's Copse. The development footprint is required to be 25-30m away from the edge of this woodland in order to provide a buffer between the buildings and Stratton's Copse. This buffer consists of green open space and a similar green buffer is proposed to wrap around the entire perimeter of the site. This is proposed to provide a circuit of accessible recreational open space with play features and items of trim trail equipment as well as some ecological connectivity for wildlife.

New tree planting is proposed,

- At the entrance – large native trees will form a continuity of the green corridor along Main Road;
- Along the avenues and residential estate roads – space has been created for single lines of trees;
- Within car parking areas - to break up their impact.

A 23m x 66m communal open space is proposed in the middle of the site which will provide a significant visual amenity at the heart of the scheme and will also provide an opportunity for informal games and community events. Further details of this will be required at reserved matters.

It is regrettable that a belt of trees running east-west across the site would be lost, but the amount of tree planting proposed elsewhere on site would compensate for this.

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In terms of public open space, Colden Common is lacking in accessible open space and this housing allocation is intended to provide an opportunity for additional on site provision of open space to meet current and future needs.

In addition to the open space proposed to be provided on site, the adjacent Copse is offered to the local community as accessible natural green space. The woodland is a semi-natural ancient woodland and a Site for Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Access to the woodland is explained in the Landscape and Public Open Space Strategy and the Proposed Woodland Trail and Woodland Management Plan.

The woodland access strategy sets out the provision of a nature walk / trail of about 450m that enables views of the bluebells, wild daffodils and orchids without encroaching directly on these and other sensitive areas. The Woodland Management Plan includes details relating to protected species and how timings and good practice techniques will be employed to avoid disturbance. The management strategy also aims to enhance areas that have been degraded by paintballing activity and previous tree clearance, and remove invasive plants to improve the environment for both ground flora and fauna.

Managed access to the woodland was a requirement proposed by the South Downs National Park when they were consulted on the allocation of the site through the LPP2. They subsequently raised concerns that access to the woodland might have an unacceptable impact on biodiversity in their initial response to this application. The Park have been re-consulted with the revised documents which include the Landscape and Public Open Space Strategy, the Proposed Woodland Trail and Woodland Management Plan and various ecological surveys. The Park has not yet provided a response. Notwithstanding this, Winchester City Council's specialist officers have assessed the various documents and are satisfied that public access to the woodland can be achieved and managed in a fashion which will provide an accessible natural green space for the community while also protecting and enhancing the biodiversity of the woodland. Further details of the walkway will need to be provided at reserved matters.

Ecological surveys with detailed survey and mitigation work have also been undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the proposals on all aspects of ecology across the site and there are no unacceptable impacts.

Overall, it is considered that the scheme provides a robust landscape strategy, protecting existing planting, trees and ecological interests, providing robust on site planting and allowing for improved management and enhancement of the adjoining woodland.

Highways/Parking

The application involves the formation of a new vehicle and pedestrian access from B3354 Main Road, approximately 20 metres south-east of the existing access to the site. These works will need to be secured through a Section 278 Agreement.

The development provides parking to meet Winchester City Council's Residential Parking Standards. This parking is provided through a mixture of on-street parking, off-street spaces and parking courts. The on-street parking will be broken up visually through landscaping.

A Framework Residential Travel Plan has been produced for the site and supports the

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application. The Travel Plan aims to encourage a reduction in the amount of car travel to and from the site, particularly in the morning and evening peaks. The Travel Plan would be secured through a S106 Obligation.

Other Matters

Concern has been raised that Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states planning permission should be refused for major developments in National Parks except in exceptional circumstances. However, this site is not within the Park, is well screened from wider views from the park and has been found to be moderately sensitive in landscape terms. The introduction of the woodland walk (within the Park) is considered to be a positive method of managing and enhancing this part of Stratton's Copse and will secure the long-term benefit to the Park. It is not therefore considered that the proposal is in conflict with the NPPF.

Planning Obligations/Agreements

In seeking the planning obligation(s) and/or financial contributions for affordable housing, highway works, education contributions and management of the woodland, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to the tests laid down in para 204 of the NPPF which requires the obligations to be necessary; relevant to planning; directly related to the proposed development; fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects.

Recommendation

That the application be approved subject to a S106 Obligation to secure the following:

- 40% affordable housing;
- education contributions;
- management of the woodland;
- mitigation works described within the supporting GCN mitigation strategy
- highway works
- public access to all footpaths/cycle ways and future possible access to the footpath network.

(Note: If the Legal Agreement is not completed within 6 months then the application may be refused without further reference to Committee)

and subject to the following condition(s):

Conditions/Reasons

01 Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

01 Reason: To comply with the provision of Section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02 The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission, or before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved, whichever is the later.