

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Thursday, 16 December 2021 (completed on Tuesday, 21 December 2021)

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Councillors: Simon Speller (Chair), Maureen McKay (Vice-Chair), Adrian Brown, Teresa Callaghan, Matt Creasey, Michael Downing, Graham Lawrence CC, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Adam Mitchell CC, Graham Snell and Tom Wren (16 December meeting only).

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.30pm (on 16 December 2021, finishing at 10.12pm)
End Time: 8.50pm (on 21 December 2021, having re-started at 6.30pm)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Myla Arceno, Doug Bainbridge and Jody Hanafin.

Councillor Adam Mitchell declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of application 21/00356/FPM as he held shares in Persimmon Homes Limited, one of the applicants who proposed to develop the site. He chose to remain in the meeting, declaring that he would keep an open-mind during the presentations and debate on the application.

Councillor Tom Wren was present for the meeting on 16 December 2021, but submitted his apologies for absence for the re-convened meeting on 21 December 2021. Councillor Adrian Brown arrived late at the re-convened meeting on 21 December 2021.

2 21/00356/FPM - LAND TO THE WEST OF STEVENAGE

The Committee considered a hybrid application regarding the following:

Full planning permission for the erection of 390 dwellings (including 117 affordable dwellings and 4 self-build plots), a cricket pitch and/or football pitches with temporary community shop (Use Class E/F2), public open space and amenity space (including children's play), associated landscaping and ecological enhancements, internal highways, parking, footpaths, cycleways, drainage, utilities, service infrastructure, acoustic bunding and fencing, improvements to existing access routes across A1(M) via Six Hills Way, Bessemer Drive, Redcar Drive and Meadway (including a new underpass at Meadway and associated accommodation/engineering works) and highway improvements along Chadwell Road.

Outline planning permission for up to 1,110 dwelling units (including 30% affordable

housing and self-build plots), principal employment area (up to 10,000 sq.m Use Class E(g) space), a residential care home (up to 72 beds) and up to 400sq.m Use Class E space, a mixed use local centre (Use Class C3 and up to 900 sq.m of Use Class E/F2 Space), a neighbourhood square (including mobility hub and up to 150 sq.m of Use E/F2 Space), a primary school (up to 3FE), a mobility hub with flexible community workspace adjacent to the Meadway underpass, a pavilion and mobility hub adjacent to the cricket and/or football pitches, public open space and amenity space (including children's play), sport facilities (including informal multi-use games area), associated landscaping and ecological enhancement works, acoustic bunding and fencing, internal highways, parking, footpaths, cycleways, drainage, utilities, service infrastructure and future connections into safeguarded land in North Hertfordshire, and a new car park and pavilion at Meadway Playing Fields (with some matters reserved). This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation) introduced the item. He stated that development on the West of Stevenage site had been mooted for decades. The Committee would be focussing on the application for development within the SBC boundary.

The Assistant Director (Planning & Regulation) advised that there were two major factors to take into consideration, firstly the importance of the decision in terms of the details of design of a sustainable and connected new neighbourhood for the town (paying heed to the New Town Principles of urban design); and secondly the Council's 5 year land supply and its importance in being able to deliver the Stevenage Local Plan (the application was for 1,500 units, a fifth of the Local Plan's allocation for housing provision).

Introductory Presentation

The Development Manager gave a slide presentation (including site photographs and plans) in respect of the outline application; Local Plan and historical policies; sustainable new neighbourhood; linkages to the existing town; consultation responses; Meadway/Bessemer Road changes; and links to NHDC plans for potential development across the Borough boundary.

The Development Manager outlined the Masterplan for the site, and confirmed that the application site was outside the Green Belt. In terms of the representations regarding bridleways, he stated that a policy LT23 of the former Local Plan regarding the protection of horse/pony routes had been removed from the latest Local Plan during its adoption. He explained that the reason for the removal of this policy was due to the fact that Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) had the responsibility for maintenance of the Public Rights of Way Network (including footpaths and bridleways) across the county. The Countryside Rights of Way Officer at HCC had been involved in the elements of the application that related to the bridleways that ran through the site.

The Development Manager referred to the joint site vision of West Stevenage and drew attention to the various parameter plans for the development, including Land Use; Access and Movement; Building Heights; Green Infrastructure; and Phasing

Plan. He then referred to what was included in the outline application for the North, Central and South character areas of the site (landscaping, routes, green/woodland/community areas, residential typology, Meadway arrival area, employment area, and Meadway and Bessemer Drive underpass improvement proposals).

The Chair invited Jennifer Gray, an objector to the application representing the equestrian community, to address the Committee. Jennifer made the following comments:

- in excess of 220 riders and carriage drivers in the local area used the footpath/bridleway network, ranging from children to the over 60's, not to mention walkers, runners and cyclists;
- horses needed to be exercised in all four gaits (walk, trot, canter and gallop);
- removal of Bridleway 035 – the application stated “re-provided” to the south, but this would take riders through the estate rather than a field, which she considered was unacceptable as it pushed riders onto roads, limiting horses to walk/trot rather than canter/gallop;
- UCR1 – the section through the development was listed for a change in surface material, again limiting the horses' gait. In addition, it was listed that a section of this route would be made pedestrians/cyclists only, on a path regularly used by horse riders. She felt that this route should be classified as a restricted byway with a British Horse Society approved surface to allow it to be used safely by horse riders along its entire length;
- Bridleway 098 – similar issues to those in respect of UCR1;
- Meadway (access from the east to the west of the A1(M)) – the existing underpass would be made pedestrians/cyclists only, forcing horse and carriage riders to use the new roadway, which would be dangerous. The planned cycle/pedestrian path should also be made a restricted byway with a British Horse Society approved surface to allow it to be used safely by horse riders and carriage drivers and added to the Definitive Map;
- Covid-19 had increased the use of the application site area not only by horse riders, but also runners, walkers and cyclists;
- Horse riders see a wide range of wildlife in the area, which is more scared by walkers and runners than it was by horse riders; and
- Clarification that Bridleway 024, UCR 1 and Bridleway 038 ran the length of the west side of the development.

If the application was granted planning permission, Jennifer considered that the following action should be carried out:

- all work on rights of way should be completed before building work commenced, with consultation with the British Horse Society to ensure the correct surfaces were used and that both sides of the bridleways were correctly fenced with post and rail fencing and Equi-fencing attached to it. This would be to keep horse riders and dogs safe from entering the site along clearly defined routes. No barbed wire or metal stake fencing should be used;
- the surfaces should not be damaged and no debris disposed on them by the contractors. Any damage caused should be immediately repaired by the

- developers;
- the developers should consult the Access Department of Hertfordshire County Council and British Horse Society to agree on the correct fencing and surfaces for the bridleways, byways and unclassified roads;
 - the correct crossings were put in place where the paths crossed roads to new roads (ie. Pegasus specification crossings to allow horse riders, carriage drivers, walkers and cyclists to cross safely);
 - Horse warning signs need to be placed at points where construction traffic crossed any of the bridleways, byways or unclassified roads;
 - Crossing point surfaces should be maintained to allow continued access and re-instated as soon as construction had been completed and fencing replaced;
 - Creation by the developers of a formal documented system to ensure that all contractors, sub-contractors and delivery vehicles were made aware that horse riders used the bridleways, byways and unclassified roads, as well as local roads to gain access to them, and were instructed to take great care when entering or leaving the site and on local roads; and
 - Creation by the developers of a documented system to ensure that operators of heavy machinery and vehicles were instructed to take great care when operating them and to turn them off when passed by horse riders and carriage drivers.

The Chair thanked Jennifer for her presentation, and invited Mr James Delafield (from Carter Jonas), the applicants' Planning Agent, to address the Committee.

Mr Delafield advised that the application was highly significant, as it was the largest strategic development site in the adopted Stevenage Local Plan. The officer report contained a rigorous and thorough assessment of the application against Local Plan policies, clearly demonstrating how it met the requirements of the site allocation policy HO2. The conclusions reached were all soundly based on technical evidence and further agreements reached on appropriate mitigation measures.

Mr Delafield summarised the numerous and substantial planning benefits arising from the proposals as follows:

- the development was a fundamental element of the future 5 year housing land supply for the town, with the anticipated delivery of Phase 1 by 2026 crucial to meeting the 5 year requirement;
- a wide range of properties would be provided, including self-build plots, aspirational homes, and a policy compliant level of 30% affordable homes;
- a significant number of local jobs would be created during the construction period and once operational through the provision of an employment area, and a through a mix of uses proposed in the Neighbourhood Centre;
- a comprehensive package of measures had been incorporated to achieve an ambitious shift towards sustainable modes of transport;
- the development would provide access to a range of facilities to support residents' day-to-day needs;
- a considerable amount of open space would be provided across the development (almost 3 times the policy requirement) and in a variety of forms, so as to provide something for all generations; and
- the development would be a great place to live, with high quality and well-

designed buildings, public realm and landscaping.

Mr Delafield considered that the planning benefits taken together were strong material considerations for supporting a grant of planning permission.

Mr Delafield recognised that development on the scale proposed would cause some concern amongst the existing community. He hoped that those who had read the officer report and those viewing the meeting would be comforted by the work that had been undertaken by the applicants' team, in liaison with Planning Officers, to deliver a scheme which mitigated its impacts. He appreciated from the comments that the public Rights of Way network in the area was well used, particularly by horse riders. Although there were no policies in the Adopted Local Plan which required the upgrading and expansion of horse and pony routes, the development proposals did include a comprehensive and fully funded Rights of Way Improvement Plan, as outlined in Paragraph 7.7.23 of the officer report. This had been prepared in liaison with the HCC Rights of Way (RoW) Team. It was important to note that public Rights of Way across the development site, and proposed connections between, had been designed as multi-user routes that were aide and inviting to walkers, cyclists and equestrian users, in accordance with specifications provided by the HCC RoW Team. The existing network would also be fully protected during the construction period by way of a Construction Traffic Management Plan to be secured via condition.

Mr Delafield hoped that Members had found his presentation to be a useful introduction to the proposals contained in the application.

The Chair thanked Mr Delafield for his presentation.

In response to Members' questions, Officers advised as follows:

- the public realm/open space areas of the site would be owned and maintained by a Private Management Company, secured as part of the Section 106 Agreement;
- most of the public objections related to an earlier scheme. The latest scheme was much improved and the design of the various buildings had been supported by a professional team of urban designers, who were fully conversant with the New Town principles of design.

Applicants' Presentation

Mr Jonathan Pillow (Taylor Wimpey) advised that, as applicants, they were mindful of Stevenage's New Town history. The application aimed to complement the existing built form of the town. The development would comprise green spaces, with a priority on cycling, walking and pedestrianised centres with bus connectivity. They had worked with HCC to provide 3 mobility hubs to offer electric cycle hire and charging and a connected bus service, integrating into the path network, thereby reducing the need to travel by car and promoting sustainable modes of transport.

Mr Pillow explained that multi-use green ways would be provided around the site for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, and offering 2km and 5km park runs to connect into the surrounding countryside. Three larger open spaces would be

provided which including sporting activities, such as football and cricket, as well as fetes, fairs, picnics and other leisure activities. These would be complemented by a further network of green spaces, including trim trails and play equipment in close proximity to most households.

Mr Pillow stated that the Neighbourhood Centre would provide retail, primary school, communal and care facilities that would come together around a pedestrianised square, accessible from the path network, mobility hubs and bus stops, whilst connecting into the green central space and the wider countryside. He added that the landscape-led approach embodied the key place-making principles set out in the National Design Guide and Design Code.

In terms of climate change, Mr Pillow advised that the applicants' submitted energy statement committed them to exceeding the Building Regulations for the homes, which demonstrated carbon reductions of up to 70% by using renewable alternatives. Taylor Wimpey was also committed to a carbon reduction of 43%, and would be striving to reach net zero. They had also published an Environmental Strategy which meant none of the homes having gas boilers from 2025 onwards; reducing emissions from the homes by 75% by 2030; using only 100% green-sourced electricity; and ensuring that 90% of construction waste was recycled. The Strategy also committed to the provision of electric vehicle charging points in all homes and communal areas, as well as enhanced landscape provision and biodiversity.

In relation to delivery, Mr Pillow commented that the phasing of the site had been designed to ensure that both access points came forward in Phase 1, leading to an early bus loop, whilst affordable and self-build homes were evenly distributed throughout the site. Affordable homes would be constructed to the same standards as the private dwellings, in order that they were fully integrated into the street scene.

Mr Pillow concluded by stating that the vision for the site had been agreed and approved by SBC, including a Framework Masterplan. The layout had been heavily scrutinised by Planning Officers and the Design Team. The applicants had worked alongside these officers, HCC officers and other statutory consultees to arrive at a policy-compliant scheme which had been supported by Homes England. The Section 106 Agreement was in draft form, which he hoped would be completed in the early part of 2022. He therefore asked the Committee to support the officers' recommendation to grant planning permission for the scheme.

Mr Simon Breen (Persimmon) advised that Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey were two of the three largest housebuilders in the UK. Persimmon were driven towards the provision of good quality and energy efficient homes to appeal to all levels of the housing market.

In terms of the current application, Mr Breen stated that the scheme had been based on strong design proposals, good quality mature and semi-mature landscaping, pedestrian friendly hard and soft landscape areas, as well providing an environment both internally and externally that was appealing to buyers and the wider community. Persimmon was constantly looking at ways to improve energy efficiency and, in terms of the Government's net zero carbon target coming into force in 2030, was

committed to delivering 70% carbon reduction in the application. He referred to 3 pilot projects built by Persimmon which were carbon neutral.

Mr Breen explained that vast majority of the scheme would be delivered post-2025, and hence most of the new homes would meet the Government's Future Homes Standards.

Mr Breen commented that Persimmon had an involvement with the West of Stevenage site since 1994. Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey were committed to the investment of millions of pounds in Stevenage over a 10 year period to deliver this project. The jobs created by the scheme, together with the financial contributions in the Section 106 Agreement, would be highly beneficial to the town and the Council.

Mr Breen advised that the application was the culmination of a lengthy pre-application process, including a series of landscape design workshops with Planning Officers and consultants. This had achieved a high level of design and landscape provision that would set the project apart from other schemes of this size.

Mr Breen commended Council officers for their support and enthusiasm for the development. The development proposals were policy-compliant, would deliver 30% affordable housing, a new school, employment space, local centre, care home, retail space and mobility hubs. He hoped that the Committee would support a grant of planning permission.

Mr James Harman (Omega Architects) gave a presentation in respect of an overview of the design process for the development. The presentation covered compliance of the application with the SBC Design Vision and Principles for the site; site topography and Public Rights of Way Plan; site connectivity (green corridors and key spaces); Landscape Strategy and route hierarchy; Framework Masterplan; North Area – settings and principles; North Area – Artist impressions; Central Area – settings and principles; Neighbourhood Centre; South Area – settings and principles; South Area – Artist impressions; Phase 1 of the project; South, Central and North Areas – Design Workshops and post-submission evolution; Character studies; and various character and appearance slides (Avenue, countryside edge, residential streets, High Street, green corridor, Community Green).

Mr Matt Stevens (Milestone Transport Planning Ltd.) gave a presentation regarding the mobility hubs serving the development, to be provided near the Meadway; at the Local Centre; and at the Community Pavilion. These mobility hubs facilitated additional and smarter travel choices, electric vehicles, bikes and buses, whilst integrating with other uses, and aligned with Stevenage as a sustainable travel town, as well as the HCC Local Transport Plan.

Environmental Impacts / Consultation responses

The Development Manager reported as follows:

- Natural England – no objections;
- AONB – not relevant;
- Biodiversity and archaeology – no concerns, Section 106 financial contribution

- and relevant conditions to be applied;
- Flooding – relevant conditions attached, no response as yet from the Local Lead Flooding Authority (HCC);
 - Site infrastructure – NHS/GP provision may be needed, requiring a Section 106 financial contribution;
 - Sport England – no objections;
 - Affordable Housing – policy compliant;
 - Education – a primary school to be delivered as part of the scheme. HCC had confirmed that there was no requirement for a secondary school;
 - Highways – the conditions to be imposed were flexible, allowing a comprehensive Public Rights of Way package to be delivered to ensure continued access for multi-users. The Construction Management Plan included a suite of measures aimed at protecting Public Rights of Way.

Detailed Plans – Phase 1

The Development Manager gave a slide presentation regarding the detailed Plans for Phase 1 of the development. He presented slides in respect of site layout; Housing mix and tenure; massing; road hierarchy; various street typologies; Phase 1 Character Areas; Building typology; parking strategies; materials; detailing; street furniture; boundary treatment; planting; surface materials; key buildings; materials strategy/plan; Bessemer Drive – arrival area; Avenue – appearance; High Street – appearance; Community Green – appearance; Cricket Pitch options (including ball striking radii); Green Corridor – appearance; Linear edge – appearance; Countryside edge – appearance; Residential Streets – appearance; Southern, Central and Northern parcels – street elevations; Self build plots/aspirational homes; Refuse Plans, Parking Plans, Tenure Plans and Boundary Plans – South, Central and North; House types – plans and elevations; Temporary shop; and Proposed landscape bund.

Indicative Landscape Plans – Phase 1

The Development Manager gave a slide presentation regarding indicative Landscape Plans for Phase 1 of the development. He presented slides in respect of the Landscape Layouts (South, Central and North areas; High Street area; Avenue Area; Community Green area; Parking Court area; Rural Edge areas; Residential area; Retention pond area; Southern edge area; Sustainable Transport Corridor area; Meadway Link Road areas 1 and 2; and Meadway/Redcar Drive area). He then presented a number of slides showing the hard landscape typology; play and exercise equipment typology; images of the Avenue, Countryside edge and swales; planting examples for the Rain gardens; images of the footpath and cycle corridors, the Community Green, and housing hard landscaping.

Highways and Connections

The Development Manager gave a slide presentation regarding Highways and Connections. He presented slides in respect of the Bessemer Drive access/Quiet Way; Proposed Footway/cycleway – Bessemer Drive; Signalised junction – Bessemer Drive/Gunnels Wood Road; and Meadway/Redcar Drive highway works.

In response to a Member's question regarding the level of public representations

concerning the impact of increased traffic (including construction traffic) on the A1(M) and at Junction 8 in particular, the Development Manager commented that the Traffic Modelling Assessment provided by the developers had shown that there would be a small amount of extra queuing at Junction 8. Highways England had raised no concerns, subject to mitigation measures relating to highway improvements to the Junction 8 roundabout, which would be expedited in conjunction with HCC Highways. As part of the suite of works proposed by the developer, a scheme of Active Travel Works would be carried out, including the provision of pedestrian and cycle routes to connect with the existing network; the bus loop within the site; and improvements to the Clovelly Road junction. The site had been designed to be as self-contained as possible, aimed at reducing the number of car journeys. A comprehensive Rights of Way Improvement Plan for the site had also been produced.

In view of the lateness of the hour and the unlikelihood that business would be completed, at 10.12pm, the Chair adjourned the meeting, and Members agreed that the Committee would re-convene at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 21 December 2021, in order to complete its determination of application 21/00356/FPM.

RE-CONVENED MEETING – 21 DECEMBER 2021

The Chair opened the re-convened meeting by inviting the Development Manager to give a brief resumé of the application.

The Development Manager referred to Addendum 2 which had been circulated to Members, which included a number of late representations and answers to a number of pre-submitted questions received from a Committee Member.

The Development Manager then gave a presentation providing an overview of the initial Committee meeting held on 16 December 2021.

The Chair invited the Member who had supplied the pre-submitted questions to respond to the answers given by the Development Manager. The comments made by the Member, together with officer replies, were as follows:

- Bus service concerns – the HCC Highways representative commented that the Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) would be tendering for a bus service with one bus servicing the initial Phase 1 of 390 homes, with a frequency of 20 minutes, and in subsequent phases two buses circulating through the site at any one time. The spine road within the development would be of sufficient width to accommodate any size of bus and Section 106 monies would be used to fund the service for a number of years. The PTU had advised that they saw no reason why bus companies would not wish to tender for the contract, in view of the initial Section 106 support funding, but also in the hope that in the fullness of time it would become a self-supporting and profitable venture;
- Primary School (would a 3 form entry size be sufficient?) – the HCC Education representative stated that a very sophisticated modelling tool would be used to assess the level of need for primary school places, taking into account the type, size and tenure of dwellings. The modelling for the application site showed that the peak limit for the school would be a 3 form entry. In the interim period before

the school became operational, there was sufficient surplus capacity in nearby primary schools; and

- Local Health Services (how could it be ensured that a new GP surgery was built) – the Development Manager advised that this would be difficult to enforce as it was within the control of the NHS. The Clinical Commissioning Group had indicated that they may take up the offer of a GP Surgery, and that it was certainly the preference of the developers that one was provided on the site. The area set aside for the surgery could be enlarged if required, and the developer was willing to work with the NHS to deliver the project. However, in a worst case scenario where the NHS did not wish for a surgery to be provided then a financial contribution would be triggered in the Section 106 Agreement towards the expansion of existing nearby GP surgeries.

The Chair invited questions from other Members, and officers responded as follows:

- Section 106 Agreement (reduction in level of financial contribution for NHS services) – the original figure was indicative as part of pre-application discussions. The latest figure was based on the housing mix set out in the submitted application. Any changes to the housing mix when Phase 2 came forward would be dealt with as part of the subsequent Reserved Matters application;
- Proposed Care Home (how did this fit into the Neighbourhood cluster in the development) – Policy HO2 in the Local Plan required that there should be provision for sheltered housing, but the make-up of such a facility would be determined by a commercial provider via the submission of a Reserved Matters application;
- Cricket Pitch (who would be responsible for its maintenance) – Policy HO2 of the Local Plan stated that sports facilities would be required on the site. The developers had carried out an evidence-based assessment which had demonstrated the need for an artificial cricket wicket, with future proofing for the addition of up to 8 further wickets. The land had been offered for the Council to maintain and manage, which would be achieved through a financial contribution to be agreed through the Section 106 Agreement. The area had been designed as a multi-functional space (including football pitches) and had been demonstrated as such to Sport England;
- Amenities (limited night time economy facilities in the application) – there was no Local Plan Policy requirement for such provision, although there was potential for an element of night time economy to be included in the proposed Neighbourhood Centre, which would form part of Phase 2 of the development;
- Policy regarding 30% tree canopy coverage on the site – the Local Plan review (due in 2023) would look at strengthening the policy regarding tree canopy coverage;
- Integration in terms of design of the heritage-type dwellings with the “high rise” flat blocks - the consultee comments on “high rise” was based on the former Masterplan for the site, which showed much taller flat blocks. The submitted application included a series of suburban-style 3 and 4 storey flat blocks as part of Phase 1, with the majority of heritage-type dwellings forming part of subsequent phases. Officers would work with the developers on this issue during future phases;
- Flooding/drainage concerns (Dyes Lane and adjacent to site boundary) – drainage ponds and drainage channels would be provided in the vicinity of Dyes

- Lane and across the overall site;
- Adjacent Gypsy/Traveller site – landscaping buffers would be constructed on the border between the employment element of the application site and the Gypsy/Traveller site. There would be a further landscape buffer and open space area between the Primary School and Gypsy/Traveller site. Much of this detail would form part of the future Reserved Matters application. The users of the Gypsy/Traveller site had been consulted on the plans by the Police Community and HCC Liaison Officers, and no concerns had been fed back to Planning Officers. As part of the Construction Management Plan, there would be continued highway access to the Gypsy/Traveller site;
 - Fire Hydrants condition – this was set out in proposed Condition 61 in the report; and
 - Catchment area for potential occupiers of residential units – it was expected that the majority (80-85%) of occupiers would come from within a 10 mile radius of the site, especially the occupiers of the affordable housing which was driven by local need based on SBC's Housing Register.

Phase 1 – Full Permission element of application

The Development Manager gave a fuller slide presentation of the detailed plans for Phase 1 of the development, as previously presented to the Committee on 16 December 2021.

In reply to a number of Members' questions, the Development Manager commented as follows:

- Disabled units – there were no bungalows to be constructed as part of the application, but some dwellings would be designed for disabled use, including a number of units which would be 50% adaptable for use by disabled persons;
- Access roads – both of these (through Meadway and Bessemer Drive) would be constructed as part of Phase 1 of the scheme;
- Parking standards – the development provided for approximately one parking space per bedroom, through a mixture of communal parking areas, garages and driveways. There was also on-street visitor parking in the communal green/cricket pitch area and some unallocated spaces would be provided across the site;
- Speed bumps – most of the crossing points in the development were at level, including the major junctions;
- Play/open spaces – there were mechanisms in the Section 106 Agreement to secure the provision and management of these areas as play/open spaces; and
- Bus turning circle – once the whole scheme was completed, buses would run in a loop through the site from the Meadway access to the Bessemer Drive access. In Phase 1, the buses would enter the site through Bessemer Drive, and there would be a temporary turning area to allow buses to egress the site via Bessemer Drive.

A number of Members were of the opinion that the application presented a well thought out, good quality scheme, which would also provide improved access to the countryside on the western side of the A1(M). Whilst Members appreciated the loss of countryside, they also acknowledged that the site was no longer afforded Green Belt protection.

In summing up the application, the Development Manager confirmed that the recommendation in the report should be amended to clarify that the application sought full permission for Phase 1 and outline permission for the remainder of the development.

Upon the recommendations being put to the vote, it was

It was **RESOLVED** that, subject to the applicant having first entered into a Section 106 agreement as set out in Paragraph 9.1 of the report, and to the delegated powers being given to the Assistant Director (Regulation) in consultation with the Chair of the Planning & Development Committee set out in Paragraph 9.2 of the report (and regarding the Lead Local Flood Authority in the second addendum report), application 21/00356/FPM be granted outline and full planning permission, as per the draft conditions listed in the report, together with the additional draft conditions listed in the first addendum report, and inclusive of the following additional Section 106 items and further additional draft conditions:

Additional Section 106 items (with delegated powers being given to the Assistant Director (Regulation) in consultation with the Chair of the Planning & Development Committee to secure these measures)

- Mitigation measures to manage fly tipping in Dyes Lane, as requested by the Council's Community Safety Manager; and
- A financial contribution of approximately £396,536 for extra capacity for the health and emergency service, as requested by the East of England Ambulance Service.

Further additional draft conditions

92. At least 50% of the residential units shall be Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings in accordance with Policy HO11 of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2019).
93. Prior to the commencement of development (excluding operations consisting of site clearance, demolition, earthworks, archaeological investigations, investigations for assessing ground conditions, remedial work in respect of any contamination or other adverse ground conditions, diversion and laying of services, erection of any temporary means of enclosure, and the temporary display of site notices or advertisements) details of mitigation measures to reduce the potential recreational pressures on the Knebworth Woods SSSI shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Natural England. The approved mitigation measures shall be put in place prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted.

3 URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None.

4 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

5 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR