
Planning Statement

Land at Woodcroft Farm, Horndean

Planning Statement

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1. Statement of Purpose

- 1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an outline planning application (all matters reserved except access) for the development of up to 190 dwellings, with associated vehicular access, infrastructure and landscaping at Land at Woodcroft Farm, Horndean (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). This statement sets out the development proposal for the site, the planning policy context and explains why planning permission can, and should, be granted. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings and other supporting documentation.

Description of Development

- 1.2. The description of development is as follows:

"Outline planning application sought for the development of up to 190 dwellings, with associated vehicular access, infrastructure and landscaping (all matters reserved except access)."

2. Background

- 2.1. Grainger PLC has been actively promoting Land at Woodcroft Farm as a sustainable extension to the Catherington Park development since 2014 through engagement in the local plan-making process. Catherington Park is a residential development that has extant planning consent and is substantially complete with a majority of the homes occupied and adjoins the site to the south.
- 2.2. Since Grainger started promoting the site in 2014, Grainger has received positive responses from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on its potential for allocation within the emerging Local Plan. This has led to the site successfully gaining a draft allocation in consecutive versions of East Hampshire District Council's (EHDC's) emerging Local Plan since 2019. Specifically, the site was identified as a draft allocation for housing within the EHDC Regulation 18 Part Two Local Plan 2021-2040 published in December 2024.
- 2.3. Grainger has also had positive discussions and engagement with EHDC planning policy officers and Horndean Parish Council (HPC) regarding the prospect of a sustainable residential development on the site.
- 2.4. Given that the Land at Woodcroft Farm has been consistently assessed by EHDC as a sustainable site for residential development over a number of years, Grainger PLC is keen to bring forward the site in order to make a valuable contribution towards bolstering the supply of new homes within the district and addressing identified local housing needs in a sustainable and positive way, acknowledging that the preparation and adoption of a new Local Plan is delayed.

3. The Site

- 3.1. The site is located to the very south of the administrative area of East Hampshire District and directly adjacent to the administrative area of Havant Borough. The site abuts the existing developed area of Catherington Park, comprising 288 dwellings, to the south and east.
- 3.2. The site is approximately 8.6 hectares in size and predominantly comprises grazing paddock with a gentle southerly gradient. A cluster of trees is situated to the centre of the site, along with a belt of vegetation running from north-south which serves to visually delineate the site into two separate paddocks. The boundaries of the site are characterised by mature vegetation and trees which serve to ensure that the site is visually self-contained within the surrounding landscape.
- 3.3. Immediately adjacent to the northern side of the site is a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT). Beyond the BOAT to the north lies James's Copse, which is both designated as ancient woodland and a Site of Important Nature Conservation (SINC).
- 3.4. The site is bounded to the west by an existing public right of way, beyond which lies grazing paddocks and equestrian development.
- 3.5. The site does not contain, nor is it situated within close proximity to, any heritage assets. There are no specific landscape designations on the site and the entirety of the site is situated within Flood Zone 1. It is notable however that the mature treeline to the northern boundary of the site is subject to a group of tree preservation orders (ref. EH1122(10)), in addition to 2 no. mature oaks situated to the centre of the site (ref. EH1122 (10)).
- 3.6. There is a wide range of local facilities and services to the south and to the east of the site and these are readily accessible by sustainable modes of transport. Additional detail can be found in the accompanying Transport Statement (TS).

4. Planning History and Public Engagement

- 4.1. The site has limited planning history. In 2014, a request for a screening opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 was submitted for 'up to 200 residential dwellings with associated infrastructure, open space access and parking'. EHDC concluded that the proposal did not amount to 'EIA development' within the meaning of the 2011 Regulations.
- 4.2. Savills, under instruction from Grainger PLC, submitted (8 January 2024) a request for an EIA Screening Opinion (LPA ref: 55625/001) for 'up to 200 residential dwellings with associated infrastructure, open space and means of access'. On 7 February 2024, the Council concluded that the scheme would not amount to 'EIA development' within the meaning of the 2017 Regulations.

Public Engagement

- 4.3. Prior to the submission of this outline planning application, Grainger PLC, supported by communications specialists SP Broadway, has undertaken consultation with relevant local stakeholders and the local public. Specifically the following activities were included in the programme of engagement:
- The creation of a dedicated website inviting interested parties to submit their views on the proposed plans for development at the site.
 - 14 November 2023 - 808 letters sent to both local stakeholders and local residents inviting them to view the dedicated development website, in addition to making them aware of the forthcoming public exhibition.
 - 5 December 2023 - A drop-in public exhibition was held from 2pm-7pm at the Acorn Community Centre.
 - 11 December 2023 - Plans to develop the site were presented to Horndean Parish Council for feedback.
- 4.4. The programme of engagement undertaken has helped Grainger PLC and the consultant team understand the views of local residents and stakeholders, and has resulted in a number of changes to the scheme for which outline planning permission is now sought. Full details of public consultation and engagement undertaken is contained within the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
- 4.5. The programme of public consultation and engagement was planned and undertaken to accord with criterion 4 of the Housing Outside Settlement Boundaries SPD (August 2022).

Pre-application Engagement

- 4.6. Prior to the submission of this application for outline planning permission, the applicant has sought to positively and proactively engage with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), as encouraged within the Planning Practice Guidance, through the submission of a formal pre-application enquiry in November 2023 (LPA ref. 55625/999). The pre-application enquiry sought feedback on the merits of developing the site for up to 200 units with associated vehicular access, public open space and ancillary infrastructure on land at Woodcroft Farm (all matters reserved except from access).
- 4.7. The written response to the pre-application enquiry was issued by EHDC on 13 December 2023. Whilst noting that the site is currently outside of a settlement boundary under the current Local Plan (adopted May

2014), the LPA stated its general support of the principle of housing development, acknowledging that the site has been favourably assessed as a sustainable location for new homes resulting in a draft allocation within the emerging EHDC local plan.

- 4.8. In the pre-application response, officers provided extensive feedback on the merits of the scheme. It was noted that the pre-application scheme would not be anticipated to harm views, or the special character, of the adjacent South Downs National Park, nor would it have any landscape impacts beyond those associated with the development of housing in the immediate locality. The retention of the hedgerows and trees was welcomed, and officers noted that the approach to the extent of land which is proposed to be developed for housing and that which is proposed to be landscaped is appropriate and will assist with providing a suitable transition to the surrounding countryside.
- 4.9. The pre-application response was also supportive of the level of public open space provision, which would exceed policy requirements in order to create a pleasant and verdant living environment for future residents. The creation of additional connections to the surrounding public right of way network (PRoW) was also welcomed.
- 4.10. The written advice received at pre-application stage has been incorporated and influenced the application scheme where appropriate and possible, particularly in relation to the parameters of the scheme. Table 1 details the key changes made to the application scheme following receipt of pre-application advice.

Table 1: Response to pre-application comments

Comment	Response
The quantum of development is too high for the site.	The development of the parameter plans for the site have been landscape-led, with a particular focus on ensuring development would create a high-quality future living environment that seeks to conserve and enhance ecology whilst avoiding adverse landscape impacts. The parameter plans and associated illustrative masterplan have been revised to reduce the quantum of development for which outline planning permission is sought from up to 200, to up to 190 dwellings. Whilst the detailed layout will be subject to further approval under Reserved Matters, the reduction in the unit numbers for which outline planning permission is sought will result in a development that can comfortably provide a high-quality living environment, at a density that is comparable to neighbouring forms of development, whilst seeking to ensure the most efficient use of land as required by paragraph 128 of the NPPF.

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Comment	Response
The development of a significant amount of the site for 2.5 and 3 storey buildings is inappropriate for an edge of countryside location.	The building height/ scale parameter plan has been amended and now features only very limited areas of the site that could be developed for up to three storeys. Buildings in this location will frame key entrances to the site and will help define key vistas from the adjacent public open space. This approach is supported by the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
It is advised that the extent of flats identified on the illustrative masterplan is reduced to limit impact on the BOAT and help address the concerns raised in relation to density and layout.	On the eastern development parcel, two flatted blocks were proposed. As a result of comments, one block nearest the BOAT has been removed. On the western development parcel, a proposed flatted block that was positioned adjacent to the BOAT has been re-located further within the site to 'bookend' the main entrance into this western parcel. Whilst the detailed layout will require further approval and the masterplan is illustrative only, these amendments are reflected in the building heights parameter plan, which limits 3-storey elements to these discrete and limited locations

5. The Proposed Development

- 5.1. Outline planning permission is sought for up to 190 residential units with associated vehicular access, infrastructure and landscaping. All matters other than the proposed vehicular access are reserved.
- 5.2. The proposed parameter plans have been carefully developed taking into account all known site constraints and opportunities. Specifically, the arboricultural and ecological assets both within and adjacent to the site have significantly influenced the location of the proposed residential development parcels, through the incorporation of suitable buffer zones, in addition to a green corridor running from north-south through the centre of the site. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed number of residential units will achieve a density of development that is respectful to the verdant and semi-rural character of the area, whilst also seeking to develop the site in a way that optimises the number of new homes the site can accommodate, making most efficient use of this land resource.

Figure 1: Land Use Parameter Plan



- 5.3. The scheme has also been developed to take account of the known geological features and is capable of supporting SUDs that would ensure that surface water is suitably managed within the site without increasing off-site flood risk.
- 5.4. The desire to create a welcoming and healthy community is a core tenet of the development as proposed. Play features are proposed (including both locally equipped areas for play and local areas for play), in addition to significant areas of public open space for recreation and informal play. Trim trails are also proposed to encourage healthy lifestyles. A community orchard will encourage social interactions and the development of a new community in addition to sustainable food growing.

- 5.5. Additional connections to adjoining footpaths and public rights of way are proposed, allowing both residents of the development and the wider local community enhanced access to the wider countryside and community facilities and amenities.
- 5.6. The proposal would predominantly comprise dwelling houses up to 2 storeys in height, with provision also made for a limited number of flatted units up to 3 storeys in height. Development would be split across two development parcels, delineated by a central, green corridor. Access between the two parcels would be restricted to pedestrian only, in order to ensure the coherence of the ecological commuting network, in addition to ensuring a pedestrian-friendly layout, especially in proximity to the proposed public open space and play features. However, it is intended to ensure that this route would also be suitable for emergency vehicles.
- 5.7. Vehicular access to the site will be provided via existing development at Catherington Park. Specifically, it is anticipated that the western parcel of development will be serviced by a vehicular access provided from Merritt Way to the southern side of the site, with an associated pedestrian access. The eastern parcel of development would be served by a vehicular and pedestrian access provided from Catherington Park to the eastern side of the site. The two parcels would then be linked by a pedestrian/ cycle footpath to ensure the two development parcels are interlinked via the green corridor.

6. Planning Policy

- 6.1. S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Act, determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations strongly indicate otherwise.

The development plan

- 6.2. The development plan for the area under the administrative control of East Hampshire District Council currently comprises the following:
- East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (adopted June 2014)
 - East Hampshire District Local Plan: Housing and Employment Allocations (adopted April 2016)
 - East Hampshire District Local Plan: Second Review (Saved Policies)
 - Made Neighbourhood Plans
 - Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (Adopted October 2013)
- 6.3. There is no made neighbourhood plan for the parish of Horndean.
- 6.4. The most relevant development plan policies are listed below:

East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (adopted June 2014)

- CP1-Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CP2-Spatial strategy
- CP10-Spatial strategy for housing
- CP11-Housing tenure, type and mix
- CP13-Affordable housing on residential development sites
- CP18-Provision of open space, sport and recreation and built facilities
- CP19-Development in the Countryside
- CP20-Landscape
- CP21-Biodiversity
- CP22-Internationally designated sites
- CP24-Sustainable construction
- CP25-Flood Risk
- CP26-Water resources/water quality
- CP28-Green Infrastructure
- CP29-Design
- CP31-Transport
- CP32-Infrastructure

East Hampshire District Local Plan: Second Review

- T3-Pedestrians and Cyclists
- T4-Pedestrians, cyclists, cycling, walking/ horse-riding
- C6-Tree Preservation, Forestry Operations, Management Plans
- HE12-Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building
- HE17-Archaeology and Ancient Monuments

6.5. S70(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that Local Planning Authorities have regard to any other material considerations. The following are considered to be material considerations relevant to the determination of this outline application:

- National Planning Policy Framework 2023
- Planning Practice Guidance
- Local Authority Housing Waiting List
- Climate Change and Sustainable Construction SPD
- Housing Outside Settlement Boundaries SPD
- Vehicle Parking Standards SPD
- East Hampshire: Our Local Plan 2021-2040 Regulation 18 consultation version

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.6. The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) is material to decision-making in respect of all planning applications.
- 6.7. At the heart of the NPPF is a recognition that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (paragraph 7) and the Framework contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).
- 6.8. The importance of ensuring the provision of a sufficient number and range of new homes in supporting the achievement of sustainable development and supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities is explicitly acknowledged within the framework (paragraphs 7 and 8).
- 6.9. The NPPF identifies that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, the needs of groups with specific housing requirements should be addressed.

Local Authority Housing Waiting List

- 6.10. As of 31 March 2023, figures published by DLUHC indicated that EHDC had 1,590 households on its housing waiting lists.

Climate Change and Sustainable Construction SPD

- 6.11. Adopted in April 2022, the Climate Change and Sustainable Construction SPD provides additional guidance on the practical application of policy CP24 of the Joint Core Strategy.

Housing Outside Settlement Boundaries SPD

- 6.12. EHDC adopted its 'Housing Outside of Settlement Boundaries' SPD on 23 March 2023. This SPD seeks to provide further guidance on the application of Joint Core Strategy Policy CP10 - Spatial Strategy for Housing.

Vehicle Parking Standard SPD

- 6.13. The Vehicle Parking Standards SPD provides further clarification on the implementation of policy CP31 of the Joint Core Strategy

East Hampshire: Our Local Plan 2021-2040 Regulation 18

- 6.14. In January 2024, EHDC consulted on its Regulation 18 Local Plan. This included proposed site allocations. The Regulation 18 Local Plan proposes sites for development. It is notable that Land at Woodcroft Farm is proposed for the development of 164 homes. A summary for the stated rationale for inclusion within the emerging local plan is provided below:
- The site is sustainably located so that new housing could be well-connected to existing facilities and services in Wecock Farm and Cowplain by sustainable modes of transport.
 - The site scores above average in the Local Planning Authority's Accessibility Study.
 - New connections to adjoining rights of way could support healthy and active lifestyles for residents.
 - Impacts on environmental constraints (biodiversity, water quality, geology, flood risks) could be avoided or mitigated by appropriate design and layout.
 - Existing green infrastructure could be augmented and linked, to maintain coherent green networks.
 - New vehicular access could be provided by extending roads that were built to serve the housing development to the south.
 - The dimensions of the site facilitate an east-west layout for development, which would support passive design principles and the installation of solar panels for meeting the design requirements associated with the climate emergency.
- 6.15. Whilst the emerging local plan is still at the early stage of plan making, it is considered that some weight can be afforded to the direction of travel contained within the draft plan.

7. Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

- 7.1. The site is not currently allocated for residential purposes within the adopted East Hampshire Local Plan and currently is located outside of a defined settlement boundary area. However, Policy CP10 of the Core Strategy does state that in addition to sites allocated to meet the housing numbers, housing outside settlement policy boundaries will be permitted where it meets certain tests. These are set out in more detail in the adopted Housing Outside of Settlement Boundaries SPD.
- 7.2. EHDC adopted its 'Housing Outside of Settlement Boundaries' SPD on 23 March 2023. This SPD seeks to bolster saved policies within the adopted Local Plan, and in the absence of a new Local Plan and five year housing land supply, the SPD seeks to ensure that certain tests are met in EHDC's consideration of a site's suitability for new homes.
- 7.3. The SPD sets out four key tests, and states that planning applications for housing outside of settlement boundaries should demonstrate how these tests have been met, which are that the proposed development:
- **Criterion 1.** Meets a community need or realises local community aspirations
 - **Criterion 2.** Reinforces a settlement's role and function
 - **Criterion 3.** Cannot be accommodated within the built-up area
 - **Criterion 4.** Has been identified in a neighbourhood plan or has clear community support as demonstrated through a process which has been agreed by the LPA in consultation with the Parish of Town Council
- 7.4. The proposed development meets these criteria as follows:
- Criterion 1.** The site has previously received draft housing allocations in two versions of the emerging Local Plan (Reg 18 documents). Furthermore, under the East Hampshire: Our Local Plan 2021-2040 Regulation 18 document, the site is proposed for residential development. The site would clearly assist EHDC in bolstering the supply of new homes within the district to meet identified housing needs (including 40% affordable housing needs). Specifically, whilst the final housing mix will be determined at the reserved matters stage, the edge of settlement location means the site is suitable for delivering a high proportion of 2, 3 or 4 bedroom units that are identified as being required within the southern parishes of the district as detailed within the EHDC HEDNA (2022). The Statement of Community Involvement details the manner in which Grainger has proactively engaged with the Parish Council, and other local stakeholders, prior to the submission of this planning application. Additionally, Grainger has proactively engaged with EHDC and Horndean Parish Council as part of actively promoting the site through the local plan process over a number of years. Accordingly, the scheme is considered to comply with criterion 1.

Criterion 2. The site is situated adjacent to the existing development of Catherington Park, beyond which lies the settlement of Horndean to the east. To the south are the settlements of Wecock and Cowplain (Havant Borough Council). The subtext of Policy CP2 (Spatial Strategy) of the Joint Core Strategy identifies the Parish of Horndean as a large Local Service Centre. The pre-application proposal therefore accords with the general spirit of the spatial strategy contained within the Joint Core Strategy which advises that ‘... new development growth in the period up to 2028 will be directed to the most sustainable and accessible locations in the District in accordance with the Spatial Strategy shown on the Key Diagram’. It is therefore considered that the proposal would reinforce Horndean’s role and function as a large local service centre and the proposal therefore accords with criterion 2.

Criterion 3. The proposal would assist with meeting a local need for market housing, including contributing to the delivery of family-sized 2, 3 or 4 bedroom units and affordable housing. Following review of the sites submitted within the EHDC Land Availability Assessment, there are no brownfield sites within the existing settlement of Horndean that are capable of delivering, either independently or collectively, the development proposed at Land at Woodcroft Farm. The proposal therefore conforms with criterion 3.

Criterion 4. Prior to the submission of this planning application, Grainger PLC has undertaken substantial public consultation with local communities, Horndean Parish Council and other stakeholders. This has influenced the scheme for which outline planning permission is sought. The full details of the consultation undertaken are detailed within the Statement of Community Involvement. The proposal is considered to comply with criterion 4.

- 7.5. Overall, it is asserted that the scheme meets the requirements of policy CS10 of the adopted Local Plan and the guidance set out in Housing Outside of Settlement Boundaries SPD.
- 7.6. The proposal has been assessed by the LPA as being a suitable and relatively unconstrained site for new homes and would assist EHDC in meeting the identified local need for family housing and affordable housing. The scheme would comply in full with policy CS10 - Housing Outside of Settlement Boundaries SPD and would assist in delivering new residential development in what the LPA recognises as an inherently sustainable location.
- 7.7. However, the East Hampshire: Our Local Plan 2021-2040 Regulation 18 document and supporting documentation has assessed Land at Woodcroft Farm as a sustainable location for new homes and as a result, the site has been given a draft allocation as a preferred site for the delivery of new residential development within the district. In securing a draft allocation, the LPA recognises that the site is sustainably located and impacts on environmental constraints (biodiversity, water quality, geology, flood risks) which can be avoided or mitigated by appropriate design and layout. Whilst not adopted planning policy, it is suggested that some weight can be afforded to the direction of travel within the plan and the draft allocation proposed.

Housing Land Supply

- 7.8. Following publication of the revised NPPF in December 2023, there is no longer a requirement for Local Planning Authorities to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, should they have a Regulation 18 Local Plan which has a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. It is notable

however that the objective to significantly boost the supply of homes is retained within the NPPF (paragraph 60). The proposal would support the realisation of this policy aspiration.

Sustainable Location

- 7.9. The site's location is inherently sustainable; the settlements of Horndean and Waterlooville lie a short distance to the west and south respectively. Furthermore, the site directly adjacent to, and accessed via, the residential site of Catherington Park is currently under construction. The proposal would therefore form an entirely logical and cohesive additional phase to the existing Catherington Park development and the wider settlement of Horndean.
- 7.10. The site is not currently allocated for residential purposes within the EHDC Local Plan. It is however notable that the subtext of Policy CP2 (Spatial Strategy) of the Joint Core Strategy identifies the Parish of Horndean as a large Local Service Centre. The pre-application proposal therefore accords with the general spirit of the spatial strategy contained within the Joint Core Strategy which advises that '*...new development growth in the period up to 2028 will be directed to the most sustainable and accessible locations in the District in accordance with the Spatial Strategy shown on the Key Diagram*'.
- 7.11. The site is identified as sustainably located so that new housing could be well-connected to existing facilities and services in Wecock Farm and Cowplain by walking and cycling modes.
- 7.12. Furthermore, the site scores positively in the EHDC Integrated Impact Assessment (January 2024) in terms of accessibility and sustainability of location.
- 7.13. The site therefore represents a sustainable location that is close to local services and facilities, meaning occupants would not have to rely on vehicles to access these.

Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Locality

- 7.14. Policy CP20 (Landscape) of the Joint Core Strategy requires that the special characteristics of the district's natural environment will be conserved and enhanced.
- 7.15. The site falls within the landscape character area known as '10a: Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest'. The site is visually well-contained from most public vantage points, as well as within the wider landscape, as a consequence of the presence of mature vegetation and trees to the site boundary.
- 7.16. The application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in which it is assessed that the visibility of the development would be extremely limited, with views limited to those obtainable in the immediate surrounding area, and in particular, from adjacent public right of ways. The LVIA concludes that the development of the type proposed can be comfortably accommodated within the landscape, without any significant detrimental impact upon the wider landscape character.
- 7.17. Following consultation with the local community, homes within the north-west corner of the site were relocated within the site and replaced with public open space, to limit any visual impact from the west as a result of comments made at the public consultation. Moreover, following pre-application engagement with EHDC, a number of the flatted units that were originally proposed have been removed from the scheme to

limit any impact on surrounding public rights of way, including the BOAT that runs along the northern boundary of the site.

- 7.18. As a result of these changes and the incorporation of extensive areas of landscaping and public open space, which exceeds policy requirements, the overall gross density of development for the site will be 25dph, which is a density that is considered to be consistent with forms of development found in the surrounding area. Furthermore, the proposed density of development is considered entirely appropriate for the site's edge of settlement location.
- 7.19. It is therefore considered that the development would comply with policy CP20.

Transport and Access

- 7.20. Policy SP31 of the Joint Core Strategy requires, amongst other considerations, that highway design meets the needs of vehicular traffic and the need for safety, in addition to encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.
- 7.21. Prior to the submission of this outline planning application, the applicant has engaged positively with Hampshire County Council (HCC) Highways, in its capacity as the local highway authority (LHA), through requesting formal pre-application advice from HCC Highways (LHA ref. 6-3-6-494). The pre-application response from the LHA concluded that the site can provide pedestrian and cycle access to surrounding amenities and services. Furthermore, it is recognised that the proximity of the site to the nearest bus stop will ensure that buses will be well utilised by future occupants of the site.
- 7.22. Pre-application advice from the LHA has been acknowledged and has influenced the scheme as submitted. A full analysis is provided within the submitted Transport Assessment.

Sustainability

- 7.23. The site is sustainably located relative to the Catherington Park development situated immediately to the south and the settlement of Horndean which is located immediately west of the site. A number of convenience retail, recreational/ play facilities, education and community facilities are located within 800m of the site, with a number of others within easy access as demonstrated in the following table:

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Land at Woodcroft Farm, Horndean



Table 1: Site Accessibility

Facility	Distance (from the centre of the site)	Walking Time (80m per minute)	Cycling Time (250m per minute)
Curlew Gardens Bus Stop	550m	7 minutes	2 minutes
Woodcroft Primary School	550m	7 minutes	2 minutes
Wecock Play Area	550m	7 minutes	2 minutes
Dove Close Bus Stops	750m	9 minutes	3 minutes
Tesco Express (Woodcroft Lane/Lovedean Lane Local Shop)	750m	9 minutes	3 minutes
Wecock Church	850m	10 minutes	3-4 minutes
Premier Convenience Store	900m	11 minutes	3-4 minutes
Eagle Avenue/Milton Road Local Shops	900m	11 minutes	3-4 minutes
Lovedean Pharmacy	950m	12 minutes	4 minutes
The Acorn Community Centre	1.1km	14 minutes	4-5 minutes
Wecock Recreation Ground and Skate Park	1.2km	15 minutes	5 minutes
Lovedean Village Hall	1.2km	15 minutes	5 minutes
Lovedean Post Office	1.3km	16 minutes	5 minutes
Rachel Madocks School	1.3km	16 minutes	5 minutes
Milton Road/Hart Plain Avenue Local Shops	1.9km	22 minutes	6-7 minutes
Hart Plain Infant School	2.4km	30 minutes	9-10 minutes
Cowplain Shops	2.4km	30 minutes	9-10 minutes
Hart Plain Junior School	2.5km	31 minutes	10 minutes
Vine Medical Group – Health Centre	2.5km	31 minutes	10 minutes
Horndean Technology College	2.7km	32 minutes	11 minutes
Morrisons (Horndean)	2.7km	34 minutes	11 minutes
The Cowplain School	2.8km	35 minutes	11 minutes
Horndean Shops	3.2km	40 minutes	13 minutes
Horizon Waterlooville Leisure Centre	3.5km	44 minutes	14 minutes
Horndean Shops	3.5km	44 minutes	14 minutes
Lidl	3.6km	45 minutes	14 minutes
Sainsburys	3.6km	45 minutes	14 minutes
Waterlooville Town Centre	4.1km	51 minutes	16 minutes

- 7.24. The site has good links to the local bridleway network being bound by byway 119/46/1 to the north, bridleway 108/1b/1 to the east and bridleway 119/30/1 to the west. The development seeks to create new access points onto this bridleway network, allowing future residents enhanced access to the countryside as well as sustainable access to existing communities and services to the south and east of the site. In addition, the proposed masterplan incorporates an internal network of residential streets, cycle ways and pedestrian routes to promote permeability and legibility within the scheme, as well as strong linkages to surrounding communities and facilities.
- 7.25. The BOAT that runs adjacent to the northern boundary of the site is managed by HCC as a public right of way. However, at the public consultation, it was raised that the BOAT is currently in a poor state of repair and can be subject to anti-social behaviour due to its discrete location. Whilst the development will provide some natural surveillance to the BOAT, the applicant is keen to engage with HCC on its state of repair.
- 7.26. The site is also well-served by existing bus routes, with three bus stops located in proximity to the site, all located along Eagle Avenue. Curlew Gardens Bus Stop is located to the east of the junction with Powell Drive and is a c.6 ½ minute walk from the site. The other two bus stops at 'Dove Close' are located c.180m south of the junction with Powell Drive and is a c.9-minute walk from the site.

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- 7.27. The site can demonstrate a high degree of functional connectivity to the surrounding development and the wider area through access to pedestrian, cycle and bus infrastructure. As acknowledged by the LHA, the site successfully promotes sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policy SP31.

Access

- 7.28. Access to the site will be provided via existing development at Catherington Park. The western parcel of development is to be accessed via Wilkes Way to the southern side of the site and it is proposed to access the eastern parcel of development via Merritt Way. The two parcels would then be linked by a shared pedestrian/ cycle way (which would also serve as an emergency access) to facilitate permeability.

Surrounding Highway Network

- 7.29. Junction capacity assessment and trip generation has been undertaken to support the application. Based upon this analysis, it is not anticipated that the proposed development trips will have a significant impact on the operation of the junction or the surrounding highways network in the context of paragraph 115 of the NPPF.

Parking

- 7.30. The details of the parking to be provided on site will be determined by future reserved matters applications. However, the illustrative masterplan demonstrates that up to 190 units could comfortably accommodate the required parking provision, acknowledging that the site is likely to accommodate 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings and it is anticipated that appropriately worded planning conditions are part of any planning permission to secure parking details as part of Reserved Matters. Residential parking provided on site will have due regard to East Hampshire District Council Vehicle Parking Standards SPD (July 2018), or other subsequent guidance available at the time of a reserved matters application.

Arboriculture

- 7.31. Policy CP20 of the Core Strategy states that trees and woodlands that contribute to the distinctive landscape character of the district should be protected and enhanced. Policy CP21 states that trees which are of local value to wildlife should be protected and enhanced. Saved policy C6 of the Local Plan Second Review (LPSR) states planning permission will not be granted which would damage or destroy one or more trees protected by a tree preservation order, unless removal would be in the interests of good arboricultural practice.
- 7.32. The application is supported by an Arboricultural Implications Plan, Tree Survey Plan and Arboricultural Implications Assessment.
- 7.33. The mature treeline to the northern boundary of the site is subject to a group tree preservation order (ref. EH1122(10)), in addition to 2 no. mature oaks situated to the centre of the site (ref. EH1122 (10)). Additionally, James's Copse to the north of the site is designated ancient woodland.
- 7.34. The illustrative layout indicates that sections of 4 no. groups of trees and 2 no. hedgerows would need to be removed to facilitate the proposed layout. These trees are classified as category 'C' trees. All category

'A' and category 'B' trees within, or adjacent to, the site would be retained. It is not considered that the loss of these trees, or small areas of hedgerow, would result in any loss of the verdant character of the site, nor would any trees of special merit be lost. This assessment was agreed by the LPA in its written pre-application response.

- 7.35. The proposed landscape parameter plan seeks to ensure suitable buffer zones are incorporated within the layout, to avoid future pressures for the loss of mature trees both within and surrounding the site.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.36. Policy CP25 details that, amongst other requirements, development in areas at risk of flooding (as identified on the Environment Agency's flood risk maps and EHDC's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment) will be permitted provided that a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that the development, including access, will be safe without increasing flooding elsewhere. The policy also requires that all development will be required to ensure that there is no net increase in surface water run-off.
- 7.37. The application is supported by a site-specific Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy (Hilson Moran, January 2024).
- 7.38. The entirety of the application site falls within flood zone 1 (an area at the lowest probability of flooding).
- 7.39. The site contains an area of karstic underdrainage which poses a possible risk of surface water flooding. Accordingly, it is not proposed to develop this area of the site and instead, this area will include a cycle path connecting the two development areas, and an access road which will be complemented by enhanced landscaping, such as planted trees and orchards.
- 7.40. The scheme has been designed to incorporate SuDS features to ensure that surface water is suitably managed on site, without increasing the risk of off-site flooding.
- 7.41. The scheme is therefore considered to comply with national and local planning policy in respect of flood risk.

Ground Water Source Protection

- 7.42. Policy CP26 of the Core Strategy states that, amongst other considerations, development will be permitted provided that it protects and enhances the quality and quantity of ground water.
- 7.43. The site falls within inner source protection zone. Accordingly, the SuDS have been designed to avoid ground infiltration, and instead it is proposed to discharge to a surface water sewer.
- 7.44. It is considered that the development can be delivered without adverse impacts upon the source protection zone.

Heritage and archaeology

- 7.45. Saved Policy HE12 of the East Hampshire Local Plan: Second Review states that development will not be permitted if it would harm the setting of a listed building. Policy HE17 states that development will not be permitted which adversely affects important archaeological sites, buildings, monuments or features, whether scheduled or not, or their settings.
- 7.46. The application is supported by a Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (Savills, March 2024). The document concludes that the development would not adversely affect the setting of any heritage assets. The potential for the site to support archaeological remains has also been assessed and it is considered that it is unlikely that the site would support any archaeological remains of greater than local significance and this should not preclude development.
- 7.47. The scheme is therefore judged to accord with local planning policy in respect of built heritage and archaeology. Should it be deemed necessary by the Archaeological Officer, an agreed programme of archaeological works can be secured by planning condition.

Ground Conditions

- 7.48. The applicant has commissioned extensive intrusive ground investigation work to inform the proposed scheme. This has identified chalk solution features at specific locations within the site. The masterplan has been informed by the findings of these investigations, which has influenced the extent and location of the developable areas in order that these chalk solution features are wholly contained within public open space and as landscape features on site. This benefits the scheme through the provision of generous leisure and ecological areas, which improve biodiversity and wellbeing.
- 7.49. The ground conditions investigations undertaken demonstrate that the site is suitable for the quantum of residential development proposed.

Ecology

- 7.50. Policy CP21 of the Core Strategy requires that development proposals maintain, enhance and protect the district's biodiversity and surrounding environment.
- 7.51. The application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment (LC Ecological Services, March 2024).

On-site ecology

Flora

- 7.52. The majority of the application site is covered by semi-improved grassland, which has limited ecological value. Following receipt of pre-application advice from EHDC, the site has been assessed for the presence of butcher's-broom and lesser spearwort, however neither of these species are recorded as being present on the site.

- 7.53. A scheme of supplementary hedgerow planting is proposed in order to compensate for the loss of small areas of hedgerow on the site, and to provide enhanced ecological commuting and foraging opportunities.

Fauna

- 7.54. The site is known to contain an active badger sett which is situated in the central woodland of the site, in addition to bats using the woodland features adjacent to the site for foraging and commuting. This was raised by Grainger at a meeting with HPC in terms of the mitigation measures that would be incorporated and HPC has confirmed that it considers that any development ensures protection of the badger sett.
- 7.55. As such, the positioning of the access routes have been amended to ensure construction activity does not disturb the badger sett. Further, limiting the access that links the development parcels to pedestrian and cycle only, limits any severance in foraging and commuting by badgers by maintaining vehicular free routes within the site.
- 7.56. The site also provides suitable habitat for nesting birds and reptiles, which will be protected and habitats enhanced through the landscaping scheme including bolstering the perimeter planting with native species.
- 7.57. Further mitigation measures are proposed within the ecological impact assessment to minimise any disturbance on any notable ecological features known to be present within the site.

Off-site ecology

- 7.58. Seven statutory designated sites are identified within 5km of the site, however they are located sufficiently far away from the site to ensure that there will be no mechanisms of impact upon these designations.
- 7.59. The site is situated in close proximity to James's Copse and Outlier SINC. The proposal will not directly result in the loss of this habitat once operational, however the Ecological Impact Assessment highlights that the SINC may be subject to recreational disturbance from walkers once the development is completed. It is however envisaged that impacts would be minimised as most recreational activities would take place within the generous public open space on site. Construction impacts can be adequately managed through the use of a CEMP which can be secured via planning condition. A buffer zone of at least 15 metres from James's Copse SINC is provided with the lowland deciduous woodland providing part of that buffer zone, which is considered to be ecologically robust.
- 7.60. In line with standing advice issued by Natural England, the ancient woodland area of James's Copse will be buffered by at least 15 metres from the development (over 20 metres at the closest point to development). The woodland south of the ancient woodland will help to provide this buffer.

Summary

- 7.61. Extensive ecological surveys have been undertaken on the site. These surveys have informed an appropriate and comprehensive package of ecological mitigation and enhancement measures that can be delivered on the site. These measures will ensure that the proposal will overall have a positive impact upon the ecological value of the site and its surrounds. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be consistent with national and local planning policy in this regard.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.62. The development proposed is mandated to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain by the Environment Act 2021.
- 7.63. The application is supported by a Biodiversity Net Gain Report (LC Ecological Services, March 2024). This includes a BNG metric assessment which assesses the baseline value of the site and areas of habitat that would be impacted by development.
- 7.64. The BNG strategy for the site comprises providing enhanced planting on the application site. Additionally, off-site enhancements will be required to secure a minimum of 10% net-gain. The exact details of the off-site enhancement have not been confirmed at this stage. Options to use land comprising other neutral grassland in poor condition immediately north of the site have been considered, as have options to purchase off-site habitat units via a third-party. A mix of these two options could also provide a net gain. Combined, these enhancements would deliver a minimum of 10% gain in habitat units and a 12.32% gain in hedgerow units.

Nitrate Neutrality

- 7.65. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) requires that projects and plans do not have a likely significant effect on the national sites network.
- 7.66. As detailed within the EHDC Position Statement and Mitigation Plan for Nutrient Neutral Development (May 2022), Natural England has provided guidance to the Council that asserts that increased development is resulting in higher levels of nitrogen input into the water environment of the Solent, with evidence that these nutrients are causing eutrophication of the national site network, thereby potentially adversely affecting the integrity of these sites. As a result, Natural England and EHDC require that impacts are offset under the Habitats Regulations.
- 7.67. Wastewater from the application site would be treated at Budds Farm Wastewater Treatment Works which would have a detrimental impact upon various designated sites comprising the national sites network through increased nitrate loading.
- 7.68. Accordingly, mitigation is required and it is the developer's intention to purchase nitrogen credits delivered by an off-site provider such as the scheme at Warnford Park, or the one operated by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Subject to the purchase of these credits, the scheme will not result in any likely significant effects upon the national site network.
- 7.69. The full nitrate calculations and details of possible mitigation options are detailed within the submitted Nutrient Budget for Woodcroft Farm Technical Note (Artemis, March 2024).

Sustainability and Energy

- 7.70. Policy CP24 of the Joint Core Strategy states that development provides at least 10% of energy demand from decentralised and renewable or low energy carbon sources. The EHDC Climate Change and

Sustainable Construction SPD provides greater detail on measures that can be implemented to reduce energy usage and increase the use of renewable energy technologies within East Hampshire District.

- 7.71. The application is supported by an Energy and Sustainability Statement (March 2024) which details that consideration will be given to maximising the south facing orientation of homes within the masterplan to make optimum use of natural light and thermal gain.
- 7.72. All homes will be designed to be comfortable and energy efficient in terms of making the most of natural light, heat and ventilation. Comprehensive landscaping within and surrounding the site will provide shade and cooling for homes and publicly accessible areas, as well as providing a pleasant and healthy residential environment.
- 7.73. The site is capable of supporting a range of renewable energy technologies which can be brought forward as part of a future detailed planning consent that will meet the minimum of 10% renewable or low carbon energy sources as required by Policy CP24 of the Core Strategy.

Housing Mix and Tenure

Affordable Housing

- 7.74. Policy CP13 of the Joint Core Strategy states that development sites of one or more additional dwelling should provide 40% affordable housing, of which the type and size will be determined on a site-by-site basis.
- 7.75. Subject to viability, it is the developer's intention to deliver 40% affordable housing on-site in accordance with the policy. The applicant would welcome early discussions with the Council in respect of the tenure and unit sizes.

Unit Sizes

- 7.76. The application is suitable for delivering a range of unit sizes. Following the receipt of pre-application advice, the number of flatted units shown on the illustrative masterplan has been reduced in favour of the provision of additional family sized units, which are understood to be most in need within the southern part of the district. The final mix will be determined at the reserved matters stage.

The Living Environment for Future Occupiers

- 7.77. The application site is located adjacent to residential development to the south, east and west. Woodland and farmland is located to the north. There are no sources of noise pollution located within close proximity to the site.
- 7.78. The application is supported by an Air Quality Assessment (Hawkins Environmental, 2024) which details that the development will not be adversely affected by, or give rise to, unacceptable levels of air pollution.
- 7.79. The proposed parameter plan details that the site will deliver a policy compliant level of public open space, including opportunities for an equipped children's play area, multiple informal play areas, a trim trail and a

community orchard. Additional connections to the PRoW network are proposed, facilitating enhanced access to the surrounding countryside with associated benefits to mental and physical health.

Impact upon the amenity of Neighbouring Occupiers

- 7.80. Policy 27 of the Joint Core Strategy details that development will not be permitted if it would have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- 7.81. Following public consultation, development has been pulled away from the north-western side of the site to prevent any impacts upon neighbouring development. Furthermore, the parameters of the scheme provide sufficient buffer to prevent adverse impacts upon residents of Catherington Park.
- 7.82. It is not considered that the scheme will give rise to adverse effects upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and the scheme would therefore accord with policy CP27 of the Joint Core Strategy.

Economic Impacts

- 7.83. The application is supported by an Economic Benefits Summary (Savills) which details the primary economic benefits that are likely to be derived from the delivery of the scheme. These benefits include around £0.5m per annum additional expenditure within the local economy, £5m construction gross value added and around £1.5m in CIL. These benefits should all be afforded weight in support of the scheme.

Legal Agreement

- 7.84. Policy CP32 of the Joint Core Strategy details that the Council will seek developer contributions towards infrastructure to meet community or environmental needs associated with new development, or to mitigate the impact of development on the environment.
- 7.85. Having regard to national and local planning policy and guidance, as well as pre-application advice from EHDC, it is considered that the following draft heads of terms may be included:
- Provision of affordable housing to comprise no less than 40% of dwellings
 - Monitoring of the submitted travel plan
 - Monitoring of the submitted BNG strategy
 - Provision and ongoing maintenance of the public open space provided
 - Any off-site highway works considered to be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
- 7.86. Derwent Developments Ltd welcomes continued discussion with EHDC regarding the proposed Heads of Terms for the Section 106.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. This planning statement supports an application for the development of up to 190 dwellings, with associated vehicular access, associated infrastructure and landscaping (all matters reserved except access) at Woodcroft Farm, Horndean.
- 8.2. The vision for the site is to provide a long-lasting and sustainable residential development that responds positively to the landscape and features of the site, to ensure that the scheme achieves best practice in all aspects of design and sustainability. A significant area of the site will be retained, managed and enhanced for ecology. This will also provide a superior natural setting for future residents of the site to enjoy.
- 8.3. The proposed development will provide up to 190 dwellings, which will deliver a number of benefits for the community that can be summarised as follows:
- Providing new homes that expands the overall housing supply with East Hampshire
 - Expanding housing choice, including the provision of much-needed 2 and 3 bed family housing, to meet the housing needs within East Hampshire
 - Provision of a verdant, high-quality living environment for future residents
 - Provision of approximately 76 new affordable houses
 - Provision of a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain
 - Provision of enhanced hedgerow planting
 - Enhanced access to the surrounding public right of way network
 - Estimated £1.5m contribution to community infrastructure via the Community Infrastructure Levy
 - Estimated £1.6m contribution to the local economy
- 8.4. The proposal will deliver up to 190 dwellings which will assist with meeting local housing need (both affordable and market housing) within the district and wider south Hampshire area. The scheme would comply in full with the Housing Outside of Settlement Boundaries SPD and would assist in delivering new residential development in an inherently sustainable location, without any significant adverse effects that would outweigh the benefits that would be derived from the delivery of the scheme. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted without delay.

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