

ITEM NO: 7

Application No.
09/00378/REM
 Site Address:

Ward:
 Old Bracknell

Date Registered:
 12 June 2009

Target Decision Date:
 11 September 2009

**Land At The Brakenhale School Rectory Lane
 Bracknell Berkshire**

Proposal:

Submission of details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 63 no. dwellings (comprising 7 no. 1 bedroom and 12 no. 2 bedroom apartments, 30 no. 3 bedroom and 14 no. 4 bedroom houses) with associated parking, drainage and open space, with access onto Rectory Lane, pursuant to outline planning permission 07/01259/OUT.

Applicant:

Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern) Limited

Agent:

(There is no agent for this application)

Case Officer:

Trevor Yerworth, 01344 352000

environment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Site Location Plan (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



1 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (If Any)

07/00784/3 Validation Date: 10.08.2007
Part Demolition of existing Open Learning Centre. Erection of two storey extension with associated parking and creation of new access. Amendment to planning permission 06/00659/3 to create additional classroom and covered walkway.(regulation 3 application)
Approved

07/00920/OUT Validation Date: 13.09.2007
Outline application (including details of access) for up to 65 dwellings with associated parking and public open space with access onto Rectory Lane (regulation 4 Application)
Refused

07/01259/OUT Validation Date: 12.12.2007
Outline application, including details of access, for redevelopment of site for 63no. dwellings with associated parking and public open space with access onto Rectory Lane (Regulation 4 application)
Approved

09/00106/REM Validation Date: 20.02.2009
Submission of details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 63 no. dwellings with associated parking and public open space, with access onto Rectory Lane, pursuant to outline planning permission 07/01259/OUT.
Refused

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| <u>Appeal</u> Validation Date: 12.05.2009 Reference: 09/00023/REF | Submission of details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 63 no. dwellings with associated parking and public open space, with access onto Rectory Lane, pursuant to outline planning permission 07/01259/OUT. Appeal In Progress |
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2 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

Key to abbreviations

| | |
|-----------|---|
| BSP | Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 |
| BFBLP | Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan |
| BFBCS | Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Submission) |
| RMLP | Replacement Minerals Local Plan |
| WLP | Waste Local Plan for Berkshire |
| SPG | Supplementary Planning Guidance |
| SPD | Supplementary Planning Document |
| RPG | Regional Planning Guidance |
| RSS | Regional Spatial Strategy (also known as the South East Plan) |
| PPG (No.) | Planning Policy Guidance (Published by DCLG) |
| PPS (No.) | Planning Policy Statement (Published by DCLG) |
| MPG | Minerals Planning Guidance |
| DCLG | Department for Communities and Local Government |

Note: The BSP and the BFBLP contain some policies with the same title, e.g. EN1. In such cases, the policy will be suffixed with an "_S" for the BSP and an "L" for the BFBLP, e.g. EN1_S, EN1L..

| <u>Plan</u> | <u>Policy</u> | <u>Description</u> (May be abbreviated) |
|-------------|---------------|---|
| BFBLP | EN1L | Protecting Tree And Hedgerow Cover |
| BFBLP | EN2L | Supplementing Tree And Hedgerow Cover |
| BFBLP | M4L | Highway Measures New Development |
| BFBLP | M9 | Vehicle And Cycle Parking |
| BFBCS | CS7 | Design |
| BFBCS | CS1 | Sustainable Development Principles |

3 CONSULTATIONS

(Comments may be abbreviated)

Parish Or Town Council

Bracknell Town Council recommends refusal, for the reasons set out below:

Overdevelopment with major highway concerns regarding access.

1. The proposed development would unacceptably add additional traffic onto Rectory Lane at peak times and as a result would adversely affect the free flow of traffic and highway safety contrary to the provisions of the Berkshire structure plan and EN9 of the BFC local plan.
2. The proposed development is out of keeping and would have detrimental impact on the character of the area.
3. Has concerns over the safety of users of the Open Learning Centre due to the shared access.
4. Parking concerns.

Transportation Officer

No objection subject to conditions

Biodiversity Officer

The scheme includes new tree planting and a wildflower area that help to improve the biodiversity value of the site. In addition, the protection of bats within trees and buildings is secured by condition 11 of the existing planning permission ref. 07/01259/OUT. An additional opportunity to enhance biodiversity would be to include bat and/or swift bricks or boxes in or on the new buildings contributing towards scores under the Code for Sustainable Homes and the Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan.

No objection to the scheme remains based on biodiversity provided that existing vegetation is retained as shown in the submitted plans.

Landscape Officer

The proposed soft landscape plans are acceptable and show a well thought out planting scheme.

The External Materials/ Surfacing layout shows paving slabs of 450x450mm or 600x600mm to suit the path width. Paving slabs would not be suitable for the paths within the root protection area of the trees to be retained.

Details of no dig construction should be specified for these root protection areas with existing and proposed ground levels clearly shown on the plans.

The Environment Agency

No objection subject to condition

4 REPRESENTATIONS

No letters received to date.

5 OFFICER REPORT

Summary Of Key Aspects Of The Proposal (If Any)

Site area: 1.3ha

Proposed Number of Residential Units: 63

Proposed number of parking spaces: 146

Proposed density: 48 dwellings per hectare

INTRODUCTION

This application is being considered by the Planning and Highways Committee in view of the previous history on this site.

The application seeks approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline application 07/01259/OUT approved on 24th January 2008. The outline permission gave approval for the redevelopment of the site for 63 dwellings with access onto Rectory Lane. The principle of the development, the number of dwellings and the means of access have all been approved under the outline permission. The only matters for consideration as part of the present reserved matters application are the layout of the site, the scale and appearance of each building proposed, and the details of landscaping.

A previous reserved matters application 09/00106/REM was considered by this Committee on 30th April 2009. Members resolved to refuse this application for the following reason:

“The proposal, by reason of its design, detailing and layout would create a development that is out of character with and unsympathetic to, its surroundings. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policy DP5 of the Berkshire Structure Plan, Policy EN20 of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan and to Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. It would also be contrary to national planning guidance contained within PPS1 and the provisions of section 183 of the Planning Act 2008.”

The present revised application seeks to address the concerns that Members had to the original proposal.

PROPOSAL

The previous buildings on the site have now been demolished, and the new access road constructed off Rectory Lane as part of the scheme for the extension of the adjacent open learning centre. This proposal would extend the access road south of the Open Learning Centre to form the main access route serving the proposed housing development. In the south western corner of the site a cyclepath and emergency vehicle access would be provided linking the site to Rainforest Walk.

At the corner of the new access road with Rectory Lane a two/two and a half storey building is proposed containing five no. one bedroom and twelve no. two bedroom apartments. This is intended to create a gateway feature to the development. This building would maintain the existing building line along Rectory Lane and turn the corner with frontages on both Rectory Lane and the new access road. A landscaped parking court would be sited behind this building, accessed through an archway from the new access road.

To the south of this there would be a terrace of six no. three and four bed houses positioned to the west of the access road. These houses would be two and a half storey and three storey, and set back approximately 17 metres from the road behind a small car park. They would be separated from the apartment building by a small area (330 sq metres) of landscaped open space, and each house would have its own nine or ten metre long private rear garden.

To the south of this terrace, in the middle of the site, would be a large area (1,245 sq metres) of landscaped open space, centred around a retained group of silver birch trees that form an important feature of the site. This open space would form an attractive greenspace at the centre of the proposed development.

The southern part of the site would consist of several groups of three and four bedroom houses generally set back approximately two metres from the road. Each property would have its own private rear garden nine or ten metres in length. Immediately to the south of the central area of open space these houses would form part of a feature square, with a terrace of five houses on the south side of the square, facing north up the access road and a further terrace forming the western side. The access road itself would be offset through the square, with views coming south terminated by a three storey element in the north facing terrace. The northern side of the square would be formed by the large area of open space, and the access road. The eastern side would be formed by a further smaller area of landscaped open space with on-street parking in front.

The access road would continue south from the square with terraced houses fronting onto the street on both sides. The first third of its length would have landscaped on-street parking on the west side, beyond which the street would widen to 19 metres with parking on both sides. The street would terminate in a second smaller feature square with a further block of terraced houses sited parallel to the southern boundary. Views coming south along the street would be terminated by a three storey element in the middle of the southern terrace. Small off-street parking courts would be sited on either side of this terrace, with two coach houses contained above the car ports. These would provide a physical and visual link to a pair of semi-detached houses sited in the south east corner of the site, as well as providing a more active frontage and natural surveillance to the courts themselves.

The various terraced blocks are comprised of two and half storey and three storey elements. The ridge height of the two and half storey elements is 9.4 metres, rising to a maximum height of 11.6 metres on the three storey elements. The elevational treatments have been changed significantly from the previous scheme and now include much greater variety and interest in their design. The three storey elements would be constructed using red brick and grey roof slates to provide contrast to the buff brick and brown roof tiles of the two and half storey houses. Further interest would be created through variations in ridge heights and roof pitches, staggering of facades, the introduction of gabled and flat roofed dormers, pitched and lean-to entrance canopies, artificial stone dressings to the lintels and cills of windows and contrasting red brick plinths to the two and a half storey houses.

The apartment building A would use similar materials together with feather-edged weather boarding on the two angled gables. The design of the apartment building is similar to the houses but with pitched dormers and more emphasis on the feature corners where patio doors and Juliette balconies are used to provide interest on the angled bays. Following comments made on the previous scheme this building has been redesigned to significantly reduce its bulk and mass through reducing the eaves height, incorporating the second floor primarily within the roof space; and through the lowering the sections of the building above the vehicular access/cycle parking area and adjacent to 11 Rectory Lane to two stories only. The two storey sections are also set back, have window bay details and are treated in a contrasting brick and roof tile to further articulate and add interest to the building. Internally the cycle and refuse storage areas have been redesigned to be separately accessed within inward opening doors. Six visitor cycle parking spaces are also proposed and the car parking arrangements have been adjusted to move spaces further away from the entrance. The redesign of building A has resulted in the loss of two one bedroom flats which have been relocated in buildings F and G.

The proposed landscaping scheme identifies the existing trees as forming an important characteristic of the site, in particular the group of Silver Birch trees at the centre of the site. These would be retained and protected during the development. In addition new structural tree and shrub planting is proposed to create avenues and boulevards, to enclose spaces, provide screening and enhance the open spaces and amenity areas. Hard and soft landscaping would be used to emphasise the feature squares and contrasting permeable paving is proposed for the majority of the parking areas. New screen fencing is proposed along the western boundary to provide privacy to existing properties on Rectory Lane and The Green. This would supplement existing boundary treatments, including a linear feature of 40 Cypress trees along the southern section of this boundary. A mixture of screen fencing and post and rail fencing to the eastern boundary would provide a secure but partly open edge to the school playing fields. The existing hedge and trees along the Rectory Lane boundary would be retained.

SITE

This 1.3 ha site lies on Rectory Lane approximately 1km south of Bracknell Town Centre and 200m from local services at the Easthampstead Neighbourhood Centre. It is on a local bus route linking the southern neighbourhoods with Bracknell town centre.

The site is approximately rectangular in shape, tapering towards the north western end where it abuts Rectory lane. The whole site has recently been cleared and the new access road off Rectory Lane completed as part of the Open Learning Centre development.

The site slopes gently down from north to south with a sharp fall in levels in the middle of the site. There are substantial trees within the site, and along its western and southern boundaries.

PRINCIPAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

(1) Principle of the development

The site comprises previously developed land within the settlement boundary of Bracknell. The principle of the development of this site with 63 dwellings has already been established under the outline permission.

(2) Impact on character and appearance of the area

Policy EN20 of the BFBLP sets out design considerations in new development. In particular provisos (i),(iii), (iv) and (v) require that new development be in sympathy with the appearance and character of the local environment and appropriate in scale, mass, design, materials, layout and siting, both in itself and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views. New development should promote or create local character and a sense of local identity; provide adequate space for private use and visual amenity; and provide appropriate layout and design features to improve personal and general security, including natural surveillance of public spaces, including footpaths, roads and open space.

Although the site lies outside the Easthampstead Conservation Area, because of its proximity to this it is necessary to consider whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. Easthampstead was the second neighbourhood to be built in accordance with the Bracknell Master Plan between 1958 and 1962, forming part of the original new town. Point Royal, a listed seventeen storey block of residential flats, provides the focal point of the conservation area. The conservation area was formally designated in 1996 as it was considered that the architecture of the buildings and their relationship with surrounding spaces and landscaping, together with the historical association of the neighbourhood merited giving it conservation area status.

The part of the conservation area closest to the site comprises properties in The Green, a low density development of semi-detached houses in large plots, set around a central wooded green. Although the proposed development would have a considerably greater density and more hard surfaces, it would be well screened from the conservation area by boundary trees and other vegetation, and not be readily visible from public views within it. In terms of views into the conservation area, the proposed apartment building would be prominent in views southwards along Rectory Lane, and the development would also be seen in long distance views towards Point Royal from the cyclepath/footpath that runs along the eastern side of Brakenhale School's playing fields linking Rectory Lane and Bagshot Road.

At approximately 48 dwellings per hectare the proposed development would introduce a moderately high density residential development comprising a mix of two and half and three storey houses and flats into this generally low density area. However it would be a largely self-contained development with no physical or strong visual link to the conservation area to the west other than the gateway apartment building proposed at the entrance to the site. The apartment building would be prominent on this corner, but the changes from the previous proposal reducing the bulk of this building, are considered to result in a more acceptable impact of this building, enabling it to sit more comfortably within the Rectory Lane context than the previous scheme. In particular it

is considered that the dropping of the building down to two stories adjacent to 11 Rectory Lane will result in an improved streetscene along this important frontage. Furthermore the existing mature trees and hedges that form the boundary along Rectory Lane and which form an important feature as one enters the conservation area from the north would be retained and would help to soften and screen the development from the conservation area. This sense of separation from the conservation area would be further increased by the substantial gap between the flank wall of the proposed building and that of the nearest property on Rectory Lane to the south (nine metres to the garage and 16 metres to the house itself).

Although the scale and density of the development would be greater than the existing dwellings on The Green and Rectory Lane it is considered that the site is sufficiently self-contained that such a difference would not harm the overall character of the local area. The proposed development would form a transition between the lower density and open character of the conservation area to the south, and the larger scale buildings comprising Brakenhale school to the north, including the recently completed extension to the Open Learning Centre which now forms a key part of the context within the proposed development would be seen.

It is considered that the applicant has attempted to provide an innovative design solution for this site that enables a high density to be achieved while ensuring a high proportion of three bedroom family houses. All the houses would be provided with reasonably sized private rear gardens and small front gardens. The layout incorporates a number of attractive features including a large central area of open space, retaining existing trees, and landscaped squares and streets. It includes a good mix of house types and sizes from one bedroom flats to four bedroom houses. It has addressed the issue of parking by providing the majority of spaces within communal landscaped squares and streets at the front of houses. This has minimised the need for rear parking courtyards, and has avoided the need for the frontages to be dominated by integral garages which can create unattractive elevations dominated by garage doors and cars parked on driveways. The layout as submitted is considered to provide an acceptable balance between the size of dwellings, and the amount of parking, open spaces and landscaping.

As well as reducing the bulk of the apartment building, in response to Members' comments on the previous application the applicant has redesigned each of the proposed buildings. This has added much greater variety and interest in the design of these dwellings. The three storey elements would be constructed using red brick and grey roof slates to provide contrast to the buff brick and brown roof tiles of the two and half storey houses. Further interest would be created through variations in ridge heights and roof pitches, staggering of facades, the introduction of gabled and flat roofed dormers, pitched and lean-to entrance canopies, artificial stone dressings to the lintels and cills of windows and contrasting red brick plinths to the two and a half storey houses. These changes from the previous scheme can be readily appreciated from the 3-D coloured images that applicant has provided to illustrate the appearance of the proposed development.

This is a small, largely self-contained development that will act as a transition between two storey residential development on one side and the larger school buildings, including the new extension to the Open Learning Centre, on the other. The proposal has been designed to reflect the scale and character of the adjacent conservation area while creating a distinct character of its own to stand alongside Brakenhale School and its sports field. It is considered that the details provided of the appearance are acceptable and would result in the creation of a small high quality development that respects the character of the surrounding area.

The scheme has been sensitively designed to provide an efficient use of urban land in a sustainable location, and although at a higher density than that prevalent in the adjacent conservation area it is not considered that the proposed development would result in a detrimental impact on the character or appearance of the surrounding area, including the adjacent conservation area, and would thus accord with Policy EN20 of the Local Plan.

(3) Effect on the amenity of neighbouring residential property

The properties that would be most affected by the proposed development are seven houses in The Green which back onto the western boundary of the site, and several houses on Rectory Lane that adjoin or face the site. The houses on The Green have rear gardens between 26 and 35 metres in length, and a substantial coniferous tree screen approximately 10 metres in height forms the boundary with the four of these properties closest to the site. The proposed houses would result in a back to back separation distance of at least 40 metres which is substantially in excess of the generally accepted minimum distance of 30 metres for three storey houses.

In addition to the separation distance, privacy is presently augmented in part by the existing tree screen which the applicants propose to retain. It is considered that, while not in itself essential to the avoidance of unacceptable overlooking, the retention of this tree screen does add to the actual and perceived sense of privacy enjoyed by residents of The Green. However it is possible that future residents of the proposed houses that back onto this tree screen may wish to substantially reduce the height of this screen or remove it altogether. This pressure may be accentuated if discolouration results from the crown lifting required to provide the rear access paths. At present these trees are protected by way of a condition on the outline planning permission which prevents their felling without the prior permission of the LPA. It is considered that a time may come when it is considered appropriate to allow the removal of these trees in the interests of the amenities of the future occupiers. Should this situation arise it is considered that permission to fell should only be granted if a satisfactory alternative form of boundary treatment is agreed with the LPA. The height of this tree screen also needs to be maintained in the interests of both neighbours and future occupiers. The closest neighbour has previously suggested that a height of 8 metres would be acceptable and in consideration of this comment the applicant has submitted a maintenance strategy for the retention of the tree screen at this height. It is therefore not considered that the proposed development would result in any undue harm to the amenities of residents of The Green.

The proposed apartment building adjacent to Rectory Lane would respect the existing building lines on Rectory Lane, and has been designed with no windows in the flank elevation closest to the neighbouring house at 11 Rectory Lane. This elevation would be 16 metres from that property. Although a parking court is proposed to be sited adjacent to the rear garden, this is not considered to be any more detrimental than the previous situation where an access road ran along this boundary to the car park at the rear of the open learning centre. It is not considered that the proposed development would result in an unacceptable impact on the amenities of number 11, or on any other properties on Rectory Lane.

In view of the changes in levels across the site, in particular the sharp fall in levels at the southern end of the site where the all weather pitch was sited, it has been necessary to change ground levels across the site. This has resulted in a general raising of ground levels, particularly in the southern half of the site in order to provide

acceptable road gradients, level access and sustainable drainage. However it is proposed to grade garden areas back to existing levels at the site boundaries and in view of the distances involved it is not considered that the proposed slab levels would be detrimental to any neighbouring properties.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with proviso (vii) of BFBLP Policy EN20.

(4) Living Conditions of future residents

The proposed houses are not considered to result in any undue overlooking or loss of daylight or sunlight to other properties in the development, and would provide adequate private amenity space for future residents. A possible future concern with overshadowing from the linear tree screen at the rear of plots 47 to 63 has been addressed above. It is considered that the proposed development would provide an acceptable living environment for future occupants.

(5) Transport considerations

The principle of this development in terms of its impact on Rectory Lane and the surrounding road network, in particular the Horse and Groom Roundabout, and the details of the access have been considered and approved under the outline permission.

The access road has already received consent under the proposals for the new open learning centre and the position of the road has not altered. This road has now been completed and presently provides access to the remodelled Open Learning Centre. The design has changed slightly as the drop off and turning area in front of the building has been removed as it is no longer required for the OLC. This has provided further benefit for pedestrians and cyclists using this route.

The extension to the permitted access road starts at the first 'Square'. The exit road would be offset from the entry to slow vehicle speeds however there is sufficient road width to maintain access for large vehicles such as refuse vehicles. The second 'Square' at the far end of the development allows for large vehicles to safely turn.

There are several accesses to parking courts on the plans, one is under the flat block and it appears that visibility of approximately 2.4m x 25m in both directions can be achieved; this is acceptable as the approach speeds are expected to be below 20mph. In fact the visibility to the right appears to be greater than that shown, with actual visibility being near to 50m. In order to provide a visibility splay of 2.4m x 33m from the access serving the parking court in front of Block B the landscaping proposals show that the trees planted adjacent to the footway will be splayed so that they do not interfere with visibility. The hedge proposed must be kept no higher than 0.6m to enable a visibility splay of 2.4m x 33m to be achieved in both directions.

The materials proposed to be used on the road are indicated in the application. The applicant is proposing various materials along its length including permeable paving in the car parking areas. The road will sought for adoption as it will provide a public link from/to the south. The adopted highway will need to have independent drainage to the parking spaces. These matters will be covered at the adoption stage.

The detailed design of the two 'Square' areas have been amended from the previous application to incorporate comments made by the Highway Authority which considered that the layout shown originally was unsuitable for adoption. The previous layout

indicated that bollards would be introduced in the corner areas to stop parking. This was considered likely to lead to safety issues for pedestrians. Following a safety audit the redesign of this area has now been amended to include a safe build out around the footway and the road edge, together with additional soft landscaping. It is considered that in principle this area is now suitable for adoption, and that the additional landscaping will improve the streetscene here.

The site has segregated 2m footways that run adjacent to the road and behind the car parking areas, this layout will provide safe and segregated use for pedestrians.

Cyclists will be able to safely travel through the site and continue onto Rainforest Walk. This route will provide a good link to the facilities to the south such as the primary school and children's centre. This route also provides for emergency access for a fire appliance.

Access around the buildings is good with rear access being provided, which will allow easy movement of refuse bins. A bin storage area for the flats is provided under the building adjacent to the access to the rear parking court. The detailed design of this area has been amended from the previous application to incorporate comments made by the Highway Authority. The bin storage is now segregated from the cycle parking and better access is provided into the car park at the rear.

The site provides a total of 146 parking spaces which is in accordance with the borough standards for this scale of development. Disabled parking has been provided by using parking adjacent to paths to buildings. This is considered to be acceptable.

Adequate cycle parking has been indicated for the flats, which include lockable storage within the building and Sheffield stands for visitors located under within the parking courtyard. The applicant has indicated that cycle parking for the houses can be accommodated within the rear gardens.

The level of traffic was calculated at the outline permission stage and it was demonstrated then that the development would not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding road network and major junctions including the Horse and Groom roundabout. The development is likely to generate about 40 movements in the peak hours, the daily increase will be in the region of 430 movements per day. The addendum Transport Statement submitted with this application states that previously slightly higher trip rates (50 trips in the peak hours) were used in order to robustly test the impact on the Horse and Groom junction. The Highway Authority expects the trip rate to be slightly lower than this overall and this is covered in the estimates above.

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable with respect to transport considerations and as such is in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS24 and BFBLP Policies M4 and M9.

(6) Tree and Landscaping Considerations

None of the trees on the site are protected by Tree Preservation Order. However at the outline application stage a number of existing trees and groups of trees were identified for retention, and root protection areas were indicated. As indicated in section 3 above these trees are protected by way of a condition on the outline planning permission which prevents their felling without the prior permission of the LPA. This application proposes the retention of all the existing trees with the exception of a group of Sycamore trees in the south western corner which will need to be removed to create the cycle path/emergency access link to rainforest walk.

In addition to the retention of existing trees the applicant has proposed a detailed landscape framework providing new open spaces, tree and shrub planting and hard landscaping. It is considered that these details would enable the creation of a high quality and attractive environment for future residents and the general public if implemented fully in accordance with these details.

The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with BFBLP Policies EN1, EN2 and EN20.

(7) Access implications

The site is easily accessible to the footpath and cycle network linking to Bracknell town centre, is within walking distance of the local facilities provided at the Easthampstead neighbourhood centre, and is on a bus route to Bracknell town centre providing good access for non car owners. The applicant has confirmed that all properties would be designed so that they are fully accessible to those with disabilities in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations. The proposals include an emergency access and cycle path link to Rainforest Walk which will provide permeability for pedestrians and cyclists as well as improving access for emergency vehicles. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with BFBLP Policy EN22.

(8) Impact on Thames Basin Heaths SPA

The site lies within approximately 2 km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA classified on 9th March 2005 under the EC Birds Directive. Natural England has advised that any development involving an increase in the number of dwellings, taken in conjunction with other dwellings proposed within a 5km radius of the SPA, is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the SPA. The increased population is likely to contribute to the deterioration of the quality of the habitat on which the protected bird species (nightjar, woodlark and Dartford warbler) depend, and increased disturbance to the birds by reason of increased access to the heath including access for general recreation and dog-walking. A s106 agreement has been completed in conjunction with the outline application. This includes SPA obligations that provide for appropriate mitigation with respect to any adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA. As there has not been a material change in circumstances since then, it is considered that these obligations continue to provide appropriate mitigation and therefore the proposal is in accordance with BFBLP Policy EN3.

(9) Flood Risk

The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) with this application with respect to the surface water drainage strategy. The updated strategy treats surface water through a number of Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) devices before being discharged. This is acceptable to the Environment Agency which raises no object to the approval of the reserved matters for the development.

(10) Ecological Issues

Core Strategy Policy CS1 states that developments will be permitted where they protect and enhance biodiversity. Policy CS7 states that development proposals will be permitted which, inter alia, enhance the landscape and promote biodiversity.

The proposal includes new tree planting and a wildflower area that will help to improve the biodiversity value of the site. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with PPS9 and Core Strategy Policies CS1 and CS7.

(11) Sustainability Resource Management issues

The outline planning permission was granted before the Council adopted the Sustainable Resource Management SPD and therefore no conditions were imposed relating to this issue. However the applicant has indicated that the proposed buildings would incorporate renewable energy sources and will achieve Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

CONCLUSION

This application seeks approval of reserved matters with respect to the site layout, scale and appearance of each building proposed, and the details of landscaping. The principle of the development, the number of dwellings and the means of access have all been approved under the outline permission.

The applicant has attempted to provide an innovative design solution for this site that enables a high density to be achieved while ensuring that all the dwellings have private or communal amenity space, and the inclusion within the layout of a large central area of open space around an attractive group of retained trees.

The layout has been designed to ensure an adequate relationship between the new dwellings and existing properties and it is not considered that any undue harm would result to the amenities of any neighbouring properties. It is also considered that the proposed layout would provide a satisfactory environment for future occupiers of the new dwellings. The layout makes satisfactory provision for parking of cars and cycles and enables safe and convenient access to be provided to each property. It is therefore considered that the proposed layout is acceptable.

Following previous concerns raised by Members with respect to the design of the buildings the applicant has made a number of changes to both the scale and design of the apartment building, and in the detailed design of the houses. The scale of the buildings is in accordance to the outline restriction to a maximum of three stories, and is considered to be appropriate to the site. Variety and interest is provided through a variation in scale, materials and detailed design features, with larger three storey buildings being sited at key points through the site where they would act as vista stops to views along the access road. It is considered that the details provided of the external appearance are a significant improvement over the previous scheme and would result in the creation of a small high quality development that respects the character of the adjacent conservation area, and that of surrounding properties.

The application is accompanied by a detailed landscaping scheme, which if implemented would provide an acceptable landscape quality to the development, softening and complementing the built elements.

Overall it is considered that the scheme has been sensitively designed to provide an efficient use of urban land in a sustainable location, and although at a higher density than that prevalent in the adjacent conservation area it is not considered that the proposed development would result in a detrimental impact on the character or

appearance of the surrounding area or on neighbouring properties, and approval is therefore recommended.

6 RECOMMENDATION

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:-

01. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans and other submitted details:

received by the Local Planning Authority on 12 June 2009:

O.340.PL 201, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 227-239

Design and Access Statement,
Arboricultural Report dated 25 January 2008
Addendum Transport Assessment
Addendum Flood Risk Assessment
Summary of Highway Works - A Technical Note
Details of Hutton Timber Bench

received by the Local Planning Authority on 3rd July 2009:

0.340.PL 202A, 203A, 226A
0.383. 1.1C, 1.2C

Soft landscape Works: Maintenance Schedule Revision A
Maintenance Strategy for Cypress Screen Revision A

(or any plans or details subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as an amendment to the approved plans or details).

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the local Planning Authority.

02. No dwelling shall be occupied until all the visibility splays shown on the approved drawings have been provided. These areas shall thereafter be kept free of all obstructions to visibility over a height of 0.6 metres measured from the surface of the adjacent carriageway.
REASON: In the interests of highway safety.
[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy DPD CS23]
03. No dwelling shall be occupied until the car parking spaces have been surfaced and marked out in accordance with the approved drawing. The spaces shall thereafter be kept available for parking at all times. There shall be no restrictions on the use of the car parking spaces shown on the approved plan for the occupiers of, or visitors to, any of the buildings hereby permitted, with the exception that one space may be allocated to each of the three and four bedroom houses hereby permitted.

REASON: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate car parking to prevent the likelihood of car parking on Rectory Lane which would be a danger to other road users.

[Relevant Plans and Policies: BDBLP M9]

Summary Of Reason(s) For Decision:

The following development plan policies have been taken into account in determining this planning application:

South East Plan Policy:

CC6 which seeks the creation of sustainable and distinctive communities through a local shared vision which respects, and where appropriate enhances, the character and distinctiveness of settlements and landscapes and through the use of innovative design processes to create a high quality built environment which promotes a sense of place.

Core Strategy DPD Policies:

CS1 which seeks to ensure that development makes efficient use of land and buildings, reduces the need for travel, promotes a mix of uses, conserves water and energy use, supports the economic wellbeing of the population, protects and enhances safety, natural resources, character of local landscape and historic and cultural features
CS7 which seeks to ensure that developments are of high quality design

Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policies:

EN1 which seeks to protect tree and hedgerow cover

EN2 which seeks to supplement tree and hedgerow cover

EN20 as it would be acceptable in terms of its impact upon the character of the area, and amenity of surrounding properties and adjoining area

M4 which seeks to ensure that development which would result in a material increase in the use of the existing highway will provide appropriate pedestrian, cycling and public transport routes

M9 which seeks satisfactory parking provision for vehicles and cycles

(Please note that this is not intended to be an exhaustive list).

The following material considerations have been taken into account:

The proposal is considered to comply with the above policies. The proposal would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the surrounding area or the adjacent Easthampstead Conservation Area. The proposed dwellings would be sited and designed so as not to result in unacceptable overlooking or overshadowing of neighbouring properties, or significantly affect their amenities in any other respect. Adequate access and parking is provided to serve the development. The development would not result in the loss of any important trees and would enhance the wildlife value of the site.

The concerns raised by the Town Council have been considered. Issues relating to the amount of development, additional traffic and the safety of the access have been previously considered by the LPA at the outline application stage. The proposal has been significantly amended from the previous application and is now considered to have fully addressed concerns relating to it being out of keeping with and having a detrimental impact on, the character of the area. Parking is provided in accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards.

The planning application is therefore approved.

Doc. Ref: Uniform 7/DC/Agenda

The application file to which this report relates can be viewed at the Council's Time Square office during office hours or online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk