



## Update for Report to Strategic Planning Committee

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<b>Application Number:</b>	19/00148/AOP
<b>Proposal:</b>	Outline Planning Application (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for a residential development of up to 420 dwellings (including affordable housing), and associated infrastructure including provision of open space (including formal playspace); car parking; new pedestrian and cycle linkages; landscaping and drainage works (to include SuDS attenuation) and two new accesses off Osier Way and one new access off Gawcott Road. Includes demolition of the existing pigsty.
<b>Site Location:</b>	Land off Osier Way, East Of Gawcott Road And South Of Buckingham Ring Road Buckingham Buckinghamshire
<b>Applicant:</b>	Wates Developments Ltd
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Philippa Jarvis
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	Buckingham West
<b>Parish-Town Council:</b>	Buckingham Town Council and Gawcott Parish Council
<b>Date valid application received:</b>	15 January 2019
<b>Statutory determination date:</b>	24 March 2021

The following sections Recommendation and Summary and Recommendation have been subject to minor updates since the publication of the agenda. Updates has been made to the Recommendation and to paragraphs 1.3, 1.5, 1.12 and 1.14. For convenience and ease of understanding the entire sections has been reproduced to replace the existing sections within the report.

### Recommendation

The recommendation is that the application be deferred and delegated to the Director of Planning and Environment for APPROVAL subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 agreement to secure the matters set out below, with conditions as considered appropriate by Officers, or if these are not achieved for the application to be refused:-

- Provision of a minimum of 35% on-site affordable housing (and related controls – tenure mix, pepper potting, timing of delivery etc)

- Provision of custom / self-build (5% to be negotiated depending on evidence of demand)
- Provision of on-site public open space and its future maintenance / management
- Provision and future maintenance / management of off-site biodiversity enhancement
- maintenance / management scheme for SuDS in perpetuity,
- Provision of various off-site highway works and sustainable access improvements
- Financial contributions towards off-site highway works (TRO) and monitoring of Travel Plan
- financial contribution towards the provision of new and/or enhanced bus infrastructure and services or community transport to serve the site
- financial contribution towards primary, secondary and special needs education provision
- financial contribution towards off-site sport & leisure facilities as necessary in accordance with the SPD and accompanying Ready Reckoner

## **1. Summary & Recommendation/ Reason for Planning Committee Consideration**

- 1.1. The application seeks outline permission with only access to be determined at this stage for a development of up to 420 dwellings on a large site of just over 23 hectares located in open countryside to the south-west of the town. It is bounded by Osier Way and various commercial premises and the A421 by pass along its north-eastern boundaries, Gawcott Road to the west and open countryside to the south and south-east. The Buckingham Industrial Park (key employment site) lies to the east, to the south of which is the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan (BNDP) site Q allocated for 10 hectares of employment development. The site lies just beyond the identified boundary settlement area (BSA).
- 1.2. The application site is VALP allocation site BUC046 which is one of two allocations for Buckingham which comprise the strategic allocation for the town in accordance with policy D2. The allocation which relates to a site of 22.7 ha. is allocated for 420 dwellings and green infrastructure / landscape buffer to the southern boundary with a number of criteria to be satisfied.
- 1.3. The first key issue relates to the principle of development on this site. Policy BUC046 is now the most up to date policy of the development plan and takes precedence over the relevant policies of the Buckingham Neighbourhood Development Plan (BNDP). Policy HP1 of the BNDP states that development will be supported within the BSA for new housing at the sites set out in the accompanying table. The table identifies 5 sites providing a total of 617 dwellings with a reserve site of 300 dwellings. The proposed development would not be in accordance with this policy as it is not one of the identified sites within the BSA. However, the recently adopted VALP is the most up to date plan and as the Local Plan contains the strategic policies for the plan area. The relevant VALP policy for this site is BUC046 is a strategic policy which allocates the site for residential development. As such for both these reasons this policy carries greater weight in the

decision-making process. The proposal has been assessed against this strategic policy and found to be in accordance. The principle of residential development of this site is therefore acceptable.

- 1.4. The proposal would deliver both market and affordable housing, with a proportion of self / custom build according to demand, through the S106 agreement. A good mix of size and type of dwellings would be provided and overall the proposal would make a significant contribution to housing supply in the area. The Local Planning Authority can currently demonstrate a five year supply of housing, albeit this site is relied on as part of that deliverable supply.
- 1.5. Within the BNDP the site lies in the open countryside and is part of the open land surrounding the built-up area. The proposed residential development will inevitably result in the loss of its current open, natural appearance and intrinsic character and beauty. However, the impacts would be mainly localised in nature and would be mitigated to a degree by the proposed strategic landscaping that would be provided around the site boundaries and within the site itself, including in particular the open space buffer with tree planting to be provided along the southern boundary. However, this has to be considered within the context of this being an allocated housing site. The specific housing policy requires a landscape led approach which this site has adopted and was accompanied by a LVIA and a landscape mitigation scheme that reduces wider landscape and visual impact upon the southern boundaries of the site. As such the proposal has an acknowledged impact on the landscape character but is in accordance with the landscape requirements of policy BUC046.
- 1.6. The Council and the applicants have spent considerable time negotiating the highway and transport impacts and the appropriate mitigation requirements. The main impacts would be on the A421 and its junctions within the vicinity of the site. However, it has been agreed that these can be mitigated through various junction improvements together with a commensurate contribution to the Buckingham Transport Strategy to offset the impacts on the A421/Tesco roundabout through broader measures. With these mitigation measures in place, it is concluded that there will not be severe impacts on the highway network. The site would be served by three new access points, two along Osier Way and one off Gawcott Road. Appropriate visibility splays can be achieved when taking into account the reduction in speed limit that will be sought along the Gawcott Road via a Traffic Regulation Order, to which a contribution will be sought via a S106.
- 1.7. In terms of sustainable transport links, it is recognised that the site is not located in close proximity to facilities in the town centre and in particular, the primary school that is intended to mainly serve the development as that is the only one that has the capacity to extend to accommodate the new pupils. However, in terms of some facilities the site is well located, for instance the Aldi superstore at the junction of Osier Way and the A421, local employment areas and also within reasonable walking distance of the leisure centre and secondary schools. New combined footway / cycleways will be provided, connecting through the site to link with improved footways and cycleways beyond the site towards

the town centre, to encourage the use of sustainable modes. However, existing bus stops are beyond the 400m 'walkable' distance therefore a new bus stop along the A421 for the X5 service will be provided. In addition, the development will incorporate a spine road sufficient to accommodate a bus which, together with a contribution towards the provision of a bus service to serve the site or to enable an existing service to be re-directed through it, will ensure that the site is served by public transport.

- 1.8. The majority of the site is located in flood zone 1 though some areas of localised groundwater flooding are known to occur including along the ordinary watercourse that runs through the centre of the site. The LLFA initially raised concerns that the FRA and associated drainage information did not fully address possible flooding risks, particularly in relation to detailed modelling and ground water flooding risks. Additional information was sought that demonstrates that flood risk can be mitigated and that the flooding issues that occur can be dealt with such as to result in an overall improvement to the current situation. A suitable fully detailed surface water drainage scheme will be required to provide on-site attenuation in accordance with SuDS measures and ensure that there will be no risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 1.9. The proposal will result in the loss of some trees to facilitate accesses and drainage features but there is scope to provide significant new planting to maintain natural capital and contribute to habitat creation. No veteran or ancient trees, nor those of high landscape or biodiversity value are to be removed. Detailed negotiations have secured appropriate net biodiversity gains to include off site mitigation and the applicant has confirmed that the national licence approach will be followed to ensure appropriate mitigation of any impacts on protected species. The proposal will secure good levels of green infrastructure with adequate levels of on-site formal and informal areas, including a NEAP and three LEAPs and overall, it has been demonstrated that a net gain will be achieved.
- 1.10. As mentioned above, the site comprises VALP allocation (BUC046) which requires a landscape led approach and a development layout that is based on a design code, which can be secured via condition. The development is also accompanied by a Transport Assessment and FRA which demonstrate that access, transport and flood risk impacts will be acceptable and that the outline surface water strategy will secure 'design for exceedance' and that the necessary upgrade to sewerage infrastructure can be provided.
- 1.11. No other adverse environmental impacts are envisaged, and whilst there would be impacts on the adjoining residential properties, these would not be significantly harmful and would be outweighed by the public benefits of the development. In addition, commensurate contributions would be secured via S106 to mitigate the impact of the development on local infrastructure.
- 1.12. It is concluded that overall, the principle of the proposal would accord with the most up to date part of the development plan, that is policy BUC046 which allocates the site for residential development. It is accepted that the change from greenfield to housing would be significant for this site and its surrounding landscape. However, this has to be

considered within the context of the site being an allocated housing site. The proposal has been developed through a landscape led approach and has been assessed in accordance with the specific criteria within BUC046 and has been found to have an acceptable impact in accordance with the established criteria. Overall, given that the VALP is the most up to date plan and policy BUC046 is a strategic policy and for both these reasons carries greater weight in the decision making process than the older BNDP policy HP1 it is concluded that the proposal would, subject to necessary conditions and obligations, comply with other relevant policies of the development plan.

1.13.NPPF paragraph 11 states that in the above circumstances, planning permission should be granted without delay, though it will be necessary to ensure that a satisfactory S106 agreement is completed first. Having regard to S38(6) of the PCPA, it is concluded that there are no material considerations that indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development plan.

1.14.Therefore, it is recommended that the application be deferred and delegated to the Director of Planning and Environment for APPROVAL subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 agreement to secure the matters as detailed above, with conditions as considered appropriate by Officers, or if these are not achieved for the application to be refused.

**Paragraph 5.36** requires the following minor updates:

The Council's Landscape Officer notes that the site is rural in character and appears part of the landscape context apparent further south. It is agreed that the change from greenfield to housing would be significant for this site and its surrounding landscape, bringing the urban edge further south past existing development into open countryside. There is a risk that it would appear separate from the existing residential areas. In terms of visual impact, it is noted that views would be experienced from Gawcott Road and to an extent, from the PRoW to the south. Residents along Gawcott Road will also experience some adverse visual impacts. Lighting impacts are not assessed and a condition to require further details is considered appropriate. It is concluded that the landscape strategy proposals would not be able to fully mitigate the high impact on landscape character. However, this needs to be considered in the context of this being an allocated housing site delivering the strategic growth for the plan. The specific housing policy requires a landscape led approach which this **site** has adopted and was accompanied by a LVIA and a landscape mitigation scheme that reduces wider landscape and visual impact upon the southern boundaries of the site. As ~~seeks~~ **such** the proposal has an acknowledged impact on the landscape character but is in accordance with the ~~requirements of~~ landscape requirements of policy BUC046.