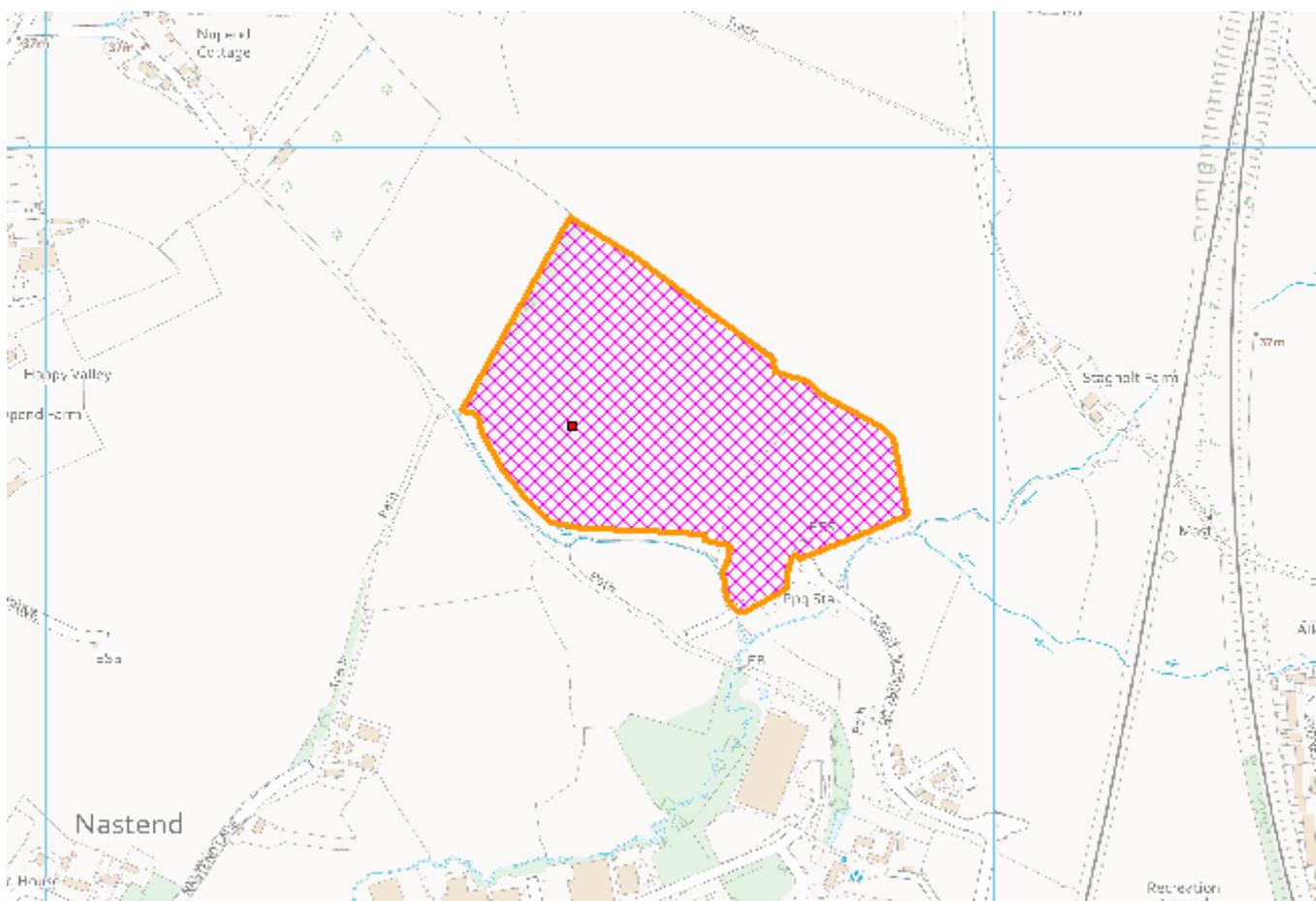




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Item No:	04
Application No.	S.19/2165/DISCON
Site No.	PP-08200765
Site Address	Parcel H16-20 Land West of Stonehouse, Grove Lane, Westend, Stonehouse
Town/Parish	Eastington Parish Council
Grid Reference	379553,206697
Application Type	Discharge of Condition
Proposal	Discharging condition 46 - Area masterplan on permitted application S.14/0810/OUT
Recommendation	Permission
Call in Request	Requested by DCC for all LWoS applications





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Applicant's Details	Robert Hitchins Limited The Manor, Boddington, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 0TJ
Agent's Details	Pegasus Planning Group Ltd First Floor, South Wing, Equinox North, Great Park Road, Almondsbury Bristol, BS32 4QL
Case Officer	Amy Robertson
Application Validated	08.10.2019
	CONSULTEES
Comments Received	Biodiversity Officer Contaminated Land Officer (E) Public Rights of Way Officer Development Coordination (E) Arboricultural Officer (E) Eastington Parish Council Stonehouse Town Council
Constraints	Consult area Key Wildlife Sites - Polygons Neighbourhood Plan Neighbourhood Plan Eastington Parish Council Standish Parish Council Affecting a Public Right of Way SAC SPA 7700m buffer
	OFFICER'S REPORT

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Layout, Design and Highways Structure
- Landscape and Ecology
- Public Open Space
- Residential amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site relates to parcels H16-H20 of outline permission S.14/0810/OUT for Land West of Stonehouse (Great Oldbury). The outline application was for a mixed-use development of up to 1350 houses, employment land, primary school, open space, landscaping etc. Parcels H16-20 form part of the residential areas within this wider site.

The parcels are located towards the north east of the outline site and form the most northerly point of the boundary.

The 5 parcels are contained within the 'northern edge' character area as outlined under the S.14/0810/OUT application.



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PROPOSAL

The application proposes the discharge of condition 46 of the S.14/0810/OUT application, which requires the submission and agreement of the area masterplan for this phase of the development.

An area masterplan has been prepared for the site and is submitted to discharge this condition. In accordance with the condition, it is only at a masterplan level and therefore only shows key features such as main arterial road networks and significant landscape areas. As per standard outline and reserved matters applications, the detailed design, layout and appearance will be subject to a reserved matters application.

REVISED DETAILS

Throughout the course of the application, the biodiversity specialist officer expressed concern with the proposed masterplan and the amount of vegetative landscaping proposed to the northern boundary. As such, revised reports and masterplans (P19-0013_06G received on 13th February 2020) have been received that seeks to address these issues. The biodiversity specialist is now happy with the proposed plans.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

The application site forms part of a wider allocated development with outline planning permission for: "A mixed use development comprising up to 1,350 dwellings and 9.3 hectares of employment land for use classes B1, B2 and B8; a mixed use local centre comprising use classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1, D2 and B1; primary school, open space and landscaping, parking and supporting infrastructure and utilities; and the creation of new vehicular accesses from Grove Lane, Oldends Lane and Brunel Way".

Parcels H16-20, as is the subject of this application, are designated and approved for residential development under the above application.

REPRESENTATIONS STATUTORY

Stonehouse Town Council:

It is disappointing that the revised Masterplan document does not address the Biodiversity Officer's comments regarding the need for a study of the impact of introducing roads which cut through the hedgerow on the North East boundary in order to access the potential site allocation PS19. Mitigation measures should be considered and made conditions of the discharge of condition 46.

The revised Masterplan document (February 2020, P19-0013_06G) is still vague regarding a proposal to increase density along the edge of the H16 land parcel in the light of the possible site allocation PS19. The planning authority should seek clarification as to the number and type of units now proposed in this area.

Any cycle routes, such as the one shown on DRWG P19-0013_02, should be off road and designed so they can link to Stonehouse and other settlements as the development is built.

It is requested that all the trees and plants introduced as part of the landscape strategy are sourced from within the UK both for biodiversity benefits and to minimise the spread of tree diseases.

It should be noted that this response by Stonehouse Town Council was received prior to revised documents/plans being submitted to support this application.



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Eastington Parish Council:

Comments as follows Existing footpath EEA7 (running along northern boundary and then leaving the site in an easterly direction) is located within the site and given a landscaped strip of grass in which to pass support in accordance with EP9 (Public rights of way and wildlife corridors). EPC would encourage replacement of the two stiles with kissing gates.

Existing footpath EEA10 (running along the western boundary) follows its original route except for a minor diversion at the southern end. The diversion is not within the site area but assuming that this route and diversion remains on grass as a rural path in accordance with EP9 (Public rights of way and wildlife corridors) no objection is raised and no objection should be raised to a diversion order in due course). Clarification is sought to ensure that that is what the developer means when it shows a white dashed line.

The existing bridleway EEA11 appears unaffected except for at the road access previously agreed from land parcel PS1 (primary school).

The proposed new pedestrian walking routes as marked in black lines should be generously sited so as not to impact or reduce the surrounding green corridors. Their current annotation implies impact on established hedges and needs clarification. For clarification as these are not formal PROW EPC would be happy to see these provided in a surfaced manner to aid wider circulation objectives.

It is noted that provision is made for two accesses to a potential extension to WOS are shown this should ensure provision to do as little damage to hedge row and existing trees as possible. In view of the ten metre level changes within the site (north to south) has consideration been given to water runoff and solar gain? It appears more likely to facilitate solar gain if streets on the eastern half of the site facilitated south facing windows and did not channel water so quickly through the site.

Revised comments:

Comments are submitted pursuant to amendments and removal of hedgerow on site EPC object to the manner in which development is now being intensified at land parcels H16, H19 and H20 given their sensitive green corridors as highlighted by the Ecology Officer. PS19a is not yet an allocated site in an adopted Local Plan and whilst a road network may need to be able to cope with additional traffic it should not be at the expense of a sensitive design close to existing countryside. EPC are particularly keen to safeguard existing field boundaries for their historic value, ecology and visual amenity EP9 (Public rights of way and wildlife corridors).

Existing footpath EEA7 (running along northern boundary and then leaving the site in an easterly direction) is located within the site and given a landscaped strip of grass in which to pass - support in accordance with EP9 (Public rights of way and wildlife corridors). EPC would encourage replacement of the two stiles with kissing gates.

Existing footpath EEA10 (running along the western boundary) follows its original route except for a minor diversion at the southern end. The diversion is not within the site area but assuming that this route and diversion remains on grass as a rural path in accordance with EP9 (Public rights of way and wildlife corridors) no objection is raised and no objection should be raised to a diversion order in due course). Clarification is sought to ensure that that is what the developer means when it shows a white dashed line.



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The existing bridleway EEA11 and its hedges appears from the proposals to be in tact except for at the road access previously agreed from land parcel PS1 (primary school). However, a hundred metre stretch of hedge was unnecessarily removed in December. This is shown in page 2 of the revised Masterplan document directly under the arrow and the removed part extends left towards the taller trees shown in that hedgerow.

The proposed new pedestrian walking routes as marked in black lines should be generously sited so as not to impact or reduce the surrounding green corridors. Their current annotation implies impact on established hedges and needs clarification. For clarification as these are not formal PROW EPC would be happy to see these provided in a surfaced manner to aid wider circulation objectives.

It is noted that provision is made for two accesses to a potential extension to WOS are shown - this should ensure provision to do as little damage to hedgerow and existing trees as possible. It is noted that SDC Ecologist is particularly concerned about the watercourse/hedge boundary at H19 and that this revision, being denser will likely impact on that more.

In view of the ten metre level changes within the site (north to south) has consideration been given to water runoff and solar gain? It appears more likely to facilitate solar gain if streets on the eastern half of the site facilitated south facing windows and did not channel water so quickly through the site.

Standish Parish Council:

Standish Parish Council supports the concerns of Eastington Parish Council and Stonehouse Town Council regarding footpaths, bridleways and new walking routes; protecting existing hedgerows and trees; and site layout in relation to water run-off and solar gain. The Parish Council shares the concern that the Masterplan document refers to increasing density along the edge of the H16 land parcel in the light of the possible site allocation PS19a and requests the planning authority to seek clarification as to the number and type of units now proposed in this area. The Parish Council strongly endorses the Biodiversity Officers concerns re the importance of retaining and enhancing the hedgerow networks as features within the landscape and essential wildlife corridors. There is a serious concern that the green corridor to the north east could be breached if and when PS19a, which is entirely within Standish Parish, is allocated for development. The Parish Council supports the need for a study of the impact of introducing roads which breach the north east hedgerow and consideration of suitable mitigation measures. The Parish Council supports the view that all new plants and trees should be sourced from within the UK. The Parish Council takes the view that any cycle routes should be off-road, with good linkage to existing and planned paths. They should be available to all non-motorised users and, as such, would be more appropriately named multi-user paths.



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SDC Senior Biodiversity Officer:

Revised comment:

It is proposed that a 3 metre natural buffer will be retained between the hedgerow to the northern boundary of the site and the proposed development works. This therefore is considered sufficient to enable the discharge of condition 46.

Initial comment:

Further information is required in order for Condition 46 to be discharged:

There are particular concerns relating to the boundary hedgerow to the north-east boundary of phase H19. Further ecological enhancements are required for the length of hedgerow to the north-eastern boundary with particular focus on increasing and buffering the north-eastern boundary hedge of phase H19. The submitted revised plans have not provided any further confidence that this section of hedgerow will be enhanced, from the plans presented it appears that this particular section of hedgerow will be further diluted with no reasonable buffers to ensure its future protection and ability to function as a green corridor. This feature currently acts as an important landscape link and wildlife corridor and should be retained and buffered to ensure it continue to function as such and to ensure that the proposals accord with local plan policy ES6 which states the following 'the council will support development that enhances existing sites and features of nature conservation value (including wildlife corridors).

Comments: It is important to ensure that the site boundaries to the NE are retained and adequately buffered to ensure that they are able to function as connecting features within the landscape for wildlife movement. The originally approved outline master plan did not indicate that roads would cut through the hedgerow to the NE boundary and as such great weight was given to ensuring that boundary be retained as a green corridor. However, it is understood that the fields to the north east are being promoted as site allocations in the review of the local plan and as such road connections will need to be incorporated in order to connect the sites for future development.

It must also be noted that phases H16-H20 represent some of the most important hedgerow networks for wildlife within the whole Land west of Stonehouse allocation and as such it is imperative that they be retained where possible and continue to function as corridors for wildlife movement within the greater landscape. After considering how the site sits within the landscape it is clear that the boundary to the NE of the proposed phases acts as an important link between natural features either side of the built development site. Furthermore, the already agreed and approved outline Master plan, Dwg H.0324_08-1F showed a more robust hedge line along the NE boundary of phase H19 than that proposed within the submitted Dwg P19-0013-02 which offers limited to no connectivity for wildlife, the revised plan P19-0013-06 Rev F, doesn't appear to offer any further confidence.

It is therefore recommended that the NE boundary at phase H19 be further enhanced for wildlife connectivity and buffered, with further investigation to be provided detailing how the impact of proposed roads cutting through these sections of hedgerow can be mitigated to reduce the impact on habitat connectivity. Furthermore, it is proposed that a new cycleway will be added to the NE boundary, by enhancing this area ecologically it will also contribute towards multifunctional green infrastructure and ultimately provide a more aesthetically pleasing area for future residents by breaking up the built form with high quality ecological planting.



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SDC Tree Officer:

The proposed master plan needs to be overlaid on the tree protection plan, so the applicant can demonstrate how the remaining trees and hedges will be adequately protected during the construction phase(s). The tree protection plan should be superimposed on a layout plan, based on the topographical survey and showing all hard surfacing and other existing structures within the (rot protection area) RPA. The plan should clearly indicate the precise location of protective barriers to be erected to form a construction exclusion zone around the retained trees. It should also show the extent and type of ground protection, and any additional physical measures, such as tree protection boxes, that will need to be installed to safeguard vulnerable sections of trees and their RPAs where construction activity cannot be fully or permanently excluded. These measures should be indicated on the plan, accompanied by descriptive text as required. Barrier and ground protection offsets should be dimensioned from existing fixed points on the site to enable accurate setting out. The position of barriers and any ground protection should be shown as a polygon representing the actual alignment of the protection. I shall comment further once the additional information has been submitted.

SDC Contaminated Land Officer: No comments relating to the application.

The Public Rights of Way Officer (GCC) was consulted and responded with no objections, but made an observation that consideration should be given to multi users of PROWs.

Can the developer please consider that any access over the open space is dedicated as a Public Right of Way; this protects the path by means of recording it on the Definitive Map of rights of way. I am happy to talk further about this. I would also recommend that horse riders are always taken into consideration in any development. They are vulnerable users and should also have access to multi user tracks. Again this can be done via bridleway dedications. Cycle tracks should not exclude vulnerable users such as horse riders and we suggest re-naming them as 'multi-user' paths. Hedgerows are important wildlife corridors and we would therefore object to any un-necessary removal of them but hugely support the planting of additional ones

Gloucestershire County Council Highways Department was consulted and provided response stating no objection.

The proposed Master plan layout is acceptable; however, I would remind the designers of any proposed detailed application to be submitted that all roads within the estate should be designed for a maximum speed of 20mph. Further, Manual for Streets Gloucester has now been withdrawn and a revised document being produced. This authority will no longer accept shared surfaces streets for adoption and these will consequently have to remain as private streets.

PUBLIC

At the time of writing, no representations from the public had been made.



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PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS - NATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

NATIONAL

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 is the development plan for Stroud District. Due weight should be given to policies in this plan according to the degree of consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF 2.2 is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF was revised in February 2019.

Full details of the NPPF is available to view at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Local

For the full content of the Stroud District Local Plan policies above together with the preamble text and associated supplementary planning documents are available to view on the Councils website

http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan_strat/newlocalplan/PLAIN_TEXT_Local%20Plan_Adopted_November_2015.pdf

The proposal should also be considered against the guidance laid out in SPG Stroud District Landscape Assessment.

Eastington Neighbourhood Development Plan & the adjacent Stonehouse NDP also form part of the development plan.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of development for this site was established under the outline application ref: S.14/0810/OUT with the land use parameters, building heights, character areas and indicative masterplan and green infrastructure considered. Therefore, the principle of development is not for consideration under this application.

This application seeks to address the requirement of condition 46 to provide more detailed Area Master Plan for parcels H16-20.

Condition 46 of the outline permission reads:

Prior to the submission of Reserved Matters on each particular phase, an Area Master Plan for that particular phase shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Each Reserved Matters application shall broadly accord with the approved accompanying Area Master Plan. The Area Master Plans shall include details of strategic landscaping within that part of the site, the landscaping along the boundaries of the site, open spaces, building frontages, road hierarchy, public realm, pedestrian/cycling movements, identify key buildings and plot views in/out.

Reason:

To provide a more detailed working of the Design Strategy December 2015 to allow a quality development, which is also sympathetic to the surrounding hamlets and landscape, in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 58-64 and Stroud District Local Plan (19th November 2015) Policy CP1.



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LAYOUT, DESIGN AND HIGHWAYS STRUCTURE

The layout shown under the illustrative masterplan sought to be discharged under this application is largely comparable to that shown under the outline approval. The total site area for all five parcels are designated and have been approved as residential development. These parcels are within the Northern edge character area of the Land West of Stonehouse (Great Oldbury) development.

With the site, three character areas are indicated under the masterplan; primary street frontage along the spine road, core housing areas and open space edge frontage. Feature housing will be located at prominent locations within the site, on key corners and bends within the development in order to create a better sense of place, build character and to create presence within the street scenes.

A number of spine roads are proposed within the site, with secondary streets leading off these roads. Residential dwellings will be served off the road network with some units having direct access onto the primary/secondary streets, with some units being served off private drives. Density of the proposed units is to follow a more urban character, with density decreasing the further from the main spine roads the units are. The hierarchy of the streets outlines how this will be achieved with the space and planting between buildings. The proposed road network on site is considered to be appropriate in relation to the wider strategic layout into the wider network.

The proposal does look to increase the density of the some of the residential areas particularly to towards the northern boundary with the introduction of two primary streets going north. With these the developer is looking to the Local Plan Review extension site to the north. Whilst it has to be acknowledged that there is still significant way to go for this potential allocation it is difficult to resist these areas of future proofing in this masterplan stage. Whilst the Parish's concerns are noted, the main landscaping features are retained and it is not evident that the increase will cause significant wider harm.

Footpath and pedestrian links are maintained with routes being provided along the green infrastructure. In addition to the vehicle speeds will be kept low on the residential areas a cycle route off the main vehicle carriage way has been identified. As highlighted by the Public Rights of Way Officer, the cycle routes proposed should not exclude vulnerable users such as horse riders and suggest they are re-named as 'multi-user' paths. Further discussions and input from GCC regarding this and the registration of paths and open space on the Definitive Map of rights of way can take place during the dedication process. It is therefore considered that the masterplan for the scheme provides suitable provision for cyclist, pedestrians and other users to connect with the wider provision and to nearby destinations.

The overall indicative layout provided under this masterplan is considered acceptable by way of it providing opportunity to create character and sense of place when the finer detail is submitted under the reserved matters application.



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LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY

The proposed application site is currently undeveloped land and therefore being subject to a large scale mixed-use development will be the subject to a fair amount of visual change. The proposed illustrative landscaping plan shows the key features proposed under this discharge of condition application. Notably, there is a significant amount of vegetation to be retained to the north western boundary of the site, and then further planting along the northern boundary.

Throughout the course of the application, it was considered that the vegetation planting and retention along the northern element of the site was of specific importance and should be both protected and enhanced further in order to increase the mitigating impact, as well as promoting significant environmental benefits.

As the site is currently undeveloped it has an expansive amount of established vegetation in situ particularly along the field hedge boundaries which are important to protect. Vegetation and existing hedgerows in this location have been retained where possible in order to protect the species and habitats. These field boundaries are sensitive and important wildlife corridors and whilst there are some gaps to facilitate the approved development and connections these have been kept to a minimum.

Over the course of the application, an increase in vegetative boundary towards the northern boundary of the site has been requested by the Biodiversity Officer, and revisions to this boundary has been received with a landscape hedgerow buffer of a minimum 3m in width to the development has been negotiated with the agent. Whilst pressure has been applied this is constrained by the approved outline permission and the approved land use parameters and green infrastructure.

This buffer area will be maintained outside the householder gardens to avoid it be degraded and will form part of the wider landscaping features. At the thinnest part of the boundary adjacent to H19, the existing hedge is also outside the red line so would be in addition to the proposed 3m buffer. It is therefore considered that given the constraints of the outline permission this is an acceptable provision to protect the ecological habitat within this area, as well as providing an element of landscaping along the boundary of the development.

The main arterial roads are proposed to be tree lined which encourages greater ecological enhancements to areas of the site that will be primarily denser development. These connect with the nodal/green points through the development and to the more strategic green infrastructure of the wider scheme. The full details of the landscaping scheme and tree protection will be required by the more detailed reserved matters and other discharge of conditions.

Whilst the land to the north of this site has been initially identified as a strategic site for potential residential development under the Local Plan Review process, this plan is not at such an advanced stage as to be certain. As such, it is considered that providing substantial landscaping and planting to the northern boundary of the site remains important and will protect the landscape and biodiversity. Should further development occur with the development to the north of this application site coming forward, further additional landscaping buffer width on this potential allocation will be required to maximise the opportunity for connectivity and functionality of this boundary as a wildlife corridor. The agent has offer reassurance regarding



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this matter and whilst it can be highlighted as a minimum requirement for any potential allocation to the north this would be outside the scope of this application.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Whilst public open space areas are provided throughout and connected to the wider strategic development, within this application area, the main informal open space is provided towards the north west of the site in accordance with the approved masterplan. An area of landscaping, retained vegetation and meandering footpaths are proposed, and will provide areas for future residents to walk and enjoy. Formal green 'pocket parks' are also proposed throughout the development.

The public open space elements of this area masterplan application therefore accord with the outline masterplan, as well as the policies contained within the SDC Local Plan.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

The purpose of this application is not to put forward individual plot locations and therefore a full assessment of residential amenity will be withheld for the Reserved Matters stage. However, it is considered that the parcels of land will be able to cater for the required number of residential units proposed and will not adversely affect existing residents which are mainly set away from these parcels.

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed area masterplan is in general accordance to the approved wider masterplan under application ref: S.14/0810/OUT. In the absence of any adverse material considerations, it is considered that the submitted mini area masterplan required by condition 46 is acceptable.

The reserved matters for these parcels will provide the detailed information in accordance with the approved masterplan. It is therefore recommended that this discharge of condition application is approved.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In compiling this recommendation, we have given full consideration to all aspects of the Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to the applicant and/or the occupiers of any neighbouring or affected properties. In particular regard has been had to Article 8 of the ECHR (Right to Respect for private and family life) and the requirement to ensure that any interference with the right in this Article is both permissible and proportionate. On analysing the issues raised by the application no particular matters, other than those referred to in this report, warranted any different action to that recommended.