



East Suffolk House, Riduna Park, Station Road,
Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP12 1RT

Planning Committee South

Members:

Councillor Debbie McCallum (Chairman)
Councillor Tony Fryatt (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Melissa Allen
Councillor Stuart Bird
Councillor Chris Blundell
Councillor Tony Cooper
Councillor Mike Deacon
Councillor Colin Hedgley
Councillor Kay Yule

Members are invited to a **Meeting of the Planning Committee South**
to be held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Melton
on **Tuesday, 22 October 2019 at 2:00 pm**

An Agenda is set out below.

Part One – Open to the Public

Pages

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

2 Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers are invited to make any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Local Non-Pecuniary Interests that they may have in relation to items on the Agenda and are also reminded to make any declarations at any stage during the Meeting if it becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is considered.

3 Declarations of Lobbying and Responses to Lobbying

To receive any Declarations of Lobbying in respect of any item on the agenda and also declarations of any response to that lobbying.

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4	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 September 2019	1 - 8
5	East Suffolk Enforcement Action - Case Update ES/0176 Report of the Head of Planning and Coastal Management	9 - 24
6	DC/19/2641/FUL - Former Council Offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge, IP12 1AU ES/0178 Report of the Head of Planning and Coastal Management	25 - 145
7	DC/19/3098/COU - The Firs, The Street, Hacheston, Woodbridge, IP13 0DR ES/0179 Report of the Head of Planning and Coastal Management	146 - 154
8	DC/19/2700/FUL - Croft Cottage, Lower Street, Great Bealings, IP13 6NH ES/0180 Report of the Head of Planning and Coastal Management	155 - 164

Part Two – Exempt/Confidential

Pages

There are no Exempt or Confidential items for this Agenda.

Close



Stephen Baker, Chief Executive

Speaking at Planning Committee Meetings

Interested parties who wish to speak will be able to register to do so, using an online form. Registration may take place on the day that the reports for the scheduled meeting are published on the Council's website, until 5.00pm on the day prior to the scheduled meeting.

To register to speak at a Planning Committee, please visit

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/planning-committee/> to complete the online registration form. Please contact the Customer Services Team on 03330 162 000 if you have any queries regarding the completion of the form.

Interested parties permitted to speak on an application are a representative of Town / Parish Council or Parish Meeting, the applicant or representative, an objector, and the relevant ward Members. Interested parties will be given a maximum of three minutes to speak and the intention is that only one person would speak from each of the above parties.

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Minutes of a Meeting of the **Planning Committee South** held in the Deben Conference Room, East Suffolk House, Melton on **Tuesday 24 September 2019 at 2 pm**

Members of the Committee present:

Councillor Melissa Allen, Councillor Stuart Bird, Councillor Chris Blundell, Councillor Mike Deacon, Councillor Tony Fryatt, Councillor Colin Hedgley, Councillor Debbie McCallum, Councillor Kay Yule

Officers present: Katherine Abbott (Democratic Services Officer), Joe Blackmore (Senior Planning and Enforcement Officer), Katherine Scott (Development Management Team Leader)

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Tony Cooper. Councillor Paul Ashdown acted as Substitute.

2 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Melissa Allen declared a Local Non-Pecuniary Interest with regard to item 7 - Land adjacent 20 Emerald Close, Kesgrave - as she was acquainted with the landowner.

3 Declarations of Lobbying and Responses to Lobbying

Councillors Melissa Allen, Stuart Bird, Mike Deacon, Tony Fryatt, Colin Hedgley, Debbie McCallum and Key Yule made Declarations of Lobbying with regard to item 7 - Land adjacent Emerald Close, Kesgrave - and stated that they had either acknowledged receipt of correspondence only or sent no reply.

4 Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 August 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

5 East Suffolk Enforcement Action - Case Update

The Planning Committee South received report **ES/0144** by the Head of Planning and Coastal Management. The report provided a summary of the status of all outstanding cases where enforcement action had been sanctioned under delegated powers; the report referred to sixteen such cases.

The Chairman invited questions.

A member of the Committee asked for an update on the enforcement case related to the storage of vehicles at Top Street, Martlesham. The Development Management Team Leader reported that an enforcement appeal for this matter had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in late May; therefore, any further enforcement action was on hold pending the result of that appeal process.

Another member of the Committee referred to an enforcement case in his Ward but not included within the Committee's report. The Development Management Team Leader clarified that the report detailed those cases where formal enforcement action was in process; she undertook to look in to the matter within the Councillor's Ward and to provide an update outside of the Meeting.

There being no further questions, the Chairman moved to the recommendation. The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Hedgley, seconded by Councillor Deacon and by unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the report on outstanding enforcement cases up to 22 August 2019 be received.

6 DC/19/2065/FUL - Land at Waldringfield Golf Club, Newbourne Road, Waldringfield, IP12 4PT

The Committee was informed by the Chairman that this item, **ES/0145**, had been withdrawn from the Agenda.

7 DC/19/0438/FUL - Land Adjacent 20 Emerald Close, Kesgrave

The Planning Committee South received report **ES/0146** by the Head of Planning and Coastal Management. The report was presented by the Case Officer.

The application sought full planning permission for the erection of a dwelling and a garage on land adjacent to 20 Emerald Close, Kesgrave and had been forwarded to the Committee by the Referral Panel. The Referral Panel had considered the application because the Officers' recommendation for refusal was contrary to the recommendation of the Town Council. The Case Officer considered the proposed dwelling to be the second phase of the existing residential development at Emerald Close and that this would bring the total number of dwellings at the development to ten, from nine. The Committee was reminded that developments of ten or more houses should include a provision for affordable housing at a ratio of 1 in 3 and , in exceptional circumstances, a commuted sum to fund the provision of affordable housing at a different site in the same area might be acceptable. The Case Officer stated that the application would not provide an on-site affordable home and that a planning obligation to deliver an appropriate commuted sum had neither been provided or agreed with the Council. He therefore advised the Committee that the application was contrary to the strategic objectives of policies SP2 (Housing Numbers and Distribution) and DM2 (Affordable Housing on Residential Sites) which sought to deliver the housing types and tenure of accommodation required to meet the District's

needs. In addition, the application was contrary to the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework for major housing development to deliver affordable homes.

The Chairman invited questions of the Case Officer.

A member of the Committee asked about the legal 'test' of what constituted a second phase of a development, if there was a time limit for second phases of existing residential developments, for clarity about the land's ownership and how this might impact on this being assessed as a second phase, or not. The Case Officer replied that, in this case, the first phase of the residential development's building works remained on-going and so, in practice, the application would be considered to be a second phase. He added that case law was clear on what constituted a second phase, or not, but acknowledged that it was for the Committee to make a subjective judgement on the circumstances of the application before it. The Case Officer added that the ownership of the land had not changed hands since the submission of a previous planning application in 2018 which had sought to demolish an existing dwelling at 191 Main Road (now 20 Emerald Close) to enable the construction of one replacement dwelling; that application had been refused and the Committee was referred to paragraph 3.2 of the report for the detailed reasons for that determination. It was noted that whilst the land remained in the same ownership the current application had been submitted by a different applicant to the earlier application.

There being no further questions, the Chairman moved to debate.

A member of the Committee referred to correspondence from the residents of Emerald Close which indicated that they perceived the application to be part of the main development and not a second phase. The Case Officer summarised two additional letters of support which had been received since the publication of the Committee's papers. The member of the Committee added that the applicant had not adhered to the requirement for the provision of affordable housing. Another member of the Committee agreed that the requirement for affordable homes had not been met by the applicant and added that, to approve the application, would not only be contrary to policies and case law but set a precedence. Several other members supported the Officers' recommendation and concurred with the earlier comments that the Council's policies be upheld.

The Chairman spoke briefly, as Ward Member. She said that the site had been the subject of several planning applications and that, whilst the application had not received objections, there was a wish, locally, to have the matter concluded.

The Chairman moved to the recommendation which was proposed by Councillor Blundell, seconded by Councillor Deacon and by majority vote (there being one abstention) it was

RESOLVED

That the Application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. The proposed site was in the same ownership as the existing development on land at Emerald Close and, because of the access road arrangement and the way the properties were oriented around it, the proposed development of the site - in combination with the existing development - would form one planning unit. It would clearly read as a single development and the proposal was therefore a second phase of the existing development on land at Emerald Close. This second phase would take the total number of dwellings across the development from nine to ten. In this regard, the proposal failed to satisfy the requirements of policies SP3 and DM2 through its inadequate affordable housing provision and no planning obligation has been provided to deliver an appropriate commuted sum to fund provision of affordable housing at a different site within the same area.

The development proposal was, therefore, contrary to policies SP3 (New Homes) and DM2 (Affordable Housing on Residential Sites) of the East Suffolk Council (Suffolk Coastal) District Local Plan (Development Plan Document) July 2013.

2. The application site fell within 13km of three designated European Sites: the Deben Estuary SPA/Ramsar Site; the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA/Ramsar Site; and the Sandlings SPA.

The Suffolk Recreation Avoidance Mitigation Strategy ("Suffolk RAMS") identifies that new housing development within a 13km zone of influence ("ZOI") of any designated European site in Suffolk will have a likely significant effect on the interest features of those sites through increased recreational pressure, both alone and in-combination with other housing in the ZOI. To mitigate this, a per-dwelling financial contribution of £321.22 was required to fund the Suffolk RAMS. No planning obligation had been submitted with the application to deliver this financial contribution and, therefore, the Local Planning Authority could not conclude 'no likely significant effects' arising from the development proposal on the aforementioned European sites.

The proposal was therefore contrary to the objectives of Development Plan policies SP14 and DM27(i) (Biodiversity and Geodiversity); and SSP32 (Visitor Management of European Sites) - which sought to protect designated sites in accordance with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

8 DC/19/2760/COU - 19 & 21 Thoroughfare, Woodbridge, IP12 1AA

The Planning Committee South received report **ES/0147** by the Head of Planning and Coastal Management. The report was presented by the Development Management Team Leader.

The application sought planning permission for a change of use from A1 (Retail) to A3 (Restaurant), along with some external alterations and new signage, at 19 and 21 Thoroughfare, Woodbridge. The Development Management Team Leader, in summarising the report within her presentation, advised that the associated internal alterations would be considered later in the meeting as part of an associated application for Listed Building Consent (ES/0148 referred). Therefore, the presentation would summarise both reports (ES/0147 and ES/0148) for the Committee's ease and completeness. However, the Chairman reminded the Committee that the recommendations within the two reports would be considered separately.

The application was before the Committee as it was contrary to 'saved' Policy AP257 (Woodbridge Town Centre: Prime shopping area) which sought to resist changes of use from retail to non-retail at ground level within the High Street. The Development Management Team Leader stated that this policy was considered to be out of date in light of the evolving function of town centres and against the current National Planning Policy Framework and other policies within the adopted and emerging Local Plan. She continued that Officers considered the application to enhance Woodbridge town centre through the prolonging of its vitality and viability as well as the increased employment within the local economy. The Committee was referred to the proposed physical internal and external changes which Officers considered to both protect and enhance the special interest of the listed building and the Conservation Area. It was further considered that the nature of the site's current use, including the preparation and sale of hot food and the cafe at 21 Thoroughfare, would not result in adverse impact on neighbouring properties. The Committee was referred to the detail of the proposed internal and external physical alterations as detailed at paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 of ES/0148 which were not considered to harm the character or historic fabric of the building.

The Chairman invited questions of the Officer.

A member of the Committee, also the Ward Member, referred to the proposed condition related to working hours at the premises and asked if there was the possibility of a request for these to be extended. The Development Management Team Leader replied that if the premises wished to go beyond the stated hours, this would need to be formally agreed with the Council.

There being no further questions or matters raised for debate, the Chairman moved to the recommendations which was proposed by Councillor Yule, seconded by Councillor Ashdown and by unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following approved drawings:

- A02-09A (Proposed plan and elevations);
- 19/11158-03 B (Proposed ground floor plan sections and details);
- A01-01 (Location plan);
- A02-08 (Existing plans and elevations).

Reason: For avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved

3. The working hours in connection with the use hereby permitted, shall not be other than between 7am and 6pm daily, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and the protection of the local environment.

4. Proper facilities shall be provided for the storage and disposal of waste material. Such facilities should totally enclose and adequately protect all commercial waste from insect and rodent infestation.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and the protection of the local environment.

5. Prior to the installation of any plant or machinery (e.g. compressors, extractor systems, fans, pumps, air conditioning plant or refrigeration plant) a Noise Assessment based on BS4142:2014 shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The report should include information on all proposed plant and machinery based on a rating level (LAeq) of at least 5dB below the typical background (LA90). Where the rating level cannot be achieved, proposed noise mitigation measures should be explained and the achievable noise level should be identified and justified.

Reason: To avoid noise nuisance in the interests of residential amenity

6. All construction activities, including demolition and deliveries/collections to and from site will only take place within the following hours unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority:

- Monday - Friday: 7.30am - 18.00pm;
- Saturday : 8:00am - 13.00pm;
- Sundays/Bank Holidays: None.

Reason: To avoid noise nuisance in the interests of residential amenity

7. Prior to the installation of any plant or machinery (e.g. compressors, extractor systems, fans, pumps, air conditioning plant or refrigeration plant) an Odour Assessment shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The report should detail proposed measures to ensure that neighbouring residential properties are not adversely affected by odour from any proposed kitchen extract system. The report shall specifically make reference to:

- i) The proposed filtration plant;
- ii) Its ducted route through the building, and;
- iii) Its final discharge point [1 metre above roof level].

The methods proposed should be in accordance with the latest guidance e.g. Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems-An update to the 2004 report prepared by NETCEN for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Only the approved scheme shall be installed at the premises, be fully functional prior to the first operation of the business, and be retained thereafter.

Reason: To avoid odour nuisance in the interests of residential amenity.

9 DC/19/2761/LBC - 19 & 21 Thoroughfare, Woodbridge, IP12 1AA

The Planning Committee received report **ES/0148**, by the Head of Planning and Coastal Management, and presented by the Development Management Team Leader. The Development Management Team Leader, in summarising the report within her presentation, also referred to the earlier agenda item and the report ES/0147. The minute at item 8, above, also refers.

There were no additional questions.

The Chairman invited debate. A member of the Committee, also the Ward Member, said she considered the proposed internal and external physical alterations to be restrained, sympathetic and an enhancement to the existing building.

The Chairman moved to the recommendation which was proposed by Councillor Hedgley, seconded by Councillor Ashdown and by unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 18 of the Act (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following approved drawings:

- A02-09A (Proposed plan and elevations);
- 19/11158-03 B (Proposed ground floor plan sections and details);
- A01-01 (Location plan);
- A02-08 (Existing plans and elevations).

Reason: For avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. All construction activities, including demolition and deliveries/collections to and from site will only take place within the following hours unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority:

- Monday - Friday: 7.30am - 18.00pm;
- Saturday : 8:00am - 13.00pm;
- Sundays/Bank Holidays: None.

Reason: To avoid noise nuisance in the interests of residential amenity.

4. Prior to any works being undertaken confirmation of how the approved lettering to the fascia sign will be applied shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

5. Notwithstanding the details hereby approved, no development shall commence until a vertical cross-section through the area of the new shopfront to show the stall-riser, glazing and fascia sign and all materials, including tiles has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved details shall be implemented in their entirety. Cross-sections shall show the window frames, glazing bars, roof verge details and the dormer cheek width/detailing.

Reason: To ensure the development will not harm the architectural and/or historic character of the existing building.

6. No building work shall commence until details of the following have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority:

- Engineering details demonstrating capacity for the removal of the ground floor wall between no.19 and no.21;
- Details of the new raised ground floor platform, including materials, construction and method;
- Clarification that level access for wheelchair users and those with mobility will be retained/provided;
- Details of drainage and ventilation to serve new W.C, including materials and method statement;
- Details of rear access door including appearance, materials and ironmongery.

Thereafter, all work must be carried out using the approved materials and in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that any new detailing and materials will not harm the traditional/historic character of the building as the application does not include the necessary details for consideration.

The Meeting concluded at 2:40 pm

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Chairman

PLANNING COMMITTEE SOUTH

Title of Report:

East Suffolk Enforcement Action– Case Update

Meeting Date

22 October 2019

Report Author and Tel No

Mia Glass

01502 523081

Is the report Open or Exempt?

Open

REPORT

The attached is a summary of the status of all outstanding enforcement cases for East Suffolk Council where enforcement action has either been sanctioned under delegated powers or through the Committee up until 23 September 2019. At present there are 15 such cases.

Information on all cases has been updated at the time of preparing the report such that the last bullet point in the status column shows the position at that time. Officers will provide a further verbal update should the situation have changed for any of the cases.

Members will note that where Enforcement action has been authorised the Councils Solicitor shall be instructed accordingly, but the speed of delivery of response may be affected by factors which are outside of the control of the Enforcement Service.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report concerning Outstanding Enforcement matters up to 23 September 2019 be received and noted.

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
2008/0193	17/09/2008	North	25 Kessingland Cottages, Rider Haggard Lane, Kessingland	Breach of Condition Unauthorised use of chalet as main or sole residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breach of Condition Notice • Compliance expired following extension of time • Further consideration by Service Manager and Legal • See Enforcement Notice ref 2008/004 for further information – committee aware of personal circumstances of occupants • Officers, seniors and legal held meeting, 23/01/2019 to discuss the options available to move forward with the case. • Contact made with occupants on 6 February 2019 and legal advice been sought on progressing the case. • Further information being gathered from other bodies. 	ONGOING – under review.
EN08/0264 & ENF/2013/0191	15/01/2010	North	Pine Lodge Caravan Park, Hazels Lane, Hinton	Erection of a building and new vehicular access; Change of use of the land to a touring caravan site (Exemption Certificate revoked) and use of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15/10/2010 - EN served • 08/02/2010 - Appeal received • 10/11/2010 - Appeal dismissed • 25/06/2013 - Three Planning applications received 	31/10/2019

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
				land for the site of a mobile home for gypsy/traveller use. Various unauthorised utility buildings for use on caravan site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 06/11/2013 – The three applications refused at Planning Committee. 13/12/2013 - Appeal Lodged 21/03/2014 – EN's served and become effective on 24/04/2014/ 04/07/2014 - Appeal Start date - Appeal to be dealt with by Hearing 31/01/2015 – New planning appeal received for refusal of Application DC/13/3708 03/02/2015 – Appeal Decision – Two notices quashed for the avoidance of doubt, two notices upheld. Compliance time on notice relating to mobile home has been extended from 12 months to 18 months. 10/11/2015 – Informal hearing held 01/03/2016 – Planning Appeal dismissed 04/08/2016 – Site re-visited three of four Notices have not been complied with. Trial date set for 21/04/2017 	

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two charges relating to the mobile home, steps and hardstanding, the owner pleaded guilty to these to charges and was fined £1000 for failing to comply with the Enforcement Notice plus £600 in costs. The Council has requested that the mobile home along with steps, hardstanding and access be removed by 16/06/2017. 19/06/2017 – Site re-visited, no compliance with the Enforcement Notice. 14/11/2017 – Full Injunction granted for the removal of the mobile home and steps. 21/11/2017 – Mobile home and steps removed from site. Review site regarding day block and access after decision notice released for enforcement notice served in connection with unauthorised occupancy /use of barn. 	

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27/06/2018 – Compliance visit conducted to check on whether the 2010. • 06/07/2018 – Legal advice being sought. • 10/09/2018 – Site revisited to check for compliance with Notices. • 11/09/2018 – Case referred back to Legal Department for further action to be considered. • 11/10/2018 – Court hearing at the High Court in relation to the steps remain on the 2014 Enforcement Notice/ Injunction granted. Two months for compliance (11/12/2018). • 01/11/2018 – Court Hearing at the High Court in relation to the 2010 Enforcement Notice. Injunctive remedy sought. Verbal update to be given. • Injunction granted. Three months given for compliance with Enforcement Notices served in 2010. 	

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13/12/2018 – Site visit undertaken in regards to Injunction served for 2014 Notice. No compliance. Passed back to Legal for further action. 04/02/2019 –Site visit undertaken to check on compliance with Injunction served on 01/11/2018 26/02/2019 – case passed to Legal for further action to be considered. Update to be given at Planning Committee High Court hearing 27/03/2019, the case was adjourned until the 03/04/2019 03/04/2019 - Officers attended the High Court, a warrant was issued due to non-attendance and failure to provide medical evidence explaining the non-attendance as was required in the Order of 27/03/2019. 11/04/2019 – Officers returned to the High Court, the case was adjourned until 7 May 2019. 	

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 07/05/2019 – Officers returned to the High Court. A three month suspended sentence for 12 months was given and the owner was required to comply with the Notices by 03/09/2019. 05/09/2019 – Site visit undertaken; file passed to Legal Department for further action. 	
EN/09/0305	18/07/2013	South	Park Farm, Chapel Road, Bucklesham	Storage of caravans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorisation granted to serve Enforcement Notice. 13/09/2013 -Enforcement Notice served. 11/03/2014 – Appeal determined - EN upheld Compliance period extended to 4 months 11/07/2014 - Final compliance date 05/09/2014 - Planning application for change of use received 21/07/2015 – Application to be reported to Planning Committee for determination 14/09/2015 – site visited, caravans still in situ, letter sent to owner 	April 2021

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<p>requesting their removal by 30/10/2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11/02/2016 – Site visited, caravans still in situ. Legal advice sought as to further action. • 09/08/2016 – Site re-visited, some caravans re-moved but 20 still in situ. Advice to be sought. • Further enforcement action to be put on hold and site to be monitored • Review in January 2019 • 29/01/2019 - Legal advice sought; letter sent to site owner. • 18/02/2019 – contact received from site owner. • 04/04/2019 – Further enforcement action to be placed on hold and monitored. • Review in April 2021. 	
ENF/2014/0104	16/08/2016	South	Top Street, Martlesham	Storage of vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23/11/2016 – Authorisation granted to serve an Enforcement Notice • 22/03/2017 – Enforcement Notice served. Notice takes effect on 	30/11/2019

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<p>26/04/2017. Compliance period is 4 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17/07/2017 – Enforcement Notice withdrawn and to be re-served • 11/10/2017 – Notice re-served, effective on 13/11/2017 – 3 months for compliance • 23/02/2018 – Site visited. No compliance with Enforcement Notice. Case to be referred to Legal Department for further action. • Notice withdrawn • 09/07/2018 – Notice reserved, compliance date 3 months from 06/08/2018 (expires 06/11/2018) • 01/10/2018 - PINS has refused to accept Appeal as received after the time limit. • Time for compliance is by 06/12/2018 • Site visit to be completed after the 06/12/2018 to check for compliance with the Notice 	

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 07/12/2018 – Site visit completed, no compliance, case passed to Legal for further action. 17/01/2019 – Committee updated that Enforcement Notice has been withdrawn and will be re-served following advice from Counsel. 21/02/2019 – Authorisation granted by Committee to serve an Enforcement Notice. Counsel has advised that the Council give 30 days for the site to be cleared before the Notice is served. 01/04/2019 – Enforcement Notice served. 28/05/2019 – Enforcement Appeal has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. 	
ENF/2016/0292	11/08/2016	South	Houseboat Friendship, New Quay Lane, Melton	Change of use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11/08/2016 – Authorisation granted to serve Enforcement Notice with an 8 year compliance period. Enforcement Notice to be drafted Enforcement Notice served on 20/10/2016, Notice effective on 	24/11/2024

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					24/11/ 2016 – 8 year compliance period (expires 24/11/2024).	
ENF/2016/0425	21/12/2016	North	Barn at Pine Lodge, Hazels Lane, Hinton	Breach of Condition 2 of PP C/09/1287	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EN served on 21/12/2016 • Notice becomes effective on 25/01/2017 • Start date has been received. Public Inquiry to be held on 08/11/2017 • Enforcement Appeal to be re-opened Public Inquiry set for 15/05/2018. • 06/06/2018 – Appeal dismissed. Three months for compliance from 06/06/2018 (expires 06/09/2018). • Site visit to be conducted once compliance period has finished. • 09/10/2018 – Site visit conducted, no compliance with Enforcement Notice. Case to be referred to Legal Services for further action. • Site visit due on 07/01/2019. • 07/01/2019 – Site visit undertaken, no compliance with Notice. Case 	31/10/2019

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<p>referred back to Legal Services for further action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26/02/2019 – Update to be given at Committee. • Awaiting update from Legal. • 07/05/2019 – Officers returned to the High Court to seek an Injunction for failure to comply with the Enforcement Notice. An Injunction was granted and the owner is required to comply with the Injunction by 03/09/2019 • 05/09/2019 – Site visit undertaken, case file passed to Legal Department for further action. 	
ENF/2017/0170	21/07/2017	North	Land Adj to Oak Spring, The Street, Darsham	Installation on land of residential mobile home, erection of a structure, stationing of containers and portacabins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16/11/2017 – Authorisation given to serve EN. • 22/02/2018 – EN issued. Notice comes into effect on 30/03/2018 and has a 4 month compliance period • Appeal submitted. Awaiting Start date 	31/10/2019

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal started, final comments due by 08/02/2019. • Waiting for decision from Planning Inspectorate. 	
ENF/2017/0387	14/08/2018	South	64 Grange Road Felixstowe	Untidy Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14/08/2018 – S215 Notice served • 3 months for compliance from 13/09/2018 • 12/11/18 - Site in the process of being cleared. • 24/12/2018 - Site has been predominantly cleared. • 26/02/2019 – Property has recently been sold, final works expected to be done imminently. • Property sold at auction, further time given to clear site. 	31/11/2019
ENF/2015/0279 /DEV	05/09/2018	North	Land at Dam Lane Kessingland	Erection of outbuildings and wooden jetties, fencing and gates over 1 metre adjacent to highway and engineering operations amounting to the formation of a lake and soil bunds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial complaint logged by parish on 22/09/2015 • Case was reopened following further information on the 08/12/2016/ • Retrospective app received 01/03/2017. • Following delays in information requested, on 	30/11/2019

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
					<p>20/06/2018, Cate Buck, Senior Planning and Enforcement Officer, took over the case, she communicated and met with the owner on several occasions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice served by recorded delivery 05/09/2018. • Appeal has been submitted. Awaiting Start date. • Start letter received from the Planning Inspectorate. Statement due by 30/07/19. 	
ENF/2018/0057 /	15/11/2018	North	The Stone House, Low Road, Bramfield	Change of use of land for the stationing of chiller/refrigeration units and the installation of bunds and hardstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement Notices served on 10/12/2018 • Notice effective on 24/01/2019 • 3 months given for compliance • Appeal submitted awaiting Start Date. • Start letter received from the Planning Inspectorate. Statement due by 30/07/19. 	30/11/2019

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
ENF/2018/0276	23/11/2018	North	Bramfield Meats, Low Road, Bramfield	Breach of Condition 3 of planning permission DC/15/1606.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breach of Condition Notice served • Application received to Discharge Conditions • Application pending decision 	31/10/2019
ENF/2018/0330 /LISTM	17/05/2019	North	Willow Farm, Chediston Green, Chediston	Unauthorised double glazed windows installed into a Listed Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Building Enforcement Notice served on 17/05/2019. • Notice takes effect on 20/06/2019. Three months for compliance • Appeal has been submitted, awaiting a start date. 	30/11/2019
ENF/2018/0543 /DEV	24/05/2019	North	Land at North Denes Caravan Park The Ravine Lowestoft	Without planning permission operational development involving the laying of caravan bases, the construction of a roadway, the installation of a pumping station with settlement tank and the laying out of pipe works in the course of which waste material have been excavated from the site and deposited on the surface.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Stop Notice Served 02/05/2019 and ceases 30/05/2019 • Enforcement Notice served 24/05/2019, comes into effect on 28/06/2019 • Stop Notice Served 25/05/2019 comes into effect 28/05/2019. • Appeal has been submitted. Awaiting Start date. 	30/11/2019

LPA Reference	Date of Authorisation (Panel/ Delegated)	North/South	Location	Breach	Status	Date by which Compliance Expected (or Prosecution Date)
ENF/2018/0385 /COND	01/08/2019	North	28 Beverley Close Lowestoft	Breach of condition 2 & 3 of DC/15/2586/FUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach of Condition Notice served 01/08/2019. 	01/02/2020
ENF/2019/0272 /DEV	16/08/2019	South	Rosery Cottage Barn, Lodge Road, Great Bealings	Change of use of a building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcement Notice served 16/08/2019. Appeal submitted, awaiting start letter. 	17/12/2019

PLANNING COMMITTEE SOUTH – 22 October 2019

APPLICATION NO. DC/19/2641/FUL

EXPIRY DATE 30 September 2019

APPLICATION TYPE Full Application

APPLICANT Active Urban (Woodbridge) Ltd

LOCATION: Former Council Offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU

PARISH Woodbridge and Melton

PROPOSAL Residential development (100 no units) including 32 no affordable housing units (Class C3) plus a community space (91 sq.m) (Class D1) and a retail unit (157.7sq.m) (A1/A2/A3), car parking, means of access and landscaping, all following demolition of the buildings on site.

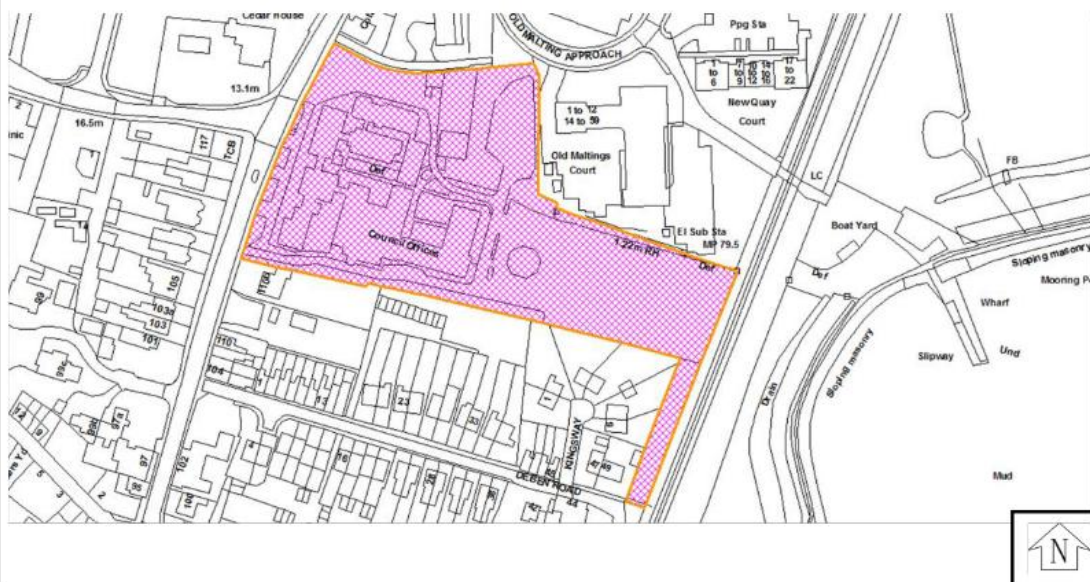
CASE OFFICER Liz Beighton
(including phone number & mail) (01394) 444778
 liz.beighton@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

DC/19/2641/FUL- Former Council Offices, Melton Hill, Melton, IP12 1AU

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Planning Permission is sought for the redevelopment of the former Suffolk Coastal District Council Offices site to a residential lead scheme of 100 dwellings, of which 32 are proposed to be affordable housing. The proposal also includes community and café space towards the site frontage, pedestrian thoroughfare through to the river and underground parking.

This is the third application for the site. The first application (reference DC/17/2840/FUL) was withdrawn at the applicant's request, following a resolution to approve by the Suffolk Coastal Planning Committee in April 2018. A revised application was submitted (application reference DC/18/3424/FUL refers) for an identical scheme but seeking to utilise Vacant Building Credit (VBC) to reduce the level of affordable housing provision to 16. That application was refused by the Suffolk Coastal Planning Committee on the 26 November 2018 in accordance with officer recommendation. The applicants appealed the decision and formal determination of the appeal is awaited from the Planning Inspectorate (noting that a site visit was undertaken on the 30 September 2019) and the consideration is via the written representation route.

The current application seeks to make some minor amendments to the layout and appearance of the site from the previously considered schemes. The general design ethos of the development remains the same and the scheme makes provision for the policy requirement affordable housing.

The Officers report has been updated to reflect the changes to the NPPF which have arisen since the previous applications and also the policy position of the site in the emerging East Suffolk - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan which has been through Examination.

The recommendation remains one of approval. The current scheme overcomes the previous concerns raised by the Council re the provision of affordable housing and officers believe the scheme will result in a dynamic, exciting, high quality development in a sustainable location, and is therefore policy compliant.

The changes to the current scheme do not in the opinion of officers result in the scheme being unacceptable having noted that the Council has on two occasions endorsed the design, appearance, layout and impacts of the development. The changes proposed are minor when considering the scheme as a whole. Indeed, it is contended that the strengthening of design in the NPPF and the requirements for the site in the emerging Local Plan add extra weight to the approval of the scheme.

The harms of the development in this instance do not outweigh the benefits of approving the development and the scheme remains one which is policy compliant.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The 1.32 hectare application involves the re-development of the former Council Offices at Melton Hill for a residential led scheme comprising 100 units of accommodation in addition to a café/shop and community space. All existing buildings within the boundary of the site are proposed for demolition. The application seeks to provide the full complement of affordable (32 units) housing required via Policy DM2 of the Local Plan in two blocks of accommodation (blocks G & H).

This application is the third such submission for the re-development of the site by the applicants and although there have been some minor changes, the general thrust of the application remains the same.

The first application (reference DC/17/2840/FUL) was valid on the 30 June 2017. In advance of a Planning Committee, Members undertook a detailed site visit to understand the site and its immediate and wider environment. The application was resolved to approve, in accordance with officer recommendation, at a meeting on the 19 April 2018, with the suite of conditions being approved between parties. Notwithstanding the positive resolution, the applicants sought to withdraw the application on the 10 August 2018 before the issue of the formal decision notice following advice from their consultant that Vacant Building Credit (VBC) could be applied to reduce the level of affordable housing provided.

A subsequent application (reference DC/18/3424/FUL) was submitted on 15 August 2018 for an identical scheme but seeking to application but seeking to apply VBC to reduce the level of affordable housing down to 16 units (a net reduction of 50%). The Planning Committee met on the 26 November 2018 to hear the application, and resolved to refuse permission, in accordance with officer recommendation. The application was refused for the following reason:

“The Melton Hill office site became vacant in May 2017 when the owners of the site closed the premises up on the completion of the relocation to their new office premises in Melton. An earlier application for the redevelopment of the site for residential use (DC/17/2840) (the First Application) was considered by the Planning Committee on the 19 April 2018. The Planning Committee resolved to approve the First Application and to delegate authority to issue the Planning Permission to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management. The First Application was subsequently withdrawn by the applicants on the 10 August 2018, before the Planning Permission could be issued.

This application (DC/18/3424/FUL) (the Second Application) was submitted by the applicants on (insert date). The Second Application is a resubmission of the First Application and is proposing exactly the same built development as the First Application, save that it has been submitted on the premise that Vacant Building Credit (VBC) applies, the effect of which would be to discount the affordable housing provision on the site from 32 units, as agreed as part of the First Application, to 16 units.

Having regard to the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance, and the Council's agreed Advice Note on VBC (September 2018), the site is considered to be a brownfield site. This is because the site is developed and occupied by existing structures.

The VBC advice note advises that the applicant will need to show that the building is vacant and has not been in continuous use for any six month period within the preceding three years from the day the planning application is validated and must be vacant at the time the application is validated. This definition arises from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) definition. In this instance the applicant would need to demonstrate that the building has not been vacant between 15 August 2015 until the 15 August 2018 (the date the planning application was validated). As the buildings on the site were used as offices until May 2017

the buildings and the site are not considered to be vacant, and VBC is not considered to apply. Office use is an authorised use for the purposes of the Advice Note on VBC.

Furthermore, the Council considers that given the previous and relevant viability evidence submitted with the First Application (which although was not resubmitted with the second application but no change in circumstances regarding the development occurred), there is no need to incentivise the development of this brownfield site because of the significant need in the district, and in Woodbridge in particular, to deliver affordable housing.

As it is considered that VBC does not apply, the proposed redevelopment of the site for 100 dwellings should make provision for one-third of all the units to be affordable housing in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan (Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD 2013). The viability evidence submitted with the First Application clearly indicated that a policy compliant scheme of 32 units of affordable housing could be delivered. The under-provision of affordable housing in the Second Application (without the application of VBC) conflicts with Policy DM2 and whilst acknowledging the benefits arising from the development, these do not outweigh the harm associated with the under-provision of affordable housing in an area where there is significant demand and need for such.”

The formal decision notice was issued on the 22 January 2019. The applicants have sought to appeal the decision to the Planning Inspectorate via the written representations route. The Council is awaiting the formal decision notice from the Inspectorate and understands that a site inspection has been carried out and all relevant correspondence is before the Inspector for consideration. It is important to note that the only concern raised by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) was the under provision of affordable housing and all other matters remained acceptable.

As is the case with all significant planning applications there are a number of competing issues which need careful consideration in the assessment. These are detailed in Section 6 of this report. It is the role of officers to carefully assess and balance out all these competing issues and reach an informed judgement on the merits of the application, having due regard to all issues presented. As required by the NPPF, the presumption is in favour of sustainable development and that developments should be approved unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and in accordance with the NPPF local planning authorities should look at ways to significantly boost the supply of housing. The starting point for any application is one of support if it is argued to be sustainable, having due regard to the three strands of sustainable development outlined in the NPPF.

The following information is appended to this report for the benefit of Members:

- Minutes of previous planning committee meetings hearing the application
- Addendum to Design and Access Statement to explain the changes
- Historic England Consultation Response
- Consultation response from Principal Design and Conservation Officer

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site straddles the boundary of both Woodbridge Town and Melton Parish and is located within the defined settlement boundary. The site is currently occupied by the

former Suffolk Coastal District Council Offices, which used the site since 1974. The buildings are predominately three storeys in height. The buildings have been vacant and the site derelict since the Council re-located to new offices at Riduna Park in Melton by the end of 2016.

2.2 The following constraints are relevant to this site:

- The site is located partly opposite Woodbridge Conservation Area, which stops at No.117 The Thoroughfare and heads due north up Pytches Road.
- Flood Zones 2 and 3 extend to the very eastern end of the site.
- There are listed buildings located in the vicinity of the application site, but none on the application site itself. Maltings Cottage (Grade 2 – Listed 11/06/1985) is located immediately due north of the application site and Nos 104-110 Thoroughfare, a terrace of four dwellings, are located due south (Grade 2 – Listed 20/12/1971).
- The Lowestoft to Ipswich/London single track railway line forms the site's eastern boundary.
- There are no protected trees on the site although it is acknowledged that the boundaries of the site contain a number of trees and shrubs and there are some isolated trees occupying the site's frontage. The large Pine tree which was located centrally within the site was felled early 2017.
- The immediate neighbours to the application site are residential. Due north the residential units, including Maltings Approach, are accessed via Maltings Approach (noted that there are some commercial units also at the bottom of the access road) and due south are properties in Deben Road and 110b The Thoroughfare.
- Beyond the railway line is the River Deben (and towpath alongside), a protected landscape and included within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and beyond such on the opposite side of the River is the Parish of Sutton within which is located Sutton Hoo, a recorded Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), the Deben Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. There are some residential properties within eyesight of the application site on the opposite side of the river, but these are at some considerable distance from the application site when considering any impact on residential amenity.
- The site is located at the top of Melton Hill and at the junction of Melton Hill, Thoroughfare and Pytches Road. An existing pedestrian refuge is located at this point and bus stops are located on both side of the road.
- The site slopes from a west to east direction and indeed the land increases in height moving in a westerly direction heading up Pytches Road. – check with levels plan. At the highest point of the site the levels are 13.23m above ordnance datum (AOD) and at the lowest point the levels are 3.23m AOD, equating to a level change across the site of 10.96m. For reference the lowest level point of the existing car park adjacent to The Maltings, where the underground carpark is proposed, at its lowest point has a level of 4.10m AOD.
- The two frontage buildings, although not listed, are considered by the Council's Principal Design and Conservation Officer as being Non- Designated Heritage Assets (NHDA).

- The site is approximately 150m due north from the edge of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and therefore due regard will have to be had to impact on the existing poor levels of air quality at the Thoroughfare crossroads.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 The proposal seeks planning permission for 100 residential units contained in a mixture of apartments and houses across the site. 32 of the units are proposed to be affordable, set within two blocks. The built development is contained within a series of blocks across the site. Residents car parking is proposed underground and accessed via the existing site access so as to create a landscape led scheme and car-free environment and with visitor car parking located at ground level by the vehicular access to the site. The total level of parking proposed is 106 spaces.

3.2 All the existing buildings on the site are proposed for demolition in order to facilitate the development and secure a comprehensive and cohesive development. The loss of the two principal frontage buildings is an issue which is causing concern as is noted via the consultation responses received in Section 4 of this report.

3.3 The mix of residential development proposed is as per the table below, broken down into the private and affordable elements.

	Private	Affordable	TOTAL
1 bed	2	22	24
2 bed	31	10	41
3 bed	32		32
4 bed	3		3
TOTAL	68	32	100

3.4 In addition to the residential element, 157.7m² of commercial space and 91m² of community space is also proposed (a total of 166m²) at ground floor level within the two main frontage blocks facing The Thoroughfare. An additional 33.3m² of space is dedicated to the concierge.

3.5 The application forms indicate that the scheme would make provision for two full time positions of employment, although it is also noted that additional jobs would be created via the construction phase and the development would yield additional spend in the community.

3.6 The application site extends to some 1.32 hectares, and therefore the proposal would yield a density of development of 76 dwellings per hectare.

3.7 The development is proposed to be contained within angular blocks set aside a linear pedestrian route leading to a water meadow area at the bottom of the site. The buildings at the frontage of the site have been deliberately pulled back from the highway so as to open up views and create an open area at the front of the site so as to promote and encourage community use of the space. The opening up of the site for the public benefit, from what is currently in private use, is seen as a positive enhancement and is of benefit to the town (residents and visitors alike) as a whole.

3.8 Officers have been keen to stress the importance of the scheme being landscape led, in terms of both the internal landscape design but also how the scheme relates to the wider landscape

setting. The revisions to the current scheme show a greater degree of landscaping and a softer edge to Melton Hill than previously was shown. In relation to this the potential for pedestrian access through the site to Deben Road is seen as a key positive outcome in that it fosters permeability through the site for residents and visitors alike to access key services and facilities in the town. There is also the potential to create an additional link through to The Maltings should the owners/residents request such in due course.

Changes to the Current Scheme from the previous two iterations

3.9 An addendum to the previous Design and Access Statement has been provided to clarify the changes to the current scheme. This document is publicly accessible but for ease of reference the following is noted (this is included as an appendix to this report):

- The number of units remains the same, i.e. 100,
- The site access and car parking is essentially the same – the number is the same but there has been a slight re-design to accommodate lift pits,
- The community facility (Block E formerly Block B) is brought down to ground level to avoid sharing a lift with residential units and making it more visible and accessible,
- Additional soft landscaping and tree planting to Melton Hill,
- Revisions to private terraces at ground level,
- Minor changes to the elevation of some units,
- Block K is now proposed as two houses with the same footprint but reduced massing,
- Bin stores added,
- Inclusion of public cycle racks in front of Block E and D.

3.10 Officers accept that the proposals do represent a change to the current views of the site (both short and long distance) however, change is not unacceptable in principle and it is the issues arising which require the careful analysis. It is important to stress that the planning system is not able to protect private views from surrounding residential properties and therefore the assessment concentrates on public views.

4. CONSULTATIONS/COMMENTS

4.1 Woodbridge Town Council:

“Woodbridge Town Council (WTC) Planning Committee voted unanimously to recommend REFUSAL of Planning Application DC/19/2641/FUL — Former Council Offices, Melton Hill.

This application fails to satisfy many of the policies of the Local Plan. The term "enhance" occurs 84 times in the current Local Plan, but this development does nothing to enhance the quality of life in Woodbridge, or the environment.

WTC was disappointed to see that the application was supported by several out of date reports. The Council would like to see a new and updated traffic survey and an air quality survey which includes Particulate Matter readings. The Council fully endorses and supports the comments made by Historic England, the River Deben Association, the Woodbridge Society, and echoes the sentiments expressed by the many neighbours who have responded. We urge the Officers to read each of these, and ensure that the full details of these are brought to the attention of the Planning Committee, not merely in a summarised form.

WTC believes that this application should be refused as it contravenes the following policies:

DM2 Affordable Housing

The developer has reduced the Social housing element in this application, and does not comply with DM2. Only eight units are so designated, and the additional 24 are described as "Intermediate Housing". This is not what the local community requires — there is an established clear local need for units available for social rent, and this application patently fails to meet that need. Affordable housing appears to be by means of very small one bedroomed apartments. Many townspeople waiting for social and affordable housing have children and need accommodation that supports the family.

The mix does not conform to East Suffolk Council policy.

DM19 Parking Standards

The number of parking spaces is woefully inadequate, and will lead to a significant overspill. The Planning Department may take the view that this is a 'Town Centre' site, but which is really is not. Half of the site is in Woodbridge, and half in Melton, and all of it is on a busy access road to the town, outside an area clearly defined by a busy junction with traffic-lights.

We have seen various calculations based on East Suffolk Council's own policy, ranging from about 150 to 183. No account of the increased number of bedrooms has been taken in assessing parking requirements. Clearly, the developer should drastically increase parking or drastically decrease the number of units.

The Parking provision does not conform to Council policy.

DM21 Design Aesthetics

a. *Scale*

This states that 'proposals should relate well to the scale and character of their surroundings particularly in terms of their siting, height massing and form'.

This development is clearly out of keeping, overbearing in a landscape adjacent to a Conservation Area, an AONB, a Ramsar, SPA site and will contribute negatively to the Air Quality Management Area.

The design layout detracts from the character of its surroundings, particularly in terms of their siting, height, massing and form; especially, attention must be given to the form, scale, use and landscape of the spaces between buildings and the boundary treatment of individual sites particularly on the edge of settlements.

b. *Density.*

The Local Plan says on this topic:

"As a general guide across the district when assessing development schemes,

30 dph or below is considered low density;

40 dph medium density and

50+ dph as high density."

At 100 dwellings on a 1.25 hectare site, unit density is 80 units per hectare. Added to that, this new application now has a bedroom-count at 214, an increase of 13% over the original 2017 application, further adding to the density impact

c. Retention & Protection

This states that 'layouts should incorporate and protect existing site features of landscape, ecological, heritage or amenity value as well as such features'. This has not happened; development plans are to demolish the heritage building although this goes against SCDC Guidance 2014.

DM23 Residential Amenity

The new buildings are too close to neighbouring sites, impacting on privacy/overlooking, outlook, access to daylight, noise and disturbance, the resulting physical relationship with other properties, light spillage, air quality and other forms of pollution and safety and security.

Within the site, buildings are similarly too close to each other, and their height leads to equivalent loss of amenity being designed in at the outset.

DM24 Sustainable Construction

Woodbridge Town Council, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council have declared a Climate Emergency; East Suffolk Council should not abandon theirs just yet.

The Council will expect all new developments, including redevelopment and refurbishment of existing buildings, to use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care in order to reduce emissions linked to changes to the climate and take into account the effects of climate change.

This development does not pay heed to adequate insulation levels, sustainability, access for disability, EV points and decreasing CO2 levels. The emissions from 100 combi boilers in such a dense development will add considerably to local pollution.

We see no provision of renewable energy at all.

SP26 Non-designated Heritage Asset, a, h and i.

Residents are greatly distressed to see that the Victorian and Edwardian Buildings in the front are to be demolished.

DM26 Lighting

The site was previously occupied by offices, and as such, the radiated light pollution was very low. This will not be the case for the new development, and the combination of over-development and high density will result in a high level of pollution from light spillage.

This will be glaringly obvious when viewed from the Ramsar site nearby. It will also be harmful to wildlife.

The role of trees is well-documented in improving Air Quality. The trees on this site should be retained, in line with the Council's declared state of Climate Emergency.

Conservation Area

The new East Suffolk Conservation Area for Woodbridge will include the terrace on Deben Road, and this Council has asked for 34 Deben Road, Brick Kiln Cottage to be included.

This development shares a boundary with Deben Road, and the design pays scant respect to the Conservation Area.

Public Views

Woodbridge Town Council considered this Application on 16th July 2019.

Seventy two members of the public attended, and 13 of them spoke to the committee. They were unanimous in their condemnation of the plans, and some spoke of their disappointment with East Suffolk Council's approach to the development over the past three years.

Their comments included:

- *People had been deceived by the developers as they had made statements and then changed them.*
- *Planning Committee had ignored 300+ objections to the plan and are determined to 'inflict a monstrous' design on Woodbridge*
- *The East Suffolk Councillor for Melton said that buildings on the site should be converted, not pulled down and that the trees should not be cut down.*
- *It was suggested that the development would be in breach of Historic England guidelines which could end in a Judicial Review.*
- *SCDC Guidance 2014 instructed developers to pay 'due regard to the adjacent site' and 'to utilise the buildings on the frontage'. This had not happened.*
- *A neighbour will look out onto a seven storey building (two floors of parking and five of apartments).*
- *Less affordable bedrooms and more Market bedrooms and an increase in the number of three and four bedroom houses.*
- *The Air Quality Survey dated July 2017 but undertaken in February 2017 had become obsolete in 2018.*
- *More than one member of the public put in a plea to save the trees on the site saying that they were old, absorbed CO2 and particulates from cars. The area has become a corridor for wildlife."*

4.2 Melton Parish Council:

"Melton Parish Council Planning and Transport Committee has considered this application at its meeting on 17 July and has resolved to recommend refusal of the application for the following reasons:

1. *The site at Melton Hill of the former Council Offices encompasses 1.33ha and is allocated for the development of approximately 100 dwellings under the Final Draft Local Plan published in January 2019. It is expected that the site will provide “a high quality, high density development, providing predominantly smaller dwellings in a flatted scheme”. The Plan continues: “The design of the development will need to be distinctive and innovative whilst appropriate in terms of the proximity to the Grade II listed Maltings Cottage and Woodbridge Conservation Area as well as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.” Policy SCLP12.32 summarises the planning requirements for the site, and again emphasises the need for “exemplar, high quality design”. It is submitted that the current application does not meet the high standard of design required for such a sensitive site. In particular:*
 - * The bulk, scale and harsh urban form of the tall blocks (the tallest is 22 metres) with their mono-pitched roofs is incongruous in their proposed setting and would provide a poor gateway into Woodbridge; this will also, as with previous proposals, not only impact on the immediate surroundings e.g. Deben Road and Old Maltings Approach, but also in the longer distance views across the River Deben and from the river path.*
 - * This new application maintains the proposals to demolish the two Victorian / Edwardian buildings at the front of the site; Melton Councillors have always argued that these two undesignated heritage assets should be retained, as they form a potential bridge between the traditional architecture along Melton Hill, and any new development behind.*
 - * The new buildings overall would represent a complete departure from the character of the surrounding area, and completely out of scale.*
 - * The views from the Sutton Hoo site would be seriously compromised.*
 - * The comments submitted by Historic England to this application are extremely critical of the application in its current form and Melton Parish Council fully agrees with what their Inspector has said. Overall it is considered that this application fails in every respect to meet the aspirations of Local Plan Policy SCLP12.31 in terms of enhancing the historic environment and riverside character of Woodbridge, fails to meet both the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of protecting and enhancing heritage assets and promoting sustainable development; nor does it accord with the East Suffolk Council’s Draft Local Plan.*
2. *In terms of property mix, this application now has fewer 2 bedroom properties and more 3 and 4 bedroom ones. Hence density overall is higher, with 214 bedrooms overall – an increase of 13%. The site only has 1.25ha available for building because of flood zone designations. Notwithstanding the Draft Local Plan’s designation of the site for around 100 dwellings, this amounts to a very high density for such a sensitive site.*
3. *The proposals provide for 106 parking spaces. Applying the Suffolk County Council guidance on car parking based on the number of bedrooms per dwelling, the proposal would require some 183 spaces, not the 106 offered. The proposal fails to comply with Policy MEL6 in the Melton Neighbourhood Plan (the car park location is within the Parish of Melton). It also suggests strongly that there are too many dwellings proposed for this site. Additionally, parking provision remains underground. As Melton Parish Council has commented before, experience has shown in urban environments where this has been tried, that residents will park illegally or inconsiderately rather than use such provision because of both inconvenience and fear of crime.*
4. *Draft Local Plan Policy SCLP5.10 requires that proposals for residential development with capacity for more than ten units...will be expected to make provision for 1 in 3 units to be affordable dwellings, and to be made available to meet an identified local need. The Policy*

goes on to say that of the affordable dwellings, 50% should be for affordable / social rent, 25% should be for shared ownership, and 25% should be for discounted home ownership. This application offers 32 units, but with the emphasis on intermediate housing rather than social rent: 8 x 1 bedroom units for social housing and 24 units (14 x 1 bedroom and 10 x 2 bedroom) for intermediate housing – part sale / part rent. Whilst it is unclear what the local needs are, the offer clearly does fall short of compliance with Draft Local Plan Policy SCLP5.10.

5. *Melton Parish Council are also concerned at the worsening of the air quality on Melton Hill caused by additional traffic attempting to enter / exit the development. Given the existing air quality issues in the Lime Kiln Quay / Thoroughfare area, air quality data needs to be re-assessed in relation to the impact of this proposed development. To date both Suffolk County Council and Woodbridge Town Council have made declarations of climate emergency; it is very important that residential amenity (Draft Local Plan Policy SCLP11.2) in the Melton Hill area is not compromised either by air quality issues or traffic congestion as a result of overdevelopment on this site.*
6. *This application remains deficient, both in terms of the Final Draft Local Plan, the Melton Neighbourhood Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. Also, and most importantly, it does appear that the exhortation of paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework continues to be ignored; that applicants work closely with those directly affected by the proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community.*
7. *This application should be treated as new, despite its similar forerunners. As such the applicant should have carried out fresh community consultation before presenting the application for consideration and approval. That has not been done, and is another reason why the application should be rejected. It can be assumed that the failure to carry out such consultation is due to the very high level of objections from both the Woodbridge and Melton communities to the previous similar applications. However it would have been reasonable to expect that for a brand new application, the applicant might decide to take these objections into account and alter the approach, working within the spirit of paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework to achieve something much more community minded. The Developer is well aware of alternative proposals that would deliver similar financial returns, but which at the same time would allow for the retention and conversion of the two heritage buildings at the front of the site, but has chosen to ignore them.*
8. *Finally Melton Parish Council requests that, in view of the significance of this application, it should be considered by the Planning Committee, at which Melton Parish Council will wish to appear as an objector."*

4.3 Sutton Parish Council (adjoining Parish):

"The Parish Council has no objections to these plans."

Statutory Consultees

- 4.4 Environment Agency: Having reviewed the FRA do not seek to object to the application because the site is currently defended and the Deben Estuary Plan for this area has an aspiration to hold the line.

- 4.5 Historic England: Object strongly to the application on heritage grounds as it would result in harm to the significance of the conservation area and not constitute sustainable development in terms of the NPPF. Members will note that the full consultation response is appended to this Committee report.
- 4.6 Natural England: Note that the site is within the 13km zone of influence of one or more European designated sites and therefore RAMS needs to be taken into consideration.
- 4.7 Anglian Water: There is suitable capacity for wastewater. Foul and surface water to be covered by appropriate conditions.
- 4.8 Suffolk Wildlife Trust: Note that contribution to RAMS is required. Remain concerned over the impacts on designated sites and query if the open space provision on site is of adequate size and whether potential in-combination impacts have been fully assessed.
- 4.9 RSPB: No comments received.
- 4.10 Network Rail: Advise that they should be consulted before any works take place to agree a Protection Agreements in regards to the detailed works.
- 4.11 NHS England: No comments received.

Local Interest Groups

- 4.12 The Woodbridge Society: Object to the application. Note that whilst there have been some minor changes to the design it is essentially the same and therefore has all the faults of the previous application. Note the site is adjacent the Conservation Area, the buildings are out of scale with their surroundings and oddly shaped and as such do not relate. The development will dominate the skyline. Parking provision is inadequate and will result in on street parking. Will involve the demolition of heritage assets. Increase density, pollution, overlooking. The size of the affordable units is not what is required.
- 4.13 River Deben Association: Consider that the application will have significant detrimental impact on the river and its environs. The scale is insensitive to the estuary topography and is intrusive. Quality of the area will be spoilt by a development which ignores appropriate scale. Will have a detrimental impact on visitor experience to Sutton Hoo. Create light pollution. Over-development.
- 4.14 The Deben Estuary Partnership: No comments received.
- 4.15 Suffolk Police (Designing Out Crime): No comments received.
- 4.16 Suffolk Preservation Society: Whilst SPS continues to support the redevelopment of this highly sustainable site, the serious concerns regarding the excessive scale, mass and height of the proposals remain.
- 4.17 Woodbridge Town Trust: No comments received
- 4.18 Woodbridge Riverside Trust: No comments received

- 4.19 The National Trust: The changes do not cause the National Trust to change its response to the redevelopment of this site. The objections previously raised concerned the impact of the development upon the character of the area, the skyline, the setting of important heritage assets (the Sutton Hoo site, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and upon the character of the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which Sutton Hoo lies within. In these respects the development was considered to be contrary to a core principle of national planning guidance (the conservation of heritage assets) and prejudicial to the specific requirement of national guidance that development should conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Sutton Hoo's heritage significance is inextricably linked to the site's prominence within the landscape. As a consequence, development which would adversely affect the appreciation of the site's setting within the landscape has the potential to negatively affect its significance in heritage terms. The proposed development will certainly be visible from a number of points on public rights of way within the Sutton Hoo site, even in the summer months where tree cover provides some mitigation. There is aspect onto the application site from viewing points within the wooded areas fringing the River Deben and also from the more open areas nearer to the Burial Mounds and Tranmer House.

The proposed development would be visible from various points within the Sutton Hoo site, appearing at odds with the local townscape character, compromising the experience for visitors and detracting from the important contribution that the setting makes to the heritage significance of Sutton Hoo. Accordingly, the National Trust maintains its objections to the development.

Suffolk County Council Departments

- 4.20 Archaeological Service: No objection subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions which are proposed.
- 4.21 Suffolk County Council Local Lead Flood Authority: Following receipt of additional information from the applicants, the Local Lead Flood Authority raise no objection subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.
- 4.22 Fire and Rescue Service (Water Office): Included within the S106 response regarding the provision of fire hydrants
- 4.23 Highway Authority: As the above application is unchanged in highway terms from the previous proposal at the site, the comments remain similar in that no objection is raised subject to conditions. In terms of parking provision, the Highway Authority would like to see a minimum of 1 space per dwelling plus visitor parking. In addition, s106 contributions are requested for towards bus stop improvements and public rights of way (PROW) improvements.
- 4.24 Rights of Way Team: included within the Highway Authority response.
- 4.25 S106 Planning Obligations: raise a number of infrastructure requirements which are to be raised via CIL and matters to be considered. The County Council do not request any infrastructure which is outside the CIL regime or conditions.
- 4.26 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Team: No comments received

East Suffolk Council Departments

- 4.27 Building Control: No comments received but have been involved in discussions with the applicants primarily in relation to the construction of the carpark.
- 4.28 Head of Housing: No comments received.
- 4.29 Head of Environmental Services and Port Health: No comments received.
- 4.30 Head of Economic Development: No comments received.

Third Party Representations

- 4.31 The records held electronically show that 215 Letters of Objection have been received.
- 4.32 The following matters have been raised and for the benefit of the audience the table below summarises the points that have been made, and the full transcripts are available on the public access system.
- Out of character with its surroundings, including neighbouring residential properties, and not sympathetic and a more traditional form should have been applied.
 - The proposal fails the local distinctiveness test.
 - The proposed blocks are too large and high.
 - The proposal bears no resemblance to the scheme which was seen at the public consultation event.
 - Design is not bespoke for the site.
 - Over-development.
 - The modern design of the buildings is out of character with Woodbridge.
 - The design has been likened by a number of the respondents to wedges of cheese.
 - The dwellings proposed are too small and more effort should be made for dwellings which would be attractive for families. Flats are not required.
 - Any new structures on the site should not exceed the height of the buildings at present, which are three storeys in height.
 - The proposal is not considered to enhance the setting of the Conservation Area.
 - The height and proximity of the buildings will have an adverse impact on the setting of Maltings Cottage, a Grade 2 listed building.
 - Concern has been raised over the loss of the two frontage buildings which can be considered as Non Designated Heritage Assets.
 - The development is overbearing and affects light into neighbouring properties, and this is predominately raised in relation to those properties on Deben Road. This in terms affects the privacy that those residents should readily be expected to receive.
 - The increase in noise arising from the site in particular with relation to the café use is not acceptable.
 - The scheme fails to make provision for appropriate levels of parking to meet its needs.
 - The increase in traffic associated with the development will have a negative impact on highway safety.
 - The proposal is very unlikely to improve the existing air quality situation.

- The underground car park is impracticable.
- The loss of the trees from the site as a result of the scheme will have a negative impact on local wildlife and comments have been received advising that bats have been seen at the site.
- The view from Sutton Hoo would be blighted as a result from this development and the development will jar with the landscape when viewed from the Deben Estuary and Sutton Hoo.
- There is no local need or demand for another coffee outlet or retail space.
- The consultation process has been flawed.
- The local infrastructure is unable to comfortably manage with the impacts of this development.
- There is no local support for the scheme and the significant objection received.
- The affordable housing provision fails policy in terms of the type and size – more larger units required.
- More details on affordable housing required.
- Concern over the potential for affordable housing commuted sums.
- Only 20% affordable housing when looking at GFA.
- Not taking a stand on full affordable sets a bad precedent.
- Applicants not willing to listen to residents and interested parties.
- Financial decisions clouding the decision making process.
- Existing structures perfectly acceptable to use.
- Lack of starter homes.
- Need reassurance that asbestos will be appropriately dealt with.
- ESC have declared a 'climate emergency' and therefore destroying trees is unacceptable.
- If there is a clear conflict of interest the favour should be in the favour of objectors.
- The time has come for a fresh application – the whole scheme should be assessed from scratch.
- Scheme will be for second home owners.
- Can the applicants submit an application when there is an appeal pending.
- Planning team seem biased towards development.
- Historic England have objected to loss of the frontage buildings.
- Has any consideration been given to the floodplain?

4.33 Cllr Chris Mapey (Ward Member)

"This planned development is not appropriate for Woodbridge.

The size of the blocks are too tall, and will look incongruous when viewed from the SSSI designated wetland & saltmarsh habitats on the River Deben. The World renowned sit at Sutton Hoo will have it's view back over historic Woodbridge blighted by these 7 storey tall blocks, clad in light colour materials to make them stand out further.

There is an over saturation of apartments in the Woodbridge area, and these are seemingly selling at a much slower rate than was anticipated by the developers - quite what a further 100 units are going to do to this saturated market is unknown.

This scheme should be sent back to the drawing board, and one with an extra public car parking provision for Woodbridge should be mandated by ESDC for this site / development, before the developer is allowed back in front of the planning committee with yet another re-jigged version of a scheme that has been rejected previously."

5. RELEVANT POLICIES

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 states that application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, which is replicated in paragraph 11 of the NPPF. In this instance, the Development Plan for the purpose of this application is the Core Strategy (2013) together with any 'saved polices' from the Local Plan (Incorporating First and Second Alterations 2001 and 2006) and the Site Specific Allocations (2017).
- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- 5.3 Ministerial statements and case law are material considerations.
- 5.4 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – in particular Section 66(1).
- 5.5 Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (adopted July 2013) policies:
- SP1a – Sustainable Development
 - SP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - SP1 – Housing Numbers and Distribution
 - SP3 – New Homes
 - SP15 – Landscape and Townscape
 - SP16 – Sport and Play
 - SP17 – Green Space
 - SP18 – Infrastructure
 - SP26 - Woodbridge
 - DM2 – Affordable Housing on Residential Sites
 - DM10 – Protection of Employment Sites
 - DM19 – Parking Standards
 - DM21 – Design: Aesthetics
 - DM22 – Design: Function
 - DM23 – Residential Amenity
 - DM26 – Lighting
 - DM27 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - DM31 – Public Buildings
- 5.6 The following 'Saved' Policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (incorporating the First and Second Alterations, as saved upon adoption of the 2013 document) are relevant to the consideration of this application:
- AP1: Conservation Areas
 - AP28: Areas to be protected from Development
- 5.7 Woodbridge Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – July 2011
- 5.8 Melton Neighbourhood Plan (Made January 2018) policies:

MEL1 – Physical Limits Boundaries
MEL2 – Dedicated Access for Cyclists and Pedestrians
MEL3 – Views from Footpaths, Cyclepaths and PROW
MEL6 – Parking Standards
MEL8 – Community Facilities
MEL17 – Character Areas

5.9 The new local plan, covering the former Suffolk Coastal area, herein referred to as the emerging East Suffolk - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan has completed the Examination in Public (September 20 2019) with the Inspectors Report, including any modifications, expected in November. It is intended that the Plan will be adopted early 2020. Given the advanced nature of the replacement plan, it is considered that appropriate weight can be attached to any relevant policies.

5.10 There is a specific policy relating to the Melton Hill site which is proposed as follows:

“Policy SCLP12.32: Former Council Offices, Melton Hill

1.33ha of land at the Former Council Offices, Melton Hill, is allocated for a residential-led mixed use development of approximately 100 dwellings.

Development will be expected to be of an exemplar, high quality design, and comply with the following criteria:

- a) Provision of a mix of units including a predominance of flatted dwellings, including affordable housing on-site;*
- b) Design, layout and height of buildings to be appropriate to the site’s location in proximity to heritage assets and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;*
- c) Provision of a high standard of sustainable design;*
- d) Provision of open space providing opportunities for all ages;*
- e) A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required;*
- f) Project level Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required;*
- g) Evidence is required to demonstrate there is adequate Water Recycling Centre capacity or that capacity can be made available;*
- h) Measures to promote non-car modes of travel; and*
- i) Confirmation of adequate capacity in the foul sewerage network or action to upgrade to create the required capacity.*

The provision of small scale community and A3 uses will be supported where they do not have a significant impact on the town centre.”

5.11 Other relevant policies of the emerging East Suffolk - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan are as follows:

SCLP5.8 – Housing Mix
SCLP5.10 – Affordable Housing
SCLP7.2 – Parking Standards
SCLP8.1 – Community Facilities and Assets
SCLP8.2 – Open Space
SCLP10.3 – Environmental Quality

SCLP11.1 – Design Quality
 SCLP11.2 – Residential Amenity
 SCLP11.3 – Historic Environment
 SCLP11.4 – Listed Buildings
 SCLP11.5 – Conservation Areas
 SCLP11.6 – Non Designated Heritage Assets
 SCLP11.7 - Archaeology
 SCLP12.31 – Strategy for Woodbridge
 SCLP3.3 – Settlement Boundaries
 SCLP4.1 – Existing Employment areas

6 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There are a number of competing issues associated with this planning application, which need to be balanced out carefully in reaching a recommendation on this application. These issues and consultation responses which have been received, and outlined in Section 4 of this report, raise a number of issues which are considered via the following headings for ease of reference:
- Principle of development including Sustainability Criteria, policy compliance and relevant planning history.
 - Design, Layout and Visual Appearance
 - Impact on Heritage Assets including NDHA's, Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area.
 - Impact on Residential Amenity, principally in relation to properties in Deben Road
 - Highways Considerations, including parking and access (moved from 2)
 - Landscape and Arboriculture matters including relationship to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Sutton Hoo (Scheduled Ancient Monument)
 - Economic Benefits
 - Other Matters (moved from 9)
 - Application of the Tilted Balance
 - Conclusions and Recommendation
- 6.2 The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Woodbridge, with parts of Melton, where guidance contained in both the NPPF and Local Plan supports additional residential development. The site is considered a brownfield site, being previously developed with the vacant buildings still occupying the site. The NPPF and the Housing White Paper offers great support and encouragement for the development of brownfield sites.
- 6.3 The site is not proposed for allocation within the adopted Site Specific Allocations DPD; however, as the site is located within the settlement boundary it is to be treated as a windfall site. Table 3.2 of the Local Plan makes allowances for windfall provision during the plan period, providing an indicative provision of 850 dwellings across the District as a whole. It is also important to note that the overall housing requirement for the District (7900 new homes to be provided) is a floor as opposed to ceiling figure and members will acknowledge that recent appeal decisions have questioned the continued use of the 7900 figure as being out of date and should be 11000; and that local authorities should seek positively boost the supply of housing (para 47 of NPPF).

- 6.4 Members will note however that the site is proposed for allocation in the emerging East Suffolk - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan via policy SCLP12.32. Given the advanced nature of the emerging plan, the policy contained within can be afforded weight in the determination of applications and appeals. The principle of the development of the site for 100 dwellings complies with this policy, as does the density of development occurring as a result of the level of development.
- 6.5 Policy SP26 of the Local Plan deals specifically with Woodbridge, including parts of Melton. It is acknowledged in Policy SP19 that Woodbridge is a high order settlement (Market Town) and is therefore considered to be highly sustainable when considering the services and facilities contained within, but as stated in Paragraph 4.81 of the Local Plan there are very limited opportunities for new housing provision in the town, with a particular need to meet locally generated needs particularly for affordable housing.
- 6.6 The proposed development would provide a choice of homes of both the market and affordable tenure, and therefore, in the opinion of officers, complies with Policy SP3 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- Melton Neighbourhood Plan
- 6.7 The Melton Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was formally 'made' by Suffolk Coastal District Council (now East Suffolk Council) on 28 January 2018 following referendum and now forms part of the Development Plan. The policies contained within therefore form part of the Development Plan and are relevant to the consideration of this application.
- 6.8 The boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area dissects the application site following the boundary of the Parish boundary. It is therefore appropriate to state that only the northern most portion of the application site lies within the NP boundary and is bound by the policies in the Plan. This includes the vehicular entrance to the site, visitor and extra parking (in accordance with paragraph 5.5 above) and Block G which contains 16 affordable housing apartments.
- 6.9 For a NP to be 'made' it is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained within the Local Plan. Given the application has been tested against the Local Plan and considered to be compliant, it can also be stated therefore that the proposal complies with the NP. For the sake of completeness, the relevant policies and their assessment are provided below:
- 6.10 Policy MEL1: Physical Limits Boundaries. The policy states that development will be focused within the physical limits boundaries as defined on the Proposals Map. Development proposals within the physical limits boundary will be supported subject to compliance with the other policies in the development plan, particularly policy SP19, SP26 and SP28. The proposal is located within the settlement boundary and is therefore supported in principle. It is also important to note that the application has been robustly against these policies as detailed in this report.
- 6.11 Policy MEL2: Dedicated Access For Cyclists And Pedestrians. Although the site is for the most part outside the NP area, the site as a whole makes enhanced provision for pedestrian and cyclist permeability which extends to the wider public as opposed to just the residents of the scheme. This is considered to be a betterment over the existing situation.

- 6.12 Policy MEL3: Views From Footpaths, Cyclepaths And Public Rights Of Way. The policy states that development proposals will be expected to be designed so that they do not have a significant adverse impact on short distance views (up to 500m) of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and, in particular, the River Deben, from any footpath, cyclepath or public right of way. The impact upon the AONB was a key consideration with the planning application when presented to the Planning Committee, and in advance of such Members engaged in a site visit which explored the views from the opposite side of the River Deben and the towpath running along the eastern boundary of the site beyond the railway line. In addition, CGI graphics have been prepared to show how the development would be seen against the backdrop.
- 6.13 It is considered that the views of the development and its setting from the AONB and considered that the breaking up of the massing and bulk created a form of betterment than the existing scenario. The existing treeline would not be broken, the views of the key buildings (church spires and Melton Grange) not disrupted and there is a clear separation from the historic core of Woodbridge. The test in this policy is clear in that any impact has to be significant. In this instance, and taking account the small portion of the site which is affected by this policy, the impact of the development on the wider protected landscape is not considered to be adverse and can be accommodated in an acceptable manner.
- 6.14 Policy MEL6: Parking Standards. Although the LPA has not sought to endorse the County Council parking standards, the formal response from the Highways Authority does not seek to object on grounds of insufficient parking. The scheme as a whole can accommodate the required level of parking to meet its own needs, plus visitor spaces, without creating additional pressure on the public highway. The scheme makes provision for 106 spaces which exceeds a 1:1 ratio and given the sustainable location of the site is considered an acceptable level.
- 6.15 Policy MEL8: Community Facilities. This policy seeks to support new and improved facilities subject to the impacts of such being acceptable. Although outside of the NP boundary, the wider scheme makes provision for community facilities, which were included following consultation with the local community and will benefit residents of the scheme but also the wider area, including those residing within the NP boundary. The proposal therefore complies with this policy.
- 6.16 Policy MEL17: Character Areas. The NP affected area is included within the Melton Road Character Area as defined on the Character Area plan in the NP. This policy deals with all character areas and follow guidance contained in policies SP26, SP15, DM21 and DM23 of the Local Plan, all of which have been considered by the Local Planning Authority. In relation to the area contained within the NP, the internal relationships and those from Block G to The Maltings and The Malt Yard have been considered and deemed to be acceptable. The relationship to the Conservation Area and the adjoining Heritage Asset (Maltings Cottage) have also been considered in detail and found to be of an acceptable relationship. Officers are therefore of the opinion that the issues within this policy have been considered by officers though the evolution of the scheme and in the report initially presented to Committee and found to be acceptable.

- Sustainability Criteria

- 6.17 Both the Local Plan and the NPPF places great emphasis on sustainable development. Sustainable development goes beyond the physical location of a site in relation to services and facilities. There are three strands of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) which are mutually dependant and should not be undertaken in isolation. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as people's quality of life, including replacing poor design with better design, which your officers believe is one of the fundamental benefits of the scheme.
- 6.18 The government is also clear that the presumption should be in favour of sustainable development unless the harm arising is so significant and demonstrable when balanced against the benefits of the scheme as a whole. This strong message is also carried through in the more recent ministerial statements, the White Paper on Housing Growth and the Local Plan. The role of the planning system is to seek ways to foster development and promote development rather than act as an impediment to growth or to stifle growth. It is therefore incumbent on officers to firstly assess the sustainability credentials of a scheme, and if this is accepted should look at ways to make the development acceptable and work with developers to achieve such. This has been evident with the significant pre-application discussions held with officers at the Council which meets the aspirations of the site. It also follows that the Council has on two occasions endorsed the design principles of the development.
- 6.19 Officers have assessed the sustainability credential of the site and believe that there are a number of significant benefits of the scheme in terms of the three strands of sustainable development, and therefore the presumption is in favour of development.
- 6.20 Regarding the physical location of the site, there are a number of services and facilities within easy access of the site to support additional residents, accessible by means other than the private car, including (not an exhaustive list):
- Retail – convenience and comparison. The thoroughfare, primary shopping frontage including food stores (Co-op, butchers, bakers) and the Spa on Melton Hill (associated with the garage). Woodbridge town centre also supports a wide range of comparison stores. The site is 167m at its closest point to the start of the primary retail core.
 - Education Establishments - Melton Primary School, Woodbridge Primary School, St Mary's Primary School, Kyson Primary School, Farlingaye High School, The Abbey Prep School and pre-prep school and Woodbridge School
 - Woodbridge Library, located in New Street off Oak Lane car park
 - Woodbridge Cinema and Seckford Theatre
 - Public Transport - Turban Centre bus station, bus stops immediately adjacent the site, Melton railway station and Woodbridge railway station. These means of public transport provide links direct to Lowestoft, Martlesham, Ipswich and London for employment, retail and leisure purposes.
 - Leisure Facilities - Woodbridge swimming pool and leisure centre (new facility recently completed) in addition to Farlingaye High School which is available for community use.
 - Public Open Space - Elmhurst Park, Melton Park, Woodbridge Skatepark, Kingston field (including tennis facilities) and Woodbridge Town Football ground.

- Employment opportunities in Woodbridge, Rendlesham and Melton (Dock Lane / Riduna Park / Maltings Approach). It is noted that new office accommodation is being developed currently at Riduna Park.
- Pubs, restaurants and cafes in both Woodbridge and Melton
- Medical Centre at Notcutts and doctors at Little St John Street and opticians in The Thoroughfare.
- Places of worship of various denominations
- Public pay and display car parks are within walking distance of the site.

6.21 This is a key benefit of the site and these clear sustainability credentials weigh heavily in favour granting planning permission in line with policies SP1 and SP1a of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

- Loss of Employment Site

6.22 The lawful use of the site is office which is use class (B1) and therefore the loss of existing employment use needs to be considered in light of Policy DM10 of the Local Plan. Policy DM10 sets out the criteria by which proposals for the loss of employment will be tested. The site was until December 2016 occupied by Suffolk Coastal District Council, who have subsequently relocated to an alternative site in Melton, which is also within easy reach of Woodbridge. This has subsequently left the site vacant. It is therefore the case that the employment use of the site has not been lost but has been relocated within the immediate geographic area, and employment catchment area. The development at Riduna Park, currently under construction, will also create more employment opportunities within the local area which will help to counter the loss of the Melton Hill site and ensure that a range of employment opportunities are retained. The Riduna Park site also accommodates and makes provision for more flexible employment opportunities than the Melton Hill site could accommodate.

6.23 Officers believe that insofar that the current use has been wholly relocated to a suitable alternative premise in the local area, the site could be redeveloped for non-employment uses in that it would yield substantial planning benefits in allowing alternative uses (as noted by subsection b of Policy DM10). In reaching conclusions on this matter full regard has been had to the cumulative impact of the series of development proposals being considered namely the new office location for the Local Authority at Riduna Park and the redeveloped Melton Hill site: -

- To make the best use of the opportunities offered by the site,
- To create a distinctive, attractive and sustainable environment, with new buildings and spaces to enhance and improve the existing environment,
- To maximise the opportunity to create new development of high, and lasting, design quality that respects the sites' location,
- To stimulate physical and social regeneration for the benefit of all,
- To ensure that a residential scheme, or a combination of commercial and residential, would meet the needs of the local area,
- To provide for a significant proportion of affordable housing, on the basis of agreed Council policy, having regard to the need to achieve a mixed and balanced community,
- To ensure that any development has regard to the amenities of nearby residential properties, in particular those in Deben Road, to the south of the site,

- To provide a range of housing types and mix of dwelling unit sizes to accord with Council policy.

- 6.24 Residential or mixed-use schemes have the ability to create an environment whereby a site is occupied and utilised by a variety of users. The presence of a number of residential units, including both private and affordable tenure, can contribute towards creating a safe and secure environment. It is also evident via the submission that the proposal does include some employment elements, namely the café/shop, community space and concierge. These elements seek to retain an employment use on the site and therefore offer compliance with Policy DM10.
- 6.25 It is also considered by officers that should the site be developed entirely for an employment use, then it would be to a scale greater than the former Council use and is unlikely to be suitable for one operator. It is likely that any redevelopment for employment uses would include a number of smaller units which all would generate more separate buildings, more vehicular activity and hours of operation greater than the former use, i.e. would include weekend operations and hours greater than the council operated. It could therefore be reasonably argued that any employment use would be more detrimental to residential amenity and the highway network than a sympathetic residential led scheme.
- 6.26 Given the location within the settlement boundary, its brownfield nature and sustainable location, Officers are of the opinion that the principle of development is acceptable and the proposal complies with policy and guidance contained in the Local Plan and NPPF. Officers have considered the implications of Policy DM10 and believe for the reasons stated above that there are sufficient grounds to endorse a residential led scheme with a smaller element of employment use and believe that there would be benefits of a residential scheme, whilst also securing employment use within the catchment area.

Design, Layout and Visual Appearance

- 6.27 Members will note that a number of objections from interested parties relate to the proposed design and its overtly modern approach, as is detailed in Section 4 of this report. There has always been the case with the application which has generated passionate views on the design credentials with the two previous applications. Members will note that the design ethos of the site has been considered acceptable to the Local Planning Authority via the two previous planning applications and in the opinion of officers, the small deviations to the scheme do not alter the assessment with regards to the design approach applied. Acknowledging that design is a subjective matter, officers do not believe there are changes in circumstances which would warrant a different approach to be taken. Indeed, the thrust of the NPPF (2019) and the emerging policy strengthens the position of seeking a high-quality design, which is delivered through this application.

Attention is also drawn to the fact that there has been an independent review of the initial application by the independent RIBA Suffolk Design Review Panel, an independent review process, as is encouraged in the NPPF, who have endorsed the design approach.

- 6.28 In urban design terms, the site has a number of constraints which will influence its planning and layout:
- The railway line presents a barrier to the land and river beyond,
 - Connectivity by foot into adjacent areas to the north and south is potentially poor,

- Levels changes between the site and areas to the north and south are significant in places,
- The site has a significant sloping topography that principally falls across from west to east,
- The eastern extent of the site falls within a flood risk area,
- The site is bounded by existing close-by residential uses to the north, south and west,
- The site contains non-designated heritage assets at the site's frontage,
- The site has a high degree of visibility in long views from the Sutton shore.

6.29 From these constraints, however, opportunities will arise and for any design to be successful, these should be taken into account and creatively utilised, which include:

- Using high quality building and urban design to create the site's own identity such that its local distinctiveness will arise out of being distinctive locally,
- Exploiting existing site features to generate a positively characterised layout of buildings, spaces, aspect, views, routes and edges,
- Acknowledging the existing streetscene and townscape contribution of the historic buildings at the front of the site that are of local importance,
- Being a good neighbour to existing surrounding buildings.

6.30 Significant emphasis is placed on securing good and inclusive design within the NPPF and decision makers are strongly urged to look positively at high quality developments which create a strong sense of place. The NPPF (para 131) states the following, which is considered applicable and true in this instance:

"In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings. "

6.31 There are a number of design and visual appearance elements associated with the scheme that are considered in detail below.

- Layout

6.32 The principal organising element of the layout is the strong concept of the landscape thoroughfare. This public pedestrian route that connects Thoroughfare and a new public space on it, to another new public space at the bottom of the site that consists of a designed destination which will also link laterally to Deben Road. The pedestrian only link to Deben Road is proposed to be secured as such by planning condition. Via the consultation process undertaken by the development team, a key issue raised by residents along Deben Road was that the link road was not available for vehicular use and be restricted to pedestrian/cycle only.

6.33 This proposed thoroughfare provides not just a route through the site but also a key view – one that will be retained to be enjoyed by the public and residents alike – that is, the view across the River Deben to Sutton Hoo (Tranmer House and Reconstructed Mound 2). This is an important view and the scheme as proposed would 'gift' a public view of a nationally important asset which does not currently exist. It is also noted that some of the properties immediately opposite the site, fronting The Thoroughfare, would also benefit from gaining

this view which is currently shielded by buildings. This is considered a significant benefit of the proposal.

- 6.34 Another important concept of the proposal is the creation of a car-free layout. The proposed layout ensures that outdoor space is given over wholly to pedestrian and cycle routes, private garden space, public space, semi-public space and space that can be used communally by residents and visitors alike. A car-free space provides the opportunity for a calm, soft and green setting that is animated by people rather than by traffic. The idea of utilising the site topography to create underground parking for the entire site in one area is bold and, again, distinctive as an approach which is welcomed by officers. Another benefit of hiding the carpark from public views, is that more of the site can be given over to development and seek to ensure that there is the efficient use of land and that the proposal can bolster the supply of housing of both the market and affordable tenures. The application of these two principal layout design drivers - the public landscape thoroughfare and the car-free layout – are considered to be outstanding in their approach and which set a high level of urban design aspiration for this site.
- 6.35 The layout pattern is interesting in that it reflects aspects of the surrounding context and urban grain: the frontage blocks face the street to provide enclosure and reflect the surrounding alignment; the blocks adjacent to the Maltings reflect the same orientation; the lower section of the site which is proposed to have townhouses has a more conventional alignment typical of a small-scale street such as Deben Road. The overall pattern of blocks bears similarity to existing layouts to the north of the site, as illustrated in the Design and Access Statement. Thus, the layout pattern is designed to mediate between the surrounding mixed urban grain and effect a transition between the contrasting urban grains to the north and south of the site.
- 6.36 The layout of the apartment blocks is deliberately angled to utilise aspect and view and helps explain the form of layout: the desire to maximise and optimise the views across to the river and the countryside beyond, and surrounding townscape. This is easier to achieve where a block is angled such that three elevations face outwards. By creating forms with three elevations, it also means the roof elevation, as the dramatically angled roof forms allow their exploitation to provide light and view. In this way the layout has a functionality derived from the desire to exploit site-specific characteristics which gives a degree of order and reason to what, initially, would appear as a random and wilful layout. The resultant layout of blocks is highly distinctive and of outstanding quality in the judgement of officers. As part of the site visit undertaken Members also viewed the application site from within Sutton Hoo. It is evident from viewing from the opposite side of the river that the proposed development, by virtue of the ground levels changes, would sit lower than the tree line and therefore not affect the skyline significantly. The church spires, important landmarks of the town, which are clearly evident, would also not be affected by this proposal. It is also clear that the site is somewhat divorced from the historic core of Woodbridge, sitting on the edge of the town, and therefore although well related to the town centre, long distance views of the historic core of Woodbridge would be unaffected by this proposal. Notwithstanding, the new buildings would clearly be visible to the naked eye, but their visibility is not a reason to withhold the grant of planning permission. It is also important to note that Sutton Parish Council do not object to the application.
- 6.37 The NPPF places significant emphasis to promoting high quality design, with a clear steer that the government is seeking high standards of design in all aspects of planning. In negotiating

on applications local planning authorities are told that they should seek to push the boundaries on design seeking innovative and evolutionary solutions for sites. This application seeks to endorse this message and whilst it is accepted that there are concerns raised locally on the design approach, decision takers should not be afraid to take bold decisions on design and should not *“stifle innovation, originality or initiative”*.

- Spaces

- 6.38 Of high significance and great merit in this layout are the public spaces that are created as ‘anchors’ at the top and the bottom of the site, that is at either end of the landscape thoroughfare, itself a space of high importance. These are spaces that will help animate the street frontage and provide a destination for travel through the site (in person or via sight), drawn by the key view across the river to Sutton Hoo. These public spaces do not currently exist, and it is an outstanding feature of the application that they are proposed here. Even though additional landscaping is proposed at the top of the site, adjacent Melton Hill, its role is to soften the entrance to the site rather than act as an impediment to using the area for open space.
- 6.39 The public space at the top of the site is intended to be versatile for use in conjunction with the community use of one of the frontage blocks; and could also be partly used by the retail space in the other frontage block, which could be a café, for example. In this way the public space will be enjoyed by residents and passers-by alike. Indeed, it is worth noting that, due to the extent of new commercial and residential floorspace in the land immediately to the north of the application site, there is an increasing footfall past this site towards the town centre.
- 6.40 It has been raised in the succession of applications, that there is not a need for any additional cafés or shops given the existence of such in The Thoroughfare. The perceived need or not, or matters in relation to competition, are not material planning considerations, but rather a commercial judgement made by the developer. Officers believe that there are significant benefits for the inclusion and seeks to ensure integration of the development into the wider community, in addition to economic benefits that would ensue. It is not considered that the creation of a small retail unit/café would have any negative impact on the other such facilities located within the town centre but will seek to complement the town centre. The inclusion of such is also supported in the emerging planning policy for the site
- 6.41 The inclusion of community facilities within developments is encouraged in paragraph 92 of the NPPF which states:
- “To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:*
- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*
 - b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*
 - c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*

- d) *ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*
- e) *ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.”*

- 6.42 The public space at the bottom of the site utilises its topography and the fact that this area is undevelopable due to the inclusion within the flood zone, to create a positive feature that is a destination at the end of the landscape thoroughfare. This space also links into Deben Road, which increases the opportunities available for its use (to be retained as pedestrian link only by planning condition). The space appears to have been designed as one that can be occupied as a viewing platform and to have a soft, green informal character that will form an effective contrast to the more urban public space at the top of the site. The design of these two spaces is effective and well-considered. The exact details, in terms of the design, planting and materials are to be agreed via the submission of details reserved by planning condition.
- 6.43 The character of the landscape thoroughfare space will be ever-altering whilst one transits up or down it – the town scale at the top will flow into a smaller scale ending in an open space bounded by riparian and countryside views. Such an experience has the opportunity to afford the pedestrian a rich experience similar in nature to the best that historic townscapes do have to offer.
- 6.44 Other space within the layout is designed as for either private or communal use. The former includes private terraces to ground floor apartments and gardens to the townhouses in the lower area of the site. Communal gardens are located adjacent the apartment blocks and are designed for use by their occupants. This designation of space ensures that there will be a green setting to most of the residences.
- 6.45 The intermediate space along the landscape thoroughfare forms an effective transition between the two character areas of this site – between the apartment blocks and the townhouses – and provides important connectivity. In respect of the hierarchy of spaces, it is important that there is a delineation between spaces that are for use privately by residents and those that can be shared with other public users of the site. This ensures that the site is legible in terms of where people should be going or will want to go. A condition is proposed on the application to seek the approval of landscape management plan to ensure that the communal spaces (hard and soft landscaped) are maintained in a high standard in perpetuity to ensure that these public benefits are retained.

- Routes, Connectivity and Legibility

- 6.46 Legibility is the concept that a layout provides for recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around. People intuitively navigate their familiar urban spaces through established uses, recognisable buildings or intriguing vistas. Places of anonymous character and bewildering route-finding alienate residents and visitors, and urban design has come a long way since the 1980s to understand the perceptual journeys that we traverse and then translate into legible layouts. Legibility arises out of a clear hierarchy of routes with good connectivity providing a high degree of permeability into surrounding existing areas.
- 6.47 In this respect the design maximises the limited opportunities that the site offers. By providing a new public thoroughfare through the site between new public spaces, and a new

public connection onto Deben Road and access to the riverside beyond, the design links the layout into the existing urban fabric, constrained as it is by the lack of connectivity opportunities along its northern, eastern and southern edges.

- 6.48 Of great interest here is the primacy given to the pedestrian in terms of the hierarchy of routes. This is the complete reverse of practically every other development proposal, where the hierarchy is established by the delineation of routes designed primarily for vehicle use and with a secondary and tertiary network of pedestrian and cycling spaces following on. Of outstanding quality is that here the organisation of routes is predicated on the primacy of the pedestrian – in his or her own space not ‘shared’ by vehicles – and this is both innovative and laudable: a principal route animated by people, not vehicles.
- 6.49 The landscape thoroughfare forms the principal route (and space) which: connects the site to its context at the top and bottom; connects the new public spaces; joins the entrances to the apartments blocks and townhouses; connects to the underground parking area; and which has its own defined character and which forms an easy route to follow. It is of great importance that this principal route is not a road but a footpath and one which will perform several important roles in connecting up the residential and spatial elements of the site and in a way that is clear and easy to understand in use. This is an outstanding element of the design.
- 6.50 As a consequence of the layout, there will be a physical separation of vehicle and pedestrian routes, such that vehicles have a separate and defined access to the site in approximately the same position as exists currently. This is limited in extent to the top corner of the site where two-storey parking will be provided in that area of the existing site where the topography takes a ‘dip’ towards the Maltings. From the car park there are proposed pedestrian connections to a centrally positioned circular access core and separately to the lower area of the site. Fire tender access is permissible via a service road as far as the intermediate public space on the landscape thoroughfare, which can double as a turning head; access for ambulances and maintenance will be permissible to the bottom of the site. The success of this layout where vehicle access is secondary to pedestrian access will be partly predicated on the management of the site for deliveries, waste and servicing.
- Density and building heights
- 6.51 The approach to density and building heights in the design produces two differing sorts of character areas in the upper and lower parts of the site. The upper part is characterised by apartment blocks of differing scales; the lower part is characterised mostly by townhouses facing on to the greensward and public space at the lower end of the site. The decision to design a scheme that utilises apartment blocks as its principal typology has allowed for the creation of a dense environment and the maximisation of resultant open space greater than that which may have been envisaged when the planning brief was prepared by SCDC initially. The deviation from the planning brief does not make for an unacceptable scheme as the purpose of the brief was to demonstrate that a residential development could be accommodated on the site rather than specifically dictate the form, layout and numbers of the development. Concerns raised by some objectors that the number of dwellings has increased from 71 to 100. It is important to note that the design brief (which suggested 71 dwellings) was not formally adopted, formalised or consulted on but was a document to show that the site could support residential development. Over the three applications submitted the number of dwellings proposed and considered has always been at 100 and

this has been accepted as appropriate by this Council. This level of development has been subsequently set within the emerging policy for the site as referred to earlier in this report.

- 6.52 The density of development resulting from the proposed development equates to 76 dwellings per hectare, which has been achieved principally through the removal of cars from the scheme and the use of apartment blocks with varying heights through the site. Paragraph 3.165 of the current Local Plan deals with density of development and describes the density proposed as high density which could be considered as being suitable in the more sustainable locations in major centres and market towns, close to a good range of services and facilities. Reference has previously been drawn to the high level of services and facilities in easy reach of the application site. The density of the site is also supported in the emerging plan as the policy promotes the site for 100 dwellings.
- 6.53 It is appreciated that this aspect of the proposal may be contentious locally, officers are satisfied that the scale of the blocks has been carefully considered such that it has been reduced along the street frontage to respect the streetscene context; and to Blocks A, B and C to avoid an unacceptable overbearing impact on neighbouring properties in Deben Road. It is also important to note that the storey heights of each block vary across their depth from, for example, five to three or two, or four to three; and that these are not, therefore, monolithic five storey blocks at their highest, and also take account of the level changes across the site. In this way, some of the scale impact of the design is mitigated.
- 6.54 On long views into the site these blocks will establish a presence and, positively designed, officers fully support the validity of this: a bold and confident approach to place-making and the creation of a twenty-first century townscape. It is an approach wholly appropriate in calibre for a town like Woodbridge which, in areas, enjoys the highest quality evolved townscape. It would be very welcome to see this calibre being reflected at other development sites in our District's towns.

- Edges

- 6.55 When considering development proposals, it is always important to consider how the designed layout will meet the edges of the site. It is important to understand that the edges have been taken into account by the layout and not ignored. The northern edge of the site consists of the vehicular access to the site including a service area, visitor parking and a bin store; and the ramped access and egress from the underground parking area. The north-eastern edge of the site consists of the underground parking area and the pedestrian access to it from the intermediate public space on the landscape thoroughfare. The parking area and egress is partially surmounted by Blocks G and H.
- 6.56 There is little doubt that this is the 'business' end of the site in terms of the activities that are focussed here, including the relocation of the substation to the area next to the proposed bin store. This is a sensitive edge, given the proximity of recent and existing residential development. However, the position of the access off the main road and the route to the underground parking means that the route is the shortest that it can be, to take account of the required gradient; and that use of a residential block on top of the parking means that this does not become a 'multi-storey car park' feature on the site. Indeed, it will only be visible along the north-eastern edge of the site where planting should mitigate some of its negative effects on neighbouring properties. A drawback to this arrangement is that part of the space

that surrounds Block G on two sides is not attractive communal gardens but a ramped vehicle access and stepped underground car park.

- 6.57 In respect of the southern edge, this is shown to consist of a mix of private rear gardens and rear communal gardens and private ground floor terraces serving apartment blocks A, B and C. All of these are south-facing and back on to existing rear private gardens, which is appropriate. The existing green edge will be reinforced to mitigate some of the impact of the new development on adjacent gardens and this is welcome.
- Built form, character and materials
- 6.58 Of note with this scheme is the distinctive form of development proposed, not just in terms of its car-free and public landscape thoroughfare approach, but the form, mass and layout of the apartment blocks and townhouses. What is proposed here is a new kind of place-making through the careful juxtaposition of forms and spaces to create townscape of interest and positive character. This approach has been wholly derived from the applicant and his architects' conceptual approach to this site. The strength of this approach was evident at the outset and has been carried all the way through the pre-application process and public consultations, with the result that the proposed scheme is in the opinion of officers an innovative and outstanding example of urban design.
- 6.59 In terms of the character of the proposal officers initially had discussions with the applicant team over the idea of 'Woodbridgeness', and again Members will note that this is an issue which has been raised by some parties through the consultation period (section 4 of the report refers). It is important that the design therefore respects key characteristics of its context, including the use of materials, scale and urban grain, for example. The proposals here include the use of white brick, red brick (in Flemish bond), and natural slate and clay plain tiles – a palette of materials, the diversity of which is evident in the town. The mixed scale of buildings also reflects that of its context – from modest terraced forms, large villas in generous gardens to buildings of substantial scale as at the Maltings and Malt Yard, which are substantial buildings. The urban grain of the proposal again borrows from its neighbours and melds them to create a site-specific response.
- 6.60 In these ways this proposal is entirely suited to its situation in Woodbridge/Melton because it could not have been designed for any other site. The scheme design is Woodbridge in character – appropriate and justified and contrary to some comments which have been raised is a bespoke design solution for this site.
- 6.61 When considering the historic evolution of Woodbridge and why the approach to built form and character here can be judged appropriate, it is important to consider that Woodbridge's townscape has evolved over centuries. This has provided a handsome historic townscape of the highest quality with evidence of late medieval, Georgian and Victorian architecture gifted to us by preceding generations, to the highest standard of design and quality, making the town special. New developments should provide design of our era, of the twenty-first century, reflecting the way that we build and live today and not aping past styles. This point is illustrated by looking at the area of Woodbridge around St Johns Street. This is a fine example of Victorian town planning, with formal streets and architecture of white brick and slate. It immediately abuts the medieval core of Woodbridge and yet looks nothing like it in character. It looked entirely novel at the time and reflects its era; and is now cherished townscape.

- 6.62 It is considered by officers that the design will promote local distinctiveness through being distinctive locally – which is proper – and that its built form and character are original and innovative in approach and of a high standard, reflecting the quality of its wider urban context and adding positively to the continuing architectural evolution of Woodbridge's and Melton's townscapes. The proposal is therefore seen as a dynamic and modern interpretation of 'Woodbridgeness'.
- 6.63 It is appropriate that the proposed replacement landmark building (Building E) to the streetscene frontage is the building that includes two floors of community use. This will be a semi-public building and its architecture (prominent position, distinctive cantilevered design with a glazed ground floor, and use of white brick uniquely on the site) expresses its importance in the streetscene and wider context. This building also plays a key role in the management of the site in terms of the concierge facility.
- 6.64 Building D to the frontage includes a retail unit with living accommodation over. This idea of 'living over the shop' is a strong feature of Woodbridge's Thoroughfare. This block also has domestic scale gardens included which relate to the more traditional townhouse-garden relationship visible opposite the application site.
- 6.65 It is also welcomed that the retail unit will address both the street frontage and also the new public square and will hopefully add activity to both. Like the community building (E) the glazed open-ness of the ground floor signals the different uses to the residential uses above and behind; and will offer welcoming spaces to use. The muted colour palette of building D references the existing building in this position and reflects the palette of villas opposite (dark/weathered brick and natural slate roof).
- 6.66 Members will note that whilst on the whole there is endorsement to the design and layout there are some detailed design aspects which could benefit from some further refinement which are considered minor in nature and do not go to the heart of the scheme. In general, though, the scheme is considered to be well thought out, innovative, responsive to its context and an appropriate solution for the site. The applicants have described the scheme as comprising "villas in the park" which is an apt description on how the scheme has arrived. Confidence in the appropriateness of the scheme is also given by the review, and endorsement of, on more than one occasion by the RIBA Suffolk Design Review Panel.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 6.67 In determining the application, it is necessary to assess the impact of it on three different types of heritage asset: a Conservation Area, listed buildings and two non-designated heritage assets. Different statutory duties and policy tests apply to each type of asset.
- 6.68 The NPPF (2019) places greater weight on the protection of assets than its 2012 and 2018 predecessors. The relevant paragraphs have been included within this report but do not alter or change the sentiment afforded to such by officers in this instance.
- 6.69 The Council's Principal Design and Conservation Officer has described the significance of the Non Designated Heritage Assets and ascribed the level of harm that will arise from their total loss. Not only should Members take that into account in their deliberations but when they come to weigh all the relevant factors in the planning balance in arriving at their

determination, they will need to ascribe a weight to the significance and harm identified by Officers.

- 6.70 In respect of what ascribing weight means, the NPPF, for examples, states that '*great weight*' should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering the impact of proposed development on its significance. It goes on to state that the '*more important the asset, the greater the weight should be*'. Thus, in the planning balance, decision makers could give considerable, some or limited weight to the significance and harm that officers have. The weight then ascribed is weighed against the other planning benefits that would occur in arriving at a balanced judgment.
- 6.71 For Conservation Areas, the statutory duty under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. However, the duty only applies when the planning authority is determining a planning application in respect of "*buildings or other land in a conservation area*". Where development is proposed outside the boundary of a conservation area – as is the case in this instance - the statutory duty is not engaged.
- 6.72 For listed buildings, s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. The duty is engaged when the local planning authority is considering whether to approve development which affects a listed building or its setting. Therefore, even if a listed building is not directly affected by a proposed development, the duty will still apply if the development affects the setting of the building. In the case of *East Northamptonshire DC v Secretary of State* ('Barnwell Manor'), the Court of Appeal held that the desirability of preserving the settings of listed buildings should not simply be given careful consideration by the decision-maker for the purpose of deciding whether there would be some harm, but should be given "*considerable importance and weight*" when the decision-maker carries out the balancing exercise; and that a finding of harm to a listed building or its setting gives rise to a "*strong presumption*" against granting permission.
- 6.73 There are no statutory duties concerning non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.74 The National Planning Policy Framework identifies protection and enhancement of the historic environment as an important element of sustainable development. The core planning principles of the NPPF are observed in paragraph 17 which includes the need to:
- 'conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life for this and future generations'.*
- 6.75 Paragraph 192 says that when determining planning applications, account should be taken of:
- 'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation', 'the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality' and 'the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'*

- 6.76 The NPPF at paragraph 194 requires planning authorities to place ‘great weight’ on the conservation of designated heritage assets, and states that the more important the asset the greater the weight should be. It also recognises that significance can be harmed by development within the setting of an asset. This paragraph also states that ‘any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification’. It is important to note that this paragraph applies to all designated heritage assets. Therefore, although the statutory duty in s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is not engaged by development outside the boundary of a conservation area, the NPPF makes clear that (i) the conservation area still has a setting and (ii) the approach should be the same for all types of designated heritage asset, therefore harm to the setting of a conservation area should be treated in the same way as harm to a listed building or its setting when a planning application is being determined.
- 6.77 Paragraph 195 of the NPPF applies where development would lead to “*substantial harm to or total loss of significance*” of a designated heritage asset. Where that is the case, it advises that planning permission should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or four other criteria are satisfied (which relate to the absence of reasonable or viable uses of the asset). In the case of *Bedford BC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government*, the High Court said that “*substantial harm*” meant “*such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced*”.
- 6.78 Paragraph 196 of the NPPF applies where a development proposal would lead to “*less than substantial harm*” to the significance of a designated heritage asset. In such cases, it says that the harm (which, as per paragraph 132, must be given great weight) should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 6.79 In the case of *Jones v Mordue* the Court of Appeal confirmed that this part of the NPPF corresponds with the statutory duty in s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and, therefore, if a decision maker works through paragraphs 131-134 of the NPPF according to their terms, the statutory duty will have been complied with.
- 6.80 In the case of non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 197 of the NPPF says that the effect of a proposed development on their significance should be taken into account, and that where a development would affect a non-designated heritage asset either directly or indirectly a “*balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset*”. Reference is drawn to the Council’s adopted technical guidance on NDHA’s.
- 6.81 The NPPF at highlights the opportunity for local planning authorities to look for new development within the setting of heritage assets that will enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that therefore preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably. It states that “*Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted*”.

6.82 With regard to the setting of heritage assets, this is defined in the NPPF glossary. The NPPF states that elements of a setting that make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset may affect the ability to appreciate that significance. The NPPG further advises that the extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations and that, although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. Historic England advises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset.

- Setting of Woodbridge Conservation Area.

6.83 The application site falls outside the Woodbridge Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset, which means that the development proposal will not affect it directly. The site partly abuts the conservation area along a short section of the site's frontage. The application site can be described as falling within the setting of the conservation area. Woodbridge Conservation Area was designated in 1969 and extended in 1971 and 1975. It was re-designated in 1990.

6.84 Woodbridge has an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal SPD (July 2011). That part of the Conservation Area closest to the site falls within Character Area 9, summarised on p19 of the Appraisal as:

"Thoroughfare, from Cross Corner to Pytches Road. The commercial heart of the town, with a continuous built up frontage of 18th & 19th century vernacular facades standing on the back edge of the footway. There are fine detached and semi-detached Victorian villas north of Sun Lane".

6.85 The Heritage Appraisal identifies nos 103-117 opposite the site's frontage as significant buildings with important front boundary walls. There are no important views or important open/green/tree space in that part of the Conservation Area that abuts the application site. This area makes a moderate contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

6.86 Reference to the north end of the Thoroughfare is made within the Heritage Appraisal, where it states that:

"the landform rises on the west side of the road and the houses are built well above the road level with generous front gardens".

6.87 The Appraisal states that the:

"end of the Thoroughfare, beyond Sun Lane, contains Nos. 103 to 117, a good group of Late Victorian and Edwardian houses, alternating between detached and semi-detached plans, set back above the road in spacious front gardens, enclosed by garden walls, with gates and piers and clipped hedges. The construction of the row commenced with the high number prior to 1875."

- 6.88 More detailed architectural descriptions of these buildings follow in the text. Clearly, this area of the town up to the edge of the parish boundary with Melton was subject to modest residential expansion in the late Victorian and Edwardian era.
- 6.89 In the Conservation Area Management Plan that forms part of the Appraisal, it is stated that:
- “proper account should also always be taken of the impact that new development adjacent a conservation area can have on its setting. Although a Conservation Area boundary represents a demarcation enclosing a special area of historic interest, changes immediately outside of it can still have a significant impact on character and appearance. The setting of the conservation area, therefore, has an intrinsic value that must be acknowledged in any proposals for change to it.”*
- 6.90 This wording reflects that of the NPPF (which actually post-dates the Appraisal) which refers to the potential for the significance of a designated heritage asset (including a Conservation Area) being harmed through development within its setting.
- 6.91 It remains the view of Officers that the application site, itself, does not contribute importantly to the history of Woodbridge as it falls well outside the medieval origins and historic core of the town. The site lies adjacent the important route joining Ipswich to Great Yarmouth via Melton and Lowestoft but appears to have remained undeveloped until the 19th century. Areas of land around the application site became industrialised during the late 18th century and then 19th century with the advent of the railway. Late 19th century industrial activities in the area of the site included brickworks and associated kilns, iron foundry (specialising in the manufacture of agricultural equipment), timber yard, osier bed, and maltings. Historic uses of the application site included as a plantation and residential use and garden land allied to the expansion of Woodbridge northwards in the later 19th century. Brickworks and kilns were located immediately beyond the application site to the north-east in the 19th century and also to the south, one of which on Deben Road is now a dwelling (and Grade II listed). Not until the late 19th century, therefore, did Woodbridge’s development entirely encroach upon the parish boundary with Melton. Thus, the development of this area of the town around the application site is relatively modern and the contribution of the application site to the significance of the conservation area as part of its setting is very limited. Also, worth noting in this respect is that the application site, itself, is occupied by the now vacant Council offices which – with the exception of the two non-designated heritage assets – are modern, being mostly post-WWII in origin and including extensive areas of parking.
- 6.92 The Conservation Area in Woodbridge is very large (103 ha), such that the Appraisal identifies eleven character areas within it. It has, therefore, a very wide and extensive setting in all directions to it. The application site forms a very modest and minor part of that extensive setting. Its position is such, however, that the proposed development on it will impact views into the north-east corner of the Conservation Area from the wider area, for example Sutton shore and Sutton Hoo. As stated above, the development will affect the ability to appreciate the significance of the conservation area by intervening in longer views across to the north-east corner of the Conservation Area. However, the minor extent of conservation area affected (and its moderate contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area) will not restrict the ability to appreciate the significance of the wider conservation area as a designated heritage asset.

- 6.93 In its section on the setting of the Conservation Area, the Appraisal states that the River Deben and its farmed and tree-ed eastern banks of the Sutton shore:

“form the setting to the east of the Conservation Area. The estuarine, open and undeveloped character of this edge forms a significant contrast to the built form of the town and provides key views across and into the conservation area”.

- 6.94 This indicates that the main views of the conservation area from Sutton shore which contribute to significance are those directly into it where the boundary of the conservation area abuts the River Deben. Development of the application site would not impact on these key views apart from being seen incidentally in a wider view, spatially removed from the edge of the conservation area and in the context of other large and more modern development to the north of the application site.
- 6.95 In respect of the historic frontage buildings proposed for removal it is accepted that these do contribute positively to the significance of this part of the conservation area. The position, character and historic derivation of these two buildings complement those opposite that fall within the conservation area, although it must be borne in mind that neither building was considered to justify inclusion within the Conservation Area at the time of designation or in subsequent boundary reviews. Loss of these buildings will harm their positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area and cause less-than-substantial harm to the Conservation Area’s significance. It has already been commented that the design is considered to be the outstanding quality of the proposal in terms of design, but there will need to be other public benefits of the proposal which fall outside the scope of these comments and which will need to be taken into account by the decision maker. Officers remain of the opinion that the other positive benefits of the scheme include the housing delivery to meet identified housing targets, delivery of policy compliant level of affordable housing, economic benefits and additional spend in the local community, the removal of the unsightly buildings from the site and the improved views of the river and Sutton Hoo that would ensue.
- 6.96 In Officers view, there are no other adverse impacts on the setting of the Conservation Area arising from the development proposal. It is inherent within urban context that change takes place over time, that buildings come and go and are replaced with newer forms of development. This pattern is shown to be acceptable within Conservation Areas (on a large scale, for example, at Whisstocks) as much as it can be outside it within their setting, where that setting is already developed. The scale and character of the proposed development in its design will represent change (positive in terms of design quality; negative in terms of the loss of the historic frontage buildings), but a change to one very small part of the very extensive setting to the Conservation Area of Woodbridge, only.
- Setting of Listed Buildings
- 6.97 The Grade II listed Maltings Cottage is 17th century in origin, timber framed and rendered with a tiled roof. The Cottage’s principal elevation is at right angles to Melton Hill, facing the application site, and is visible and thereby prominent on approach northwards along the Thoroughfare to Melton Hill. Its distinctive gabled end elevation is also prominent within the streetscene. Its name suggests it was occupied in association with the maltings that succeeded the brickworks on the nearby site at the end of the 19th century, although the Archaeological

DBA report suggests that the industry originates nearby in the 17th century; this association also contributes to its significance.

- 6.98 The setting of the Cottage consists primarily of its garden curtilage and the space to the front of it which provides the existing vehicular access and parking area to the former Council offices. This space is important as it contributes to an appreciation of the significance of the Cottage and is an established and historic view which, although encroached upon by built development in the 19th century and 20th century, remains intact. This key view across to Maltings Cottage is important in understanding its significance. The view reveals its principal elevation, vernacular form and traditional materials of construction along with its unusual gable end-on-to-the road orientation.
- 6.99 The application site appears to have enjoyed no likely historic relationship to the Cottage in terms of ownership or use, other than that the northern access area may have formed its front garden originally (this is speculative). The application site was developed for residential and garden use during the 19th century as Woodbridge expanded towards the parish boundary with Melton. However, this development and the site's existing buildings are incidental to the history and development of Maltings Cottage in Melton parish and, thus it is judged that the application site does not contribute towards the significance of the Cottage.
- 6.100 The existing character of the setting in the area of the application site is that of built form consisting of a series of linked volumes creating the impression of continuous development of predominantly, but not exclusively, modern appearance. The proposed development will retain the effect of built development within the setting of the Cottage, return it to predominantly residential use and preserve the important and established space and view to the immediate frontage of the Cottage which ensures appreciation of its significance. That the actual development introduces built form of a different use, architectural character and scale than that which exists is incidental provided that its position does not impinge upon what has been identified as a visual and spatial buffer to its frontage, which it does not.

For these reasons, therefore, it is judged by officers that there would be no harm arising from the proposed development within the Cottage's setting and that its setting would, thereby, be preserved.

- 6.101 The significance of the late 18th century Grade II listed terrace at no.s 104-110 Thoroughfare to the south of the application site is derived from its historic origins, urban form, profile, materials and its position adjacent the principal route out of Woodbridge to Melton. They contribute to the same street scene as the frontage buildings on the application site and allows the way in which this part of Woodbridge extended around and beyond the pre-existing terrace during the later part of the 19th century and early 20th century to be read. The townscape has continued to evolve around and within the setting of the terrace during the 20th century and this is inherent within its urban nature.
- 6.102 The principle of the redevelopment of the application site will not cause harm to the terrace's setting. The design of the development replaces built form with built form and restores the residential character of the site with gardens in proximity to the terrace. The development proposal, therefore, would represent a change in this part of the terrace's setting would have no effect on the terrace's significance.

6.103 For these reasons, therefore, officers judge that there would be no harm arising from the proposed development within the terrace's setting and that its setting would, thereby, be preserved. It is not necessary, therefore, to apply the tests in either paragraph 195 or 196 of the NPPF.

- Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NHDA's)

6.104 The two frontage buildings were identified as non-designated heritage assets as both met the following criteria: aesthetic value; integrity; landmark status; and social and communal value. Reference is drawn to the adopted Council's technical guidance on NDHA's which provides the relevant detail to underpin Council policy.

6.105 The white brick building which is the southerly of the two heritage assets, is a substantial late 19th century villa with a projecting eaves and slate roof with good survival of its original external joinery to the front. It exhibits a positive external appearance in the street scene and retains a degree of intactness and lack of harmful alteration. It derives its communal value from its civic role as part of the former seat of the local authority.

6.106 The red brick building which is the northerly of the two heritage assets is likely early 20th century in origin and constructed for the Deben Rural District Council. The building is an impressive essay in the early 18th century classical revival style and retains much of its original joinery to the front. It exhibits a positive external appearance in the street scene and retains a degree of intactness and lack of harmful alteration. It derives its communal value from its civic role as part of the former seat of the local authority. Its scale and formal character contribute to its street scene role as a local landmark, an attribute particularly visible on approach down Pytches Road.

6.107 The NPPF acknowledges that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource at and that local planning authorities should, in determining planning applications, take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; and the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality. Historic England's 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (2008) state that:

'the fact that a place does not meet current criteria for formal designation does not negate the values it may have to particular communities. Such values should be taken into account in making decisions about its future...' (para. 81).

6.108 It is also important to consider that:

"retaining and re-using existing buildings generally has a lower environment impact than replacing buildings in terms of embodied energy" (British Standard 7913:2013 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings – para. 5.3.1).

6.109 The NPPF requires that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing the current application that directly affects two non-designated heritage assets, decision makers will need to arrive at a balanced judgment having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. The two frontage buildings are not of very great significance – they are not designated heritage assets. However, they have met 4 of the 10 criteria for

identification as non-designated heritage assets and are clearly of some local importance. Taking into account the significance of the buildings, therefore, it is officer's judgment that their complete loss would result in considerable harm.

- 6.110 It has already been explained the outstanding quality of the design of the proposed development which is held by officers and this is a positive factor. Likewise, the delivery of a mix of housing sizes to meet the needs of the district, particularly smaller units, and the delivery of the policy requirement of affordable housing. Should it be determined that the two frontage buildings need to be retained then their size, scale and ability to subdivide are such that the quantum of development would be less than what would occur with a new building. This report details the positive benefits of the scheme, and in the opinion of officers that the benefits of the scheme are significant and weigh in favour of the loss of the two NDHA's in this instance. It is also held that the two replacement buildings will in themselves become landmark buildings in their own right.
- 6.111 It is also of note that third parties sought to have the two NDHA's on the site's frontage formally listed by Historic England. The request was considered by Historic England but declined and not therefore considered worthy of listing in their own right. There have been no further requests for listing since this initial request. The loss of these buildings does however remain a concern to third parties

Impact on Residential Amenity

- 6.112 Members will note in Section 4 of this report that concern has been raised over the impact on residential amenity. The planning system is unable to protect private views, and just because a view has altered this does not make the development unacceptable. Officers are of the view that the key relationship in this regard is that between the proposed development, namely blocks A, B and C along the boundary to Deben Road due south.
- 6.113 Along this boundary the separation distances are approximately 40m from dwelling to dwelling, accepting that there are intervening private gardens. The buildings have been angled where possible so as to remove any bulk away from this boundary which also ensures that views in a southerly direction are oblique rather than direct. At the eastern end of the site there is a closer relationship to the properties in Kingsway, but at this point the proposed buildings within the application site are two-storey and domestic in scale, with the flank wall facing south, and therefore the distance of 15m is considered appropriate for an urban setting.
- 6.114 Whilst there are a number of windows on the southern facing elevations on these blocks, particularly block A, officers consider that the level of separation is acceptable in an urban environment, and this relationship should be seen in context of the existing office block which also has a number of windows facing south, and were occupied by a number of offices. The retention and supplementation of boundary treatment, including the protection of the Yew Tree, will also seek to protect this relationship and residential amenity as far as possible. Members are also advised that the buildings along the southern boundary of the site have been amended during the application, so as to reduce their height and hence improve this relationship.
- 6.115 Regarding the interrelationship to The Maltings, officers also believe that this is acceptable. This is related to Blocks G and H. During the pre-application discussions both of these blocks

have been pulled in a westerly direction to ensure greater relief between the buildings. The levels of separation vary between 15 and 25m and are considered to be acceptable for an urban environment.

- 6.116 Concerns have been raised by objectors regarding loss of amenity to the properties the opposite side of The Thoroughfare and also the River Deben. Officers have considered these matters but believe that the levels of separation and intervening structures are sufficient to protect their amenities. Likewise, the relationship to the properties on the opposite side of the Thoroughfare is acceptable given the set back of the dwellings, the level of separation, the position of the existing buildings and the presence of the intervening road and footpath. It can indeed be argued that this relationship has been improved and that some of the properties will benefit as a result of the development of direct views through the site to the landscape setting beyond, which are currently masked by buildings.

Highways Considerations, including parking and access

- 6.117 Reference is drawn to Section 4 of this report where it is advised that Suffolk County Council as Highways Authority do not raise any objection to the application subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions. It is noted that there are local concerns in relation to highways matters, but these have not been supplemented by any evidence and therefore in the absence of such officers need to defer to the expertise of the statutory party in this regard.
- 6.118 Only one vehicular entrance to the site is proposed in lieu of the two at present and the development of 100 residential units would generate less vehicular activity than what would occur should the B1 use be implemented to its full capacity, which could take place without any recourse to the local planning authority.
- 6.119 The plans show 106 spaces provided for the 100 units, which Officers and the Highways Authority deems appropriate. The increase from the initial 99 spaces was also considered acceptable to the Planning Committee and reflects the site's high sustainability credentials, in the consideration of the two previous planning applications.
- 6.120 Whilst as a B1 use there would be significant vehicular activity at peak times from the staff, there would in addition be the traffic generated by visitors. This vehicular activity would be condensed over core hours of the working day, whereas any traffic associated with a residential use would be dissipated throughout the day. It is contended that the level of traffic associated with the residential scheme is less than a fully utilised office site. This in turn has positive implications upon the air quality locally.
- 6.121 This report outlines the key services and facilities which are accessible by means other than the private car to future residents of this development.
- 6.122 The proposal makes provision for appropriate linkages through the site and this is seen as a key benefit of the proposal. The removal of traffic from within the site (with the exception of emergency and service vehicles) is another welcome addition as it provides for a safe and secure environment which minimises conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

Landscape and Arboriculture Matters

- Landscape and Visual Impact Effects

- 6.123 The applicant has submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and this has been undertaken under the Landscape Institute's (and others) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3). The LVIA remains unchanged from the earlier scheme due to the lack in change in the application proposals or site's setting in the intervening period. Because the planning application is not subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, this LVIA is not required to include an assessment of the significance of effects.
- 6.124 The submitted assessment generally follows the well established pattern of such reports by describing the proposed development and its current landscape context. In describing the context or landscape baseline for the proposed development, both the National and County landscape character assessments are considered. It is noted that, under the Suffolk County landscape character assessment and the more localised AONB 'Touching the Tide' landscape character assessment, the actual development site is defined as Urban. However, because of the site's proximity to the Deben estuary and with which it has clear visual interaction, the nature of the landscape character areas to the East is also considered. For example, the land next to the river falls into the SCC LCT Coastal Levels and the guidance notes for this LCT note the following as a Key Force for Change:
- "Changes of land management and land use adjacent to this land use especially the changes to the quantity, scale and style of built environment."*
- 6.125 The report also considers the adjacent LCAs as described in the Touching the Tide study and this could be considered to be the most localised and therefore most relevant study available. What is notable is that the Touching the Tide report does note the potential threats to this setting and suggests ways to manage change – which include:
- "Protect the strong sense of tranquillity within the estuary and avoid inappropriate recreational development or development beyond the estuary which may have a significant visual impact affecting perceptions of the area."*
- 6.126 The report goes on to consider the existing context of the site and concludes that the zone of potential visibility of the new development is likely to be limited by the built environment to the north, west and south with more extensive views only to be had from the east. The site analysis was carried out before the large pine tree to the rear of the offices was felled and this tree was used as a height reference point.
- 6.127 Paragraph 4.15 of the LVIA notes the proximity to the AONB and refers to the AONB Management Plan and the guidance contained therein to respect local character and history, and to reflect the identity of the local surroundings and materials, whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. There is further guidance on retaining local distinctiveness, fitting in with local character and recognising the need for tranquillity. However, there is no specific reference to the setting of the AONB in the Management Plan, although separate guidance for this has been produced by the AONB unit and reference to this issue has been made in national planning guidance.
- 6.128 In terms of landscape sensitivity, the site itself is described as having medium-low landscape value based on its use as a complex of office buildings of varying architectural style, and being situated between a railway line and a busy road. The site is outside any designated area although close to the AONB boundary and has inter-visible with the estuary setting. Although

it is proposed that some trees be removed, many are proposed for retention and there is new planting planned.

6.129 Through the design process for the development, intrusion on the wider setting of the site has been minimised where possible, together with impacts on near neighbours and the Woodbridge townscape. Taking account of the nature of the proposed development and the character of the site and its setting, it is concluded that the site has a Medium level of sensitivity to the type of the proposed development. According to the LVIA methodology, this means that the landscape exhibits some distinctive characteristics but may have been slightly degraded or is one that is moderately valued despite its alteration.

6.130 It is concluded that the impact of site construction will have a moderate adverse impact on landscape character and a moderate adverse effect on landscape features i.e. the loss of some trees. Once complete and the site is occupied, it is suggested that the development will have a slight – adverse landscape impact on character, and a slight impact on landscape features.

6.131 Overall, it is concluded that the landscape impact of the proposed development will be moderate to slight. This allows for the sensitivity of the site and its setting, the nature of the development and the proposed mitigation planting.

- Visual Impacts and Effects

6.132 11 viewpoints have been chosen within the LVIA from the surrounding area and the scale of impact of each has been assessed from each for the appropriate type of visual receptors. Viewpoints where the scale of impact is assessed as more severe than Moderate i.e. Substantial are:

- Viewpoint 2 looking east down Pyches Road from principal living areas of adjacent houses.
- Viewpoint 4 looking south from Old Maltings Approach from principal living areas of adjacent flats.
- Viewpoint 7 looking North-West from river front footpath approximately 90m. from site.
- Viewpoint 8 looking North from eastern end of Deben Road from principal living areas of adjacent houses.

6.133 Substantially adverse visual effects are defined as:

“Where the proposed changes will form the dominant feature, will be completely uncharacteristic and substantially change the scene in valued views.”

6.134 Substantially beneficial visual effects are defined as:

“Where the proposed changes to existing views will substantially improve the character and value through the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far reaching enhancements.”

6.135 Paragraph 7.9 of the LVIA concludes that the application site will not be generally visible from the Sutton Hoo burial site SAM because of intervening woodland, although this is not completely the case as we know from experience that the reconstituted mound was visible from our former offices so it would be wrong to assume that there will be no inter-visibility with the SAM area; there will be inter visibility from the northern part of the SAM.

- 6.136 The assessment does not record whether the scale of visual effects is either beneficial or adverse, although examples of such conclusions are included in the LVIA methodology. We are not told why this differentiation is not made but it could be that the distinction is left in the hands of the receptor depending on their response to the design of the development. It should be understood that the selected viewpoints are examples of typical key views but should not be seen as exhaustive. That said the following conclusions are drawn:

“It is acknowledged that within the Woodbridge/Melton urban area, there will be substantial visual effects for a number of receptors who live in the immediate locality.

For the wider area and in surrounding settlements, visual effects are assessed as slight or neutral because of the distances involved and intervening screening from buildings, topography and existing vegetation.

The Sandlings Way designated footpath passes the site to the east along the river wall and visual effects on walkers is assessed as moderate to moderate–slight because the receptor is transient and the development is seen against the existing built up backdrop and with the railway in the foreground.

For other transient receptors in Woodbridge whether in cars or on foot, visual effects are assessed as slight or neutral because of the transient position of the receptor, and the intervening urban structure to a greater or lesser degree.

For other transient receptors at Sutton Hoo on foot, visual effects are assessed as slight or neutral because of the transient position of the receptor, and the distance from the application site. From the elevated areas of the National Trust estate, the development will not break the skyline.”

- 6.137 The overall conclusion is that there will be partial views of the upper parts of the proposed development for a limited area to the north, west and south of the site. From the east there is potential for wider views but the site will be seen against the backdrop of the wider Woodbridge built up area. A good degree of mitigation against visual effects is embedded in the design of the development including the choice of materials, retention and protection of on site trees, and the provision of new landscape planting. The maturing of new planting will lessen effects over the passage of time.

- Issues arising from the Assessment

- 6.138 Whilst it is noted that the site is outside the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) boundary, there is no specific assessment of the impacts on the setting of the AONB. The site falls within the setting of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB which does not have a geographical border. The character, location, scale, materials or design of a proposed development or land management activity will determine whether it affects the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. A very large development may have an impact even if some considerable distance from the AONB boundary. As such, each proposal should be assessed on its own merits and where there is potential to adversely affect the protected landscape, this impact should be assessed.

- 6.139 Within Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 and Section 85 (1) of the Countryside and

Rights of Way Act 2000 there is a duty on all relevant authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect land in AONBs. This Duty of Regard requires all public bodies, down to parish council level, to consider the AONB's nationally protected status in any land use related decisions. This includes planning applications and the formulation of Local and Neighbourhood Plans.

- 6.140 Planning Practice Guidance "Natural Environment, Landscape", Paragraph 042, Reference ID: 8-042-20190721, Revision date: 21 07 2019, states:

"How should development within the setting of National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty be dealt with?"

Land within the setting of these areas often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Development within the settings of these areas will therefore need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account."

- 6.141 Examples of adverse impacts will include:

- Development not appropriate to the landscape setting of the AONB,
- Blocking or interference of views out of the AONB particularly from public viewpoints,
- Blocking or interference of views of the AONB from public viewpoints outside the AONB,
- Loss of tranquillity through the introduction of lighting, noise, or traffic movement,
- Introduction of an abrupt change of landscape character.

- 6.142 The site falls within the setting of the AONB and therefore of specific relevance is the document endorsed at the end of 2015 by the AONB Partnership, entitled 'Developments in the Setting of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB'. The following extract is of direct concern:

"The Partnership considers the setting, including the views into and out of the AONB, to be the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature; size; scale; siting, materials or design can be considered to have an impact, positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the nationally designated landscape. The Partnership considers that development in the setting of the AONB that would have a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty and special qualities of the area and should not be supported."

- 6.143 The NPPF provides specific planning guidance for plan makers and decision takers in relation to AONBs and confirms that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
- 6.144 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should set criteria, based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. The phrase "or affecting" landscape areas supports the need for setting as a consideration in policy making. The current Core Strategy Policy SP15 supports this Framework requirement.
- 6.145 A Suffolk Coasts & Heaths AONB Special Qualities document has recently been drawn up, primarily in relation to the Sizewell C development, but available for wider application. In the

Special Qualities document a distinctive sense of place, is described as a landscape of Unique character defined by semi-natural and cultural landscapes (notably coast, estuaries, reedbeds, Sandlings heath, forest, farmland and villages) and built heritage features (such as Martello towers, pill boxes, river walls), creating a juxtaposition of elements in a relatively small area. It is against these and other qualities contained in the document that this proposal will need to be assessed and considers that this should have formed part of the LVIA.

- 6.146 The submitted landscape appraisal makes no specific assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the setting of the AONB, but officers are able to assist Members in this consideration by advising as follows:
- The proposed development replaces an existing office complex and car park area that is currently visible from the riverside footpath and from across the River Deben at the Sutton Hoo site. Therefore, the site falls within the setting of the AONB.
 - From the AONB the site will be seen against the urban backdrop of Woodbridge and from the upper Sutton Hoo area it will not break the skyline. Much of these viewpoints are over 1km. away.
 - Although the site is outside the AONB, the landscape and visual receptors are within the AONB and should be considered as Highly Sensitive. Given the distances involved for visual receptors, the magnitude of change is considered to be Medium/Low. Therefore, the significance of effects is concluded to be Moderate. These effects are only experienced over a relatively small area and at some distance.
 - Given the existing urban context of the site, it is not considered that there will be any significant impacts on qualities such as tranquillity. That said, provision of external lighting should be carefully considered and designed to minimise external light spill (see proposed conditions)
 - The layout of the site has been designed to allow views of the Deben from the Thoroughfare where none currently exist.
 - Car parking is provided in underground space (apart from limited visitor parking close to the road) and so the removal of the extensive office parking near to the river is considered to be beneficial.
 - Overall it is concluded that there will be no significant landscape and visual impacts on the setting of the AONB.

- Trees

- 6.147 A comprehensive tree survey and arboriculture impact assessment has been submitted alongside the planning application. This has been correctly carried out in accordance with the guidance contained in BS5837:21012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction. A number of other trees, groups of trees and a section of hedgerow are proposed for removal to facilitate the development. The Pine tree has already been removed. The most significant of these are the Holly (T001), Horse Chestnut (T002) and Austrian Pine (T003) on the road frontage. These trees are positioned in raised planting areas; the Chestnut has significant infections of bleeding bacterial canker, and the Pine and Chestnut (and to a degree the holly) have outgrown their enclosed rooting space, as had the Pine to the rear. To varying degrees these trees do not have a sustainable future life expectancy and their proposed removal should not be resisted. The removal of other trees and shrubs will have a limited impact on public amenity value and will be mitigated by proposed new planting. It is noted that the Yew Tree along the boundary to Deben Road is to be retained as part of the landscaping proposals.

- New Landscape Proposals

6.148 The design of external spaces around the new buildings has been an integral part of the evolving design process. Early on in the pre-application discussions it was agreed that there would be a rolling change in planting style from a more formalised, geometric pattern towards the top (street) end of the site, down to a very informal naturalistic style at the eastern end with the wildflower meadow. This meadow area will also include an element of surface water retention, play space and a timber boardwalk river viewing area and walkways through to Deben Road and possibly Maltings Court subject to final agreement. It was felt that the quality of the architecture of the new buildings should be allowed to reflect its own presence. Within the development there has been a strong emphasis on creating high quality external public space to enhance the quality of place and to encourage and allow social engagement and gathering. Officers are satisfied that the proposals that have been submitted meet these objectives and will deliver a high quality landscape that will complement the architecture and overall special concept of the development. Throughout the design process it has been a key objective to create and maintain a view right through the development from The Thoroughfare to the River Deben. The existing offices do not allow this view and it was a specific 'wish' that emerged from the early public consultation exercises. The building layout and the landscape design process has met this key objective and the view will be established from the entrance plaza area between the two new street frontage buildings where it is also proposed to site a Saxon/Sutton Hoo related sculpture. Members will note that the application includes additional planting at the site's frontage than previously.

Economic Benefits

6.149 The economic benefits of a scheme are identified in the NPPF as being a key strand of sustainable development, and should not be underplayed. This report has sought to identify a number of key economic benefits elsewhere in the report. For clarify, some of the benefits that would arise include:

- Short term construction jobs and jobs associated with the ongoing maintenance of the site,
- Employment and retention of a Concierge,
- Employment created by the café/shop and community space,
- New Homes Bonus,
- Additional spend in the local community, including shops, cafés, restaurants in Woodbridge,
- CIL receipts will be secured from the development in terms of the uplift in floorspace over the existing level of floorspace, which will be utilised towards funding infrastructure in accordance with the Council's 123 list. A proportion of the CIL receipt will be handed down to the Town/Parish Council.

Other Matters

6.150 As required by legislation, due to the relationship to sensitive landscapes the applicants have undertaken a Habits Regulation Assessment (HRA). The applicant will be required to make the appropriate RAMS payment of £64,244

- 6.151 A number of key surveys have been undertaken which have influenced the comments received in Section 4, including air quality and ecological surveys. The reports conclude that there are no overriding reasons upon which to withhold the grant of planning permission in this instance and appropriate conditions are proposed to mitigate against any harm. Some of the commentators have raised concern that the original documents have not been re-drafted. Officers consider that the contents of the reports are appropriate given how recently they were drafted and that the site or the immediate environment has not altered since the last application was reported to Committee.
- 6.152 Some respondents have commented on the increased light pollution and the impact this will have on the night sky, which is an intrinsic character of the landscape designations around the site. It is inevitable that any residential use of the site will increase the light levels emanating, this has been accepted by officers when considering the proposals. A condition is proposed to agree any external lighting within the site so that officers can ensure that its design, positioning and lux levels are appropriate having due regard to residential amenity and design aesthetics.
- 6.153 Concern has also been raised that additional, further public consultation has not been undertaken by the applicant. The desire to, or not undertake such, lies entirely with the applicant and this cannot be a reason upon which to withhold the grant of planning permission.
- 6.154 The County Council have requested contributions towards bus stop improvements and Public Right of Way (PROW) improvements. The District Council believe these are matters to be dealt with through CIL rather than condition. Whilst there is justification for bus stop improvements the LPA is unconvinced by the request for PROW improvements as this appears predicated on an existing problem and no justification has been provided in terms of how the proposed development will impact on this footpath. Furthermore, the consultation response talks about the poor surface as existing, and it is not the role of conditions or legal agreements to rectify existing deficiencies or problems. Notwithstanding such, if Members consider there is merit, this is a matter to be dealt with via CIL.
- 6.155 Concern is raised regarding the ability or otherwise for the Council to determine the application, as landowner. The Council is local planning authority responsible for determining all applications within its jurisdiction and has recently determined its own applications, including the Deben Swimming Pool and Cedar House. The report before Members looks solely at the planning merits of the scheme and provides appropriate commentary on these matters. Where appropriate Counsel opinion has also been sought to ensure that any decision issued by this Council is robust and sound.
- 6.156 Officers advise Members that communication has been had with the Secretary of the State by a third party requesting that the application be called-in for determination. The request for such is made under S77 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990). No grounds have been included with the e-mail from the Secretary of the State. The Secretary of State has powers to 'call-in', or to decide him or herself, any planning application. In practice this power is only used very infrequently. It is usually used when the application in question is of national significance or is listed in regulations which state certain types of significant application that the Secretary of State must be notified of. The power is more likely to be

used if the application is not in line with, or 'departs from', the development plan in place in the relevant area.

6.157 Most call-ins will happen for one of two reasons:

1. The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 requires local planning authorities to notify the Secretary of State if they intend to approve an application for one of the significant types of development included in the Direction. The above application does not trigger any of the automatic thresholds for referral to the SoS.
2. The application is of national significance. Anyone can tell the Secretary of State if the local planning authority intends to approve an application with a potentially very significant impact, and ask them to call-in the application for decision by themselves. This is the case even if the application doesn't come under the 2009 Direction. It is this that officers believe represents the request for the call-in, but in the opinion of officers the issues are local issues and do not raise regional or national issues of significance.

6.158 The Secretary of State has been provided with all relevant documentation pertinent to the application and have requested that they be formally notified of a resolution on the application before any formal decision notice is issued. It will be at this time that a decision is made on whether or not the Secretary of State will seek to determine the application. There are therefore no reasons for the Planning Committee not to consider and determine the application accordingly.

Local Opposition

6.159 It is acknowledged that the scheme has generated significant local objection, and the concerns of local residents are understood however this is not a reason to withhold the grant of planning permission as decisions are not and cannot be made by referendum, but instead need to be judged on their planning merits and in accordance with the relevant national and local planning policies.

6.160 Appeal decisions have dealt eloquently with this matter and reference is made to two appeal decisions where this issue has been considered. In the case of Homelands, Bishops Cleeve it was stated

“...there is nothing in the Localism Act to suggest that delegating decisions to LPAs will alter the requirement for a 5 year HLS....Allowing LPAs to review their requirements locally is not the same as allowing them to postpone their obligations under PPS3”

6.161 Another decision, Highfields Farm (13 February 2013) allowed consent for a housing scheme in an AONB, where there was no 5 year Housing Land Supply (HLS).

“It cannot be that a strategic facility to provide for the needs of a very wide area can be decided solely on the basis that the local community do not wish it to be located within their area. This would be to hold much needed, major development to ransom. If applied widely, this could hold up economic recovery as well as deprive future generations of important developments and facilities.”“There is nothing in the Act...or the Framework which indicates that the SoS has taken the view that a particular, and in this instance, very localised

group of residents should be able to prevent planning permission being granted simply because they do not want it."

Application of The Tilted Balance

- 6.162 The starting point for decision making on all planning applications is that they must be made in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)).
- 6.163 Policy SP2 (Housing Numbers and Distribution) of the Core Strategy sets out how the Core Strategy makes provision for 7,900 homes in the District between 2010 and 2027. This policy identifies the need to progress to an Issues and Options Report by 2015 at the latest, which would include identifying the Full Objectively Assessed Housing Need. The publication of an Issues and Options Report did not take place until August 2017, for reasons including the delays caused by the High Court and Court of Appeal challenges to the Core Strategy. In a number of recent appeals, Planning Inspectors have taken the view that this delay has caused Policy SP2 of the Core Strategy to be out of date.
- 6.164 In this context, the NPPF applies:
- "...For decision-taking this means:*
c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁷, granting permission unless:
i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁶; or
ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed"
- 6.165 However, it should be noted that the tilted balance applies only in a case where less than substantial harm is said to arise where it is considered that, in accordance with the NPPF, that such assessed harm to the significance of heritage assets is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals.
- 6.166 This proposal accords with the Development Plan and it represents plan-led development which achieves compliance with the economic, social and environmental roles of Sustainable Development. Due to its policy compliance, it would accord with that paragraph's requirement to approve development without delay. This paragraph is also dependent upon how up-to-date the District's housing requirement policy is. Policy SP2 (Housing Numbers and Distribution) of the Core Strategy is deemed to be out-of-date. This requires the Council to apply.
- 6.167 The tilted balance will apply only if members are satisfied that the harm to the setting of the heritage assets (listed buildings and Conservation Area) and the landscape as identified in the initial report (appended) is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal in accordance with the NPPF.

- 6.168 If this is the case, the requirement is to permit applications for sustainable development unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or specific policies of the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
- 6.169 It remains the position of officers that the benefits of the scheme, which have been outlined in detail in this report, outweigh any harm identified and therefore the presumption should be in favour of development. The previous concerns relating the lack of provision of affordable housing have been overcome via this application submission.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 There is a very clear steer from Government that the presumption should be in favour of development unless any harms identified are significant and demonstrable when weighed against the benefits arising. The government through the NPPF, White Paper and relevant case law are putting significant pressure upon local authorities and communities to take significant levels of growth and that those levels of housing growth should be significantly boosted. The delivery of the site for housing would seek to meet these objectives and also deliver housing into a town where there has historically been limited housing growth, especially of the smaller sized units.
- 7.2 The site is in a highly sustainable location within easy reach of key services and facilities required to support additional growth. These are within walking distance of the site and therefore future residents would not need to rely on the private car for access.
- 7.3 A number of clear and identifiable benefits have been identified as a result of the approval of this application. These include:
- The removal of the unsightly modern buildings on the site with a positive impact on the setting of the Conservation Area and setting of the listed buildings.
 - A car free development, with space given over to public and private use rather than the car. With the exception of the visitor's spaces, the cars would be hidden from view, by using existing levels on the site.
 - The opening up of views through the site to the benefit of many, including some of the residential properties opposite.
 - The significant economic benefits from construction, on site employment, additional spend in the community, CIL and New Homes Bonus both as an immediate response and a long-term impact.
 - A bespoke modern design for a prominent important site which has clear references to its setting and historical values of Woodbridge.
 - Reduction in traffic associated with a residential scheme over a fully serviced office development and the resulting benefits to the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
 - Enhanced landscape strategy for the site and maintenance thereof.
 - Pedestrian permeability through the site including a new link to Deben Road.

- The application is made in detailed form, with a three year time limit for implementation, and therefore there is certainty over its delivery and assisting therefore in meeting the identified housing targets for the Council.
- Creation of public space and units within the scheme for the benefit of the wider community and seek to elongate the Thoroughfare to the site.

- 7.4 The benefits arising from the development are considered to be significant and weigh in favour of the demolition of the two identified Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA's), a test required by the NPPF. The new frontage buildings themselves in turn will become feature buildings in prominent locations and are considered to be of exceptional design
- 7.5 The design of the development as a whole is considered by officers to be of high quality and responds positively to its setting. Whilst it is noted that there are concerns that the development is too bold and modern for Woodbridge, this is not a view shared by officers or indeed the independent review panel. The positioning and scale of the individual blocks has been carefully considered having due regard to the sensitive boundaries and views, and does not give rise to any harms of a significant scale upon which permission should be refused.
- 7.6 Whilst there will be a change in relationship to neighbouring land uses, particularly to Deben Road and the Maltings, change is not necessarily unacceptable and the openings and position of windows has been carefully considered to respect as far as possible private amenity, also having due regard to the position and use of the existing buildings. It is also important to note that the blocks adjacent Deben Road have been reduced in scale through the application process to respond more positively to these properties. There would no unacceptable harm or loss of amenity to the properties on the opposite side of The Thoroughfare or the river, but there will be a change in view.
- 7.7 It remains the position of officers that the benefits of the scheme, which have been outlined in detail in this report, outweigh any harm identified and therefore the presumption should be in favour of development. The concerns raised are primarily in relation to design, which is a subjective matter, and Members are reminded that the technical experts (the Councils officers and the SDRP) endorse the scheme, as has the Planning Committee on two previous occasions. There are no technical barriers to development and the earlier concerns raised by the LLFA have been overcome through this submission to the extent that they are content to accept conditions on any approval.
- 7.8 The application is therefore recommended as **AUTHORITY** to approve (subject to the receipt of RAMS payments).

8 RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORITY TO APPROVE (subject to the receipt of RAMS payments) and the following conditions.

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until it has been completed in all respects strictly in accordance with the following plans,, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

(Plans to be listed later)

Reason: To secure a properly planned development.

- 3 Samples and details of all external materials proposed, including facing bricks, roofing, eaves and guttering, openings and hard landscaping shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved samples.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory external appearance of the development.

- 4 No part of the development shall be commenced until details of the amended access (including the position of any gates to be erected and visibility splays provided) have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved access shall be laid out and constructed in its entirety prior to occupation. Thereafter the access shall be retained in its approved form.

Reason: To ensure that the access is designed and constructed to an appropriate specification and made available for use at an appropriate time in the interests of highway safety.

- 5 The areas to be provided for storage of Refuse/Recycling bins as shown on drawing number (to be added) shall be provided in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure that refuse recycling bins are not stored on the highway causing obstruction and dangers for other users.

- 6 Before the development is commenced, details of the service roads and footpaths, (including layout, levels, gradients, surfacing and means of surface water drainage), shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that roads/footways are constructed to an acceptable standard.

- 7 No dwelling shall be occupied until the access routes serving that dwelling have been constructed to at least Binder course level (or equivalent construction method) in accordance with the approved details except with the written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that satisfactory access is provided for the safety of residents and the public.

- 8 All HGV traffic movements to and from the site over the duration of the construction period shall be subject to a Deliveries Management Plan which shall be submitted to the planning authority for approval a minimum of 28 days before any deliveries of materials commence.

No HGV movements shall be permitted to and from the site other than in accordance with the routes defined in the Plan.

The site operator shall maintain a register of complaints and record of actions taken to deal with such complaints at the site office as specified in the Plan throughout the period of occupation of the site.

Reason: To reduce and / or remove as far as is reasonably possible the effects of HGV traffic in sensitive areas.

- 9 The areas to be provided for the [LOADING, UNLOADING,] manoeuvring and parking of vehicles including secure cycle storage as shown on the approved plans shall be carried out in its entirety before the development is brought into use and shall be retained thereafter and used for no other purpose.

Reason: To ensure the provision and long term maintenance of adequate on-site space for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles, where on-street parking and manoeuvring would be detrimental to highway safety.

- 10 The development shall not begin until a scheme for the provision of affordable housing as part of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The affordable housing shall be provided in accordance with the approved scheme and shall meet the definition of affordable housing in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework or any future guidance that replaces it and shall remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing. The scheme shall include:

i) the numbers, type, tenure and location on the site of the affordable housing provision to be made, which shall consist of not less than 32 affordable dwellings. The details to include a mechanism for delivering an alternative method of providing affordable housing at the same level as approved in the event that no affordable housing provider acquires some or all of the affordable housing within a reasonable timescale.

ii) the timing of the construction of the affordable housing and its phasing in relation to the occupancy of the market housing, with the delivery of the affordable housing prior to the sale of the 30th open market dwelling;

iii) the arrangements for the transfer of the affordable housing to an affordable housing provider or the management of the affordable housing;

iv) the arrangements to ensure that such provision is affordable for both first and subsequent occupiers of the affordable housing; and

v) the occupancy criteria to be used for determining the identity of occupiers of the affordable housing and the means by which such occupancy criteria shall be enforced.

Reason: In accordance with Policy DM2 of the Core Strategy to secure the appropriate provision of affordable housing on the site

- 11 The proposed link from the application site to Deben Road shown on Plan reference (to be added) shall be made available for use before any dwellings are occupied and retained in its approved scheme in perpetuity.

Reason: To improve and retain pedestrian permeability through the site and ensure appropriate linkages to established residential areas and key services and facilities in accordance with Policy SP1 of the Local Plan.

- 12 No external lighting shall be installed within the site unless details have first been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved lighting shall be maintained in its approved form in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure any external lighting is designed in a manner having regard to visual amenity and residential amenity in accordance with Policy DM23 of the Local Plan.

- 13 Prior to the development hereby approved being occupied details shall be submitted to and approved relating to the provision of public art on the site. The details submitted shall include the design and location of the art, its maintenance programme and delivery timescales. The art shall be provided and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the proposal is compliant with Policy DM25 of the Local Plan

- 14 No development shall take place until the existing trees on site, agreed with the Local Planning Authority for inclusion in the scheme of landscaping, have been protected by the erection of temporary protective fences of a height, size and in positions which shall previously have been agreed, with the Local Planning Authority. The protective fences shall be retained throughout the duration of building and engineering works in the vicinity of the tree to be protected. Any trees dying or becoming severely damaged as a result of any failure to comply with these requirements shall be replaced with trees of appropriate size and species during the first planting season, or in accordance with such other arrangement as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, following the death of, or severe damage to the trees.

Reason: For the avoidance of damage to protected trees included within the landscaping scheme in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

- 15 Prior to the development commencing a plan detailing the location of fire hydrants to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The hydrants detailed on the approved plan shall be provided before any of the dwellings hereby approved are occupied and retained as such in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure appropriate fire hydrant provision is made and retained on the site.

- 16 No development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance or removal of underground tanks and relic structures) approved by this planning permission, shall take place until a (Phase 2 contaminated land assessment report) including,
- i) The results of a number of test bores/windows samples carried out at this site, indicating the presence of any contaminants; and
- ii) Where required a detailed remediation method statement RMS for the safe removal of any contaminated land and its replacement with inert fill or, alternatively, a plan of how contaminated land is to be safely encapsulated or otherwise remediated. This RMS shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the LPA. The RMS must include, but is not limited to:

- details of all works to be undertaken including proposed methodologies, drawings and plans, materials, specifications and site management procedures;

- an explanation, including justification, for the selection of the proposed remediation methodology(ies);

- proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria; and - proposals for validating the remediation and, where appropriate, for future maintenance and monitoring.

All the approved remediation measures shall be implemented in their entirety prior to the commencement of the construction of structures, the laying of services or of any infrastructure on site.

The RMS must be prepared by a competent person and conform to current guidance and best practice, including CLR11.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination is appropriately managed

- 17 The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing at least seven days prior to any removal, encapsulation or other remediation of any contaminants.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination is appropriately managed

- 18 The Local Planning Authority shall require written validation (Phase 3 Contaminated Land Assessment) that -

i) All contaminated material removed from the site is removed by an appropriate licensed contractor to a facility approved by the Environment Agency.

ii) All imported material is suitable for its intended use

iii) Remediation measures have been undertaken to render the site suitable for the use specified.

Reason: To ensure that any contamination is appropriately managed

- 19 Prior to the commencement of the development a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. This Management Plan should include details of how the site is to be developed and include mitigation measures to prevent any loss of residential amenity to any existing residents.

The approved Management Plan shall be implemented in its entirety.

Reason: In the interest of protecting residential amenity during construction and highway safety

- 20 The hours of operation for all constructional activities shall be limited to;

07:30 to 18:00 hours Monday to Friday

08:00 to 13:00 hours Saturday and

None on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity

- 21 No piling operations shall be undertaken unless the details and method of piling is previously agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity

- 22 Details of the location, height, design, any activity sensors and illuminance of all floodlighting used during construction works shall be agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. Measures to limit obtrusive glare to nearby residential property and to minimise sky glow shall be incorporated in the design of all floodlighting.

Reason: To ensure that any external lighting is acceptable in the interest of residential amenity

- 23 Prior to the commencement of development details of the proposed public art to be provided within the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The proposals will be in situ before occupation of any dwellings hereby permitted and retained in perpetuity

Reason: In accordance with Policy DM25 of the Local Plan and promote public art within the site

- 24 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved the applicant shall submit to the Local Planning Authority for approval a scheme for the management of all open space and communal areas within the site. The management of these areas will be undertaken in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity

- 25 No development shall commence until details of the strategy for the disposal of surface water on the site have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.
- a. Run off rates shall not exceed (the below rates are brownfield rates with a 30% reduction, with the exception of the 1 in 1 + CC event);
- i. 1 in 1 + CC – 4.2 l/s;
 - ii. 1 in 30 + CC – 7.8 l/s; and
 - iii. 1 in 100 + CC – 12 l/s

Reason: To ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage are incorporated into this proposal, to ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained. To ensure that betterment is provided to existing brownfield runoff rates.

- 26 No development shall commence until details of the implementation, maintenance and management of the strategy for the disposal of surface water on the site have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The strategy shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure clear arrangements are in place for ongoing operation and maintenance of the disposal of surface water drainage. The [X no of dwelling/building] hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of all Sustainable Drainage System components and piped networks have been submitted, in an approved form, to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for inclusion on the Lead Local Flood Authority's Flood Risk Asset Register.

To ensure that the Sustainable Drainage System has been implemented as permitted and that all flood risk assets and their owners are recorded onto the LLFA's statutory flood risk asset register as per s21 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in order to enable the proper management of flood risk with the county of Suffolk

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/flood-risk-asset-register/>

- 27 No development shall commence until details of a Construction Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP) detailing how surface water and storm water will be managed on the site during construction (including demolition and site clearance operations) is submitted to and agreed by the local planning authority. The CSWMP shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan for the duration of construction. The approved CSWMP and shall include:
- b. Method statements, scaled and dimensioned plans and drawings detailing surface water management proposals to include :-
- i. Temporary drainage systems
 - ii. Measures for managing pollution / water quality and protecting controlled waters and watercourses
 - iii. Measures for managing any on or offsite flood risk associated with construction

Reason: To ensure the development does not cause increased flood risk, or pollution of watercourses or groundwater

- 28 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved, by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of hard and soft landscaping works for the site, which shall include any proposed changes in ground levels and also accurately identify spread, girth and species of all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows on the site and indicate any to be retained, together with measures for their protection which shall comply with the recommendations set out in the British Standards Institute recommendation "BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations"

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

- 29 No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas; hard surfacing materials; minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting etc); proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage power, communications cables, pipelines etc indicating lines, manholes, supports etc); retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration, where relevant. Soft landscape works shall include planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed number/densities where appropriate; implementation programme.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design.

- 30 The approved tree/shrub planting scheme shall be implemented not later than the first planting season following commencement of the development (or within such extended period as the local planning authority may allow) and shall thereafter be retained and maintained for a period of 5 years. Any plant material removed, dying or becoming

seriously damaged or diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the first available planting season and shall be retained and maintained.

Reason: To ensure the submission and implementation of a well-laid out scheme of landscaping in the interest of visual amenity.

- 31 Prior to the commencement of development details of a traffic management plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details in relation to enhancements to existing bus stops to facilitate alternative means of transport, deliveries to the site and parking controls within the site. The scheme shall be put into place before first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved and retained in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure that parking and traffic accessing the site is appropriately managed and controlled and alternative means of transport are enhanced in the interest of sustainability and residential amenity.

- 32 Prior to the commencement of development a scheme shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval, detailing the mitigation measures to be put in place in relation to impacts on protected landscapes arising from increased activity to these areas resulting from the approved residential scheme. The scheme shall be implemented before occupation of the first dwelling and retained in perpetuity.

Reason: To appropriately; manage the impact on nearby protected landscapes.

- 33 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a scheme to show ecological enhancements in relation to birds and bats shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the Ecological Survey produced by Skilled Ecology Consultance Limited dated September 2016. The scheme shall include provision for bat and bird boxes on the newly developed buildings or retained trees to increase the potential roosting and nesting sites for local bats and birds. The enhancements as proposed shall be put in place before first occupation of any of the approved dwellings and retained in perpetuity.

Reason: To improve the ecological potential of the site.

**BACKGROUND
INFORMATION:**

See application ref: DC/16/3641/FUL

at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access

Comments from Design and Conservation Officer

Liz – you have asked me to comment on the above application to replace the existing former Council buildings at Melton Hill, Melton with 100 units of residential development forming a mix of apartments, dwellings, community space, retail, parking and landscaping.

As you know I provided you with comments on design and heritage aspects of the scheme (dated 27th September 2017) that was originally submitted. That scheme was approved by the former SCDC planning committee but not consented before it was withdrawn by the applicant. A subsequent application for the same design but minus affordable housing was refused by SCDC and has now been appealed to the Planning Inspectorate (ref. APP/J3530/W/19/3227271). That appeal is currently under consideration and, in the meantime, the applicant has re-submitted a revised version of the original application that is here under consideration.

I have made the judgment that, in considering the current scheme, my previous comments are still very largely relevant. I have not changed my views about the merits and demerits of the application and have decided, therefore, to largely repeat these here which I do below. I have added to these comments to reflect the fact that the NPPF has been twice revised since the original application (latest update is of February 2019). This means that the section on design has partly been changed; and that the section on conserving and enhancing the historic environment has undergone changes in paragraph numbering. I note also that the National Planning Practice Guidance was updated on the 23rd July this year for the historic environment and I have taken this into account. All the other guidance and supporting documentation to which I refer in my 2017 comments remain extant and unrevised since I made my original comments.

Residential development (100 no. units) including 32 no. affordable housing units (Class C3) plus a community space (91 sq.m.) (Class D1) and a retail unit (157.7 sq.m.) (A1/A2/A3), car parking, means of access and landscaping, all following demolition of the buildings on the site - Former Council Offices, Melton Hill, Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 1AU.

You have asked me to comment on the above full application to construct 100 residential units, a building in part community use and a retail unit on the site of the former Council offices on Melton Hill in Melton and Woodbridge (the site straddles the parish boundary).

1.0 Background

The application proposal is for the site of the former offices in which I had worked as the Senior Design and Conservation Officer since 2007 until the site was vacated towards the end of last year. On that basis, therefore, it is fair to say that I have a close knowledge of the site. I also have a broad understanding of the development issues arising in which I take a direct interest here, namely urban design and the conservation of heritage assets.

In respect of the current application, I was involved with you and colleagues at your request at pre-application stage from the 3rd May 2016, which involvement included fifteen meetings with the design team, consisting of the developer, his architects and, on occasions, his landscape architects. The architects' Minutes of these meetings are included in the submission. I also attended alone two meetings at the architects' offices in Ipswich. I also attended two meetings of the RIBA Suffolk Design Review Panel held in Ipswich at which the scheme was submitted for external design scrutiny. I have not had any involvement since the original committee decision to date with the scheme, applicant, agents, or the RIBA Suffolk Design Review Panel (which has not been engaged since).

The extent and level of pre-application engagement for this scheme reflects the highest importance that we place on creative design dialogue from the outset for sites of key sensitivity; and also reflects the willingness of the applicant and agent, here, to join that. It is important to stress, however, that such a level of engagement does not make me an advocate for the scheme, as this would be inappropriate. The design of the proposal at all times in the pre-application process was that of the applicant and his architects. My comments here are provided to you in the form of a critique such that I shall objectively assess the merits and demerits of this application.

Please note that I did not meet the heritage consultant for the proposal, Bob Kindred, as part of the pre-application process.

Please note that I did not have any input into the planning brief provided by SCDC for the purposes of marketing the site for sale.

As you know, I am a chartered architect, chartered town planner and have a postgraduate qualification in urban design alongside another qualification in landscape history and field archaeology. I am a Full Member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation. I am also a Registrant on the RIBA Conservation Register. The NPPG in its design guidance at paragraph 005 advises that "to achieve good design the use of expert advice from appropriately skilled in house staff" may sometimes be required. It is with my knowledge and many years experience that I shall provide you with broad comments on the

application in relation to matters of urban design, principally. I shall also provide comment on heritage matters which in this case relate to the setting of designated heritage assets that are listed buildings and a conservation area; and the loss of non-designated heritage assets.

As you know, the two historic buildings that sit at the front of the application site and which are proposed for demolition were put forward (by a third party) for addition to the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest during the lifetime of the original application. The Government, on the advice of Historic England (its advisors), rejected the application which means that neither building is a listed building.

I note that Historic England has provided you with comments on the application dated 5th July 2019 and strongly objects to the application on design and heritage grounds. Please note that Historic England is not a statutory consultee in respect of this application and that their comments are advisory only.

Historic England has no powers to call in this application for determination by the Secretary of State. It is a matter of regret that my views on aspects of design conflict with those of Historic England but I believe that I am better placed to provide expert design advice – as a chartered architect, chartered town planner and with an urban design qualification – to you. I should add that, on some of Historic England's views on heritage here, I am in agreement and that should not be surprising.

2.0 The Application

The application documents which I have taken into account in my comments to you are principally the submitted design drawings (original and revised and with the blocks re-lettered); the original Design and Access Statement (as revised); the Addendum Design and Access Statement; the Heritage Statement (not updated); and the landscape drawings (original and revised).

In making my comments to you on matters of urban design I have used my working familiarity with By Design, the Urban Design Compendium, the Manual for Streets 2 and the 3rd edition of Building for Life 12 (2015). By Design is, for me, still the best and was the first government guidance on design in the planning system since 1953. It was published in 2000 and withdrawn in 2014, although its precepts and principles are still applicable, in my view. On withdrawal, the government took the view that it did not intend to publish replacement guidance but that others could and in May of 2017 the RIBA published The Design Companion for Planning and Placemaking, of which we now have a copy in our office library.

Also of relevance are sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF, Achieving well-designed places and Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; and the supporting detailed paragraphs of the NPPG. Also relevant is the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which applies to the setting of listed buildings (no other test in this legislation applies here); Historic England's Advice Note 1 – Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (8th February 2019); Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets (22nd December 2017); and IHBC Guidance Note 'Townscape as an important concept in conservation area management' (August 2017).

3.0 Analysis

I shall refrain from undertaking a detailed description of the site, its former uses and its context as this is provided acceptably within the original Design and Access Statement (DAS). The site is well positioned adjacent Woodbridge town centre and in a predominantly residential area with a strongly urban character. The site is bounded by residential development; an important road linking Melton with Woodbridge; and the East Suffolk railway line that connects Woodbridge and Melton to Lowestoft and Ipswich. Beyond the railway is the River Deben with long views to Sutton Hoo, a site of international historical significance, which falls within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Development here will, by virtue of its position, relate well, therefore, to the existing built up area, town centre and urban character in and around this part of Melton and Woodbridge.

The application site falls outside the Woodbridge Conservation Area but lies within its setting. There are no designated heritage assets within the site but there are listed buildings in close proximity to the front of the site at its sides. There are two Non-Designated Heritage Assets within the site at its front that were identified by us as part of the pre-application planning process.

In urban design terms, the site has constraints which will affect its masterplanning and layout:

- * The railway line presents a barrier to the land and river beyond
- * Connectivity by foot into adjacent areas to the north and south is potentially poor
- * Levels changes between the site and areas to the north and south are significant in places
- * The site has a significant sloping topography that principally falls across from west to east

- * The eastern extent of the site falls within a flood risk area
- * The site is bounded by existing close-by residential uses to the north, south and west
- * The site contains non-designated heritage assets
- * The site has a high degree of visibility in long views from the Sutton shore

From these constraints, however, opportunities will arise and for any design to be successful, these should be taken into account and creatively utilised. In my view, these include:

- * Using high quality building and urban design to create the site's own identity such that its local distinctiveness will arise out of being distinctive locally
- * Exploiting existing site features to generate a positively characterised layout of buildings, spaces, aspect, views, routes and edges
- * Acknowledging the existing streetscene and townscape contribution of the historic buildings at the front of the site that are of local importance
- * Being a good neighbour to existing surrounding buildings

Whilst not a comprehensive list of site opportunities, I suggest that these can form a useful test for the current proposals. On this basis, I have the following broad comments on the proposals for development at this site:

3.1 Layout

a. The principal organising element of the layout as illustrated is the strong concept of the landscape thoroughfare. This is a generous idea of a public pedestrian route that connects Thoroughfare and a new public space on it, to another new public space at the bottom of the site that consists of a designed destination which also links laterally to Deben Road. This thoroughfare provides not just a route through the site but also a key view – one that will be retained to be enjoyed by the public – that is, the view across the River Deben to Sutton Hoo (Tranmer House and Reconstructed Mound 2). This is such an important view, such an attractive and almost iconic view (from within the site) that I entirely support the idea of it being embedded within the layout and used to organise it. In this way its importance is reflected in the site layout and this is wholly appropriate. I believe that it can also be argued that the layout is 'gifting' this view as a public view where none is currently available from a similar position. This has to be considered a significant benefit of the proposal and needs to be fully acknowledged in considering its merits.

b. Also of strong concept is the application of a car-free layout. In this way the layout ensures that outdoor space is given over wholly to pedestrian and cycle routes, private garden space, public space, semi-public space and space that can be used communally by residents. A car-free space provides the opportunity for a calm, soft and green setting that is animated by people rather than by traffic (although the dynamic value of traffic is a significant urban characteristic). The idea of utilising the site topography to create underground parking for the entire site in one area is bold and, again, distinctive as an approach and I strongly welcome it as another significant benefit of this proposal. Indeed, I would argue that the application of these two principal layout design drivers - the public landscape thoroughfare and the car-free layout – are outstanding in their approach and which set a high level of urban design aspiration for this site. I would ask the question, where else are, in effect, car-free layouts being designed?

c. The layout pattern is interesting in that it reflects aspects of the surrounding context and urban grain: the frontage blocks relate to the street and provide enclosure; the blocks adjacent the Maltings reflect the same orientation; the lower section of the site which is proposed to have townhouses has a more conventional alignment typical of a small-scale street such as Deben Road, close by. The overall pattern of blocks bears similarity to existing layouts to the north of the site, as illustrated in the original Design and Access Statement at p34 and p79 (Figure Ground Plans). Thus the layout pattern is designed to mediate between the surrounding mixed urban grain and effect a transition between the contrasting urban grains to the north and south of the site. I judge that this is effectively achieved.

d. The layout of the apartment blocks is deliberately angled to utilise aspect and view – key opportunities and design drivers at this site – and helps explain the form of layout: the desire to maximise and optimise the views across to the river and the countryside beyond, and surrounding townscape. This is easier to achieve where a block is angled such that three elevations face outwards rather than one – hence the angled disposition of forms, as here. By three elevations, I also mean the roof elevation, as the dramatically angled roof forms allow their exploitation to provide light and view. In this way the layout has a functionality derived from the desire to exploit site-specific characteristics which gives a degree of order and reason to what, initially, would appear as a random and wilful layout. I think it is, indeed, of great importance to give due consideration to the care that appears to have been taken in the disposition of the layout as I describe it. The resultant layout of blocks is highly distinctive and of outstanding quality, in my judgment.

3.2 Spaces

a. Of high significance and great merit in this layout are the public spaces that are created as ‘anchors’ at the top and the bottom of the site, that is at either end of the landscape thoroughfare, itself a space of high importance. These are spaces that will help animate the street frontage and provide a destination for travel through the site, drawn by the key view across the river to Sutton Hoo. These public spaces do not currently exist and it is a generous and outstanding feature of the application that they are proposed here.

b. The public space at the top of the site is intended for use in conjunction with the ground floor community use of one of the frontage blocks (Block E); and could also be partly used by the retail space in the other frontage block. In this way the public space will be enjoyed by residents and passers-by alike. Indeed, it is worth noting that, due to the extent of new commercial and residential floorspace in the land immediately to the north of the application site, there is an increasing footfall past this site towards the town centre. This footfall increases the likelihood that the public space and adjoining uses will be actively engaged, which is important for the space to be successful and not just a tick on an urban designer's wishlist. Is it appropriate for a public space to be in this location at all? I judge that it is – the space opens up the frontage to the new landscape thoroughfare and the view beyond and invites people to traverse it; it will engage the site with the existing pedestrian route across the top of it from Woodbridge to Melton and reverse; and it is proportionate to the importance of the site i.e. it is not intended to have a large scale civic character. I note that the revised landscape design for the frontage now includes for informally planted beds and new trees to soften and filter the urban architecture of this design and these are welcome.

c. The public space at the bottom of the site utilises its topography and the fact that this area is undevelopable to create a positive feature that is a destination at the end of the landscape thoroughfare. This space also links in to Deben Road, which increases the opportunities available for its use. The space appears to have been designed as one that can be occupied as a viewing platform and to have a soft, green informal character – a 'naturally planted 'wild' area' - that will form an effective contrast to the more urban public space at the top of the site. I judge that the design of these two spaces is effective and well-considered.

d. The character of the landscape thoroughfare space will be ever-altering whilst one transits up or down it – the town scale at the top will flow into a smaller scale ending in an open space bounded by riparian and countryside views of great beauty. Such an experience has the opportunity to afford the pedestrian a rich experience, the detail of which it will be important to understand.

e. Other space within the layout is designed as for either private or communal use, presumably, although the annotation for which has disappeared in the current submission. The former includes private terraces to ground floor apartments and gardens to the townhouses in the lower area of the site. Communal gardens – I assume - are located adjacent the apartment blocks and are designed for use by their occupants. This ensures that there will be a green setting to most of the residences.

f. The intermediate space along the landscape thoroughfare forms an effective transition between the two character areas of this site – between the apartment blocks and the townhouses – and provides important connectivity.

g. In respect of the hierarchy of spaces illustrated in the submission, it is important that there is a delineation between spaces that are for use privately by residents and those that can be shared with other public users of the site. This ensures that the site is legible in terms

of where people should be going or will want to go. In the layout shown here, it appears that the topography of the site will be partly deployed to manage that hierarchy such that level changes (along with planting) will delineate separation between private garden areas and the public thoroughfare space – I assume. Of interest, was the emphasis that the architect placed at pre-application stage on ensuring that even private space could be overlooked and enjoyed from the public space that is the thoroughfare such that it is not necessary, for example, to provide boundaries or fenced screening in these areas. In this way, the garden setting to these new built forms is kept visually open across the site – is this still the intention here? The revised landscape drawings lack detail and clarity on this matter. I assume, however, that the ground floor terraces will provide privacy for their users.

3.3 Routes, connectivity and legibility

a. Legibility is the concept that a layout provides for recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around. People intuitively navigate their familiar urban spaces through established uses, recognisable buildings or intriguing vistas. Places of anonymous character and bewildering route-finding alienate residents and visitors, and urban design has come a long way since the 1980s to understand the perceptual journeys that we traverse and then translate into legible layouts. Legibility arises out of a clear hierarchy of routes with good connectivity providing a high degree of permeability into surrounding existing areas.

b. In this respect, I judge that the design maximises the limited opportunities that the site offers. By providing a new public thoroughfare through the site between new public spaces, and a new public connection onto Deben Road and access to the riverside beyond, the design links the layout into the existing urban fabric, constrained as it is by the lack of connectivity opportunities along its northern, eastern and southern edges. I could envisage an alternative less appealing layout where this entire site was closed off to any kind of public access and enjoyment, with a solid frontage and mostly private space behind for exclusive use of residents. Perhaps some consider that this would be a better design approach as it is more conventional but is not one that I support at this site where a better alternative is before us.

c. Of great interest here is the primacy given to the pedestrian in terms of the hierarchy of routes.

This is the complete reverse of practically every other development proposal we see, where the hierarchy is established by the delineation of routes designed primarily for vehicle use and with a secondary and tertiary network of pedestrian and cycling spaces following on. Of outstanding quality is that here the organisation of routes is predicated on the primacy of the pedestrian – in his or her own space not ‘shared’ by vehicles – and this is both innovative and laudable: a principal route animated by people, not vehicles. The landscape thoroughfare forms the principal route (and space) which: connects the site to its context at the top and bottom; connects the new public spaces; joins the entrances to the apartments

blocks and townhouses; connects to the underground parking area; and which has its own defined character and which forms an easy route to follow (as illustrated on the Site Plan with Pedestrian Circulation drawing). It is of great importance that this principal route is not a road but a footpath and one which will perform several important roles in connecting up the residential and spatial elements of the site and in a way that is clear and easy to understand in use. Again, I judge this to be an outstanding element of the design. On a technical point, the submitted drawing no.

0250/C/480A 'Site Plan with Pedestrian Circulation' omits to identify that the circulation illustrated in blue is the public route through the scheme. This should be clarified/confirmed by the agent.

d. As a consequence of the layout, there will be a physical separation of vehicle and pedestrian routes, such that vehicles have a separate and defined access to the site in approximately the same position as exists currently. This is limited in extent to the top corner of the site where 2-storey parking will be provided in that area of the existing site where the topography takes a 'dip' towards the Maltings. From the car park there are proposed pedestrian connections to a centrally positioned access core and separately to the lower area of the site. Fire tender and ambulance access are permissible via a service road as far as the intermediate public space on the landscape thoroughfare, which can double as a turning head; access for maintenance vehicles will be permissible to the bottom of the site. The success of this layout where vehicle access is secondary to pedestrian access will be partly predicated on the concierge management of the site for deliveries, waste and servicing (strategies for which are illustrated in the application and described in section 8.0 of the original DAS). From discussion with the applicant at pre-application stage, it is clear that thought has been given to this issue. The result in practice may have something of the experimental about it but could also offer a useful blueprint for the development of constrained urban sites and, in this respect, I judge the proposal to be innovative.

3.4 Density and building heights

a. The approach to density and building heights in the design produces two differing sorts of character areas in the upper and lower parts of the site. The upper part is characterised by apartment blocks of differing scales; the lower part is characterised by townhouses giving on to the greensward and public space at the lower end of the site. The decision to design a scheme that utilises apartment blocks as its principal typology has provided for a densification of development and the maximisation of resultant open space greater than that which may have been envisaged when the planning brief was prepared by SCDC initially.

b. As you know, I expressed reservations regarding the scale of some of these blocks during the pre-application process such that the design was modified to reduce it. I challenged whether it was appropriate to employ this building typology - more akin to city-scale development - within a market town. The architects took the view that there is precedent for (new and existing) development of a similar scale within the context of this

site. Further, the now complete development at Whisstocks and Nunns Mill includes the use of 4-storey development on sites at the edge of the town centre; and 4-storey development is visible next to the application site at the Malt Yard and the Old Maltings. I appreciate that this aspect of the proposal is contentious and that many may consider the approach taken to be fundamentally wrong in this regard.

However, I am satisfied that the scale of the blocks has been carefully considered such that it has been reduced along the street frontage to respect the streetscene context – Block E has been reduced further in height by 750mm; and to Blocks A, B and C to avoid an overbearing impact on neighbouring properties. It is also important to note that the storey heights of each block vary across their depth from, for example, five to three or two, or four to three; and that these are not, therefore, monolithic five storey blocks at their highest. In this way, some of the scale impact of the design is mitigated. This is usefully illustrated in the massing comparison with neighbouring large buildings shown on Site Sections/Elevations 1 and 2.

c. I am also satisfied that this site is not a suburban site and that suburban densities would be inappropriate. This site is an edge-of-town centre site with a fully urban character such that development of the density proposed here will help support the viability and vitality of the town centre in which it is in such close (walking) proximity. It is of great importance that the opportunities, as presented here, are taken to do so and I support this scheme on that basis.

More intensive forms of development are important in making the best use of well-connected sites.

d. Of interest to me is how the scale of the proposed architecture creates a new rising and falling site topography through the mass, form and scale of these blocks and I find this an appealing approach. On long views into the site these blocks will establish presence and, positively designed, I fully support the validity of this: a bold and confident approach to place-making and the creation of 21st century townscape. It is an approach wholly appropriate in calibre for a town like Woodbridge which, in its historic core, riverside and some suburban areas, enjoys the highest quality evolved townscape. It would be very welcome to see this calibre being reflected at other development sites in our District's towns.

e. A consequence of the building heights proposed here is a juxtaposition in scale between new and existing buildings that will arise, particularly along the street frontage. However, as at Nunns Mill where such scale juxtaposition is evident, it is my view that such scale contrasts can animate urban form and are an essential component of it (but not of suburban form). I appreciate that this will be a view that is not shared by all for whom more of a blending-in approach, scale-wise, would be considered more suitable. Such an approach would not be wrong here – it will just be less interesting.

3.5 Uses

a. I welcome the mix of uses that is proposed here. The proposal is for a new street frontage that will include active uses, including community uses and retail. Although residential use of this site is clearly a high-value use, it is important that the design does not promote a monolithic single use in a site so close to the town centre. The community and retail uses will activate the frontage of the site and the architecture of these buildings is designed in such a way that this is expressed through their character. This is in contrast to the former employment use of the site which had, in effect, a dead frontage with no active connections, except for the pedestrian link down the side of the site to a 'front door' that was not on the front at all. The frontage mixed uses in conjunction with the new public square, therefore, provide a good opportunity for the scheme to contribute positively to context, beyond the important provision of new housing.

3.6 Edges

a. When considering development proposals it is always important to consider how the designed layout will meet the edges of the site. It is important to understand that the edges have been taken into account by the layout and not ignored. I have already discussed the edges at the top and bottom of the site (i.e. to the east and west). The northern edge of the site consists of the vehicular access to the site including a service area, visitor parking and a bin marshalling area; and the ramped access and egress from the underground parking area. The north-eastern edge of the site consists of the underground parking area and the pedestrian access to it from the intermediate public space on the landscape thoroughfare. The parking area and egress is partially surmounted by Blocks G and H.

b. There is little doubt that this is the 'business' end of the site in terms of the activities that are focussed here, including the relocation of the substation to the area next to the proposed bin store. This is a sensitive edge, given the proximity of recent and existing residential development. However, the position of the access off the main road and the route to the underground parking means that the route is the shortest that it can be, to take account of the required gradient; and that use of a residential block on top of the parking means that this does not become a 'multi-storey car park' feature on the site. Indeed, it will only be visible along the north-eastern edge of the site where planting should mitigate some of its negative effects on neighbouring properties. A drawback to this arrangement is that part of the space that surrounds Block G on two sides is not attractive communal gardens but a ramped vehicle access and stepped underground car park.

c. In respect of the southern edge, this is shown to consist of a mix of private rear gardens and rear communal gardens and private ground floor terraces serving apartment blocks A, B and C. All of these are south-facing and back on to existing rear private gardens, which is appropriate. The existing green edge will be reinforced to mitigate some of the impact of the new development on adjacent gardens and this is welcome.

3.7 Built form, character and materials

a. Of note with this scheme is the distinctive form of development proposed, not just in terms of its car-free and public landscape thoroughfare approach, but the form, mass and layout of the apartment blocks and townhouses. What is proposed here is a new kind of place-making through the careful juxtaposition of forms and spaces to create townscape of interest and positive character. This approach has been wholly derived from the applicant and his architects' conceptual approach to this site. The strength of this approach was evident at the outset and has been carried all the way through the pre-application process and public consultations, with the result that the proposed scheme is an innovative and outstanding example of urban design, in my judgment.

b. In terms of the character of the proposal, I do recall discussions with the applicant and architects over the idea of 'Woodbridgeness', which term I had never used myself in scrutinising development proposals in the town. It is important that the design, as it does here, respects key characteristics of its context, including the use of materials, scale and urban grain, for example.

The proposals here include the use of white brick, red brick (in Flemish bond), and natural slate and clay plain tiles – a palette of materials, the diversity of which is evident in the town. The mixed scale of buildings also reflects that of its context – from modest terraced forms, large villas in generous gardens to buildings of substantial scale as at the Maltings and Malt Yard, which are big buildings. The urban grain of the proposal again borrows from its neighbours and melds them to create a site-specific response. In these ways, I judge that this proposal is entirely suited to its situation in Woodbridge/Melton because it could not have been designed for any other site. In this way the scheme design is Woodbridge in character – appropriate and justified.

c. When considering the historic evolution of Woodbridge and why the approach to built form and character here can be judged appropriate, it is important to consider that Woodbridge's central townscape has evolved over centuries. This has provided us with a handsome historic townscape of the highest quality with evidence of late medieval, Georgian and Victorian architecture gifted to us by preceding generations, to the highest standard of design and quality, making the town special. I judge that it is our duty to carry on this process with design of our era, of the 21st century, reflecting the way that we build and live today and not aping past styles. I should like to illustrate this point by looking at the area of Woodbridge around St Johns Street.

This is a fine example of determined Victorian town planning, with formal streets and architecture of white brick and slate. It immediately abuts the medieval core of Woodbridge and yet looks nothing like it in character. It looked entirely novel at the time and reflects its era; and is now cherished townscape. I should also point out, of course, that the rest of Woodbridge – that part outside the historic core - consists of average-quality suburban townscape of a character that can be found in any small to medium-sized provincial town. This aspect of Woodbridge and what people perceive to be its quality should not be ignored.

d. In the case of the current application I judge that the design will promote local distinctiveness through being distinctive locally – which is proper – and that its built form

and character are original and innovative in approach and of a high standard, reflecting the quality of its wider urban context and adding positively to the continuing architectural evolution of Woodbridge's and Melton's townscapes.

3.8 Detailed design

In terms of detailed aspects of the design, I have the following comments to make. I would say that, in conjunction with the visualisations included in the DAS, the design is comprehensively illustrated.

Frontage buildings D + E

- a. I judge it appropriate that the proposed replacement landmark building (building E) to the streetscene frontage is the building that includes community use. This will be a semi-public building and its architecture (prominent position, distinctive cantilevered design with a glazed ground floor, and use of white brick uniquely on the site) expresses its importance in the streetscene and wider context. This building also plays a key role in the management of the site in terms of the concierge facility. I note that the eaves and ridge heights of this building have been reduced by 750mm compared to the original submitted scheme; and that the community uses are now confined to the ground floor, only (two floors previously).
- b. The use of cantilevered brick to building E can be done beautifully where the brick is used to the soffit and examples in our District include the archive centre at the Red House, Aldeburgh and 75 Broad Street, Orford – both winners/commendees of our Quality of Place awards.
- c. I like the idea that building D to the frontage includes a retail unit with living accommodation over. This idea of 'living over the shop' is a strong feature of Woodbridge's Thoroughfare. I like also that it has domestic scale gardens included which relate to the more traditional townhouse-garden relationship visible opposite the application site.
- d. I also welcome that the retail unit will address the new public square and will hopefully add activity to it. Like the community building (E) the glazed open-ness of the ground floor signals the different uses to the residential uses above and behind; and will offer welcoming spaces to use.
- e. The muted colour palette of building D references the existing building in this position and reflects the palette of villas opposite (dark/weathered brick and natural slate roof).

Apartment blocks A-C, F-H

- a. I like that some of the apartment layouts are designed to provide occupants with a view out of the building directly on entry.

b. I note that the external pattern of fenestration to the apartment blocks is deliberately varied in terms of the position, size of openings and cill and head levels. This provides an interesting interplay between solid and void which helps to animate the potentially monolithic forms of these blocks. I note also that, in the contemporary language of the architecture used here, some of the openings are of a generous size. This is in contrast to pastiche architecture which can have mean little openings in an attempt to imitate historic buildings. c. I think that some of the windows to the apartment blocks are positioned to be either flush or recessed with reveals, although I may be misinterpreting some of the application drawings. This variety would provide some welcome modelling to the facades.

d. I note that some areas of external brickwork to the apartment blocks are proposed to be patterned by using a Flemish bond with recessed headers. I welcome the use of decorative brickwork, which has been a Suffolk tradition for centuries (17th century diapering), and which will help animate the appearance of these blocks. At times, the brick walling becomes the edge to an inset roof terrace and the walling here will have the headers missing to provide a perforated appearance which, itself, will be both decorative and practical.

e. It is clear from the plans and sections of the apartment blocks that several units have been designed with dramatic internal levels and spaces and external terracing such that a homogeneous standardised floor template used throughout has been avoided. This is welcome and is an illustration of how the distinctive forms of these blocks also generate interesting internal architecture.

f. Some of the elevations to the apartment blocks illustrate what are annotated as 'slot drains' by which I think is meant secret gutters. This is a design device whereby the gutter line sits behind the eaves, such that the eaves is cleanly expressed without any gutter attached or downpipes. It would be useful to understand if this detail is proposed across all the buildings and how it will actually be achieved. The detail is more common on metal roofs but I have not seen it used on tiled roofs.

g. The 'elevation extract' drawings are useful in providing an illustration of the design aspirations for the appearance of the apartment blocks. I would say from these that it may have been better to have used the idea of the patterned brickwork more extensively to ameliorate the unrelieved planar facades of these brick blocks.

h. I welcome that the former block K in the lower area of the site has now been replaced with a further pair of townhouses (units 12 and 14). In my original comments to you I did suggest that this building would have been better as another townhouse rather than a stand-alone hybrid design and I am pleased that my views have been seemingly taken into account.

i. Buildings G and H are of particular interest given the rotation of the internal floorplate to sit at 45 degrees to the external envelope. The resultant internal room forms are unusual and create a range of diverse spaces including the use of duplexes. That these blocks are intended to provide affordable units is welcome as it illustrates that there is no

second class treatment of the proposed occupiers. I do, however, have a significant reservation about the tilted floorplates and that is that they produce single-aspect north-facing apartments. I consider this to be an example of poor design creating unappealing habitable quality and should have been re-considered between the original application and now.

j. I do feel that the elevations to these apartment blocks are somewhat unrelieved and could have benefited from greater modelling, variety of fenestration and/or the use of decorative brickwork, as proposed elsewhere.

k. In terms of the position of buildings G and H, I would say that building H is well integrated into the layout – it is well connected to the landscape thoroughfare, as all other buildings are with the exception of building G which feels as if it off at the edge of the site. However, I judge it appropriate that the entrances to these two buildings face each other across an entrance space (or ‘communal terrace’ as it is styled on the landscape concept plan) and that, thereby, they are in a direct relationship.

l. On a general point about rooflights, I did say originally that I was disappointed by the quantity which has been used across these blocks. When looking at their plan position, I can understand the justification for some of these – internal bathrooms or stairwells. Rooflights are not particularly attractive features and, for me, always represent something of a design failure, as if they have been added in after completion rather than part of the original design. I note that the current scheme includes for an overall reduction in the number of rooflights used across the apartment blocks and this is welcome.

Townhouses 1-14

a. I am pleased that the design approach for producing distinctive architecture has been mostly (but not entirely) maintained in the proposals for the townhouses in the lower area of the site. The approach of using angled roofs, highly modelled forms and distinctive fenestration patterns is carried forward into the townhouses but with contrasting architectural results.

b. The use of dark cladding, grey brick and dark roof coverings will ensure that these dwellings will have more of a visually recessive character when seen in longer views to the site; and, as a muted palette, will form an interesting and effective contrast to the prevailing colour palette of the apartment blocks behind.

c. Again, the plans and sections of these townhouses reveal how the sloping topography of the site is mirrored internally, with split levels to dramatise internal space.

d. The townhouses in their pairings represent a variation on a theme in terms of their design, designed to gain light and aspect. Units 1-4 are oriented to front directly onto the new public space and greensward at the bottom of the site which will ensure that it is well supervised and also enjoyed by the occupants.

2-tier car park

- a. The plans for the 2-tier parking show the layout to be efficient and which minimises the space necessary for access, egress and circulation.
- b. The same plan now details the pedestrian circulation core that will provide access to the upper levels and which contains a staircase and lift, information not previously provided.
- c. The layout plan confirms the separate pedestrian connection from the upper level to the lower area of the site layout, which will provide a more direct route for those occupying the townhouses, if parked on the upper tier.
- d. The car park will be set back such that the ramped connection down to the lower tier and between the lower and upper tiers, and the forward section of the upper tier of parking, will be open, as will be their vertical face to the east. This will provide natural daylight and ventilation to enter these spaces.

Site sections/elevations

- a. In respect of changes that have been made to the design of the elevations of the apartment blocks and townhouses – which changes appear to have been undertaken by a different designer from that of the original scheme – my view is that they do not offer quite as refined a design approach as that previously submitted. I do not regard them as improvements to the quality of design.
- b. The site sections are critical in being able to understand the heights of individual buildings; their scale relationship to each and surrounding buildings; and the effect of the site's topography.
- c. Site Section/Elevation 1 is, in effect, a section through the landscape thoroughfare along the site's main axis. This illustrates the contrast in scale, typology and character between the upper and lower parts of the site. It also helps model the apartment blocks to illustrate the dramatic manner in which their scale changes from their highest point to their lowest point. Truly, the 'fifth' elevation i.e. the roof, will, indeed, become a key visible element of their design, dramatising the character of these blocks. This section also illustrates how the replacement frontage building C will successfully mediate between the streetscene and the scale of the raised villas beyond to the west and that of apartment blocks behind. Also of interest here is the rising and falling topography of the roofline created from the front to the back of the site.
- d. I think that Cross Section/Elevation 2 is intended to illustrate the impact of the proposal on garden occupiers of Deben Road properties. The building-to-building distance is a healthy 49 metres and, due to existing edge screening by trees, the upper parts of the apartment blocks, only, will be visible to garden occupiers close to their dwellings and not much visible at all further into their gardens, in this one example.

e. Site Section/Elevation 3 is useful in showing the offset between buildings G and H and the existing Maltings building beyond, including the setback at the level of the proposed 2-tier car park. You will need to satisfy yourself in respect of impact on neighbouring properties, although the distance of 26 metres between the building G and the Maltings is adequate, in my view. The edge to the car park is closer at 15 metres and will have to be carefully designed in terms of screening and appearance to mitigate its impact: the 'green boundary' illustrated looks promising in that respect.

f. I understand that Site Section/Elevation 4 which illustrates the southern boundary of the site to the rear of Deben Road properties includes reasonably accurate renditions of the existing tree cover along this edge. Also illustrated is the profile of the existing 3-storey office building.

g. This section is also useful for showing the scale relationship between buildings D and E and their streetscene context. There is little doubt that the apartment blocks shown will have a noticeable impact along the southern boundary and within the streetscene, but that this need not be adverse.

h. Cross Section/Elevation 5 is interesting as it is a reminder that, in the broader townscape context, the application site will be seen in long views from Sutton Hoo against rising and tree-ed land behind, such that it will neither break nor form the skyline to Woodbridge/Melton in this area. Further, in the same long views, Melton Grange should remain pre-eminent as the local landmark building that is surprisingly visible.

i. I must say that the elevation to the 2-tier car park illustrated in this same drawing is irritatingly fuzzy and it is difficult to understand fully how this edge of the site will appear when viewed from the Maltings – an important view if you are a resident.

j. Cross Section/Elevation 7 provides, in effect, a useful illustration of the view through the site from close to the bottom to the top.

3.9 Original Design and Access Statement (re-submitted)

I have the following comments to make on specific parts of the DAS of relevance to my areas of interest:

a. Section 5.0: Design. The idea of the urban villa is interesting in the way that it is expressed here but I am not entirely convinced of its direct application to the organisation of the site. I do, however, understand and agree with the idea of the 'landscape thoroughfare', the principal route through the site.

b. I judge the massing diagrams illustrated on pp84-85 useful in describing in a simplified fashion the derivation of the proposal in terms of its massing, disposition of blocks and layout of spaces.

c. The lighting strategy (p138) provides a reasonably comprehensive understand of how the differing spaces will be illuminated – the landscape thoroughfare; the routes to the apartment blocks and townhouses and also their entrances; the upper and lower public spaces; the car park and vehicular and pedestrian routes in and out; the street frontage; and the route to Deben Road. We will also need to understand the design of the luminaires and proposed lux levels; and the overall impact on the night-time character of the site when viewed in context. I accept that, if approved, much of this could be Conditioned. The strategy, itself, provides an acceptable approach that acknowledges the needs of users and the transition between the urban context at the front of the site and the landscape-dominant character at the bottom of the site.

d. The graphic representations on p103 are of interest. I have never seen development proposals illustrated in this unusual manner where existing and proposed spatial uses are compared using pie charts. It does illustrate some interesting points: that the footprint areas of the existing office building and the proposed residential buildings are similar; that the area of public realm is much higher in the proposal; and that the area given over to road use and parking is proposed to be much reduced. These last two can be considered to be important attributes of the design.

e. At p132, we need to be satisfied that the approach to the provision of playspace described and illustrated here is satisfactory. From what I understand there will be no formal areas of playspace designated within the layout but that public open space is meant to provide the opportunity. It may be worth bearing in mind that the site is reasonably well connected to Elmhurst Park, which has formal and informal play areas and recreation space.

f. In respect of section 8.0 Management Strategy Statement, it is important to understand if this also applies to buildings G and H, which will contain the affordable housing units. Is it expected that any RSL taking these on will be expected to undertake a similar level of service; or buy-in this service from the on-site facility?

3.10 RIBA Suffolk Design Review Panel

a. To clarify Appendix B of the DAS, design review was conducted externally and independently by the RIBA Suffolk Design Review panel, at our request and agreed to by the applicant and architect. Therefore, the full reference here should be to the RIBA Suffolk Design Review Panel.

b. We ensured that the feedback provided during the external design review was used to support the ongoing design discussions that took place as part of the pre-application process.

c. I should point out that the design review panel consisted of architects and a landscape architect with high regional reputations; and a heritage adviser who was formerly the Head of the eminent historic buildings team at Essex County Council.

d. The DAS includes at Appendix B the three written reports of the design review panel. I note that in its second report the panel expressed its support for the project, with caveats which were the subject of its third report.

e. In respect of the third and final panel report, I note that it confirms that the frontage architecture of building C (as was, now E) is better resolved; that it still regarded the change in scale along the Deben Road garden boundary abrupt; and that the quality of open spaces and landscape strategy required better thought.

f. I suggest that you seek the views of our colleague Nick Newton to understand if this last point about open space and the landscape strategy has been acceptably addressed in the current submission.

g. In respect to the comment about building scale, I can confirm that the blocks formerly labelled G and I were reduced by a full storey subsequent to the final report and in response to the concerns expressed in it.

3.11 Analysis Conclusion

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and has articulated how this is achievable at Section 12 of the NPPF, detailed particularly in paragraph 127. In including the detailed criteria, the NPPF states that planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of an area; area visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities); establish a strong sense of place; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development; and create safe and accessible environments.

With reference to all of my comments, above, I am of the view that the application scheme will meet the criteria of paragraph 127 that I, myself, am able to judge. The scheme offers a site-specific response and design that is detailed in its consideration, innovative in some aspects of its approach and outstanding in some aspects of quality. It will be distinctive locally and through that create an identity from which its strong sense of place will be derived. I judge that the site has been optimised for development and that its scale is appropriate for its edge-of-town centre location, vital in supporting local facilities and with good access to transport networks. The design responds to its context through its varied and mediating urban grain and choice of materials whilst adopting an innovative approach to form, design and appearance, with visually enhancing results, the consequence of which is a high quality scheme, appropriate for its high quality urban context in the Woodbridge and Melton townscape.

I judge further that, through the creation of a new community building, new public spaces and a new public landscape thoroughfare through the length of the site with good physical connections to the existing wider townscape and key visual connections to the protected landscape beyond, and in its choice of materials, this scheme will offer good integration into its context, as far as physical constraints permit.

Also of relevance is paragraph 129 of the NPPF which states that LPAs should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include design advice and review arrangements. East Suffolk Council employs me as an architect to provide that design advice – uniquely amongst all Suffolk authorities. We also have local design review arrangements in place to support and ensure high standards of design. We have met this requirement by referring the scheme at pre-application stage three times to the independent RIBA Suffolk Design Review Panel, with the agreement of the applicant and architect, for scrutiny. I have had regard to its recommendations in my comments, above. Paragraph 129 states that, in assessing applications, LPAs should have regard to the recommendations made by design review panels and I assume that you will do so in your considerations. Reference here is also made to use of assessment frameworks such as Building for Life 12. I note that the emerging Suffolk Coastal Local Plan includes for the use of this tool for major residential development proposals in its policy on design quality (Policy SCLP 11.1).

Also of relevance, in my view, is paragraph 131 of the NPPF. This states that “in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.” Notwithstanding some reservations regarding some detailed aspects of the scheme, I do judge that it is innovative in some aspects of its approach and outstanding in some aspects of quality and that it contributes importantly to the raising of the standard of design more generally in our District, a very important objective to secure. However, an important change in this paragraph from the NPPF that was in use at the time of the original application

is the qualification that the outstanding or innovative design should ‘fit in’ with its surroundings. I regard this as a regressive qualification but one that we must now take into account. My own views, expressed above, are that the submitted design has more of a contrast effect with some of the form and layout of the surroundings to the application site and, thereby, the scheme cannot now be accorded great weight in respect of its outstanding design quality as per this NPPF test.

4.0 Heritage Assets

In determining the application, it is necessary to assess the impact of it on three different types of heritage asset: a conservation area, listed buildings and two non-designated

heritage assets. Different statutory duties and policy tests apply to each type of asset and I summarise these here.

For conservation areas, the statutory duty under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. However, the duty only applies when the planning authority is determining a planning application in respect of “buildings or other land in a conservation area”. Where development is proposed outside the boundary of a conservation area – as here - the statutory duty is not engaged (although the NPPF is still relevant, as set out below).

For listed buildings, s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. The duty is engaged when the planning authority is considering whether to permit development which affects a listed building or its setting. Therefore, even if a listed building is not directly affected by a proposed development, the duty will still apply if the development affects the setting of the building. In the case of *East Northamptonshire DC v Secretary of State* (‘Barnwell Manor’), the Court of Appeal held that the desirability of preserving the settings of listed buildings should not simply be given careful consideration by the decision-maker for the purpose of deciding whether there would be some harm, but should be given “considerable importance and weight” when the decision-maker carries out the balancing exercise; and that a finding of harm to a listed building or its setting gives rise to a “strong presumption” against granting permission.

There are no statutory duties concerning non-designated heritage assets.

The National Planning Policy Framework identifies protection and enhancement of the historic environment as an important element of sustainable development. The core planning principles of the NPPF are observed in paragraph 8 which includes the need to ‘contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment’. Paragraph 192 says that when determining planning applications, account should be taken of ‘the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation’; ‘the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality’; and ‘the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.’

The NPPF at paragraph 193 requires planning authorities to place ‘great weight’ on the conservation of designated heritage assets, and states that the more important the asset the greater the weight should be. Paragraph 194 recognises that significance can be harmed by development within the setting of an asset. This paragraph also states that ‘any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification’.

It is important to note that this paragraph applies to all designated heritage assets. Therefore, although the statutory duty in s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is not engaged by development outside the boundary of a conservation area, the NPPF makes clear that (i) the conservation area still has a setting and (ii) the approach should be the same for all types of designated heritage asset, therefore harm to the setting of a conservation area should be treated in the same way as harm to a listed building or its setting when a planning application is being determined.

Paragraph 195 of the NPPF applies where development would lead to “substantial harm to or total loss of significance” of a designated heritage asset. Where that is the case, it advises that planning permission should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or four other criteria are satisfied (which relate to the absence of reasonable or viable uses of the asset). In the case of *Bedford BC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government*, the High Court said that “substantial harm” meant “such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced”.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF applies where a development proposal would lead to “less than substantial harm” to the significance of a designated heritage asset. In such cases, it says that the harm (which, as per paragraph 193, must be given great weight) should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

In the case of *Jones v Mordue* the Court of Appeal confirmed that this part of the NPPF corresponds with the statutory duty in s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and, therefore, if a decision maker works through paragraphs 192-196 of the NPPF according to their terms, the statutory duty will have been complied with.

In the case of non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 197 of the NPPF says that the effect of a proposed development on their significance should be taken into account, and that where a development would affect a non-designated heritage asset either directly or indirectly a “balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”.

The NPPF at Paragraph 200 highlights the opportunity for local planning authorities to look for new development within the setting of heritage assets that will enhance or better reveal their significance.

Proposals that therefore preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably. Paragraph 199 makes provision for developers ‘to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact’

With regard to the setting of heritage assets, this is defined in the NPPF glossary. The NPPF states that elements of a setting that make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset may affect the ability to appreciate that significance. The NPPG further advises that the extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations and that, although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. Historic England advises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset.

Historic England has published relevant advice, which I have already referred to in section 2.0, above.

This advice is non-statutory and aims to assist decision makers to follow good practice. I have taken this advice into account in preparing these comments.

4.1 Heritage Impact Assessment for Melton Hill Development Site, Woodbridge

I can confirm that the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment (June 2017) meets the information and impact assessment requirements of paragraph 189 of the NPPF. The HIA is that which was submitted with the original application and it appears not to have been updated for the current submission.

4.2 Setting of Woodbridge conservation area.

I have followed the guidance in Historic England's advice note on following a stepped approach to views and setting by: identifying the heritage asset and setting affected; assessing the degree to which the setting contributes to the asset's significance; assessing the affects of development on significance or the ability to appreciate it; and exploring ways to minimise harm.

The application site falls outside the Woodbridge conservation area, a designated heritage asset, which means that the development proposal will not affect it directly. The site partly abuts the conservation area along a short section of the site's frontage. The application site can be described as falling within the setting of the conservation area.

Woodbridge conservation area was designated in 1969 and extended in 1971 and 1975. It was re-designated in 1990. A review of the conservation area boundary has been proposed with suggestions for change being made by the Design and Conservation Team, the Woodbridge Society and local residents.

A public consultation by our Design and Conservation team has recently closed on these suggestions which did not include the application site ([http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/conservation-areas/woodbridge-conservation-area-boundary-review/)

[conservation/conservation-areas/woodbridge-conservation-area-boundary-review/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/design-and-conservation/conservation-areas/woodbridge-conservation-area-boundary-review/)). Work on the proposals will re-commence in late summer to take them forward.

Woodbridge has an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal SPD (July 2011). That part of the conservation area closest to the site falls within Character Area 9, summarised on p19 of the Appraisal as “Thoroughfare, from Cross Corner to Pytches Road. The commercial heart of the town, with a continuous built up frontage of 18th & 19th century vernacular facades standing on the back edge of the footway. There are fine detached and semi-detached Victorian villas north of Sun Lane”. The Appraisal identifies nos 103-117 opposite the site’s frontage as significant buildings with important front boundary walls (on the summary map at p100). There are no important views or important open/green/tree space in that part of the conservation area that abuts the application site. This area makes a moderate contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Reference to the north end of the Thoroughfare is made at p70 of the Appraisal, where it states that “the landform rises on the west side of the road and the houses are built well above the road level with generous front gardens”. On p75, the Appraisal states that the “end of the Thoroughfare, beyond Sun Lane, contains Nos. 103 to 117, a good group of Late Victorian and Edwardian houses, alternating between detached and semi-detached plans, set back above the road in spacious front gardens, enclosed by garden walls, with gates and piers and clipped hedges. The construction of the row commenced with the high number prior to 1875.” More detailed architectural descriptions of these buildings follow in the text. Clearly, this area of the town up to the edge of the parish boundary with Melton was subject to modest residential expansion in the late Victorian and Edwardian era.

In the Conservation Area Management Plan that forms part of the Appraisal, it is stated at p89 ‘Design of new development’ that “proper account should also always be taken of the impact that new development adjacent a conservation area can have on its setting. Although a conservation area boundary represents a demarcation enclosing a special area of historic interest, changes immediately outside of it can still have a significant impact on character and appearance. The setting of the conservation area, therefore, has an intrinsic value that must be acknowledged in any proposals for change to it.” This wording reflects that of the NPPF (which post-dates the Appraisal) at paragraph 194 which refers to the potential for the significance of a designated heritage asset (including a conservation area) being harmed through development within its setting.

It is my view that the application site, itself, does not contribute importantly to the history of Woodbridge as it fell well outside the medieval origins and historic core of the town. This is confirmed by the DBA report which suggests that its archaeological potential is mostly low. The site lies adjacent the important route joining Ipswich to Great Yarmouth via Melton and Lowestoft but appears to have remained undeveloped until the 19th century. Areas of land around the application site became industrialised during the late 18th century and then

19th century with the advent of the railway. Late 19th century industrial activities in the area of the site included brickworks and associated kilns, iron foundry (specialising in the manufacture of agricultural equipment), timber yard, osier bed, and maltings. Historic uses of the application site included as a plantation and residential use and garden land allied to the expansion of Woodbridge northwards in the later 19th century. Brickworks and kilns were located immediately beyond the application site to the north-east in the 19th century and also to the south, one of which on Deben Road is now a dwelling (and Grade II listed). Not until the late 19th century, therefore, did Woodbridge's development entirely encroach upon the parish boundary with Melton. Thus the development of this area of the town around the application site is relatively modern and the contribution of the application site to the significance of the conservation area as part of its setting is very limited. Also worth noting in this respect is that the application site, itself, is occupied by the now vacant Council offices which are – with the exception of the two non-designated heritage assets – modern, being mostly post-WWII in origin and including extensive areas of parking.

The conservation area in Woodbridge is very large (103 ha), such that the Appraisal identifies eleven character areas within it. It has, therefore, a very wide and extensive setting in all directions to it. The position of the application site is such that the proposed development on it will impact views into the north-east corner of the conservation area from the wider area, for example Sutton shore and Sutton Hoo. As stated above, the development will affect the ability to appreciate the significance of the conservation area by intervening in longer views across to the north-east corner of the conservation area. However, the minor extent of conservation area affected (and its moderate contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area) will not restrict the ability to appreciate the significance of the wider conservation area as a designated heritage asset, in my view.

In its section on the setting of the conservation area, the Appraisal states that the River Deben and its farmed and tree-ed eastern banks of the Sutton shore “form the setting to the east of the conservation area. The estuarine, open and undeveloped character of this edge forms a significant contrast to the built form of the town and provides key views across and into the conservation area” (p19). This indicates that the main views of the conservation area from Sutton shore which contribute to significance are those directly into it where the boundary of the conservation area abuts the River Deben. Development of the application site would not impact on these key views apart from being seen incidentally in a wider view, spatially removed from the edge of the conservation area and in the context of other large and more modern development to the north of the application site.

In respect of the historic frontage buildings proposed for removal, I judge that these do contribute positively to the significance of this part of the conservation area. The position, character and historic derivation of these two buildings modestly complement those opposite that fall within the conservation area, although it must be borne in mind that neither building was considered to justify inclusion within the conservation area at the time of designation or in subsequent boundary reviews. Loss of these buildings will harm their

positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area and cause less-than-substantial harm to the conservation area's significance. I judge that this harm will be of a minor magnitude as neither building contributes appreciably to the significance of the conservation area. This is, therefore, less than substantial harm which will need to be given great weight and will need to be weighed by the decision maker against the public benefits of the proposal, as per the test in paragraph 196 of the NPPF. I have already commented on what I consider to be the outstanding quality of the proposal in terms of some aspects of its design, above, but there will need to be other public benefits of the proposal which fall outside the scope of these comments and which will need to be taken into account by the decision maker.

In my view, there are no other adverse impacts on the setting of the conservation area arising from the development proposal. It is inherent within urban contexts that change takes place over time, that buildings come and go and are replaced with newer forms of development. This pattern is shown to be acceptable within conservation areas (on a large scale, for example, at Whisstocks) as much as it can be outside it within their setting, where that setting is already developed. The scale and character of the proposed development in its design will represent such change which will be positive in terms of overall design quality and negative in terms of the loss of the historic frontage buildings.

4.3 Setting of listed buildings

I have followed the guidance in Historic England's advice note on following a stepped approach to setting by: identifying the heritage asset and setting affected; assessing the degree to which the setting contributes to the asset's significance; assessing the affects of development on significance or the ability to appreciate it; and exploring ways to minimise harm.

The Grade II listed Maltings Cottage is 17th century in origin, timber framed and rendered with a tiled roof. It appears to be listed for group value which is confusing as there are no other proximate listed buildings with which it shares this identified value. The significance of the cottage is derived from its historic origins, traditional form, layout and materials and its position at the edge of Melton parish. The Cottage's principal elevation is at right angles to Melton Hill, facing the application site, and is visible and thereby prominent on approach northwards along the Thoroughfare to Melton Hill. Its distinctive gabled end elevation is also prominent within the streetscene. Its name suggests it was occupied in association with the maltings that succeeded the brickworks on the nearby site at the end of the 19th century, although the Archaeological DBA report suggests that the industry originates nearby in the 17th century; this association also contributes to its significance.

The setting of the Cottage consists primarily of its garden curtilage and the space to the front of it which provides the existing vehicular access and parking area to the former Council offices. This space is important as it contributes to an appreciation of the significance of the Cottage and is an established and historic view which, although encroached upon by built development in the 19th century and 20th

century, remains intact. This key view across to Maltings Cottage is important in understanding its significance. The view reveals its principal elevation, vernacular form and traditional materials of construction along with its unusual gable end-on-to-the road orientation.

The application site appears to have enjoyed no likely historic relationship to the Cottage in terms of ownership or use, other than that the northern access area may have formed its front garden originally (this is speculative). The application site was developed for residential and garden use during the 19th century as Woodbridge expanded towards the parish boundary with Melton. However, this development and the site's existing buildings are incidental to the history and development of Maltings Cottage in Melton parish and, thus, I judge that the application site does not contribute towards the significance of the Cottage.

The existing character of the setting in the area of the application site is that of built form consisting of a series of linked volumes creating the impression of continuous development of predominantly, but not exclusively, modern appearance. The proposed development will retain the effect of built development within the setting of the Cottage, return it to predominantly residential use and preserve the important and established space and view to the immediate frontage of the Cottage which ensures appreciation of its significance. That the actual development introduces built form of a different use, architectural character and scale than that which exists is, in my view, incidental provided that its position does not impinge upon what I have, in effect, identified as a visual and spatial buffer to its frontage, which it does not.

For these reasons, therefore, I judge that there would be no harm arising from the proposed development within the Cottage's setting and that its setting would, thereby, be preserved. It is not necessary, therefore, to apply the tests in either paragraph 195 or 196 of the NPPF.

The significance of the late 18th century Grade II listed terrace at no.s 104-110 Thoroughfare to the south of the application site is derived from its historic origins, urban form, profile, materials and its position adjacent the principal route out of Woodbridge to Melton. It contributes to the same streetscene as the frontage buildings on the application site and allows the way in which this part of Woodbridge extended around and beyond the pre-existing terrace during the later part of the 19th century and early 20th century to be read. The townscape has continued to evolve around and within the setting of the terrace during the 20th century and this is inherent within its urban nature.

I judge that the principle of the redevelopment of the application site will not cause harm to the terrace's setting. The design of the development replaces built form with built form and restores the residential character of the site with gardens in proximity to the terrace. The development proposal, therefore, would represent a change in this part of the terrace's setting but I judge that the change would have no effect on the terrace's significance.

For these reasons, therefore, I judge that there would be no harm arising from the proposed

development within the terrace's setting and that its setting would, thereby, be preserved. It is not necessary, therefore, to apply the tests in either paragraph 195 or 196 of the NPPF.

4.4 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

As you know, I do not support, in principle, the loss of non-designated heritage assets. I introduced the criteria for identifying non-designated heritage assets that are buildings or structures, which were adopted and published by SCDC in October 2015. These have been used to ensure the conservation of heritage assets that would otherwise be lost, although identification does not prevent changes that can be undertaken using permitted development rights. It was the Council's view in providing its planning brief for its former office site that the two older buildings that sit at the front of the site should be retained and re-used. Consequently, as part of the pre-application process, we identified the two buildings as non-designated heritage assets in October 2016, which information is publicly available through the Council's website and using eGGP. The identification was made because four out of ten criteria were met by each building and, by having done so, we identified their significance at that time.

The greater the number of criteria met, the greater the significance.

The buildings were identified as non-designated heritage assets as both met the following criteria: aesthetic value; integrity; landmark status; and social and communal value. The white brick building which is the southerly of the two heritage assets, is a substantial late 19th century villa with a projecting eaves and slate roof with good survival of its original external joinery to the front. It exhibits a positive external appearance in the streetscene and retains a degree of intactness and lack of harmful alteration.

It derives its communal value from its civic role as part of the former seat of the local authority. The red brick building which is the northerly of the two heritage assets is likely early 20th century in origin and constructed for the Deben Rural District Council. The building is an impressive essay in the early 18th century classical revival style and retains much of its original joinery to the front. It exhibits a positive external appearance in the streetscene and retains a degree of intactness and lack of harmful alteration.

It derives its communal value from its civic role as part of the former seat of the local authority. Its scale and formal character contribute to its streetscene role as a local landmark, an attribute particularly visible on approach down Pytches Road.

It is regrettable that the current application is predicated on the loss of the non-designated heritage assets on the site rather than their retention and re-use (I do not include the former on-site air raid shelter, which has not been identified in this way). The NPPF states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource at paragraph 184 and that LPAs should, in determining planning applications, take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; and the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality (para. 192). Historic

England's 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (2008) state that 'the fact that a place does not meet current criteria for formal designation does not negate the values it may have to particular communities. Such values should be taken into account in making decisions about its future...' (para. 81). It is also important to consider that "retaining and re-using existing buildings generally has a lower environment impact than replacing buildings in terms of embodied energy" (British Standard 7913:2013 Guide to the conservation of historic buildings – para. 5.3.1).

Paragraph 197 requires that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing the current application that directly affects two non-designated heritage assets, the decision maker will need to arrive at a balanced judgment having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. The two frontage buildings are not of very great significance – they are not designated heritage assets. However, they have met 4 of the 10 criteria for identification as non-designated heritage assets and are clearly of some local importance. Taking into account the significance of the buildings, therefore, it is my judgment that their complete loss would result in considerable harm. Loss of the buildings would not be mitigated by their recording prior to removal.

It is the role of the decision maker to strike a balance having regard to the scale of harm and the significance that I have identified, above. This will involve weighing up all of the various material considerations, positive and negative, many of which fall outside the scope of my comments here. It is a matter for the decision maker's judgment how much weight is ascribed to the considerable harm and the significance of the heritage assets that I have identified. Given the overall policy in the NPPF to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance because they are irreplaceable the decision maker will need to find positive factors in weighing the planning balance. I have identified, above, the outstanding quality of some aspects of the design of the proposed development and this is a positive factor. There may be many others that are identified in striking the overall balance. Provided that the decision maker, in arriving at their judgment of where the planning balance lies, has had regard to the scale of harm to and significance of the non-designated heritage assets that I have identified, then the terms of paragraph 197 of the NPPF will have been met.

Robert Scrimgeour

Principal Design and Conservation Officer

26th July 2019

MELTON HILL WOODBRIDGE

**ADDENDUM DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**

**IN SUPPORT OF A NEW PLANNING
APPLICATION JUNE 2019**



INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement is to support a new planning application for the site of the Former Council office at Melton Hill Woodbridge.

The application is essentially the same as the two previous applications for the same site. The first was withdrawn after a resolution to grant consent was passed by The Council and the second was refused. The detail of these are covered in the associated Planning Statement which forms part of the application.

This Statement is in the form of an addendum to the previous D&A Statement by Hoopers Architects and serves to set out and explain the minor amendments made to the scheme.

Also note that this scheme now rationalises the Block lettering unit numbering meaning some blocks a re-lettered.

The key points to note are that:

1. The number of units is the same i.e. 100 with a slightly different mix
2. The positioning, heights, massing and materials of the buildings are the same with two exceptions detailed below.
3. The site access and car parking is essentially the same.
4. The community facility has been brought down to ground level to avoid sharing a lift with residential units and making it more visible and accessible
5. There are minor amendments to the site layout to increase the soft landscaping.
6. The units have been planned to provide better planned and more useable accommodation which has led to minor changes to the elevations

UNIT MIX

Dwelling mix

	New Application	Previous Application
1 Bed :	24	23
2 Bed:	41	64
3 Bed:	32	13
4 Bed:	3	

Note that in the previous application there were a number of 2 bed units which had a third bedroom/study

BUILDING CHANGES

Former Block K is now proposed as two houses with the same footprint as before with reduced massing. The position has been slightly altered to be further from the site boundary and there are associated modest changes to the site layout to reflect the access arrangement to the houses.

Block E (Formerly Block B) has been revised so that the community room is sited at ground level and the upper floors are all residential. This also means that the first floor can be lower and this results in the eaves and roof level to the block being reduced in height by 750mm. The ground floor of the block is also slightly larger (under the overhang) and has been re-planned to reflect the revised use.

CAR PARKING

The previous scheme did not take account of the lift pits of the Blocks at podium level which will protrude down into the car park level below and block parking spaces. The car park layouts have been revised to accommodate the lift pits and in the case of Block G the core has had to be revised with the lift re-positioned to take it out of the access road. The 'lost' spaces at the upper car park level have been made up by making the lower car park level extend slightly further under the upper level car park.

SITE LAYOUT CHANGES

These are set out on drawing 453 and consist of:

Increase in soft landscaping and tree planting to the site frontage on Melton Hill

Revisions to private terraces at ground level.

Access over stair and lift up from car park to ground level now planned to work with layouts

Set back to deck over upper level car park to east of Block G revised to reflect structural and car park layout.

Block J now 2 houses as above

Access to house revised with bin stores added

Revised paving between Blocks G and H to reflect access and bin collections and to incorporate covered cycle parking

Public cycle parking racks added in front of Block E by the community room and adjacent to the commercial unit in Block D.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION PROVIDED AS PART OF THE APPLICATION

New information:

- 1) New plans of all blocks and houses
- 2) New elevations of all blocks and houses
- 3) Revised site and context plans
- 4) New car park plans
- 5) Site plan with previous scheme overlaid with revisions noted
- 6) Revised drawings for site layout and landscape strategies
- 7) Addendum D&A Statement with revised schedule of accommodation

Hoopers Information to be re-submitted from previous applications

- 1) Site survey
- 2) Existing site elevations
- 3) Demolition plans
- 4) Site sections and elevations with context
- 5) D&A Statement

Schedule of information			
Drawing	Current application	Previous Application	Notes
Location plan	3760-01	3760-01	Same drawing
Existing Survey	3760-50	3760-50	Same drawing
Existing site sections	3760-55	3760-55	Same drawing
Existing site elevations	3760-56	3760-56	Same drawing
Site plan demolitions	3760-60	3760-60	Same drawing
Site plan overall	0250/P/451	3760-103	
Site plan masterplan	0250/P/450	3760-100	
Site plan overlaid	0250/P/453	-	New drawing
Car park layout lower	0250/P/455	3760-1000	
Car park layout upper	0250/P/456	3760-1000	
Block A plans	0250/P/170	3760-580/581	Formerly Block J
Block B plans	0250/P/171	3760-560/561	Formerly Block I
Block C plans 1	0250/P/172	3760-480/481	Formerly Block E
Block C plans 2	0250/P/173	3760-481/482	Formerly Block E
Block D plans	0250/P/175	3760-440	Formerly Block C
Block E plans	0250/P/175	3760-420	Formerly Block B
Block F plans 1	0250/P/176	3760-500/501	
Block F plans 2	0250/P/177	3760-501/502	
Block G plans	0250/P/178	3760-520/521	
Block H plans	0250/P/179	3760-540/541	
House plan type 1	0250/P/180	3760/620/640//680	Formerly Blocks K, L M, O &P
House plan type 2	0250/P/181	3760-660	Formerly Block N

Block A Elevations	0250/P/150	3760-584	
Block B Elevations	0250/P/151	3760-562	
Block C Elevations	0250/P/152	3760-483	
Block D Elevations	0250/P/153	3760-441	
Block E Elevations	0250/P/154	3760-421	
Block F Elevations	0250/P/155	3760-503	
Block G Elevations	0250/P/156	3760-522	
Block H Elevations	0250/P/157	3760-542	
House Elevations 1	0250/P/158	3760- 601, 621, 641, 661, 681, 701	House elevations now combined
House Elevations 1=2	0250/P/159		
Site plan with pedestrian routes	0250/P/480	3760-120	
Site plan with cycle routes	0250/P/481	3760-121	
Site plan with refuse	0250/P/482	3760-129	
Site plan with vehicle routes	0250/P/483	3760-122	
Site plan with surfacing	0250/P/485	3760-130	
Site plan with landscaping	0250/P/486	3760-127	
Site plan with trees	0250/P/487	3760-127	
Site Boundary section	3760-61		Same drawing
Site section-elevation 1	3760-106		Same drawing
Site section-elevation 2	3760-107		Same drawing
Site section-elevation 3	3760-108		Same drawing
Site section-elevation 4	3760-109		Same drawing
Site cross section-elevation 1	3760-115		Same drawing
Site cross section-elevation 2	3760-116		Same drawing
Site cross section-elevation 3	3760-117		Same drawing
Site cross section-elevation 4	3760-118		Same drawing
Site cross section-elevation 5	3760-119		Same drawing
Site cross section-elevation 6	3760-120		Same drawing
Site cross section-elevation 7	3760-121		Same drawing

KINGS VIEW MELTON Hill WOODBRIDGE SCHEDULE OF AREAS												
ISSUE 7	22/06/2019											
				Private	Affordable			Private		Affordable	OTHER	
	PLOT	TYPE	BEDS	BEDS	LEVEL	sq.m	SQ FT	sq.m	SQ FT	sq.m	SQ FT	
	1	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					deck
	2	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					deck
	3	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					deck
	4	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					deck
	5	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					Garden
	6	House	3		N/A	117.9	1,269					deck
	7	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					Garden
	8	House	3		N/A	117.9	1,269					deck
	9	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					Garden
	10	House	3		N/A	117.9	1,269					deck
	11	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					Garden
	12	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					deck
	14	House	3		N/A	129.6	1,395					deck
Block A	15	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	91.1	981					
Block A	16	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	85.4	919					
Block A	17	Apartment	1		1st Floor	63.8	687					
Block A	18	Apartment	2		1st Floor	85.4	919					
Block A	19	Duplex	2		1st Floor	73.2	788					
Block A	20	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	120.8	1,300					
Block A	21	Duplex	2		2nd Floor	91.2	982					
Block A	22	Duplex	3		3rd & 4rd Floor	169.4	1,823					Penthouse
Block B	23	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	94.6	1,018					
Block B	24	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	86.4	930					
Block B	25	Apartment	3		1st Floor	108.9	1,172					
Block B	26	Apartment	3		1st Floor	117.7	1,267					
Block B	27	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	108.9	1,172					
Block B	28	Apartment	2		2nd Floor	102.3	1,101					
Block B	29	Duplex	3		3rd & 4rd Floor	167.8	1,806					Penthouse
Block C	30	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	74.1	798					
Block C	31	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block C	32	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block C	33	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	63.1	679					
Block C	34	Apartment	2		1st Floor	83.5	899					
Block C	35	Apartment	2		1st Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block C	36	Apartment	2		1st Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block C	37	Apartment	2		1st Floor	83.5	899					
Block C	38	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	120.7	1,299					
Block C	39	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	124.3	1,338					
Block C	40	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	120.9	1,301					
Block C	41	Apartment	3		3rd Floor	120.7	1,299					
Block C	42	Apartment	3		3rd Floor	124.3	1,338					
Block C	43	Apartment	3		3rd Floor	120.9	1,301					
Block C	44	Apartment	4		4th floor	302	3246					Penthouse
	Commercial Unt									157.7	1,697	
Block D	45	House	3		G,1st & 2nd Floor	157.7	1,697					Garden
Block D	46	House	4		G,1st & 2nd Floor	168.9	1,818					Garden
Block D	47	Duplex	2		1st & 2nd Floor	94.2	1,014					
Block D	48	Duplex	2		1st & 2nd Floor	94.2	1,014					
	Community Room									91.0	980	
	Concierge									33.5	361	
Block E	49	Apartment	2		1st Floor	104.8	1,128					
Block E	50	Apartment	2		1st Floor	112.8	1,214					
Block E	51	Apartment	2		2nd Floor	104.8	1,128					
Block E	52	Apartment	2		2nd Floor	112.7	1,213					
Block E	53	Apartment	2		3rd Floor	101.0	1,087					
Block E	54	Apartment	1		3rd Floor	53.8	579					
Block F	55	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	63.1	679					
Block F	56	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	74.1	798					
Block F	57	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block F	58	Apartment	2		Ground Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block F	59	Apartment	2		1st Floor	83.5	899					
Block F	60	Apartment	2		1st Floor	83.5	899					
Block F	61	Apartment	2		1st Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block F	62	Apartment	2		1st Floor	93.1	1,002					
Block F	63	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	120.9	1,301					
Block F	64	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	124.3	1,338					
Block F	65	Apartment	3		2nd Floor	120.7	1,299					
Block F	66	Apartment	3		3rd Floor	120.9	1,301					
Block F	67	Apartment	3		3rd Floor	120.7	1,299					
Block F	68	Apartment	3		3rd Floor	124.3	1,338					
Block F	69	Apartment	4		4th floor	306.0	3,294					Penthouse

TOTAL AREAS	
sq.m	Sq.ft.
9070.8	97638.1

EXTRACTED FROM THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 19 APRIL 2018

8. **WOODBIDGE and MELTON – DC/17/2840/FUL – Demolish all of the existing offices and surrounding buildings on the site and replace with a high-quality housing development providing 100 residential units (33 affordable) (C3) together with a community building (D1) and a retail unit that may be a coffee shop (A1/2/3) or retail unit. A landscape environment free from cars as they are located in an underground car park. Means of access and other associated works at Former Council Offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU for Active Urban (Woodbridge) Ltd**

Planning Permission was sought for the redevelopment of the former Suffolk Coastal District Council Offices site to a residential led scheme of 100 dwellings, with the policy requirement of affordable housing. The proposal also included community and café space towards the site frontage, pedestrian thoroughfare through to the river and underground parking.

The application was considered by the Planning Committee on the 13 October 2017, following a site visit, whereby the scheme was endorsed by the Committee but further details were sought in relation to car parking, the boundary treatment to Deben Road and the affordable housing provision, and that these matters were to be brought back to the Committee for determination, alongside confirmation that the Secretary of State did not wish to call in the application for his own determination.

The Committee received an updated presentation on the application by the Development Management Team Leader (South).

The Committee was advised that the original report on the application, presented to it on 13 October 2017, was appended to the updated report along with consultation responses from both the Arboriculture and Landscape Manager and the Principal Design and Conservation Officer, together with the Minutes of the meeting.

The recommendation, as set out on pages 90 and 91 of the report, was outlined.

The site was formally vacated by the Council in December 2016 and had remained vacant since that time. The Committee was reminded of its detailed site visit undertaken on 2 October 2017 which included taking in views of the site from the opposite side of the River Deben.

The proposal was described as being made up of fourteen blocks of varying height and scale; the taller blocks to be located towards Melton Hill, with more domestic size buildings towards the rear of the site. Vehicular access to the site was off Melton Hill with an additional pedestrian and cycle route through to Deben Road. In addition to the residential elements the scheme also includes community and retail facilities in the two frontage blocks. It was noted that the Drummer Boy statue, which had been located at the front of the site, had been moved to the Market Hill in Woodbridge.

The further details requested by the Committee on 13 October 2017 were outlined. The Development Management Team Leader referred to the update sheet circulated in advance of the meeting which included revised wording to the proposed affordable housing policy and updates to the report following internal review of the Committee report.

The Development Management Team Leader (South) referred the Committee to paragraph 5.2 of the report, which detailed the mechanism to deliver affordable housing in perpetuity.

She explained that condition 7 of the recommendation referred to the information contained in paragraph 5.2, stating that development would not begin until a scheme for the provision of affordable housing had been submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority and that the numbers, type, tenure and location on the site of the affordable housing provision would consist of not less than thirty two affordable dwellings.

The Committee was shown a letter from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government that had been received following the meeting of the Committee on 13 October 2017, which confirmed that he did not wish to call-in the application and interfere in its determination.

Officers had discussed parking arrangements with the applicant. Through the slight relocation of the bin storage area, reduction in the boundary planting area to Melton Hill and using an area adjacent to Block B, it was possible to accommodate and addition seven parking spaces on the site, which was in excess of the 1:1 requirement sought by the Committee.

The boundary to Deben Road had also been reviewed by the applicant and the Arboriculture and Landscape Manager and it had been agreed that the Yew Tree could be retained on the boundary. One of the balconies overlooking Deben Road had also been removed from the scheme in Block J.

It was noted that part of the application site fell within the area of the Melton Neighbourhood Plan, which was made in January 2018, because it sat across the boundary of Melton and Woodbridge parishes. The Development Management Team Leader (South) referred to the sections of the report containing extracts of relevant policies from that plan and identified the areas of the site they applied to as Block G, parts of Blocks A, B and F and a majority of the parking.

The only policy from the Melton Neighbourhood Plan which the application was considered contrary to was MEL6, in relation to parking standards. Officers considered that the benefits of the scheme overall and the potential of the whole of the site for redevelopment outweighed the fact that the parking standards did not meet the requirements set out in MEL6.

The presentation was concluded and the Committee was advised that officers believed the matters arising from the previous meeting had been dealt with satisfactorily and that an assessment of the scheme under the “tilted balance” test, as policy SP2 was out of date, had concluded that the benefits of the scheme outweighed the harm.

The recommendation for approval, as set out in the report, was outlined to the Committee.

The Chairman invited questions to the officer.

A member of the Committee referred to the determination made by the Committee on 13 October 2017 and was of the opinion that the purpose of the meeting, now, was to address the four points which required further information. These four points appeared to have been addressed. He asked officers if the Committee was expected to review the first principles again, or solely the updated information presented in the report.

In response, the Head of Planning and Coastal Management advised the Committee that it was entitled to go back to first principles, if it so wished.

He described the decision of 13 October 2017 as a holding position, by which Members had agreed to the scheme in principle whilst officers negotiated a satisfactory resolutions to the four points raised at that meeting. He made it clear to the Committee that the decision taken on 13 October 2017 was not closed and could be revisited, if the Committee so wished.

Another member of the Committee asked for clarification on the parking standards not being in accordance with policy MEL6 of the Melton Neighbourhood Plan and if this was because the net result was less than the nominal requirement.

The Development Management Team Leader (South) confirmed that assertion. She advised the Committee that the Highways Authority had deemed the parking arrangements to be acceptable, but that they did not meet the requirements of the Melton Neighbourhood Plan.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management added that MEL6 was a restrictive policy; due regard had to be given to the fact that the parking ratio was below what MEL6 required, but that this was outweighed by the benefits of the scheme. In order for the whole scheme to be acceptable to the policy, one hundred and ninety two parking spaces were needed.

In response to a subsequent question from another Member on parking, who highlighted that the Melton Neighbourhood Plan was not applicable to the entire site, the Head of Planning and Coastal Management acknowledged that fact and advised the Committee that it needed to look at the application as a whole, but in doing so give the necessary weight to the Melton Neighbourhood Plan policy.

A member of the Committee asked if the security of the gardens to the rear of the properties in Deben Road had been a concern. The Development Management Team Leader (South) confirmed that the security of the gardens had been considered by officers and the presence of existing and proposed planting would overcome any harm. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management considered that the security of the gardens would be improved by the development.

The Chairman invited Mr Hughes, the applicant, to address the Committee. Mr Hughes was accompanied by his agent Mr Driver.

Mr Hughes advised that he had little to add to the report given by the officer. He considered that the items raised at the meeting on 13 October 2017 had been addressed and stated that he was present to answer any questions which the Committee may have.

There being no questions to Mr Hughes, the Chairman invited Mr Saggars, an objector, to address the Committee.

Mr Saggars explained that he was a nearby resident of the site and had been part of the objectors who attended the previous meeting.

He wished to address the Committee solely on the issue of affordable housing. He noted that the Committee had delayed the approval of its previous decision until a detailed scheme for the delivery of affordable housing had been approved. Mr Saggars considered that this was because, at the last meeting, the applicant could not provide details of the scheme.

Mr Saggars was of the view that the situation remained unchanged. Instead, he felt that officers had set out conditions which they felt would secure the delivery of the affordable housing. He did not see how these conditions would achieve this, but considered that they had been imposed to enable planning permission to be granted.

Rather, he suggested that a detailed scheme for the delivery of the affordable housing would give comfort to the Committee, as it enabled it to see that a registered provider had agreed to terms and could provide the mix of housing required. He queried why such a detailed scheme was not available and why no registered provider had been attracted to the site over the last eighteen months.

Mr Saggars said that the Committee required a detailed scheme so that there was no issue with the affordable housing being provided, after planning permission had been approved. He asked the Committee to ensure that before approval was given, a credible and well funded entity was in place to deliver the affordable housing required.

The Chairman invited questions to Mr Saggars.

A member of the Committee enquired if Mr Saggars' concerns related to the wording of paragraph 5.2 of the report and if he felt that it did not provide the certainty required. Mr Saggars reiterated that he felt that the conditions which had been laid out by the Committee for affordable housing had not been met by the applicant, as no detailed scheme had been approved.

At this point, the Head of Planning and Coastal Management revisited the first principles in relation to affordable housing. He reminded the Committee that originally, the scheme looked to deliver thirty three units of affordable housing.

Following the meeting of the Committee on 13 October 2017, discussions took place between officers and the applicant and a figure of thirty two units was agreed; this was because one of the proposed units of affordable housing was a single unit, located in Block B. Such a single unit would not have been practical or an attractive prospect to registered providers.

He advised the Committee that the applicant was in dialogue with a number of registered providers and had received varying levels of interest in the site, from them. He explained that the affordable housing market was an extremely challenging one and that offers from registered providers in the Suffolk Coastal area were generally at a lower value than offers in other areas.

He stated that policy DM3 was clear in requiring up to a third affordable housing for the development, and he was confident that the condition set out in the recommendation, as amended in the update sheet, would deliver the affordable housing scheme required. The condition as worded sought an approval to the mechanism for delivery before any development on the site commenced. Permission would however enable the site to be actively marketed to prospective providers.

He was clear that the wording “not less than thirty two dwellings” meant that anything lower than that would not satisfy the condition and would mean that it could not be lawfully discharged. He considered that the condition gave comfort to the Committee and to the public that the development would provide the required amount of affordable housing.

He outlined the mechanisms within the wording of the proposed (amended) condition of the report to deliver the required level of affordable housing via an alternative method, in the event that a registered provider did not acquire some or all of the affordable housing units, within a reasonable timescale.

The alternative method of delivery would allow for the potential for a commuted sum to be paid to the equivalent “value” of the affordable homes not delivered on site. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management advised the Committee that this was not an uncommon approach and recently the committee had accepted a commuted payment for a residential development behind the Notcutts garden centre in Woodbridge. This would ensure that the development was not stymied due to a registered provider not being willing to take on units on the site.

The Committee was strongly advised against refusing the application based on the limited risk of a registered provider not coming forward. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management stressed that the applicant was content with the condition and that its wording was lawful.

There being no further questions, the Chairman invited Lady Blois, representing Woodbridge Town Council, to address the Committee. Lady Blois was supported by the Mayor of Woodbridge.

Lady Blois advised the Committee that she was representing residents and organisations in Woodbridge, who remained unhappy that the application was progressing despite the large opposition to it in October 2017.

She stated that the meeting had heard that various impacts of the proposed development had been dealt with, but she considered that the application ignored the concerns of the residents of Woodbridge. She felt that the development would be unsightly and would spoil the town. She suggested that the development had the potential to attract young people who would have noisy parties, which would disturb nearby residents.

Lady Blois rejected the view of the applicants that the units would attract retired people who would not have cars. She said that in her experience, retired people did drive and considered parking to be an essential amenity in any development. The increase in parking provision agreed between the applicant and the Council was an insult to residents, given that the area was already short of the parking it required.

She said that a detailed scheme for the affordable housing was supposed to be presented to the Committee, and that this was essential to the development and the Local Plan. She noted that the tenure and mix of affordable housing was important and she considered that it was not addressed in the latest report. She was of the view that the Committee was being asked to rely on the judgement of Planning officers and she was concerned that the development would end up with no social housing.

She acknowledged that a commuted sum could be agreed, but was concerned that it would be used to fund social housing outside of Woodbridge.

Lady Blois suggested that the residents of Deben Road would not be happy with the amendments to the boundary; the proposed vegetation would take a long time to grow and she was of the opinion that the yew tree would be killed off by the development.

She urged the Committee to listen to the concerns of Woodbridge Town Council, Melton Parish Council and the residents of Woodbridge and Melton. She urged the Committee to reconsider and refuse what she considered to be an “ugly” application.

The Chairman invited questions to Lady Blois.

A member of the Committee thanked Lady Blois for her time and noted that her views had been taken on board. She asked Lady Blois if she considered that Woodbridge did not need the new dwellings which the development would offer.

In response, Lady Blois considered that Woodbridge did need the new dwellings, but not in the form of the design proposed for the development.

Another member of the Committee considered the concerns which Lady Blois had expressed about the design and asked if they were specific to the design itself or the mass of the development.

Lady Blois advised that both were of concern to her; she acknowledged that residents accepted that the site needed to be developed, but they wanted to see an alternative to what was being proposed.

There being no further questions, the Chairman invited Mr Porter, Chairman of Melton Parish Council, to address the Committee.

Mr Porter informed the Committee that Melton Parish Council remained resolutely against the application. Many residents saw it as a blot on the landscape.

He challenged the assertion that the community had been consulted when the design of the development was formulated.

He revisited the four items that the Committee had asked to be addressed at its meeting on 13 October 2017. He considered that no detailed scheme for affordable housing was in place and that the proposed changes to the boundary to Deben Road were insufficient.

He noted that one balcony had been removed from Block J but said that other balconies, which he felt overlooked properties on Deben Road, remained. He considered this to be contrary to policy DM23 of the Local Plan regarding residential amenity.

Mr Porter considered that the car park was not truly underground and created a two-tier building which was contrary to the Melton Neighbourhood Plan regarding the scale of the property. He was of the opinion that the structures would be visible to the residents of Melton.

He noted that at least two letters had been submitted to the Local Government Ombudsman regarding the sale of the site.

Mr Porter made reference to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management's advice to the Committee on the affordable housing solution, and described it as being "magical" and "David Blaine-esque".

He concluded that Melton Parish Council supported its colleagues at Woodbridge Town Council and urged the Committee to reject what he considered to be a "ridiculous" application.

The Chairman advised Mr Porter that she found his comment about the Head of Planning and Coastal Management's advice to be offensive. She invited the Head of Planning and Coastal Management to respond.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management explained to the Committee that the advice given was bona fide, lawful and in line with local and national policies. He rejected the assertion that his advice was "magic" and was clear that it was not designed to achieve anything untoward. He stated that the advice to the Committee had been given to allow a lawful decision to be made on the application.

Mr Porter acknowledged the comments and stated that he had intended to praise the ingenuity of the wording used.

There being no questions, the Chairman invited Councillor Mulcahy, Ward Member for Woodbridge, to address the Committee.

Councillor Mulcahy reminded the Committee of the discussions at its meeting on 13 October 2017 and the significant debate on the benefits and harms of the application. She noted that the loss of two heritage buildings on the site was considered to be a significant harm at that meeting, but that the promise of affordable housing outweighed the loss.

Therefore, she considered that the affordable housing was one of the key benefits of the development and that this was why the Committee had asked for a detailed scheme.

She acknowledged that the recommended conditions had been designed to ensure such a scheme would be in place, but felt that it would have been prudent to see more information regarding a scheme, which registered providers were interested and detail on the reduction from thirty three to thirty two affordable units. She said that the people of Woodbridge deserved to know that information.

Councillor Mulcahy noted that a previous development in Woodbridge had not proceeded as planned, because the developer had stated that the affordable housing requirements were not economically viable.

She suggested that if it was not possible to achieve the scheme required, then the heritage buildings should be retained and the entire development revisited, providing an opportunity to reduce the development and consider alternative proposals. Councillor Mulcahy was of the opinion that Woodbridge needed a better scheme if the promised benefits of the current one could not be delivered.

The Chairman invited questions to Councillor Mulcahy.

A member of the Committee asked Councillor Mulcahy if her assertion was that one hundred new dwellings was not an advantage to Woodbridge.

Councillor Mulcahy replied that if the affordable housing could not be secured, the development would not be of an advantage to the town.

She reiterated that the affordable housing had been considered a benefit that outweighed the harm of losing the heritage buildings and repeated her view that if the affordable housing could not be delivered, then those buildings should be retained. She was of the opinion that a commuted sum would not be of benefit to Woodbridge.

In response, the Head of Planning and Coastal Management advised the Committee that the affordable housing was not the sole benefit of the development and referred the Committee to the original report presented on 13 October 2017.

He acknowledged the harm that would be caused by the loss of the heritage buildings; he also reminded the Committee of the controls on affordable housing and outlined how priority for affordable housing would be given to local residents in the first instance, followed by those from the nearby parishes.

He informed the Committee that should the affordable housing solution result in a commuted sum, this would be ring-fenced to be used on development in the Woodbridge/Melton area first. He again reminded the Committee of a similar situation that had resulted from the development of the Notcutts site in the town and stressed that any commutable sum would benefit the local community, with details to be defined in the discharge of the recommended planning condition.

In response to these comments, a member of the Committee asked if there was a suitable site in the local area where affordable housing could be delivered, if it could not be delivered on site. The Head of Planning and Coastal Management noted several sites in the area, including a site for approximately fifty five houses behind Riduna Park, Melton, which was identified in the Melton Neighbourhood Plan, where the affordable housing could be delivered.

He confirmed to the Committee that registered providers were interested in the Melton Hill site, and he was hopeful that all thirty two units could be delivered on site, but there needed to be a “backstop” for developers, if this was not the case.

There being no further questions, the Chairman invited Councillor Hedgley, Ward Member for Woodbridge, to address the Committee.

Councillor Hedgley acknowledged that his previous comments on the application had been recorded in the Minutes of the meeting on 13 October 2017 and he was not going to repeat them.

He remained unhappy with the overall design of the site, but acknowledged it was not going to change. He noted that improvements had been made to the boundary to Deben Road but felt that the privacy of residents had not been addressed sufficiently well.

He considered that the removal of a balcony from Block J was a step in the right direction but further amendments were required and residents had legitimate grievances.

Councillor Hedgley concluded by commenting that as a member of the Planning Committee, it was his intention, at that point, to vote against the application.

The Chairman invited the Committee to debate the proposal.

A member of the Committee shared the views that Councillor Hedgley had expressed as a Ward Member. He was equally worried about the design, the mass of the development and its impact on the residents of Deben Road. He considered that the latter point had not been addressed.

He was not satisfied that the amendments made addressed the concerns at the previous meeting and advised he would be voting against the proposal.

Another member of the Committee advised that his judgements would be based on the amendments put before the Committee; he acknowledged the lack of clarity on affordable housing and considered that the Planning officers needed to be given authority to make the best of that situation.

He noted that objectors had stated that an overtly modern set of buildings was somehow unacceptable. He considered that Woodbridge was made up of buildings that were statements of the age in which they were designed and built and he interpreted the development as such and as a statement for the current age.

During the Member's speech, the Chairman noted that a member of the public had formed his hand into the shape of a gun and pointed it at the Member. She instructed the member of the public to stop making the gesture immediately and said that it was out of order, offensive and inappropriate.

Members of the Committee considered that the first principles of the application had been covered in detail at the previous meeting and did not need to be revisited. One Member suggested that lateral thinking would be required to solve any potential issues with the affordable housing.

Another member of the Committee stated that he remained of the opinion that the development was unacceptable and that the concerns about the development's relationship

with Deben Road had not been resolved satisfactorily. He stated that he would be voting against the proposal.

The updates to the proposal were highlighted by a member of the Committee. She appreciated that car parking had been addressed and that the Secretary of State was not calling in the application. She stated that both the affordable housing and the number of dwellings as a whole were both needed by the local community.

She suggested the need to review the design, in particular the balconies, to address any remaining concerns about the privacy of residents in Deben Road and stressed the importance of delivering affordable housing on this Council site. She said that as a matter of general principle, she believed that the development could deliver on the affordable housing and she would be voting in favour, highlighting that any future issues could be brought before the Committee if required.

Another member of the Committee agreed with the previous speaker and suggested that the development could be award winning.

Both sides of the argument were considered by a member of the Committee, acknowledging its benefits but also its impact on the local community. She urged caution when considering the application and stated that she was swayed towards voting against the application.

A member of the Committee, who had previously spoken against the design, wished for it to be noted that he was not against contemporary buildings in general and that his concerns with the development related to its mass.

The Chairman moved to the recommendation to approve, as set out in the report, which was proposed and seconded.

As the number of votes for and against the application was equal, the Chairman exercised her casting vote and the application was determined as follows:

DETERMINATION

APPROVED subject to the following conditions (as initially reported on 13 October 2017):

1. Standard time limit (3 years)
2. Plans/drawings considered/approved
3. Materials – samples required of both the buildings and hard landscaping
4. Archaeological Conditions as proposed
5. Highways Conditions as proposed
6. Deben link to be for pedestrian and cycle on in perpetuity and not for use by motorised vehicles
7. Mechanism to deliver the affordable housing in perpetuity – including the mix and tenure (as per the text of paragraph 5.2 of the report, contained within the update sheet)
8. Details of mitigation measures in relation to the protected landscapes as requested by Natural England to be submitted prior to development commencing.

9. Details of any external lighting to be agreed in advance of being installed
10. Ecological conditions
11. Submission of and agreement of a Construction Management Plan prior to any commencement of development, including demolition. To include details in relation to operational hours, method of demolition, delivery times, details of banksman, dust suppression, hours restricted on any piling, road cleaning and landscape protection/fencing
12. Management plan for all areas of communal space (hard and soft landscaped) to include the railway boundary
13. Details of public art proposed to be submitted to and approved in writing prior to its installation
14. Detailed landscape proposals to be submitted and approved in writing prior to any development commencing
15. Replacement of any trees and landscaping that dies within five years
16. Tree/shrub protection during construction
17. Amended plans as requested by the Council's Design and Conservation Officer (see appended consultation response)
18. SUDS conditions as proposed by SCC Suds team
19. Plan detailing the location of fire hydrants within the site
20. Details of a traffic management plan
21. details to promote improvements to the PROW and bus stops

Following determination of the application, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:05am for a short break. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services left at this point of the meeting.

The meeting was reconvened at 11:20am.

EXTRACTED FROM THE CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2018

- 4. WOODBRIDGE and MELTON – DC/18/3424/FUL – Residential development (100 units) including affordable housing (Class C3) plus a community building (364.1sq.m) (Class D1) and a retail unit (102.3sq.m) (A1/A2/A3), car parking, means of access and landscaping, all following demolition of the buildings on site at Former Council Offices, Melton Hill, Woodbridge IP12 1AU for Active Urban (Woodbridge) Ltd**

Planning Permission was sought for the redevelopment of the former Suffolk Coastal District Council Offices site to a residential lead scheme of 100 dwellings. The proposal also included community and café space towards the site frontage, pedestrian thoroughfare through to the river and underground parking.

The application was considered by the Planning Committee in April 2017, following a site visit, whereby the scheme was endorsed by the Committee. The Minutes of that meeting were included as an appendix to the report. The application was withdrawn prior to the formal decision notice being issued, although the full set of conditions was agreed between both the applicant and local planning authority.

The differences between the new application and its predecessor related only to the application of Vacant Building Credit (VBC) to reduce the level of affordable housing to be provided. All other matters remained identical to those previously considered.

The Committee received a presentation on the application from the Planning Development Manager. She advised that the NPPF was updated in July 2018, following the approval of the previous application, and that her report had been updated to reflect the change in paragraph numbers and wording.

An objection to the application had been received from Historic England; it had not previously commented on the application and was not a statutory consultee. The full consultation response had been appended to the Committee report.

The Committee was referred to the update sheet which provided the Principal Design and Conservation Officer's comments on the previous application which remained pertinent to the current scheme. These comments addressed the points that had been raised by Historic England.

The Planning Development Manager referred to the presentation, which was the same one received by the Committee on 19 April 2018. As the application before the Committee was in effect a new application, all issues needed to be considered.

A site layout was shown to the Committee. The majority of the site lay within the town of Woodbridge although a small part of the site was in the Parish of Melton; it was within the

settlement boundary and was predominantly in a residential area. The site's proximity to the nearby conservation area was shown.

Five listed buildings were located near to the site and the two buildings currently on its frontage were non-designated heritage assets, Historic England having declined to list the buildings.

The Committee was reminded of its visit to the site on 2 October 2017 and the views of the site that would have been considered.

The site had remained vacant since the Council had relocated to East Suffolk House, in Melton, at the end of November 2016.

The range of buildings proposed was outlined and this remained unchanged from the previous application. The highest buildings were proposed to be in the middle of the site.

The site would contain underground parking so that the surface could be given over to pedestrian use and landscaping. The proposals also included a café and community space, which had been added following pre-app consultations the applicants held with the local community.

The Committee was shown illustrative images denoting the proposed height of the buildings and their relationship to the area, the frontage of the site, and additional car parking. It was also shown section drawings. The Planning Development Manager advised that the large plaza area could possibly incorporate some public art to mitigate the loss of the "Drummer Boy" which had been moved to Woodbridge Town Hall.

The removal of a balcony facing out to Deben Road, and the retention of a Yew Tree on that boundary, were highlighted to the Committee, as they had been sought following concerns raised by Members previously.

The Planning Development Manager said that it was considered that the scheme would open up views of the AONB in the local area which were currently hidden by existing buildings.

A visual demonstration of the difference between the existing and proposed frontage was displayed.

Views of the site from both Sutton Hoo and the AONB were shown to the Committee. The Planning Development Manager said it was not felt that the site would disrupt either of these views as it would nestle in amongst the existing buildings, remain below the treeline and not disrupt views of the historic core of Woodbridge seen by the church spire and Tide Mill.

Local and national policies relevant to the application were summarised, as were changes since the application was last considered by the Committee.

The key considerations were also summarised as remaining the same as those of the previous application, along with the addition of the application of VBC and the reduction of affordable housing.

The Planning Development Manager confirmed that the objections from Historic England had been considered and that the Principal Design and Conservation Officer was present to answer questions if the Committee so desired.

With regard to VBC, the Planning Development Manager referred to paragraphs 6.68 to 6.90 of the report. It was detailed in the report that Officers considered VBC not to be applicable to the site as it had been vacated for sole development nor been vacant for the necessary period of time.

The recommendation, as set out in the report, was outlined. It was noted that although the remainder of the application was deemed acceptable, it was felt that it did not contain a sufficient provision of affordable housing and did not comply with Local Plan policy DM2.

The Chairman invited questions to the Officer.

A member of the Committee asked for more detail on the recommendation to refuse, as he considered that the application was identical to what previously been approved by the Committee.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management stated that the Committee had given him delegated authority in April 2018 to approve the application, subject to the agreed controlling conditions. This resolution from the Planning Committee was not enacted prior to the application being withdrawn and replaced with what was before the Committee. He explained that the only change in circumstance was the applicants' desire to invoke VBC to reduce the amount affordable housing to be delivered on the site.

He acknowledged that the Committee's resolution on 19 April 2018 was a material consideration but that it was entitled to come to a different conclusion on the revised application if there was material planning justification to do so. The recommendation for refusal had been made solely on the basis that VBC was not applicable for the site and that a policy compliant level of affordable housing was required. It was noted by the Head of Planning and Coastal Management that the Committee had undertaken significant debate in April 2018 regarding securing the full affordable housing requirement.

Although the application remained the same in all other aspects, the Head of Planning and Coastal Management advised the Committee that there was no other option available to Officers than to recommend refusal for the reasons set out accepting that the site would remain undeveloped. He acknowledged that the Committee was entitled to go against this recommendation but needed to evidence why it had done so.

A member of the Committee, who was also the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Planning, noted the VBC strategy that had been approved by the Committee.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management, in response to a question on the application of VBC, noted that there was no real clear guidance on the subject in either the NPPF or the NPPG. Therefore, the Council had been able to explain how the application of VBC would be interpreted and that this had been approved by the Committee.

He said that the Council's policy on VBC was clear and was not applicable on this site.

The Head of Planning and Coastal Management advised the Committee that VBC was in place to incentivise development. The viability appraisals of the site provided for the withdrawn application had not shown any reason as to why the full policy quota of affordable housing could not be delivered on this site. He concurred that the site should be developed, and that it was unfortunate that this would delay matters, but he was of the opinion that any application of VBC on the site would impact on the ability to bring forward the Council's affordable housing policy and this, being a significant issue in the district, and in Woodbridge/Melton in particular, was not a justification to depart from the recommendation presented on the report.

The Chairman invited Mr Hughes, representing the applicants, to address the Committee.

Mr Hughes informed the Committee that he had no particular statement to make beyond that it was the view of the applicants that VBC applied to the site, acknowledging the opposing view held by Officers.

Mr Hughes advised that he was happy to answer the Committee's questions.

The Chairman invited questions to Mr Hughes.

The Vice-Chairman asked Mr Hughes for detail on why the new application did not include a full complement of affordable housing.

Mr Hughes explained that VBC was not available when the applicants had first bid for the site. He noted that the value of affordable housing was outside of the applicants' gift and would be transacted with a registered provider.

He stated that no Registered Provider had come forward at their required price, despite extensive work to ensure the viability of the site. Once VBC became available the applicants were advised by their planning consultants that their viability issues would be solved through its application and that legal advice had been provided which indicated VBC could be applied to the site.

Mr Hughes confirmed that VBC could not be applied after planning permission was granted, hence the withdrawal of the previous application and the submission of a near identical one. He noted the reduction on the vacant site through CIL regulations and considered that this provided precedent that VBC was also applicable.

Another member of the Committee asked why the site was considered unviable without VBC, given the significant profits being made by housing developers. Mr Hughes replied that a quality site would not be viable without the application of VBC and that the applicants were looking to deliver what they were promising in the application rather than something of a lesser standard.

The Chairman invited Mr Saggars, representing objectors to the application, to address the Committee.

Mr Saggars noted that the Officer recommendation for refusal related to a single matter and that all other matters were deemed acceptable. He asked the Committee if it deemed all other matters to be acceptable.

He considered that all aspects of the application needed to be considered and highlighted the objections from Historic England. He stated that Historic England existed to protect heritage and guide planning, and was of the view that the development would cause harm to the nearby Conservation Area and that the new buildings would be alien and intrusive, quoting the latest version of the NPPF to support its arguments.

He acknowledged that Planning Officers did not agree with the views of Historic England and appeared to have dismissed the objections, resulting in a situation where one set of planning professionals was disagreeing with another.

Mr Saggars said that when the latest version of the NPPF was introduced in July 2018, the Minister had said that the updated guidance gave communities a greater say on how developments should look. He was of the opinion that Officers' rejection of Historic England's concerns did not reflect that.

He said that the NPPF states that applicants should evolve designs to take the views of the community and as such should be looked on favourably if done so. He therefore considered that the public consultation had not been listened to by the applicants and taking this in to account, the tilted balance applied in April 2018 had been reversed.

There being no questions to Mr Saggars the Chairman invited Mr Mortimer, the Mayor of Woodbridge and representing Woodbridge Town Council, to address the Committee.

Mr Mortimer noted that both applications on the site had been refused by Woodbridge Town Council and that it was pleased to see that the recommendation was for refusal. There was concern, however, that the recommendation focussed solely on VBC and did not want this to be misinterpreted as full approval for the remaining matters.

He considered that this was a new application and was not identical to the previous one, as changes had been made to the number of parking spaces. Mr Mortimer also highlighted that the new NPPF had come into effect since the previous application had been considered by the Committee. Mr Mortimer noted the objections received from Historic England.

It was Mr Mortimer's opinion that the reduction in affordable housing had upset the tilted balance previously applied and advised that the Town Council maintained its concerns regarding parking, the height and dominance of the buildings and the site's impact on the second best town centre in the country.

There being no questions to Mr Mortimer the Chairman invited Miss Barrington, representing Melton Parish Council, to address the Committee

Miss Barrington said that the views of Melton Parish Council reflected those expressed by Woodbridge Town Council. It too had never supported any form of the application and was pleased to see a recommendation of refusal.

Miss Barrington expressed similar concerns to Mr Mortimer regarding VBC being the sole basis of the recommendation to refuse. She considered that Historic England's objections should be

taken seriously and that the tilted balance applied previously had changed due to the reduction of affordable housing.

She confirmed that Melton Parish Council wanted to see the approach to the site started afresh, be compliant with planning policies, and make a positive addition to the communities of Melton and Woodbridge.

The Chairman invited questions to Miss Barrington.

Miss Barrington confirmed that the site was not explicitly part of the Melton Neighbourhood Plan.

The Chairman invited Councillor Bidwell, Ward Member for Melton, to address the Committee.

Councillor Bidwell explained to the Committee that although he had been unable to attend its meeting on 19 April 2018, he had been steadfast in his opposition to the scheme. He noted that the decision to delegate authority to approve had been made only on the strength of the Chairman's casting vote, highlighting the change from the split majority when the application was first considered by the Committee in October 2017.

He noted the objections from Historic England, particularly the comments regarding the non-designated heritage asset buildings. He considered that the objections were a result of the application being contrary to the NPPF.

Councillor Bidwell said that the application remain controversial and had created a gap between local communities and the Council, as demonstrated by the weight of letters of objection. He stated that he had received significant correspondence on the application as Ward Member, with none of it being in favour of the application.

He was of the opinion that the reduction of affordable housing was an outrageous suggestion. He noted that balance was an integral part in what had been approved by the Committee and that seventeen fewer affordable housing units would provide fewer opportunities for young people to live and work in the area and would increase income for the developer. He urged the Committee to refuse the application.

There being no questions to Councillor Bidwell the Chairman invited Councillor Mulcahy, Ward Member for Woodbridge, to address the Committee.

Councillor Mulcahy considered that the Committee was clear on her views of the application and did not intend to revisit what she had stated at previous meetings. She was pleased that Officers had recommended that the application be refused.

She highlighted that affordable housing had been a key part of what had been approved by the Committee previously and if a full complement was not viable, then the whole scheme needed to be revisited. She was of the opinion that it could then be made smaller and the viability issue in relation to affordable housing need could be redressed. She urged the Committee to follow the recommendation for refusal.

There being no questions to Councillor Mulcahy the Chairman invited Councillor Hedgley, Ward Member for Woodbridge, to address the Committee. Councillor Hedgley moved from the Committee table to the public speaking table to address the Committee.

Councillor Hedgley said that he did not intend to revisit the pros and cons of the site; he considered that his opinion on the site was well known and recorded in the Minutes of the previous meetings that had considered the application.

He maintained that his objections to the application remained. He stated that the Council was committed to providing affordable housing where possible and the Committee had been unanimous in that regard at its meeting on 19 April 2018.

He said that nothing in the intervening months had changed his mind on the application. He noted the concerns of residents regarding the application and the letters of objection that had been received.

He concluded that the application did not meet either the Council's nor the community's needs and should be refused.

Following Councillor Hedgley's statement, the Chairman sought advice from the Monitoring Officer to clarify whether or not he was predetermined in regard to the application. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that Councillor Hedgley was not predetermined.

There being no questions to Councillor Hedgley, he returned to the Committee table.

The Chairman invited the Committee to debate the application that was before it.

In response to a question from a member of the Committee, the Chairman invited the Principal Design and Conservation Officer to address the Committee regarding the objections of Historic England to the application.

The Principal Design and Conservation Officer advised the Committee that he considered it was not fair to characterise the Officer views of the objection as dismissive. He referred to comments made by the Planning Development Manager regarding the Officer views as being in accordance with Historic England in some respects.

He said that he shared concern regarding the loss of the two non-designated heritage asset buildings at the front of the site and the development's setting in relation to the Conservation Area. He considered that these types of harm needed to be taken into account when the Committee determined the item.

The Principal Design and Conservation Officer maintained that the positive benefit of the scheme was the proposed high quality architecture. He said that Officers had respected the views of Historic England and agreed that they should be considered, but emphasised that Historic England was not a statutory consultee in terms of matters relating to the Conservation Area or the non-designated heritage asset buildings.

The Principal Design and Conservation Officer did not comment on Sutton Hoo as it was not within his remit. He also considered that Historic England's comments suggested it viewed the

site as being within the Conservation Area and that this had influenced its comments accordingly.

The Vice-Chairman considered that given the site had been a Council site, it was important that affordable housing was delivered there at maximum capacity. The Chairman concurred with this statement.

Members of the Committee supported the Officer recommendation to refuse the application. One Member spoke about the need to look at the risk of delivering housing numbers out of proportion to what was required and considered that VBC did not apply to the site, and was attempting to apply it to abdicate responsibility for delivering the affordable housing needed on the site and in the community.

Members were clear that they wanted to see the full complement of affordable housing delivered on the site.

There being no further debate, the Chairman moved to the recommendation, which was proposed, seconded and determined unanimously as follows:

DETERMINATION:

REFUSED due to the lack of provision of affordable housing in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) as a result of VBC not applying in this instance.



Historic England

Ms Melanie Pieterman
East Suffolk Council
Riverside
4 Canning Road
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR33 0EQ

Direct Dial: 01223 582721

Our ref: P01085329

5 July 2019

Dear Ms Pieterman

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**FORMER COUNCIL OFFICES, MELTON HILL, MELTON, WOODBRIDGE,
SUFFOLK, IP12 1AU
Application No. DC/19/2641/FUL**

Thank you for your letter of 4 July 2019 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Summary

This application is a resubmission of a previous scheme for the development of 100 new dwellings plus a community centre, retail unit and car parking on land occupied by former District Council offices at the northern edge of the Woodbridge conservation area. We consider this could result in harm to the historic significance of the conservation area and potentially have a visual impact on views from the setting of the Sutton Hoo scheduled monument. The Council should consider an alternative scheme for redevelopment which reduces this harmful impact but as the application stands we would object to the granting of permission.

Historic England Advice

The earliest records of settlement in Woodbridge date from the mid-10th century when a Saxon settlement developed on the western side of the River Deben. The core of the medieval town around the market place with the parish church of St Mary and site of the priory to the south is joined by Church Street and New Road on the southern and eastern sides. These connect with The Thoroughfare, the main historic



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road running parallel with the river and part of the main route from Ipswich to Lowestoft. To the south of the Throughfare roads and property boundaries lead down to the riverside where an important boat building industry was established in the medieval period along with commercial quaysides and larger industries, such as canning and malting, which flourished in the 19th century. The Throughfare itself is, as the Conservation Area Appraisal states 'the commercial heart of the town with a continuous frontage of 18th and 19th century vernacular facades' to buildings of various dates, a large number of which are listed.

The junction with Lime Kiln Quay Road (a relief road built in the 1970s) marks a change in the character of the Throughfare. The road is wider, buildings more widely spaced, more often set behind front gardens and those on the western side often built higher than the road because of the rising ground level. Historic buildings along this stretch of road are generally residential and younger as they are further from the centre of the town. Early 19th century houses give way to Victorian and Edwardian ones, but they maintain a consistent character, both in the relationship with the street and in scale, form and materials.

The conservation area extends to Pytches Road where the Thoroughfare becomes Melton Hill. Melton Hill and the northern part of the Thoroughfare form a long, straight approach road to Woodbridge from the north which for pedestrians continues along the Thoroughfare into the heart of the historic town. This approach is an important part of the conservation area and the sequence of houses along it illustrates the development of the outer parts of the town in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries with a strong degree of consistency despite some modern infill building. An earlier building, the 17th or early 18th century Maltings Cottage stands perpendicular to the eastern side of the road just past Pytches Road, an example of earlier rural building which the town has grown out to. This building is listed at grade II.

The application site stands on the eastern side of Melton Hill adjacent to where the conservation area starts and it contains two existing buildings facing but set back from the road. One is a typical mid-Victorian villa (number 112 the Thoroughfare), the other the former offices of the Rural District Council (RDC) built in the early-20th century. The latter is constructed in red brick with a hipped roof in a style reflecting traditional English domestic building.

The Heritage Impact Assessment included with the previous application does not seem to have been revised but is still a useful document. It notes that the Council identified these buildings to be of local townscape interest and undesignated heritage assets (paragraph 4.22) and states that that number 112 'contributes positively to the street scene' while the former RDC office makes a 'positive contribution to the immediate locality because of its domestic scale and the quality of its materials and construction' (paragraphs 4.30 and 4.34). We would agree with this assessment which recognises that both buildings reflect the essential character of other 19th and early 20th century buildings on this part of the road including the Edwardian houses opposite (numbers 101-117). Because of this they are a part of the immediate setting of the conservation area which makes a positive contribution



to its historic significance by reinforcing the character of this part of the Thoroughfare.

The Heritage Impact Assessment also considers previous changes to the interior and exterior of the buildings. Despite these incremental changes the street front exteriors, which are the most important parts as they relate to the conservation area, are in essence still as built. The Assessment also comments on how the 'existing townscape of the SCDC site is...incoherent and detracts from the sense of place' (page 19). This comment relates to the modern SCDC offices behind the Victorian villa and former RDC building and the entrance way between them. These modern offices do not remove the positive contribution which these two undesignated heritage assets make. They not traditional, but are understated on the street front and while they do not make a positive contribution to the conservation area they are largely hidden behind the frontage buildings.

The proposed development would require demolition of both the historic buildings on the site as well as the modern Council offices behind and replace them with a series of multi-storey residential blocks set along a broad central pedestrian route through the site on an east-west axis. The western most roadside blocks would be set back from and at an angle to the street with taller buildings rising behind them. A mono-pitched roof form has been selected which increases the height of these blocks and gives them an increased sense of verticality. The site slopes down towards the river but despite this the tallest block – which Design and Access Statement gives a maximum height of 22 meters- would appear as a tall building from the street out of scale with any historic building which, as noted above, is mainly characterised by traditional domestic building. The former maltings north of the application site is referred to in the application documents but this not a relevant model for buildings addressing the Thoroughfare and the largest of the proposed new blocks exceed the maltings in scale and do not have the horizontal emphasis or characteristic fenestration of industrial malting floors.

The precise visual impact of the new buildings on views on Melton Hill and the Thoroughfare is difficult to assess as the new application does not seem to have provided any additional images to illustrate it from the details submitted it is clear that the new buildings would be hugely out of scale with the adjacent historic buildings, including the grade II listed Maltings Cottage and numbers 101-117 the Thoroughfare. They would also not be parallel with it, as is the predominant pattern of building. Furthermore, the blocks would constitute a dramatic departure from the character of the adjacent conservation area in form and detailing.

Turning to views of the proposed development from the east, we remain concerned about the visual impact of the new buildings on views from the eastern bank of the river and the high ground on the ridge where the Sutton Hoo burial site scheduled monument stands. Despite modern commercial building of some scale between the historic town and the river the roofscape is largely that of small red tiled pitched roofs. This reflects the grain and scale of traditional building over several centuries in central Woodbridge and is an important part of the character and historic interest of the conservation area.

The proposed development, by contrast, would consist of buildings some of which are larger than the traditional ones found in the town and with mono-pitched facing east giving combined appearance of a concentration of building not seen elsewhere in the townscape. The effect of this could be to draw the eye from the main part of the conservation area and give undue prominence to the new development which is actually a relatively small and outlying part of the town.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes that in considering applications for planning permission for development which affect a listed building or its setting local planning authorities shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting (paragraph 66.1). Special attention shall also be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area in the exercise of any powers under the planning Acts (paragraph 72).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development and that protection and enhancement of the historic environment is an overarching objective in this (paragraphs 7 and 8). The significance of listed buildings and conservation areas can be harmed or lost by development in their setting. The NPPF states that clear and convincing justification should be made for any such harm and that 'great weight' should be given to the conservation of listed buildings and conservation areas irrespective of the level of harm caused (paragraphs 193 and 194). Paragraph 200 also states that the Council should favour proposals for development which preserve those elements of setting that make a positive contribution to the heritage asset or better reveal its significance while paragraph 201 notes that 'loss of a building which makes a contribution to the significance of the conservation area...should be treated as harm' to that significance.

We have again considered the proposals on the basis of the information submitted and we are concerned that demolition of number 112 the Thoroughfare and the former RDC office building would result in harm to the significance of the conservation area by removing buildings in its immediate setting which make a positive contribution to it and which help illustrate an aspect of its historic significance. The form, layout, scale and design of proposed new building on the street would also be dramatically at odds with the strong historic character of the street, making the development an alien and intrusive presence on the edge of the conservation area. The appearance of the new development as a whole in views of the conservation area from the east would also be harmful because of the scale and form of the new building and has the potential to affect the experience of the Scheduled Sutton Hoo site.

The proposals would result in harm to the significance of the conservation area and not preserve those elements of setting that make a positive contribution to the heritage asset and better reveal its significance in terms of the NPPF, paragraphs 193, 196 and 200. As such it would not achieve the NPPF's overarching aim of promoting sustainable development. Furthermore, the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan



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(first draft, 2018, policy SCLP12.28) states that 'opportunities to enhance the historic environment [of Woodbridge]...will be supported ...which do not have a significant adverse impact on the environmental designations.' The application site has some potential for enhancing the conservation area but the current proposals would have as significant adverse impact on it and so do not accord to the Council's draft policy.

We consider that a more suitable scheme which would preserve and enhance the conservation area while delivering new residential development on the site could be produced. This would satisfy the Council's own policy as well as achieving the objective of the NPPF to deliver sustainable development. Retaining and reusing the historic buildings on the site would preserve a positive aspect of the conservation area's setting but not preclude the creation of new building on the site rear of the site. While the scale of new building toward the western side of the site behind the street front buildings would need to respect that of the street more effectively a contemporary design could be suitable. The scale, form and massing of the development as a whole would need to be careful consideration so it was more akin to the historic town which it abuts but this also need not preclude a high quality development. We would be happy to advise the Council on revisions to the proposals but would object strongly to the application as it stands and recommend it is refused.

Recommendation

Historic England strongly objects to the application on heritage grounds. Development of the application site would result in harm to significance of the conservation area and not constitute sustainable development in terms of the NPPF. We consider that the application does not meet the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 7, 8, 193, 194, 196, 200 and 2001. In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess and section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the application. If you propose to determine the application in its current form, please inform us of the date of the committee and send us a copy of your report at the earliest opportunity.

Please contact me if we can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely



David Eve



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Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
e-mail: david.eve@historicengland.org.uk



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PLANNING COMMITTEE SOUTH – 22 October 2019

APPLICATION NO. DC/19/3098/COU

EXPIRY DATE 30 September 2019
APPLICATION TYPE Full Application (Change of Use)

APPLICANT Mr S Allison

LOCATION: The Firs, The Street, Hacheston, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 0DR

PARISH Hacheston

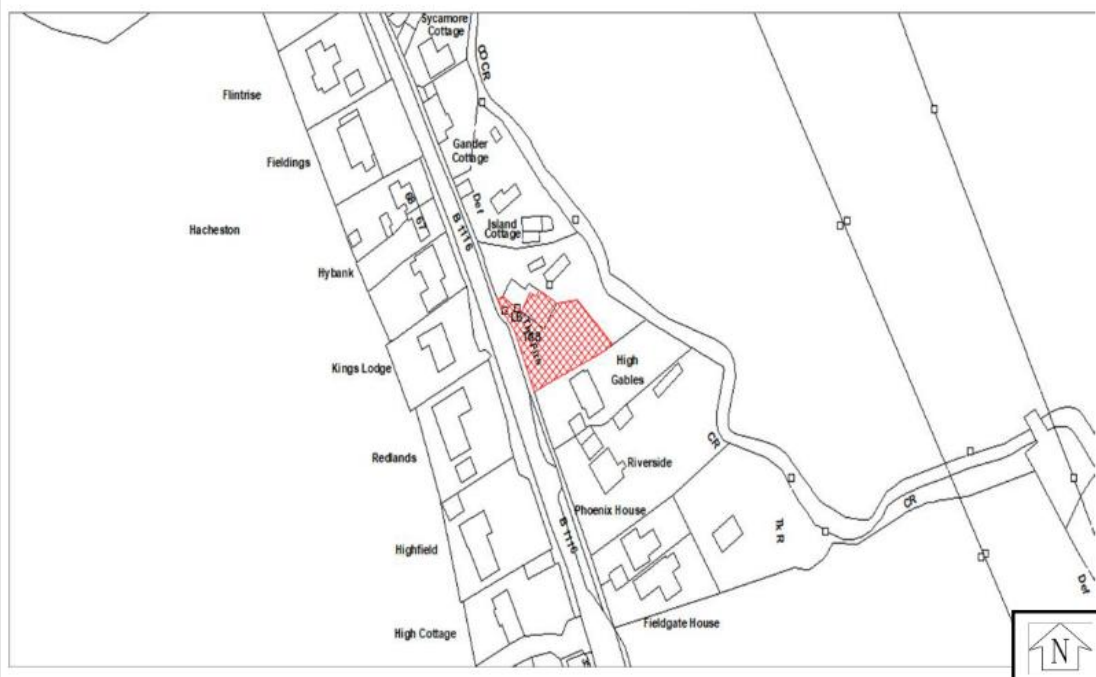
PROPOSAL Change of use of land to accommodate vehicles associated with motor home hire business

CASE OFFICER Jane Rodens
(including phone number & mail) (01394) 444505
Jane.rodens@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

DC/19/3098/COU – The Firs, The Street, Hacheston IP13 0DR

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This planning application is seeking for the change of land to accommodate six motor homes to let out as part of a business. The land is within the curtilage of The Pines, it is to the south of the host dwelling, in the Village of Hacheston and its Physical Limits Boundary.
- 1.2. It is brought to the Planning Committee through the referral panel. It had been triggered by point 1 of the Scheme of Delegation. The Parish Council has objected to the application and the Planning Officer is recommending approval. It was considered by the referral panel as it should be brought before the Planning Committee as it is retrospective planning application and should be given a hearing by the Committee.
- 1.3. Recommendation is for approval subject to conditions.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. This Full Planning Application is located within the Physical Limits Boundary of Hacheston. It is accessed off of The Street, which runs along the west boundary of the site.
- 2.2. To the south of the site is High Gables which is a detached two storey dwelling. To the north of the site is 'The Country Pine', which is an A1 retail unit. It is attached the main dwelling that is associated with the use of the current application site. This shop is also in the ownership of this property.
- 2.3. Further to the north of the site is Island Cottage, which is also a detached property. To the East is the River Ore. Further to the east of the site is open countryside.
- 2.4. The site is bounded to the south by mature vegetation and there are some trees on the site.

3 SITE HISTORY

- 3.1. DC/19/2256/COU – Withdrawn - Change of Use of land to accommodate vehicles associated with motor home hire business

4 PROPOSAL

- 4.1. The application seeks to enable the hire of motorhomes from the site.
- 4.2. Within the site is proposed to be an area of vehicle manoeuvring and turning area, this is located at the entrance to the site. Towards the southern end of the site is a space for six motor home vans that are all of a various size. One car parking space and a van position for cleaning, washing and waiting for customer collection is also proposed. There is also an area for a waste storage tank.
- 4.3. The dwelling on the site is to act as the office to collect and drop off keys to be able to hire the vehicles.
- 4.4. All of the hedges are to be retained around the site, there is no indication that there are to be changes of the boundary treatments.

- 4.5. Directly behind the Pine (the dwelling) is to be an area of amenity space available to the property, which includes an outbuilding. The parking area to the north of the shop is to be retained for its use.

5 CONSULTATIONS/COMMENTS

5.1. Hacheston Parish Council:

"Councillors object to the application on the grounds of it being inappropriate in a residential location. However, if the determining authority are minded to pass it, council would like the following conditions applied:

- *Hours of use restricted to between 8am - 6pm*
- *No vehicles to be parked in the layby*
- *The effluent tank to be installed within 3 months of permission*
- *Vehicles must only enter the highway in forward gear*

Still concerns on this one. If there were a fire with multiple gas cylinders etc in a residential area...(the whirlpool factory in Peterborough has just experienced this and lost about 20 lorries parked close together)"

Statutory Consultees

- 5.2. Suffolk County Council Highways: No objection subject to conditions
- 5.3. East Suffolk Environmental Protection: No objection subject to conditions
- 5.4. Third Party Representations – None received

6 PUBLICITY:

The application has not been the subject of an advertisement in the press

7 SITE NOTICES

The following site notice(s) have been displayed at the site:

Site notice type	Reason	Date posted	Expiry date
General site notice	Change of use	16.08.2019	09.09.19

8 PLANNING POLICY

- 8.1. National Planning Policy Framework (2019).
- 8.2. National Planning Policy Guidance
- 8.3. On 1 April 2019, East Suffolk Council was created by parliamentary order, covering the former districts of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. The Local Government (Boundary Changes) Regulations 2018 (part 7) state that any plans, schemes, statements or strategies prepared by the predecessor council should be treated as if it had been prepared and, if so required, published by the successor council - therefore any policy documents listed below referring to "Suffolk Coastal District Council" continue to apply to East Suffolk Council until such time that a new document is published.

- 8.4. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.5. The Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document has been adopted and forms part of the Development Plan. It was adopted in July 2013. Upon its adoption a number of the policies within the pre-existing Suffolk Coastal Local Plan were 'Saved,' and others were superseded or abandoned.
- 8.6. East Suffolk Council's Development Plan, consists of:
- East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013);
 - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan 2019 (Examination in public Summer-Autumn 2019);
 - East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (Adopted January 2017);
 - The 'Saved' Policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan incorporating the first and second alterations;
- 8.7. East Suffolk - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (adopted July 2013) policies:
- SP1 – Sustainable Development
SP7 – Economic Development in the Rural Areas
SP8 - Tourism
SP19 – Settlement Policy
SP27 – Key ad Local Service Centre
DM21 – Design: Aesthetics
DM23 – Residential Amenity
- 8.8. East Suffolk – Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies Development Plan Document (2017)
SSP2 – Physical Limits Boundaries
- 8.9. The new Local Plan (covering the former Suffolk Coastal area) was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for examination on Friday 29 March 2019, with the Examination to take place in August and September 2019. Full details of the submission to PINS can be found through this link: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplanexamination . At this stage in the plan making process, the policies that received little objection (or no representations) can be given more weight in decision making if required, as outlined under Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The following policies are now considered to have some weight in determining applications; these have been referenced where applicable:
- SCLP 7.1 – Sustainable Transport
SCLP 7.2 – Parking Proposals and Standards
SCLP 11.1 - Design Quality
SCLP 11.2 – Residential Amenity

9 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

- 9.1. This proposal is located in the Hacheston Physical Limits Boundary as identified by Policy SSP2 of the Site Allocation and Area Specific Policies. Policy SP19 of the Core Strategy identifies that Hacheston Physical Limits Boundary is a Local Service Centre. Therefore, Policy SP27 is to be applied to the application. A Local Service Centre is considered to be a sustainable location for development, which Policy SP1 is concerned with and supports.
- 9.2. The proposal site is considered to be a sustainable location within the village as it is located along a main route through the village. It is demonstrated on the submitted plans to have space for the proposed vans, turning area and would allow for an amenity space to the rear of the dwelling on the site.
- 9.3. This is not considered to be an allocated employment site but is located next to another business within the village and is considered to be in an acceptable location.
- 9.4. The current local plan does not include a policy specifically relating to the provision of sites for motorhome hire. However, this development is a business use which provides employment, through a tourism related use. Therefore, Policies SP7 and SP8 are applicable.
- 9.5. Policy SP7 seeks to support economic development in rural areas, including expanding the tourism offer where it is compatible with the objectives of the environment and Policy SP8 (Tourism). Policy SP8 recognises that tourism is an important part of the local economy, and that there is potential in areas west of the A12, such as the current application site, to absorb additional tourist pressure subject to the implications for the environment including the generation of traffic.
- 9.6. This scheme provides a tourism facility through the provision of motorhomes for hire in a location west of the A12, and as set out below is considered acceptable in terms of highway safety considerations and other environmental considerations. It therefore accords with Policies SP7 and SP8.
- 9.7. The NPPF also seeks to enable "...the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas..." and enable "...sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments..." (paragraph 83). Whilst it is acknowledged that this development provides vehicles for private hire that are powered by fossil fuels, and thus is not the most environmentally sustainable form of development, it provides economic benefits and is located on a site in a sustainable location within the village, in an area west of the A12. Therefore, it is considered to accord with the sustainability principles of the NPPF.
- 9.8. The emerging Local Plan Policies SCLP4.5 (Economic Development in Rural Areas), 6.1 (Tourism) and SCLP 6.5 (New Tourist Accommodation) have similar aims, objectives and requirements as current policies SP7 and SP8. Therefore, for the reasons set out above and below, the scheme is also considered to comply with the emerging policy.

Impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties and uses

- 9.9. The nearest property is to the south, High Gables, within the site the dwelling is owned and occupied by the proposer of this business. To the north of the site Island Cottage.

There is a concern that there would be an impact on them from the coming and goings of the customers of the site. There will be a harm from noise because of the general maintenance of the motor homes.

- 9.10. On this basis it is recommended that the following conditions are applied to the application
- The number of motor homes on the site – 6 motor homes and 2 cars
 - The hours of use of the site which includes the cleaning and hiring of the vans – 8 am to 6 pm Monday – Friday, Saturday and Sundays (including bank holidays)
 - All maintenance of the vans are to be carried out off the site, as suggested by the applicant.
 - No lighting is to be installed
- 9.11. This will ensure that only the permitted business use is carried out on the land indicated for this use. There is an area of land to the east of the host dwelling that is to be retained for the amenity space of the current owner of the site.
- 9.12. There is mature vegetation that surrounds the southern boundary of the site which is considered to screen this site from the dwelling to the south of the site.
- 9.13. The dwelling to the north of the site (Island Cottage) is considered to have minimal harm to its amenity from this proposal. The amenity space for the host dwelling (The Pines) and the car parking area for the existing Shop lie between the neighbouring dwelling and the area used for motorhomes. This is considered to be an adequate buffer along with the proposed conditions.
- 9.14. It is recommended that a condition is applied to the application to ensure that the use of the site is reverted back to its original use as curtilage to the host dwelling, The Pines, once this use has ceases to exist.
- 9.15. A septic tank is being proposed within the boundary of the site, but next to the curtilage of garden that is available to the main dwelling on the site. It is recommended that a condition is applied to this application for it to be installed within 3 months of this decision being issued and will be retained in this location to be used for the motor home business. It is recommended that this does not need to be removed once the use ceases.
- 9.16. The East Suffolk Environmental Protection Officer commented on the application and have considered that they have no objection to the proposal. On the basis of these comments and the considerations set out above, it is considered that there would be no harm to the amenity of these neighbouring properties, the proposal is considered to be in conformity with Policy DM23 of the Core Strategy.
- 9.17. The emerging Local Plan SCLP 11.2 states that the amenity of the neighbouring properties are very important and should be protected. The conditions that are being proposed above are considered to mitigate and reduce the potential impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in conformity with the emerging Policies.

Highways Matters

- 9.18. Suffolk County Council have confirmed that the access to the site is acceptable and have recommended a condition on this basis. This condition is to stop the discharge of water from the site, through cleaning the vehicles spreading out onto the highway. On this basis it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and there would be no harm to the highway.
- 9.19. SCLP 7.1 and 7.2 of the emerging local plan are considered to be applicable to the application and there would be no harm to the highway and the access to the site. There are no electric charging points on the site, but due to the nature of the site and the Policy having limited material weight at this time it is considered that there is no need for these charging points.

Visual Amenity

- 9.20. The motor homes, when not in use, are going to be stationed into the site away from the main road and therefore would not be highly visible. The area closest to the main road is to be used for vehicle turning. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed use would not have an impact on the wider streetscape. The proposal is therefore considered to be in conformity with Policy DM21 of the Core Strategy.
- 9.21. The proposal is also considered to be in conformity with the emerging local plan policies on this basis and there would be no harm on the street and the proposal site. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in conformity with Policy SCLP 11.1 of the Emerging Local Plan Policies.

10 CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 10.1. This application site is located in a sustainable location as it is within a Physical Limits Boundary of Hasketon. ,
- 10.2. The use provides employment and a facility supporting tourism. It therefore accords with economic objectives of the Local Plan.
- 10.3. The proposal site is to be located within a garden of a residential unit, which is adjacent to a current retail unit. The residential unit is to be associated with the change of use of the site and there is to be an area still available for the residential unit.
- 10.4. The amenity of adjacent residents would be safeguarded through appropriate conditions relating to the nature of the use and hours of activity.
- 10.5. It is considered that this change of use of the land is acceptable as long as it stays ancillary to the main dwelling on the site and stays contained to the areas indicated on the plans and the proposed conditions will assist in this.

11 RECOMMENDATION

APPROVAL Subject to Conditions.

Plans

1. The development hereby permitted shall be completed in all respects strictly in accordance with DS1220, 1905/1A, 1905/2A and 1905/3A received 6th August 2019, for which permission is hereby granted or which are subsequently submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and in compliance with any conditions imposed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

Business use and dwelling tied

2. This site shall only be used as a dwelling (currently known as 'The Firs') with associated land within the red line on drawing 1905/1A being used for the hiring of motorhomes business being operated by the owners and/or occupiers of 'The Firs', and for no other purpose. In the event that the motorhome hire business ceases, within 3 months, all material and equipment bought on to the site in connection with the motorhome hire business shall be removed (apart from the septic tank/water treatment system).

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding the amenity of future occupiers of 'The Firs'. The Local Planning Authority would not grant consent for this business use in such close proximity to a residential unit, unless they are interconnected.

Number of vehicles

3. A maximum of 6 motor homes and 2 cars (8 vehicles on site) are to be located within defined parking area as defined on drawing 1905/3A at one time. No other vehicles shall be parked anywhere else on site (i.e. anywhere outside the defined parking area, within the red line on drawing 1905/1A), unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, and in the interests of highway safety.

Hours of Use

4. The motorhomes shall only be collected, returned, cleaned and moved within the site between the hours of 8am and 6pm each day (including bank holidays).

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Use/Activities

5. The only activities to be undertaken to the motorhomes on site shall be cleaning (including emptying of chemical and grey water, washing of exterior and interior cleaning such as hoovering, changing bedding etc). No vehicle repairs or replacement of mechanical parts or vehicle sales shall be undertaken on site.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Lighting - No external

6. No external lighting shall be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site unless the Local Planning Authority has first approved details of the position, height, design, angle of fittings and luminance level. The lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and maintained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

See application ref: DC/19/3098/COU
at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access

PLANNING COMMITTEE SOUTH – 22 October 2019

APPLICATION DC/19/2700/FUL

EXPIRY DATE 31 October 2019

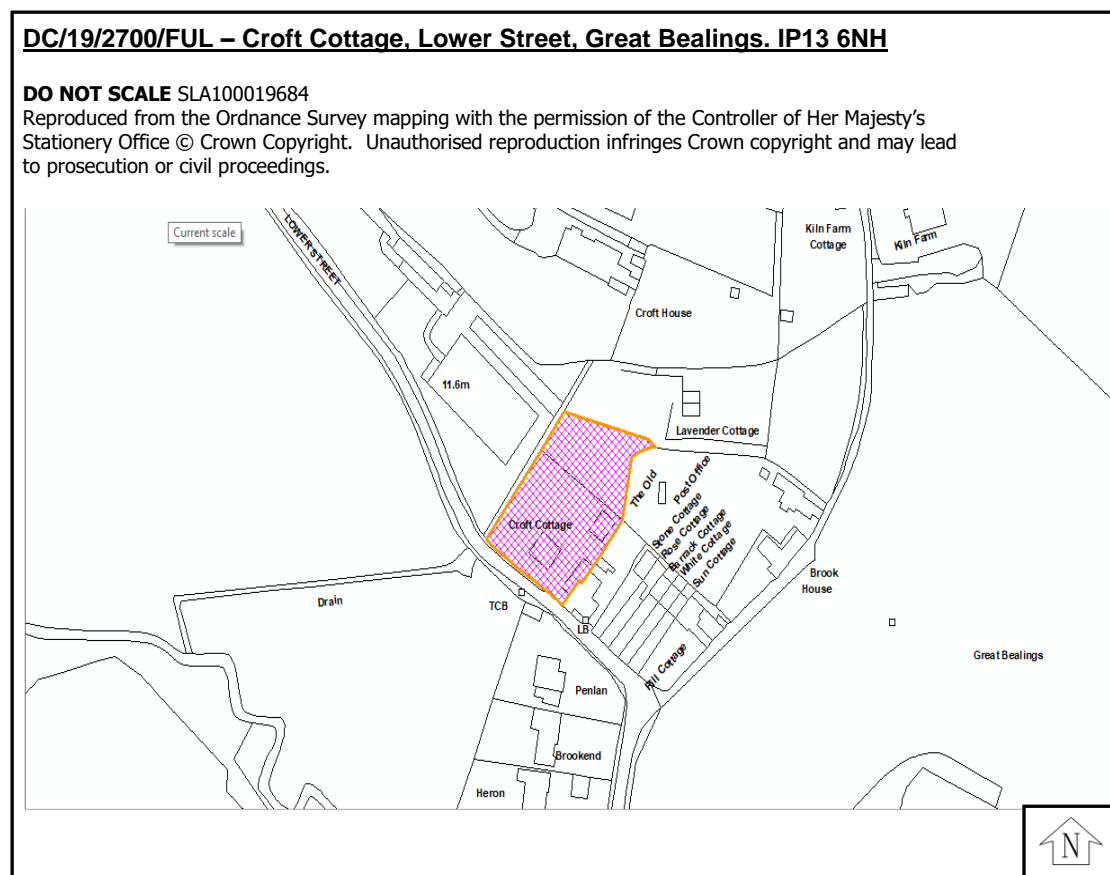
APPLICATION TYPE Minor (Dwellings)

APPLICANT Mr and Mrs A Turner

ADDRESS Croft Cottage, Lower Street, Great Bealings, IP13 6NH

PROPOSAL Replacement dwelling

CASE OFFICER Grant Heal
01394 444779
grant.heal@eastsoffolk.gov.uk



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Planning permission is sought for a replacement dwelling at Croft Cottage, Lower Street, Great Bealings. The site is positioned towards the northern extremity of Great Bealings, which is an 'Other Village' where replacement dwellings are considered acceptable, provided they are no more visually intrusive.

The existing dwelling is a building of limited architectural or historic merit set within a comparatively large plot. Its demolition is therefore considered beneficial to the quality of the wider townscape. Conversely, the replacement dwelling represents contemporary design that would enhance both a gateway into the village and the setting of an adjacent locally defined Non-Designated Heritage Asset.

The proposal's height would be 1.47 metres lower than the dwelling to be replaced, ensuring no increased prominence within the surrounding landscape. The schemes design, including placement of glazing, also ensures that existing residential amenity would not be undermined.

It is concluded that the proposal would serve to enhance the overall quality of built form within the surrounding area and raise the profile of the site location's gateway position. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to appropriate conditions, as set out below.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The application site is approximately 0.18 hectares and comprises a three-bed two-storey dwelling with separate garage. The site has frontage parking and direct access off Lower Street; which is a primary vehicular route into the village.
- 2.2. The site is prominently positioned on the northern edge of Great Bealings built-up area and the dwelling's principal elevation includes a red-tiled mansard style roof with white fenestration. The topography of the relatively large plot ascends continuously from the dwelling's rear elevation towards the site's north-eastern extremity.
- 2.3. The dwelling is set back from the highway and enjoys a good level of separation from neighbouring properties, including adjacent two-storey dwellings to the south and east. The site's western and northern boundaries are well-vegetated with various trees and foliage that screen inwards views towards the site from fields positioned opposite to the south-west.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The application seeks full planning permission for a replacement two-storey three-bed dwelling with associated parking and appropriate landscaping. The proposed dwelling represents a floor area of 186 square metres and existing outbuilding's, including the garage, would be retained.
- 3.2. The proposal has been designed in a contemporary style with flat roof and first floor terrace; from which a set of steps leads to a sizeable rear amenity space. The proposed dwelling would be sited in a similar position to the existing and the majority of it's external

surfaces would be rendered white. The introduction of natural facing materials, including timber and stone cladding to the front elevation, are also utilised to soften the building within its setting. Fenestration, rainwater goods, fascias, soffits and roofing materials would all be dark grey in colour.

4. CONSULTATIONS/COMMENTS

Great Bealings Parish Council:

4.1. *'The Parish Council met on 22nd July and it was resolved to OBJECT to this proposal for the following reasons:*

- 1. The proposed development is opposite one of the Landscape Protection Areas set up under the Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and is also adjacent to a row of non-designated heritage assets as set out in the NP. We consider that the design of the proposed development would be inappropriate given its proximity to these important elements of the NP.*
- 2. The siting is at one of the 'gateways' into the village, and the NP makes the point that these 'gateways' create the interface between landscape and the built environment that the NP is designed to protect and, where possible, enhance. The building would be intrusive in this context.*
- 3. Policy DM3(a) in your Local Plan states that any replacement building should be 'no more visually intrusive in the countryside' than the building to be replaced. We consider that the proposed development breaches this provision. The planning statement also states that the site is inside the physical limits of the settlement. This is of course an error of fact: as an 'Other Village' Great Bealings has no physical limits since it is deemed part of the countryside.*
- 4. Policy DM21 states that poor design that detracts from the character of the surroundings should not be permitted. For the reasons set out in 1 above we consider that this provision would also be breached by the proposed development.*
- 5. The ground plan of the new building is substantially larger than the ground plan of the existing house. Policy BE1 of the NP makes clear that any new development should be in scale with its surroundings, both as to height, mass, and impact. Although the new building would be slightly lower, this comes at the price of a much larger footprint.*
- 6. The siting of the new house has been moved so that it is some 2 metres closer to the Old Post Office. This is not acceptable.*
- 7. The plot boundary as shown on the drawings submitted is not accurate, and it lists two existing structures on the site, when there are in fact four.*

For these reasons we consider that the proposal should be rejected'.

Ward Members (Cllr. Colin Hedgley):

4.2. Cllr. Hedgley considers the proposal contravenes DM3, DM21 and SP28.

Statutory Consultees

4.3. Highway Authority: No objections.

Non-statutory Consultees

4.4. East Suffolk Council Head of Environmental Services: No objections subject to consideration of a condition concerning unexpected contamination.

4.5 Third Party Representations

Three letters of objection were received, which raised the following matters:

- Impact on local character;
- Landscape impact;
- Dominating/overbearing;
- Overdevelopment;
- Loss of privacy;
- Impact on heritage.

Three letters of support were received, noting the following:

- Sustainable design;
- Enhancement to local character and amenity.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1. On 1 April 2019, East Suffolk Council was created by parliamentary order, covering the former districts of Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. The Local Government (Boundary Changes) Regulations 2018 (part 7) state that any plans, schemes, statements or strategies prepared by the predecessor council should be treated as if it had been prepared and, if so required, published by the successor council - therefore any policy documents listed below referring to "Suffolk Coastal District Council" continue to apply to East Suffolk Council until such time that a new document is published.

5.2. In addition to considering applications in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's 'Development Plan', unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.3. The Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document has been adopted and forms part of the Development Plan. It was adopted in July 2013. Upon its adoption a number of the policies within the pre-existing Suffolk Coastal Local Plan were 'Saved,' and others were superseded or abandoned.

5.4. East Suffolk Council's Development Plan, as relevant to this proposal, consists of:

- East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013);
- Suffolk Coastal Local Plan 2019 (Examination in public Summer-Autumn 2019);
- East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (Adopted January 2017);
- The 'Saved' Policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan incorporating the first and second alterations;
- The Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan ('Made' March 2017).

- 5.5. The relevant policies of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted July 2013) are:

SP1 – Sustainable Development
SP1A – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SP15 – Landscape and Townscape
SP19 – Settlement Policy
SP28 – Other Villages
SP29 – The Countryside
DM3 – Housing in the countryside
DM19 – Parking standards
DM21 – Design: Aesthetics
DM22 – Design: Function
DM23 – Residential Amenity
DM24 – Sustainable construction

- 5.6. The relevant policies of the East Suffolk Council Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan – Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document are:

SSP2 – Physical Limits Boundaries
SSP38 – Special Landscape Areas

- 5.7. The relevant policies of the ‘Made’ Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan:

LP2 – Locally important landscape areas
BE1– Design of development proposals
BE4 – Non-designated heritage assets

- 5.8. The new Local Plan (covering the former Suffolk Coastal area) was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for examination on Friday 29 March 2019, the Examination took place between 20th August and the 20th September 2019. Full details of the submission to PINS can be found through this link: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/localplanexamination . Presently, only those emerging policies which have received little objection (or no representations) can be given more weight in decision making if required, as outlined under Paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The following policies are now considered to have some weight in determining applications; these have been referenced where applicable:

SCLP 5.3 – Housing Development in the countryside
SCLP 7.2 – Parking Proposals and Standards
SCLP 11.1 - Design Quality
SCLP 11.2 – Residential Amenity
SCLP 11.6 – Non-designated heritage assets

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

- 6.1. The site is positioned on the edge of a group of dwellings within the parish of Great Bealings village; which is classified as an ‘Other Village’ within the adopted settlement policy (SP19).

Great Bealings does not have defined settlement limits and therefore the strategy for growth within the village is to permit 'replacement dwellings on a one to one basis, where they are no more prominent or visually intrusive in the countryside than the building to be replaced'. This strategy is also reflected within DM3 (Housing in the countryside) and within emerging policy SCLP5.3: Housing development in the countryside

Visual Amenity

- 6.2. Croft Cottage is an unattractive low efficiency dwelling set within a large plot, prominently positioned on the edge of Great Bealings built-up area. The dwelling's principal elevation, with red tiled mansard style roof, is uncharacteristic of the local area and misplaced within the street scene. It is therefore considered that the building's demolition would be beneficial to the quality of the wider townscape, particularly given the site's settlement gateway location.
- 6.3. Conversely, the proposed replacement three-bed dwelling would introduce a high-quality contemporary design, including an appropriate pallet of materials, which both respects and improves on the general quality of the area's-built form; characterised by a variation of architectural styles, save for the repetitive use of White render evident on many dwellings.
- 6.4. While it is accepted that the new dwelling represents the introduction of contemporary forms (including flat roof, balcony, external steps) and an increased footprint when compared to the existing property, it is judged that it would nevertheless appear proportionate relative to the large plot size and complementary to the area's aesthetic. The proposed dwelling's scale and use of white render would also reflect that of other large detached properties nearby and sufficient space would remain for vehicle parking, manoeuvring.

As such, the proposal is considered to represent an attractive design that would create a new focal point. This would enhance both a gateway into the village and the setting of an adjacent locally designated heritage asset (The Old Post Office); as identified within the 'made' Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan (GBNP). The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the requirements of the NPPF, NPPG and policies SP15 (Landscape and townscape), BE1 (Design and development proposals), DM21 (Design: aesthetics), DM22 (Design: function) and DM24 (Sustainable construction) of the adopted development plan, as well as SCLP11.1: Design Quality of the emerging local plan.

Heritage and Landscape

- 6.5. The Great Bealings Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of locally categorised Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA), including The Old Post Office; sited adjacent the proposal site. The provisions set out within Policy BE4 relates to proposals directly affecting such assets and is therefore not considered wholly relevant to the proposal as this scheme is close to rather than directly related to a NDHA. Notwithstanding, potential impacts on the setting of the asset are considered negligible given both the proposal site and new dwelling's position which, in-light of The Old Post Offices' side-on orientation to Lower Street, would be to the rear of the NDHA and would therefore not disrupt views towards its principle elevation, as the main interest of historic significance. That said, the proposal's use of white render and contrasting forms would otherwise serve as an enhancement to the NDHA's significance when compared with the existing dwelling of Croft Cottage and therefore the

scale harm is considered to be negligible when judged against the provisions of the NPPF and emerging Policy SCLP11.6: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 6.6. Although the proposal, like much of the Great Bealings parish, falls within a Special Landscape Area (SSP38), it is judged the proposed dwelling would be no more visually intrusive than the existing dwelling and would, in fact, have a maximum ridge height approximately 1.47 meters lower than the dwelling to be replaced. Furthermore, the site falls outside the five locally designated landscape protection areas identified within the Neighbourhood Plan Policy LP2 (Locally important landscape areas); where replacement dwellings are otherwise considered acceptable, subject to them being no more visually intrusive.
- 6.7. Given the site's topography, which ascends towards the rear of plot (thereby restricting long-range views of the dwelling from the north), combined with existing landscaping (including substantial tree-screening along the site's northern and western boundaries), the officer considers the proposal would indeed be no more visually intrusive on the surrounding landscape than the existing taller dwelling.
- 6.8. Nevertheless, the applicant has agreed to an appropriately worded condition which would secure a proportionate landscaping scheme to assist the new dwelling's integration within its setting, as advocated by SSP38.

Residential Amenity

- 6.9. Concerning impact on residential amenity (DM23), no first-floor windows are proposed on the dwelling's east-facing elevation, towards the adjacent property. And, while it is accepted that the amount of first floor glazing proposed on the rear of the property represents an increase over the existing arrangement, this would not allow occupants direct line of sight towards private amenity areas close to rear elevations of neighbouring properties. In this regard, the inclusion of a first-floor terrace on the proposed dwelling's west-facing elevation would also not, by virtue of its orientation, boundary screening and settlement edge location, allow for any overlooking of neighbouring dwellings.
- 6.10. Due to the degree of separation that would remain between the proposal and neighbouring dwellings, it is also considered that concerns raised in relation to the implied overbearing and domineering presence of the proposal, are unfounded.
- 6.11. Therefore, while there would undoubtedly be some unavoidable minor impacts during the proposal's construction, on balance, the officer does not consider the replacement dwelling would degrade residential amenity to unacceptable levels, when judged against DM23 and SCLP11.2: Residential amenity, of the emerging local plan.
- 6.12. Notwithstanding, an appropriate condition limiting construction work (including demolition and deliveries to and from site) to between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays, with none being undertaken Sundays and bank holidays is considered reasonable in order to ensure the potential for nuisance impacts are minimised.
- 6.13. Furthermore, to ensure the potential for negative impacts on residential amenity are minimised following the proposal dwelling's occupation, it is also suggested that permitted development rights for the installation of windows on the new dwelling's east and rear-

facing elevations be removed, along with permitted development rights concerning additions and alterations to the proposed dwelling's roof, including the proposed first floor terrace.

Access and parking

- 6.14. No objections have been raised by the Highways Authority and it is judged that the proposed development would provide enough space for vehicular parking as per the existing arrangement, in accordance with DM19 and SCLP 7.2 – Parking Proposals and Standards of the emerging local plan. It is also noted that the existing parking arrangement would continue throughout the proposal's construction, while the occupants reside on site within a mobile home. The mobile home would be removed following the replacement dwelling's occupation which could be secured by an appropriate condition.

Contamination

- 6.15. In-line with comments received from the Council's Environmental Protection team, it is considered that an appropriate planning condition concerning the discovery of unexpected contamination would be appropriate.

CIL

- 6.16. The applicant has submitted the appropriate liability forms attributable to the Community Infrastructure Levy.

RAMS

- 6.17. The proposal is for a replacement dwelling and therefore payment contributions required by the council's Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy is not applicable to the proposal.

Conclusion

- 6.18. Following due consideration given to all relevant matters within the above assessment, it is concluded that the proposal represents a replacement dwelling that would be no more visually intrusive or prominent within the surrounding landscape than that to be replaced. Through the use complementary materials and contrasting forms, the proposed dwelling would serve to enhance the quality of built form within the surrounding area and raise the profile of the site location's gateway position.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1. **APPROVE** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with the following approved drawings:
- 6171 (OS Map);
 - 6171 1 (Block Plan);
 - 6171 2 (Details plans, sections and elevations);
 - Proposed finishes (Received 5 July 2019).

Reason: For avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity.

4. No construction work, including demolition and deliveries to and from site, shall commence before 8am and shall not continue after 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays with none being undertaken Sundays and bank holidays unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

Reasons: To prevent noise pollution to adjacent residential properties.

5. Within 6 weeks of the hereby approved dwelling being occupied, the mobile home illustrated on approved drawing 6171 1 (Block Plan) shall be removed in its entirety, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that there would be no more than 1 dwelling on the site, in the interests of residential amenity and because the site lies within the countryside, where additional dwelling houses are only permitted in exceptional circumstances.

6. Within 3 month(s) of commencement of development, precise details of a scheme of landscape works (which term shall include tree and shrub planting, grass, earthworks, driveway construction, parking areas patios, hard surfaces etc, and other operations as appropriate) at a scale not less than 1:200 shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that there is a well laid out landscaping scheme in the interest of visual amenity.

7. The approved landscaping works shall be implemented not later than the first planting season following commencement of the development (or within such extended period as the local planning authority may allow) and shall thereafter be retained and maintained for a period of 5 years. Any plant material removed, dying or becoming seriously damaged or diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the first available planting season and shall be retained and maintained.

Reason: To ensure the submission and implementation of a well-laid out scheme of landscaping in the interest of visual amenity.

8. Prior to the flat roof terrace being used as a balcony for the purposes incidental the enjoyment of the approved dwelling house, the hereby approved glass panels shall be erected along the sides of the roof. The panels shall thereafter be retained in the approved form unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of neighbouring residents.

9. In the event that contamination which has not already been identified to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is found or suspected on the site it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Unless agreed in writing by the LPA no further development (including any construction, demolition, site clearance, removal of underground tanks and relic structures) shall take place until this condition has been complied with in its entirety.

An investigation and risk assessment must be completed in accordance with a scheme which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and conform with prevailing guidance (including BS 10175:2011+A1:2013 and CLR11) and a written report of the findings must be produced. The written report is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Where remediation is necessary a detailed remediation method statement (RMS) must be prepared, and is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. The RMS must include detailed methodologies for all works to be undertaken, site management procedures, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria. The approved RMS must be carried out in its entirety and the Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification prior to the commencement of the remedial works.

Following completion of the approved remediation scheme a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 or any Order revoking or re-enacting the said Order] no development comprising the installation of windows on the new dwelling's east and rear-facing elevations, or development comprising additions and alterations to the proposed dwelling's roof, including the proposed first floor terrace shall be carried out unless otherwise agreed with the local planning authority.

Reason: In order that the local planning authority may retain control over this particular form of development in the interests of amenity and the protection of the local environment and the amenity of adjoining resident.

Background Papers: All application material is available by searching ref: DC/19/2700/FUL at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access