

District/borough:	Havant Borough Council
Document type:	Planning Application
Reference number:	APP/24/00342
Development:	Outline Planning Application for the development of up to 190 units, with associated vehicular access, infrastructure and landscaping (all matters reserved except access). Woodcroft Farm Development Site, Woodcroft Lane, Waterlooville
Comments by:	Hampshire County Council Public Health
Date of comments:	20 th June 2024
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Hampshire County Council Public Health Response

Hampshire County Council Public Health welcomes the opportunity to respond to this planning application. To form the subsequent response and recommendations, the following documents have been reviewed: design and access statement, development layouts, site context, master plan, and covering letter.

Good health starts with the environment in which we live, learn, work, and play. Improving these places and communities will enable more people in Hampshire to live healthier lives for longer and reduce the unfair gap between the most and least healthy [Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023-2026](#). On sites such as this taking key healthy urbanism approaches can make tangible differences in the health outcomes of a proposal. The comments below set out the key areas we would suggest looking at.

Hampshire County Council raises no objection to the application but offers a series of comments that would help the scheme meet healthier neighbourhood objectives. In general terms the scheme addresses certain public health themes such as active travel, better homes principles and is founded national planning policy framework.

The scheme sits across two local authority areas, as such the response is based on the overall scheme, but we have separated out the comments into housing and access route to assist the different authorities. There are also several cross over areas that need to be considered together such as access, linkage and alternative transport modes.

Response Regarding Housing

Having a safe, settled home is a fundamental building block of our health and wellbeing, whether residents own their home or live in social rented or private rented accommodation. The condition and nature of homes, including factors such as stability, space, tenure and cost, can have a big impact on people's lives, influencing physical and mental wellbeing and health [Hampshire Public Health Strategy 2023-2026](#). We support the proposal to develop a mix of housing tenures and types, including 40% of affordable housing, near community services and facilities.

It is noted that this is an outline application however the illustrative layouts raise certain health related comments, and we would hope that through any reserved matters application these could be considered and resolved.

We have concerns about the number of pedestrian vehicle conflict points created throughout the site. In the main this is caused by predominance of frontage parking and parking which crosses the pavement line. This design decision increases the dominance of the car and discourages activities such as walking, wheeling and cycling. We would suggest reviewing this approach so that parking becomes less dominant, and the built form helps to better define the street. Examples of how this can be achieved are set out under Building for Healthy Life and Streets for Healthy Life. A better range of parking options could be employed here to resolve this concern.

It is unclear from indicative plans whether there is any private amenity space for flats which we would recommend. Within the illustrative layout the space around larger blocks appears squeezed and the opportunity for creating this space also appears limited. Through lessons learned during Covid and to increase quality of people's living environments this should be reviewed. Ensuring this provision would increase opportunities for social connection and cohesion supporting improved mental wellbeing.

Public Health endorses the Building for a Healthy Life design tool for neighbourhoods, streets, homes and public spaces [Building for a Healthy Life](#). The design code is broken down into three headings, integrated neighbourhoods, distinctive places, and streets for all. We would recommend that this be considered to improve the design of the scheme moving through to reserved matters application stage.

Regarding street design it is unclear how these will work for outcomes set out with the LTP4 regarding healthy streets outcomes. We would urge the applicant to review this through reserved matters application and test against the 10 indicators set out within this approach [Healthy Streets | Making streets healthy places for everyone](#).

Response Regarding Access to the Site

The increased vehicle frequency and movement through the access road to the site should not result in a design that constrains or discourages walking, cycling, and wheeling opportunities. As this is a detailed matter within the application it is currently unclear how the route design helps with these aims. Clarity on the inclusion of continuous pavements, direct crossing points and side road cross overs should be set out within this application. It is felt that without design approaches like these the scheme will not seek to encourage or support walking, wheeling and cycling, this could lead to increased car use through the existing developments. This would support access to the Curlew Gardens bus stop, active travel routes and increased physical activity. Physical activity supports people to maintain a healthy body weight and is proven to help prevent and manage diseases such as heart, disease, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers [Physical activity \(who.int\)](#).

With respect to integrated neighbourhoods, it is unclear within the application whether the access route will be adjusted to mitigate air and noise pollution for existing residents to the southeastern edge of the proposed development. We also feel it would be beneficial if the application could better illustrate whether the existing roads (Powell Drive and Merritt Way) encourage cycling and walking for existing residents.

Response Regarding Walking, Wheeling and Cycling

It is unclear why the cycling/wheeling/walking route between the two housing parcels awkwardly doglegs. If there isn't a landscape constraint, then it is suggested that the cycle path between the two housing sites could be made into a more direct route. In addition, we also recommend that there are strong cycle links to and from the site which need to be better defined and carried through to final reserved matters design.

Several of the walking, wheeling and cycling routes within the site are currently marked as indicative, however we feel that as access is a detailed matter that these routes should hold the same weight of consideration and certainty as vehicular access. The development should follow priority parameters set out in Hampshire's [Local Transport Plan 4](#) (LTP4) and those set out within Manual for Streets. This would mean access for modes other than vehicles are considered as the highest priority. This would also enable the more comprehensive consideration of the healthy streets approach. As set out within the LTP4 this puts people who are walking, wheeling and cycling as the priority and supports active travel, physical activity, social cohesion, and improved mental health, as well as other benefits such as reductions in air and noise pollution and economic benefits to local streets [What is Healthy Streets? — Healthy Streets](#).

We have concerns that some of the indicative footpaths are not clearly visible, lack natural surveillance and overlooking. It is suggested through the reserved matter proposal that the position and lighting of these indicative footpaths within the scheme is reviewed. Caution is also expressed where footpaths provide a more direct link than the cycle route and ensuring that designs maybe allow for all users rather than create competing demand. The existing footpath links to the north of the site could be made safer using balconies and active frontages in the adjacent corner housing plots.

It is unclear how inclusive the proposed walking wheeling and cycling access to the northern route is considered. As a route away from overlooking, will any provision be made for this such as lighting and improved accessibility for all users (routes from Reed Walk appear to be constrained by bollards). As above we feel this should form part of the access considerations within this application.

Response Regarding Green Space

We support the opportunities for access to green space including LEAP and LAPS. There are several opportunities taken around and within the development that are supported as beneficial for health and wellbeing. However, regarding inclusion we feel further consideration should be given to opportunities for older children and younger adults to access outdoor spaces. This should be made more prominent

within the scheme ambitions, the design and access statement and then reinforced through the reserved matters stage of the proposal. The ecological enhancement proposed will further support residents to engage with the outdoor spaces and natural environment. Access to, and engagement with, the greenspace and natural environment is associated with numerous positive physical and mental health outcomes and can support a reduction in health inequalities.

Public Health England outlines four broad ways in which greenspace may be linked to positive health outcomes. These include promoting healthier behaviours, such as physical activity and active travel, enabling greater social cohesion giving people a sense of familiarity, supporting the development of skills and capabilities, such as increased concentration, and mediating potential harms, for example reducing exposure to air pollution. [Improving access to greenspace: 2020 review \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781212/improving-access-to-greenspace-2020-review.pdf). Greenspace also supports better mental health through reducing feelings of stress and anger, reducing loneliness, and improving confidence and self-esteem [How nature benefits mental health - Mind, Urban green spaces and health: A review of evidence \(World Health Organisation\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/nature-and-mental-health).

Response Regarding Parking

The position of large parking courts at the rear of properties causes some concerns. The indicative scheme doesn't illustrate how these would be actively overlooked and made to feel safe. Without this assurance the scheme is likely to push parking on to adjacent and surrounding streets. If the parking spaces are thought of as unsafe by residents, it is likely the parking will occur on the pavement which then negatively impacts, walking, cycling, and wheeling opportunities. Small changes to the development layout could be made to address this issue and it would be important to update that the illustrative layout still works with this approach.

Response Regarding Proposed Orchard

We strongly support the proposed orchard and would encourage this be carried through to the final reserved matters design. It could also be enhanced with the consideration of allotment space within the development. The area adjacent to the site (Wecock) is in decile 1 for the food insecurity index meaning this area is at highest risk for food insecurity [Hampshire JSNA](https://www.hampshirejsna.org.uk/).

The Public Health Team hopes that the following comments help both authorities in the determination of this application. Specifically, regarding the matters around access and movement but also to matters where the illustrative scheme needs demonstrate that any health and wellbeing the changes can be accommodated within the layouts.