

48/15/0053

PERSIMMON HOMES (SOUTH WEST)

ERECTION OF LOCAL CENTRE INCLUDING 4 No RETAIL UNITS WITH 18 No APARTMENTS ABOVE PLUS 69 No DWELLINGS, WITH ASSOCIATED WORKS AND ACCESS INCLUDING HIGHWAY WORKS TO THE ADJACENT A38 ON LAND OFF BRIDGWATER ROAD, MONKTON HEATHFIELD

Location: STREET RECORD, BRIDGWATER ROAD, BATHPOOL, TAUNTON

Grid Reference: 326007.126849

Full Planning Permission

Recommendation

Recommended decision: Conditional Approval

Subject to a Section 106 agreement for affordable housing and the submission of details for highway works to the Bridgwater Road (A38) the Chair of Planning, in consultation with the Assistant Director Planning and the Environment be authorised to grant permission subject to the following conditions

Recommended Condition(s) (if applicable)

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

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Section 91 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

(A3) Dr No LC101 Site Location Plan
(A1) DrNo LC100 Rev D Planning Layout
(A1) Dr No LC102-1 Street Scenes - Sht 1
(A1) Dr No LC 102-2 Rev B Street Scenes - Sht 2
(A1) DrNo LC103 Rev C Materials Key Plan
(A1) DrNo LC106 Rev C Affordable Housing Key Plan
(A1) DrNo LC105 Rev C Building Heights Key Plan
(A1) DrNo LC107 Rev B Bin Storage & Refuse Vehicle Tracking Key Plan
(A0) DrNo JBR1851 200LC Engineering Layout
(A3) Dr No 010-2 House Type Design Sheets
(A3) Dr No 120-1 Rev A House Type Ha. Brick.
(A3) DrNo LC120-0 Rev A House Type Ha Brick
(A3) DrNo LC121-1 House Type Ru Brick
(A3) DrNo LC122-1 House Type Ht Render to Front Elevation
(A3) DrNo LC124-1 Rev A House Type Ro. Brick
(A3) DrNo LC125-1 House Type Mo. Brick

(A3) DrNo LC126-1 Housetype AI Brick
 (A3) DrNo LC127-1 House Type CH Brick
 (A3) DrNo LC128-1 Rev A House Type CI Corner (brick)
 (A3) DrNo LC129-1 Rev B Retail & Commercial Units & Appartments Ground Floor Plan
 (A3) DrNo LC129-2 Rev B Retail / Commercial Units & Appartments First Floor Plan
 (A3) DrNo LC129-3 Rev B Retail & Commercial units & Appartments Second Floor Plan
 (A3) DrNo LC129-4 Rev B Retail/commercial units & Appartments elevation View1
 (A3) DrNo LC129-5 Rev B Retail / Commercial Units & Apartments Elevation View 2
 (A3) DrNo LC129-6 Rev B Retail/Commercial Units & Apartments Elevation View 3
 (A3) DrNo LC129-7 Rev B Retail/commercial units & apartments Elevation View 4
 (A3) DrNo 130-1 Affordable houstype 2B Brick
 (A3) DrNo LC131-1 Affordable House Type 3B Brick
 (A3) DrNo 140-1 Garages
 (A3) DrNo 140-2 Garages Sheet 2
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 002-1 Evesham floor plans
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 002-2 Rev B Evesham elevations
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 003-1 Rev B Warwick floor plans and elevations
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 004-1 Rev B Stratford floor plans and elevations
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 005-1 Kenilworth/Kenilworth 4 floor plans
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 005-3 Kenilworth/Kenilworth 4 elevations
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 006-2 Kenilworth/Kenilworth floor plans
 (A3) DrNo JBR 1851 008-1 Rev A Warwick cnr floor plans and elevations
 (A0) DrNo 300 Rev C Landscape Proposals
 (A3) DrNo 301 Plant Schedule and Landscape Specification
 (A0) DrNo 302 Rev C Landscape Proposals
 (A3) DrNo 303 Plant Schedule and Landscape Specification
 (A1) DrNo 304 Tree Pit In Hard works
 (A2) DrNo 305 Tree Pit in Soft Works
 (A0) DrNo 306 Tree Pit Detail Tee pits between Parking Bays
 (A0) DrNo 310 Rev Q Cricket Green And Dyers Book Corridor North POS Landscaping Layout
 (A1) DrNo 311 Rev D Landscape Proposals
 (A0) DrNo 321 Rev J Strategic footway/cycleway network plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out and thereafter retained as such, in accordance with the approved details as above, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not harm the

character and appearance of the area in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Taunton Deane Core Strategy.

4. The layout and alignment, widths and levels of the proposed roads, road junctions, and points of access, visibility splays, footpaths and turning spaces shall be provided in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The roads shall be laid out prior to the occupation of any dwelling, or any dwelling in an agreed phase of the development that may have been agreed by the Local Planning Authority, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed estate is laid out in a proper manner with adequate provision for various modes of transport in accordance with Policy 49 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review.

5. None of the dwellings hereby permitted shall be occupied until the proposed junctions onto Bridgwater Road are constructed generally in accordance with the plans hereby approved..

Reason: To ensure that the proposed estate is laid out in a proper manner.

6. The proposed roads, footpaths and turning spaces where applicable, shall be constructed in such a manner as to ensure that each dwelling before it is occupied shall be served by a properly consolidated and surfaced carriageway and footpath.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed estate is laid out in a proper manner.

7. The proposed public parking area between the front of the retail units and Bridgwater Road shall remain available for the parking of cars by the general public at all times.

Reason: To ensure the provision of public parking spaces for the use of customers for the retail units and parents dropping/picking up children from the primary school the interests of highway safety .

8. No development shall be commenced until details of the design; implementation, maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Those details shall include:

1. Information about the design storm period and intensity, discharge rates and volumes (both pre and post development), temporary storage facilities, means of access for maintenance (6 metres minimum), the methods employed to delay and control surface water discharged from the site, and the measures taken to prevent flooding and pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;
2. Any works required off-site to ensure adequate discharge of surface water without causing flooding or pollution (which should include refurbishment of

existing culverts and headwalls or removal of unused culverts where relevant);
3. Flood water exceedance routes, both on and off site;
4. A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, management company or maintenance by a Residents' Management Company and / or any other arrangements to secure the operation and maintenance to an approved standard and working condition throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development is served by a satisfactory system of surfacewater drainage and in accordance with paragraph 17 and sections 10 and 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2015).

9. Prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted full construction details of the proposed footpath and cycleway links shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings hereby approved the 3m wide bitmac footpath running to the south of the application site shall be provided on site and available for public use. Prior to the occupation of 50% of the dwellings hereby permitted the footpath and cycle link running west to east across the site and located to the north of the retail units and the 3m wide bitmac link running north - south through the Dyers Brook wildlife corridor shall be constructed on site and available for use by the general public.

Reason: To ensure that the timely provision of a foot and cycle network to serve the proposed site and its links to the surrounding development site and provide a viable alternative to the public car.

10. No dwelling shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plan for cars and cycles to be parked.

Reason: To ensure adequate on/off site parking for residents in the interests of highway safety.

12. (i) The landscaping/planting scheme shown on the submitted plans shall be completely carried out within the first available planting season from the date of commencement of the development.

(ii) For a period of five years after the completion of the landscaping scheme, the trees and shrubs shall be protected and maintained in a healthy weed free condition and any trees or shrubs that cease to grow, shall be replaced by trees or shrubs of similar size and species or other appropriate trees or shrubs as may be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development does not harm the character and appearance of the area.

12. The applicant shall undertake all the recommendations made in EAD's Wildlife Management Sub Plan for Phase 2 Monkton Heathfield dated September

2014 and the overarching Landscape and Wildlife Management Plan for the site and provide mitigation for wildlife as recommended. The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timing of the works, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the scheme for the maintenance and provision of the new bat and bird boxes and related accesses have been fully implemented. Thereafter the resting places and agreed accesses shall be permanently maintained

Reason: To protect and accommodate wildlife.

13. Prior to the commencement of the development a landscape management plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The landscape management plan shall include a maintenance plan specifying the extent and timing of grass cutting, shrub pruning and tree maintenance. The approved landscape management plan shall thereafter be implemented.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development can be successfully assimilated into the surrounding landscape and create an interesting amenity for the proposed development

14. Prior to the commencement of construction work on site for the residential buildings hereby permitted a programme for the delivery of the proposed open spaces, including Dyers Brook, shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. Once approved the open spaces shall be provided in strict accordance with the approved programme and thereafter remain available for public use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the delivery of adequate open space for the use of future residents.

15. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 or any order revoking and re-enacting the 2015 Order with or without modification), no development of the types described in Schedule 2 Part 2 Class A of the 2015 Order other than that expressly authorised by this permission shall be carried out without the further grant of planning permission.

Reason: To ensure that the public open provision is maintained for the use of the general public and that the amenity of such areas is protected.

16. No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out at all times in accordance with the agreed scheme or some other scheme that may otherwise be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the identification and preservation of archaeological remains in accordance guidance contained within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

17. Prior to their installation on site, full details for the proposed lighting, seats, litter bins, parish notice board and other furniture (as defined in the Taunton Deane Areas of Open Space note for guidance of developers attached to the Unilateral Undertaking) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The lights, seats, litter bins and other furniture shall then be installed prior to the completion of the area of open space within which it lies, in strict accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be maintained in a safe and useable condition.

Reason: To ensure that suitable and safe lighting and furniture is provided within the areas of public open space

Notes to Applicant

1. The condition relating to wildlife requires a mitigation proposal that will maintain favourable status for these species that are affected by this development proposal.

Most resident nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

It should be noted that the protection afforded to species under UK and EU legislation is irrespective of the planning system and the developer should ensure that any activity they undertake on the application site (regardless of the need for planning consent) must comply with the appropriate wildlife legislation.

2. In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework the Council has worked in a positive and pro-active way and has imposed planning conditions to enable the grant of planning permission.

Proposal

Outline planning permission was granted in 2008 for the mixed use development at Monkton Heathfield including relief roads, new primary school, employment land and up to 900 dwellings. Reserved matters applications have been submitted for parcels of this development with permission currently granted for approximately 900 dwellings to date. These permissions exclude details for the land to the west of the new primary school site which was proposed for a Local Centre and dwellings within the original, approved, masterplan and Design Code.

As a result of the number of dwellings referred to in the outline permission – 900 - it is not possible to submit the details of the Local Centre,(resulting in approximately 80 dwellings above that limit) as a reserved matters approval pursuant to the original permission and as a result this application is for full permission.

This application is for the erection of two central blocks of 3 storey development to provide 5 retail units on the ground floor (3 x 65.2sqm 1 x 47.1sqm and 1 x 114.3sqm) with 10 x 2 bed flats and 8 x 1 bed flats above and to the rear. The three storey blocks have been designed to form a symmetrical centre piece for the development and use a mix of materials with local “natural” stone for the ground floor and a mix of brick and render above. The blocks front onto a parking area with 20 spaces for public use plus an additional 6 spaces for the disabled. These spaces have been designed to be used in association with the retail units, community facilities and primary school.

The application also includes proposed alterations to Bridgwater Road (former the A38) in order to create a revised highway which can provide safe access for both the primary school and local centre, as envisaged at the time of the primary school permission. In order to soften the visual impact of the car parking and highway areas, there would be a strip of land, retaining trees from the existing hedgerow and proposing additional new trees, varying in width from 10 – 15m, to form a pleasant landscaped green space between the two. The highway between the school and Local Centre would be of pavements forming a raised table with speed restricted to 20mph. There would be two crossing points one immediately in line with the entrance to the school and one further north to link the footpath and cycle network running from the public open space to the east of the school to Dyers brook to the west of the Local Centre. Two bus stops would be included one either side of the highway. The existing footpath and cycle link to the south of the site and providing access to and from the secondary school would be upgraded to a combined footpath and cycle link.

The Local Centre blocks would be surrounded on three sides (north, west and south) by an additional 69 dwellings. The dwellings would be a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties that would provide a range of accommodation. The house types have been accepted elsewhere in the development and are two storey in height and of traditional design and materials. The dwellings have been planned to front onto the A38, west – east green links and Dyers Brook Open spaces.

The dwellings to the north of the central blocks would be separated from the commercial area by a green open space with foot / cycleways that will form a link connecting the Dyer Brook open space to the network of such open spaces proposed within the main site, lying to the east of the A38.

The proposal also includes Dyers Brook wildlife corridor and associated open space, which forms the western boundary of the site. This area has been designed in accordance with the details approved in association with the outline planning permission and comprises part of an integrated green infrastructure providing foot and cycle links within a landscaped setting. Additional trees have been included in important focal locations, and existing trees, mostly along the Dyers Brook Corridor, have been retained wherever possible.

The proposal has identified and left undeveloped, land to the south of the site which could provide a potential road link (along the route of the existing footpath link) between the A38 and School Road should it be required in the future.

Site Description

The site is approximately 33ha of agricultural land, currently grassland, which lies between the A38 and Dyers Brook. A footpath runs along the southern boundary of the site linking the secondary and primary schools in School Road to the A38. There are hedge and tree boundaries adjacent to the A38 and a hedgerow running west – east (where the proposed green link is situated) across the site. Work has now commenced on the erection of a new Primary School which lies on land on the opposite side of the A38 to the site.

Relevant Planning History

The relevant planning history relates to the outline permission and establishes the number of dwellings permitted so far and the location and design details of the green infrastructure into which this proposal links.

48/05/0072 - Outline Application for the proposed mixed use urban extension development comprising residential, employment, local centre, new primary school, A38 relief road, green spaces and playing fields at Monkton Heathfield. Permission granted 22/10/2008

48/10/0036 - Application for approval of reserved matters of application 48/05/0072 for details of phase 1, to include 327 no. dwellings and associated highways, landscaping including public open space, and the first section of the Eastern Relief Road and roundabout on A38 Bridgwater Road, at Land off Bridgwater Road, Monkton Heathfield. Conditional approval granted 20/05/2011 (there have been a number of replan's within this area)

48/13/0081 - Application for the approval of reserved matters in relation to phase R6 of outline application 48/10/0072 for the erection of 82 no. dwellings including infrastructure, open space and landscaping on land off Bridgwater Road, Monkton Heathfield permission granted 22nd May 2014

48/14/0007 - Application for the approval of reserved matters following outline application 48/05/0072 in regards to land parcels P4 and P5 for the erection

of 109 dwellings, associated highways, landscaping including public open space, on land off Bridgwater Road, West Monkton Conditional approval granted.

48/14/0009 - Reserved matters for phase ii of outline application 48/05/0072 to include the spine road and associated surface water drainage, land off Bridgwater Road, Monkton Heathfield, as amended by email and plans dated 06 June 2014. Conditional approval granted.

48/14/0015- Variation of condition no's 1 and 12 (landscaping and architectural planning layout) of application number 48/05/0072 on land off Bridgwater Road, Monkton Heathfield,

48/14/0016 - Application for the approval of reserved matters of applications for the erection of 57 dwellings with associated highways and landscaping including public open space and land parcels P11 & P12 at Monkton Heathfield, permission granted 4th February 2015

48/14/0028 - Application for the approval of reserved matters following outline approval 48/05/0072 in relation to phase 7 for the erection of 49 no dwellings and infrastructure, open space and landscaping on land off Bridgwater Road, Monkton Heathfield

48/15/0030 - Application for the approval of reserved matters following outline permission 48/05/0072 for the erection of 246 no dwellings on land parcels P6, P8 and P13 with associated highways, landscaping and public open space on land off Bridgwater Road, Monkton Heathfield permission granted 28th October 2015.

Consultation Responses

WEST MONKTON PARISH COUNCIL - makes the following comment on the amended plans/scheme:

The Parish Council would not want to see any reduction in the amount of tree planting in this application, and the amount of planting should be retained in the area between the car parking and the road.

To increase the connectivity between the existing parish and the new developments, the Parish Council recommends extending the cycleway/footpath running on the right hand side of the plans (beside the proposed location for the substation) over the Dyers Brook to join TDBC owned land at the access road to the garages in Heathfield Drive. This would encourage pedestrians from the proposed Hartnells development, Richards Crescent, Heathfield Drive, the Charles Church development to walk to the primary school and retail centre. Whilst the bridge was being installed, a slight widening of the Dyers Brook to create a 'duck pond' area where residents could sit and feed the ducks would enhance the appearance and environmental and recreational use of Dyers Brook (the idea being taken from the photograph published in the Design Code section on Dyers Brook, and local examples such as Goodland Gardens and Vivary Park).

SCC - TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT GROUP - no objection to the principle of the development subject to suitable highway works being finalised and submitted.

Comments on amended plans awaited.

WESSEX WATER - no comment

SCC - CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER - no comment

HOUSING ENABLING -

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) OFFICER - CiL is applicable to this development

BIODIVERSITY - No objection subject to a condition (as recommended)
EAD have submitted a Wildlife Management sub plan for Phase 2 of the outline permission which includes this site and I equally support the findings and recommendations of that plan in respect of this site

POLICE ARCHITECTURAL LIAISON OFFICER - no comment

CHIEF FIRE OFFICER - DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE RESCUE - no comment

SCC - RIGHTS OF WAY - no comment

SCC - FLOOD RISK MANAGER – The development indicates an increase in impermeable areas that will generate an increase in surface water runoff. This has the potential to increase flood risk to the adjacent properties or the highway if not adequately controlled.

It is noted that there are options for sustainable drainage systems proposed within the preceding outline application however there is no indication that these have been agreed and no detailed design information was included with these options. As the applicant has not provided details of the proposed drainage designs for the capture and removal of surface water from the development. Due to the location of the site and the proposed increase in impermeable areas it will be necessary to provide these details.

The Flood Risk Management (Drainage) Team has no objection to the proposed development, as submitted, subject to a drainage condition being applied. Under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act there is a requirement to seek a consent when culverting or obstructing a watercourse, whether permanent or temporary. It is important to note that under no circumstances retrospective consent will be given for unconsented works. If unconsented drainage works have occurred,

the developer will be responsible for restoring the watercourse to its original condition.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - NOISE & POLLUTION – no comment

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - no objections to the proposed development, but wishes to make the following comments:

Somerset County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, should be consulted on the proposed surface water disposal arrangements. However, it will be important for the Local Planning Authority to secure appropriate provisions from the applicant concerning the future maintenance liability and clarify ownership details for the 'Carlow' underground attenuation tank shown under the sports pitch area.

LEISURE DEVELOPMENT - the outline S106 requirements should be secured in this proposal

LANDSCAPE - No objections to revised plans which amend the proposals as requested.

SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL - South West Heritage - Although much of this site has been archaeologically investigated the areas east of the A38 have not yet been evaluated and there is potential for remains relating to prehistoric and Roman period activity. For this reason I recommend that the developer be required to archaeologically excavate the heritage asset and provide a report on any discoveries made as indicated in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 141). This should be secured by the use of model condition 55 attached to any permission granted.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - I am very happy to support this application for a local centre, which will provide essential services and employment opportunities for residents of the new development at Monkton Heathfield.

Representations Received

Joint letters have been received from the residents of Brittons Ash raising the following points:

- There is no drop off zone for parents to drop and collect children from the primary school
- There are inadequate parking spaces (20) for the 420 child school, 50 place nursery, community centre and retail units
- The 18 parking spaces to the rear of the blocks will be used for residents of the flats with only 20 for public use which is not enough
- There are no proposals to stop parking by parents of school children and non-residents in Brittons Ash, causing congestion, and difficulty in access to

- private drives
- Pedestrians are trespassing on the verges of resident's properties along with dog fouling
- Vehicle movements along the A38 will be high and it will be hard for residents to pull out onto the A38. Yellow lines should be used to stop parking near to the junction
- The layout and density of the proposal is too cramped
- The apartment blocks would be overbearing and out of scale due to their bulk and mass and they should be scaled down
- The green space at the rear of the site is an efficient use of space separating the existing and proposed development but this has not been the same for the residents of Brittons Ash and the development
- The existing hedge towards the front of the site should be retained and its removal will have a detrimental impact on wildlife and the environment
- The pedestrian crossing adjacent to the Brittons Ash road is not shown on the proposed plans, is this to be removed?
- The proposal will result in additional noise and disturbance to local residents
- There is no information on the likely hours of use of the community facility and parking for this application
- Lack of information regarding the timing of the use of the community centre and parking
- Brittons Ash residents will be hemmed in by development with no land buffer or open aspects
- No response regarding concerns over the lack of car parking
- Environmental assessment is weak and non-specific
- No construction management plan has been submitted and no information on hours of work and operation of plant and machinery
- Existing hedges should be removed only when essential
- People are parking in the turning area at the end of Hyde Lane resulting in inadequate turning facilities
- There is a dangerous Junction where the A38 meets Brittons Ash which will be worse with additional pressure for on street parking from this proposal and motorists will be left with their cars overhanging the A38
- Additional parking and use of Brittons Ash by pedestrians will result in additional conflict
- What is the proposed speed limit along the A38 in the vicinity of Brittons Ash?

2 letters of objection were received raising the following comments:

- The new development should only stretch half way "down the field" and that the hedges and trees adjacent to Dyers Brook will be retained to provide security and privacy for existing residents of School Road
- There is wildlife nesting in and using the hedges and trees
- A future School Road link will result in a dangerous rat run and additional congestion for residents of Brittons Ash
- 154a Bridgwater Road is not shown on the site plan

Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that

applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development plan for Taunton Deane comprises the Taunton Deane Core Strategy (2012), saved policies of the Taunton Deane Local Plan (2004), the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008), Somerset Minerals Local Plan (2015), and Somerset Waste Core Strategy (2013).

Relevant policies of the development plan are listed below. Policies from emerging plans are also listed; these are a material consideration.

T8 - TDBCLP - Monkton Heathfield (HISTORIC),
T9 - TDBCLPMixed-use Dev(HISTORIC),
SS1 - TD CORE STRATEGY MONKTON HEATHFIELD,
DM1 - TD CORE STRATEGY - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS,
EN28 - TDBCLP - Development and Flood Risk,
FZ2 - Floodplain Zone 2,
FZ3 - Floodplain Zone 3,

Local finance considerations

Community Infrastructure Levy

Cil payment in the region of £410,000 would be payable on this proposal.

New Homes Bonus

The development of this site would result in payment to the Council of the New Homes Bonus.

1 Year Payment

Taunton Deane Borough	£100,039
Somerset County Council	£25,010

6 Year Payment

Taunton Deane Borough	£650,234
Somerset County Council	£150,058

Determining issues and considerations

The main issues for the consideration of this application are:

1. Principles of development
1. Urban design
2. Highways
3. Affordable Housing
4. Landscape and open space

1. Principles of the development

This site was identified as part of a mixed use allocated site within the Taunton Deane Local Plan and its development was guided by policies T8 and T9 of that document. Outline planning permission granted in 2008 included the current application site. A masterplan was approved as part of the outline permission. The masterplan identified the current site for a mix of dwellings and retail units, the southern portion to form a “local Centre” opposite to the proposed primary school. Whilst the final layout of the proposed local centre and dwellings differs from the masterplan proposal, (because of the detailed alterations that are required to the former A38 in order to provide a safe route between the Local Centre and new primary school), the principles of the mixed use area have been retained and the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the allocation.

The current proposal is a full application due to the total number of dwellings within the outline site exceeding 900 as proposed within the permission and will be subject to CIL payments.

2. Urban Design

Layout

The proposed site has been designed with residential properties arranged in three parcels, northern, central and southern. The Dyers Brook wildlife corridor and open space runs along the western edge of the development and there are additional open spaces that would be provided to the north, centre and south of the site linking to that corridor and dividing the three parcels of development. The wildlife corridor and open space contain a network of footpath and cycleways links around the proposed development and would connect this site to the remainder of the Local plan site.

Each of the parcels of development have been designed so that the buildings would face outwards giving a positive street scene and providing overlooking for the open spaces. The highways serving the out facing dwellings would run between the dwellings and the public open spaces and a knee high trip rail would be provided to separate the highway and open space areas and a new hedge would be planted on the outer side of the highway to provide a visual and physical break between the two different areas.

The northern development parcel would be developed by Persimmon Homes and would also provide an internal road running n-s with terraces and semi-detached dwellings arranged so as to front onto the road.

The southern Parcel of development would be developed by Redrow Homes and is narrower than the northern parcel so has been designed to provide back to back dwellings with two terraces of four which would face east towards Bridgwater Road and an additional 6 detached dwellings fronting outwards.

The central parcel of land would provide the focus of the Local Centre site. In the original, approved design code the retail buildings fronting to the primary school were to be arranged around a triangular parking area however the proposed design would provide two 3 storey blocks providing 5 retail units on the ground floor running parallel to the Bridgwater Road and provide a rectangular landscaped parking area designed to provide a linked public space designed to cater for the likely movements west and east across the area. The design provides 18, flats above the retail units with parking within a rear courtyard area accessed from between the two blocks.

Car parking would be provided for all dwellings in a mix of garages and parking spaces. The parking spaces serving the terraced properties are generally provided at right angles to the highway with hedges and or trees being provided to split those spaces and reduce the visual impact of parking on the street scene in the longer term.

Central Retail units and flat blocks

The central retail buildings have been designed to reflect the importance of their function and central location between the existing and proposed settlement for phase 1 of the Monkton Heathfield development. Including acting as the focus for significant movements in and around the area associated with pedestrian and cycle connections around the new settlement, in particular associated with travel to and from the local schools.

These buildings would have a total 5 retail units on ground floor and the front sections of these would have a stone finish using the natural local stone for the area with the indented rear sections being a grey brick to match (details to be agreed). Flats would be located on the two floors above the retail units. The upper storeys would be a vertical mix of render and brick that would reach through to the gabled front elevations. The submission and approval of the final detail of the proposed materials would be conditioned if permission is granted.

The proposed flats would be for affordable units. Whilst this results in a high number of affordable flats, there is a relatively low number within the overall allocated site and it is likely, moving to the future if the percentage of housing is reduced to 25%, that affordable flats elsewhere on the scheme will be replaced by open market tenure so that the numbers within the scheme reflects the need for the units in the area.

Residential

The proposed Persimmon and Redrow residential units would have a traditional design using brick or render with tile or slate roofs. The majority of the units would be two storey in height although there would be six, two and a half storey Redrow dwellings in the central area. The same or similar designs have been approved elsewhere on the site and are considered to be in keeping with the area. All dwellings would have rear gardens with wall boundaries where they form the form the street scene on the outer

boundaries of the parcels or fence boundaries elsewhere.

3. Highways

Former A38

Along with the proposed new primary school, to the east of the site, the proposed development would form the central area of the new community created by the Local plan allocated site. The area is expected to be the focus of local pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movements.

The existing highway has functioned as a through route for traffic travelling from Bridgwater to Taunton and catered for traffic diverted off the M5 motorway when it was closed. The A38 has now been re-routed via the newly opened Eastern Relief Road and is now known as Bridgwater Road. A bus gate (part of the planning permission for the Western Relief Road), is proposed to the south of the development and would stop through traffic from continuing along the old A38 thereby reducing the volume of traffic using the road.

Given the historic strategic function of the A38 the existing roadway is a straight section of road approximately xxm in width with footpaths on either side (stopping at the bus stop on the nw of the road) with a 40mph speed limit. This is considered to be unsuitable and unsafe to serve its proposed new function at the centre of the development and giving access to both the local centre and proposed new primary school. As a result it is proposed to form a raised, paved section of highway, with low speed limits and a car parking free zone. Within this central area there would be two bus stops and three safe crossing points giving greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists. To the north of the central area would be a road narrowing allowing for cars to park along the highway further to the north if required. The access into the public car parking area to the front of the proposed shops would be from this raised section of Bridgwater Road

Internal layout

Car parking

The proposed development would include the provision of 139 parking spaces to serve 69 dwellings. The number of parking spaces per dwelling would range between 1 to 3 spaces depending on the size of the dwelling. There would be 18 spaces to serve the 18 flats situated in a resident's rear parking courtyard, between the flats and dwellings to the west.

The proposal would also include the provision of a public parking area with 20 parking spaces plus 6 disabled spaces that would be located to the front of the retail blocks to serve a mixed function of parking for the retail units, school drop off and pick up area for the new primary school and parking for the new community facility attached to the school. The demand for the spaces will vary throughout the week with the peak demand likely to be twice

a day in association with the school start and finish times.

The Highway Authority accept that it is not possible to provide parking spaces for the parents of the 420 children using the school. However this is a sustainably designed development that offers a regular bus service along Bridgwater Road and would provide a network of footpath and cycle ways throughout the allocated site which would link the dwellings to the school and local centre, offering direct and commodious alternatives to the private car. In addition, whilst the highway between the primary school and retail units would be car free the highway to the north would be wide enough to provide on street parking. The proposed car parking is therefore considered to be acceptable

Cycle and footpath links

There is detailed planning permission for the provision of a network of footpath and cycle links running north – south and west – east through the open spaces as well as the ability to use the on road routes. This proposal is similar to the approved network and includes an upgrade to the existing footpath which links Bridgwater Road to School Lane. The Parish Council have requested an additional link through a garage courtyard to the north with a widening of Dyers Brook to form a duck pond. The garage block is located to the rear of the existing dwellings with no direct overlooking from those properties and the developers have declined this suggestion as they consider that it would result in an unsafe link. As the footpath and cycle network has detailed planning permission and would not be overlooked I consider that it would be unreasonable to insist on such a link in this case.

4. Affordable Housing

This application lies within the Core Strategy site where there is a requirement to provide 25% affordable housing split 60% social rent and 40% shared ownership and as such the proposal would be subject to CiL payments and the provision of 25% affordable housing. The proposed is for x 1 bed flats and x 2 bed flats for social rent with an additional 2 social; rent and 2 shared ownership houses in the northern parcel of development.

The housing enabling officer is disappointed that there would be such a high number of of affordable units being proposed as flats . However the developer has suggested that when the affordable housing provision on the outline site is reduced to 25% affordable, flats located elsewhere on that site will be converted to open market so that, when the local plan site is considered overall, the number of flats is not considered to be unreasonable. A letter to confirm this proposal is awaited from the developer at which point the proposal will be considered to be acceptable

5. Landscape and Open Space

There are a number of existing hedgerows and trees throughout this site. Whilst it would normally be a priority to retain as much of these as possible,

in this case the need to improve public access and provide a permeable central area would result in the loss of much of these hedges. New hedging would be provided to the east of the dwellings at the north of the site and this will encourage new networks for wildlife to use. Between the retail blocks and former A38, the existing trees within the hedge would be retained and supplemented with additional trees in order to provide a row of trees to characterise that central cross over area.

Dyers Brook wildlife corridor runs along the western boundary of the site. Detailed planning permission has been granted for this area and these proposals replicate those details. The details include the provision of a 3m wide bitmac footway with a wildflower margin to the west and a grassed area to the east within which there would be shrub area and trees. In the southern area would be an orchard area that would provide an "orchard trail" which runs throughout the green infrastructure as suggested initially by the Parish Council.

There is also an open space running west – east to the north of the retail blocks. This would contain the landscaped footpath cycle link which would run along the northern boundary of the new primary school and link with the Dyers Brook corridor.

The Biodiversity and Landscape Officer comments have been accommodated within the amended details and the proposals are considered to be acceptable.

Conclusions

The proposed development provides the community and retail focus for the original local plan allocated site. It has a imposing building at its centre and it is considered that it would result in a local centre of a quality suitable to serve the existing and future residents of the surrounding area. The highway, footpath and cycleway proposals would cater for the combined uses in this area and have been designed to produce a high quality, accessible public realm. Whilst the parking provisions would not cater for the likely need at peak times (associated with the school times) the provision of safe access opportunities should enable car use to be reduced and walking or cycling to provide a realistic alternative. The green infrastructure in and around the site would enhance the area and create a place which people will want to use for leisure purposes.

Proposal considered to be acceptable.

In preparing this report the planning officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

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