
Planning Statement

A hybrid planning application for a proposed mixed use development to the west of Hemel Hempstead, pursuant to Policy LA3 of the adopted Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2017) to provide for up to 1100 dwellings (with up to 40% affordable housing), comprising full planning proposals for 350 dwellings and outline planning proposals (including means of access) for 750 dwellings.

West Hemel Hempstead

December 2018

Planning Statement

West Hemel Hempstead



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Savills UK Ltd is submitting this planning application on behalf of BDW Trading Ltd (Barratt David Wilson), Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd, Stimpsons and Bletsoes (hereafter referred to as the Applicant) in relation to the development of land known as West Hemel Hempstead.
- 1.2. The main purpose of this Planning Statement is to:
- describe the proposed development, the site and the surrounding area;
 - set out the planning context for the site and its development;
 - demonstrate the conformity of the proposal with relevant planning policy guidance;
 - review the technical surveys underpinning the proposal, and
 - consider the main planning issues supporting the proposed development.

The Planning Application

- 1.3. The planning application is submitted in hybrid form which seeks to establish the principle of development across the entire site, and achieve planning consent for all detailed elements for a first phase. The application description is as follows:
- A hybrid planning application for a proposed mixed use development to the west of Hemel Hempstead, pursuant to Policy LA3 of the adopted Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2017) to provide for up to 1100 dwellings (with up to 40% affordable housing), comprising full planning proposals for 350 dwellings and outline planning proposals (including means of access) for 750 dwellings.*
- 1.4. Further details of the proposed development are within Section 5 of the Planning Statement
- 1.5. The application is deemed to be an EIA development and is therefore supported by a full Environmental Statement. Which covers the following matters:
- Transport and Access;
 - Air Quality;
 - Noise;
 - Drainage and Flood Risk;
 - Biodiversity;
 - Landscape and Visual Impact;
 - Cultural Heritage; and
 - Socio-Economic Effects
- 1.6. The planning application is supported by various reports and a number of plans for approval, as well as illustrative plans and drawings to inform the determination but not proposed to be approved drawings. These are listed within the Appendix to the application Cover Letter.

2. Application Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1. The Application Site measures 51.8ha (128 acres) in area and is roughly rectangular in shape.
- 2.2. The Site is currently in agricultural use comprising fields which are predominantly arable and is subdivided by hedgerows, hedgerow trees and fences. None of the site is subject to any statutory landscape designations. The application site and its character are described in detail within the Landscape and Visual Impact chapter of the accompanying Environmental Statement and DAS.
- 2.3. The Site is located on the western edge of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, directly abutting the neighbourhoods of Warner's End and Chaulden. The Site is located circa 2.5km from the Town Centre of Hemel Hempstead. The Town Centre of Hemel Hempstead is accessible from the Site via a number of sustainable means including by bus and cycling. Full details of the accessibility of the Site is within the Transport Assessment and Transport and Access Chapter of the Environmental Statement. Hemel Hempstead also contains a train station which is located circa 2km from the Site. The station offers frequent Southern and London Northwestern services to London Euston, as well as other key regional centres such as Milton Keynes and Northampton.
- 2.4. Hemel Hempstead is the largest and most sustainable settlement in Dacorum Borough and the Town Centre contains a wide range of facilities and services, as stated within the Settlement Hierarchy, within the adopted Dacorum Borough Core Strategy 2013. The continuing focus on the investment in, and regeneration of, Hemel Hempstead is also the discussed in the Council's Single Local Plan Issues and Options document. As discussed later in this Planning Statement the Site is allocated for residential development by the Council under reference LA3.

3. Planning History

- 3.1. There have been no planning applications on the Site of relevance to the determination of this application.
- 3.2. The Site is the subject of an allocation within the Adopted Site Allocations DPD (July 2017). The site has also been subject to a Masterplan produced by the Council, which relates to the provisions within the aforementioned planning policy document. Full discussion of relevant planning policy documents and other material considerations is within Section 6 of this Planning Statement.

4. Pre-Application Consultation

Introduction

- 4.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes consultation before and after a planning application is submitted and at key stages when preparing the Local Plan and other planning policy documents.
- 4.2. Dacorum Borough Council' Statement of Community Involvement was Adopted in July 2016. This outlines the Council's standards for involving the community in the planning process and relates to both emerging planning policy and the preparation and determination of planning applications. This demonstrates the Council's accordance with the provisions of national policy with regard to public consultation. Relevant provisions within the Statement of Community Involvement and the application's conformity with them are referenced below.

Policy

- 4.3. The safeguarding and subsequent allocation of the Site for residential development through the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD has been the subject of a substantial level of public consultation over a number of years.
- 4.4. In the case of both of these documents, the respective Inspectors concluded that the consultation exercises undertaken by the Council were adequate. Indeed the Inspector for the Site Allocations DPD Examination in Public stated in their Inspector's Report:

A number of concerns were raised regarding the public consultation undertaken. However I am satisfied that the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement have been met and that the statutory consultation has been undertaken in accordance with the relevant Regulations.

EIA Scoping Opinion

- 4.5. Given the scale of the development, the Applicant accepted that this would constitute EIA development and as such did not submit a formal EIA Screening Opinion Request during the preparation of this application.
- 4.6. The Applicant submitted an EIA Scoping Opinion Request on 31 May 2016 which sought the views of the Council as to the environmental and technical disciplines to be considered within an Environmental Statement associated with a planning application for the site. This request for advice was predicated on a development of up to 1,000 homes. Advice was received from the Council in August 2016.
- 4.7. The Applicant sought a revised Scoping Opinion via a request sent on 9 January 2017. This sought the Council's view on matters to be considered as part of an Environmental Statement on the basis of an application for up to 1,100 dwellings. The Council duly responded on 31 March 2017, with the matters to be considered remaining the same.

- 4.8. All of the matters raised by the Council for inclusion within the Environmental Statement have been accommodated in the final submission document within the relevant chapters. These are listed within Section 1 of this Planning Statement.

Pre-Application Advice

- 4.9. In terms of the submission of a planning application, the Council encourages Applicants to seek pre-application advice from Council Officers in order to inform proposals, as part of their Statement of Community Involvement.
- 4.10. The Applicant and their representatives have met with Dacorum Borough Council Officers and Hertfordshire County Council Officers on a number of occasions as part of pre-application discussions during 2016 and 2017.
- 4.11. The Applicant entered into a Planning Performance Agreement in order to identify the levels of information required to inform an application, and identify an acceptable form of development. This was signed in May 2017.
- 4.12. These meetings were used as an opportunity to present development proposals to relevant officers of Dacorum Borough and Hertfordshire County Council and for them to present feedback on their views of the proposal prior to the finalisation of the planning application.

Public Consultation

- 4.13. Where proposals are large scale and likely to impact on an area, the Council's Statement of Community Involvement encourages applicants to engage directly with the local community prior to the submission of a planning application.
- 4.14. A pre-application consultation exhibition took place on 6 February 2017 at John F Kennedy Catholic High School, with representatives of the Applicant present in order to assist members of the public and elected Members of the Council who were in attendance. This event was publicised by the circulation of 2,215 newsletters to houses in the locality of the site. The extent of circulation is shown on page 7 of the accompanying Statement of Community Involvement. Those who did attend were given until 13 February 2017 in order to submit their comments on the proposals, but could also do this at the event itself.
- 4.15. 260 members of the public signed in to register their attendance and 65 feedback forms were received either at the venue, or later via post. The key concerns raised are as follows:
- transport concerns;
 - gypsy and traveller issues;
 - housing numbers; and
 - provision of local services.



- 4.16. The detail of these concerns and the Applicant's response to them are stated within the accompanying Statement of Community Engagement.
- 4.17. A further public consultation event took place on 27 June 2017 at the same location. This was again publicised by the circulation of newsletters to the same addressee previously targeted. The number of attendees was reduced from the first event at 108 and 28 feedback forms were received. Issues raised remained largely constant as traffic and the gypsy and traveller site were most frequently raised. Again the Applicant's response to these concerns is detailed within the Statement of Community Engagement.
- 4.18. In addition to public exhibitions the Applicant set up a consultation website at www.westhemel.co.uk and had a free phone number for information. The website contained information and plans explaining the proposals as well as an electronic feedback form. The website was visited by 1,200 people, who viewed on average 3.47 pages per visit.
- 4.19. Full details of the consultation event and its outcomes are contained within the Statement of Community Engagement, prepared by Meeting Place Communications and submitted as part of this planning application.

5. Proposed Development

- 5.1. The application is proposing the development of up to 1,100 new dwellings (including affordable housing), land for a seven pitch gypsy and traveller site, together with landscaping, roads footpaths and cycleways, ecological mitigation, sustainable drainage systems, earthworks, public open space, one Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP), two Locally Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) and a Community Games Area (CGA), together with a Community Hub. The Community Hub comprises:
- a site for a primary school and associated nursery with playing fields on a site of up to 2.1 hectares (including CGA);
 - specialist accommodation for the elderly with up to 70 rooms (C2 or C3);
 - a up to 450 sq m convenience store (A1);
 - three up to 100 sq m retail units (A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5);
 - a community facility of up to 175 sq m (D1);
 - a medical facility or local retail use of up to 100 sq m (A1, C3 and D1);
 - a children's' day nursery of up to 450 sq m (D1); and
 - a shared car park.
- 5.2. As previously stated the application is hybrid in nature and the detailed Phase One element covers 15.45 hectares (38.17 acres) of the total application site. This full application for Phase One comprises the following elements:
- a new vehicular access to Long Chaulden
 - a new vehicular access extension from The Avenue
 - an emergency access to Chaulden Lane
 - a new vehicular access from Chaulden Lane serving only a seven pitch gypsy and traveller site and access to a foul drainage pumping station
 - a foul drainage pumping station to Chaulden Lane and the associated connecting sewer.
 - the creation of the first phase of 350 new dwellings and associated landscaping (including affordable housing); together with associated public open space and associated landscaping, roads, footpaths and cycleways, ecological mitigation, sustainable drainage systems, earthworks, and one associated Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP).
- 5.3. The proposals have been formulated based on a thorough understanding of the technical constraints of the site, as well as its character, and context. The proposals also reference the requirement of relevant policies of the Development Plan, and other materials considerations, as discussed further in sections 6 and 7 of this Planning Statement.
- 5.4. Where appropriate the proposals have taken account of responses to the public consultation exercise that have been received and are set out within the Statement of Community Engagement.

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5.5. In terms of the mix of housing being proposed, the scheme as a whole will incorporate a mix of housing accommodating both smaller and larger households and family homes based on the most up to date evidence of housing need available at that time and site specific circumstances.

5.6. Phase 1 incorporates the following housing mix:

Table 1 – Phase 1 Housing Mix

Dwelling Type	Number of Bedrooms	Quantum
Market		
Flat	2	12
House	2	21
House	3	98
House	4	92
House	5	5
Affordable		
Flat	1	9
Flat	2	33
House	2	21
House	3	53
House	4	6
Total		
		350

6. Planning Policy Framework

Introduction

- 6.1. The provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Planning Act 1990, in particular, Section 38(6) requires that the submitted planning application be considered against the policies of the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan documents relevant to the determination of this application are the adopted Core Strategy (2013), the Site Allocations DPD (July 2017) and the saved policies of the adopted Local Plan 1991-2011 (2004). Material considerations comprise National Planning Policy and Guidance, the Local Allocation LA3 West Hemel Hempstead Master Plan, emerging Dacorum Single Local Plan and other relevant additional planning guidance.
- 6.2. The above documents will be reviewed in turn below.

Development Plan

Core Strategy 2013

- 6.3. The Dacorum Borough Core Strategy was adopted in September 2013 and covers the period to 2031.
- 6.4. The strategic objectives of the Core Strategy include promoting Hemel Hempstead as the focus within the Borough for homes, jobs and strategic services thus reinforcing the role of neighbourhoods in the town (Policy CS1). Within the Borough's settlement hierarchy, Hemel Hempstead is specifically identified as the main centre for development and change. In keeping with this spatial strategy, the Core Strategy makes provision for 10,750 dwellings between 2006 and 2031, with 8,800 of these being provided within Hemel Hempstead.
- 6.5. The proposals map indicates that the Application Site is currently deemed to be a part of the Green Belt (Policy CS5). However, the provisions of Policy CS5 state that this policy will no longer apply when the Application Site is allocated for development in the complementary Site Allocations DPD. This allocation has subsequently been adopted and the consideration of the site within the Site Allocations DPD is considered further later in this section of the Planning Statement.
- 6.6. The provisions of Policy CS2(B) provides the basis for extending existing settlements. This is subject to meeting a prescribed list of criteria and these include the following:
- allowing good transport connections (see Policy CS8);
 - having full regard to environmental assets, constraints and opportunities;
 - ensuring the most effective use of land;
 - respecting local character and landscape context;
 - according with the approach to urban structure (see Policy CS4); and
 - complying with Policy CS35 regarding infrastructure delivery and phasing.
- 6.7. The provisions of Policy CS3 seek to manage selected development sites so that they come forward from 2021 onwards. The Application site is listed within Table 9, which is referenced within Policy CS3 and is therefore safeguarded for residential development.

- 6.8. The Core Strategy specifically identifies the Application Site as a housing allocation (LA3) to be delivered through the adopted Site Allocations DPD, with the timescale for the site's release from the Green Belt to be specified within that document. The Local Allocations table for LA3 states that the site will deliver new homes together with a shop, doctors surgery and additional social and community provision. The Core Strategy identifies a number of principles for the development, however, these have since been incorporated within, or superseded by, the adopted Site Allocations DPD which considers allocation sites in more detail.
- 6.9. Further to site specific considerations relating to housing, the Core Strategy details general housing related policies of relevance. These are discussed below.
- 6.10. CS18 – Mix of Housing states that new housing development will provide for a choice of homes, including a range of housing types, sizes and tenures, as well as housing for those with special needs and policy compliant levels of affordable housing. The policy goes on to state that the mix and type of housing within development will be guided by evidence such as Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) and other site-specific considerations.
- 6.11. The level of affordable housing specified for new residential developments is outlined within CS19 - Affordable Housing. This states that on sites of, or larger than 0.3 hectares, or 10 dwellings in Hemel Hempstead 35% of new dwellings provided should be affordable. However, this is subject to viability matters and the identification of identified need. A minimum of 75% of the affordable housing should be affordable rent. It should be noted that this does not correspond and is in conflict with the affordable housing requirement set out within the LA3 Master Plan and Site Allocation DPD. This conflict and the views of the housing officer expressed during pre-application discussions are stated later in this Planning Statement.
- 6.12. CS22 – New Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers states that the target for new pitches will be set by the most recent Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment agreed by the Council and that this will be met by the provision and management of new sites. The policy also set requirements for new provision, as below:
- i. distributed in a dispersed pattern around settlements;
 - ii. located close to facilities;
 - iii. of varying sizes, not normally exceeding a site capacity of 15 pitches;
 - iv. planned to allow for part occupation initially, allowing subsequent growth to full site capacity; and
 - v. designed to a high standard with:
 - a. an open frontage similar to other forms of housing; and
 - b. landscaping or other physical features to provide an appropriate setting and relationship to existing residential areas.
- 6.13. Policy CS23 – Social Infrastructure relates to the provision of social infrastructure within Dacorum. The explanatory text of this policy outlines that this infrastructure includes education, health, community and leisure facilities. The policy states that new developments will be expected to contribute towards the provision of community infrastructure. In the case of larger developments this could be in terms of financial contributions towards off-site provision and land and/or buildings on site to accommodate required facilities.

- 6.14. The requirement for new development to provide contributions towards the provision of on-site, local and strategic infrastructure required to support the development is set by Policy CS35 – Infrastructure and Developer Contributions. The policy outlines that contributions will be required unless existing capacity in relevant infrastructure exists and financial contributions will be used in accordance with needs set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This policy has some overlap with the Community Infrastructure Levy, which has been adopted by the Council and is discussed later in this section of the Planning Statement but will not be sought for development on this site (see paragraph 6.26 of this Planning Statement).
- 6.15. A review of the Core Strategy identifies other technical policies which are deemed to be relevant and are considered in Section 7 of this Statement. These include the following.
- Policy CS8 Sustainable Transport
 - Policy CS9 Management of Roads
 - Policy CS10 Quality of Settlement Design
 - Policy CS11 Quality of Neighbourhood Design
 - Policy CS12 Quality of Site Design
 - Policy CS13 Quality of the Public Realm
 - Policy CS25 Landscape Character
 - Policy CS26 Green Infrastructure
 - Policy CS27 Quality of the Historic Environment
 - Policy CS28 Carbon Emission Reductions
 - Policy CS29 Sustainable Design and Construction
 - Policy CS32 Air, Soil and Water Quality

Site Allocations DPD

- 6.16. As referenced within the Core Strategy, the Council has published a Site Allocations DPD. This was formally Adopted by the Council on 12 July 2017.
- 6.17. The Site Allocations DPD adds further detail to the allocation of the Site, and other Local Allocations, including setting the exact boundaries, updating the housing numbers to be accommodated and setting out when the site will be the subject of development delivery.
- 6.18. The Core Strategy states that the majority of Local Allocations, including LA3 should only come forward after 2021, unless it could be demonstrated that circumstances means that this should be moved forward. However, following representations heard during the Examination in Public (EiP), the adopted Site Allocations DPD makes clear that a number of allocations, including LA3 should be brought forward as soon as practicable in order to contribution towards the housing supply, as well as provision of land for Gypsy and Traveller pitches, within the Council's 5 year housing land supply.
- 6.19. Policy SA8 – Local Allocations outlines key considerations for the delivery of allocations LA1 to LA6, through the Site Allocations DPD. Following from SA8, Policy LA3 details the following deliverables for the site:
- approximately 900 new homes;
 - shop, doctors surgery, and additional social and community provision, including a new primary school;
 - a traveller site of 7 pitches;

- new open space/playing fields;
- extension of Shrubhill Common Nature Reserve and the creation of wider green infrastructure links.

6.20. While it is stated that the capacity of the site is estimated as 900 homes, the Site Allocations DPD is clear at Paragraph 6.21 that net capacity figures should not be seen as a maximum, and the true capacity of sites will be ascertained through the planning application process.

6.21. The policy also provides a vision for the development and a series of key development principles concerning; homes, community, focus, designs, open space, access to services, road, utilities and countryside.

6.22. The Site Allocations DPD Policy LA3 states that the site should provide 40% affordable housing.

6.23. Points on the Delivery and Phasing of the allocations are outlined within Policy LA3. As stated above, the scheme is identified as suitable to come forward for development immediately in order that it can make a contribution to the housing land supply of the borough, as well as the supply of land for gypsy/traveller sites.

6.24. Policy LA3 also states the following with regards to Phasing:

The phasing of the site will seek to deliver the Gypsy and Traveller pitches within an early phase, subject to technical and viability considerations, to ensure a 5 year supply of Gypsy and Traveller provision. The Council will require that when a planning application or planning applications are brought forward for the allocation they demonstrate compliance with this Master Plan and a comprehensive approach to the development of the allocation, including the nature and timing of delivery of community infrastructure and other planning obligations.

6.25. Further consideration of the Master Plan document adopted by the Council for the site is contained with the Material Considerations part of this planning statement.

6.26. It is confirmed within the Site Allocations DPD, that the site lies within Zone 4 of the CIL Charging Schedule which means that there is no charge for residential development. Therefore, required contributions will be secured through a Section 106 agreement.

6.27. In addition to the site specific policies and guidance within the Site Allocations DPD there are also more general policies which are of relevant to the determination of this planning application.

6.28. Policy SA1 – Identified Proposals and Sites specifies that all of the identified allocations should be delivered in accordance with the requirements in the relevant schedule of the DPD. In the case of this site, this relates to Policy LA3 provisions. Furthermore, sites identified are safeguarded for their specific use unless there is a proven lack of need or alternative provision is made to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. Furthermore, it is specified that all allocations will comply with relevant policies and guidance within the Core Strategy and other relevant documents.

6.29. The matter of transport infrastructure is detailed within Policy SA3 – Improving Transport Infrastructure which states that the transport proposals identified within the Schedule of Transport Proposals and Site will be safeguarded. Furthermore, the policy states that wider opportunities to enhance footpath and cycle links and support bus patronage will also be taken.

- 6.30. Policy SA9 – Sites for Gypsies and Travellers reiterates the need for 7 pitches to be provided within allocation LA3 and states that this provision must be in accordance within the aforementioned Core Strategy Policy CS22 and site specific requirements as specified by Policy LA3.
- 6.31. Further specific points within the Site Allocations DPD, with relevance to the determination of this application are outlined within Section 7 of this Planning Statement, with discussion regarding the proposal's compliance to specific elements.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.32. The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2018. This replaced a previous iteration of the document that was adopted in March 2012. The NPPF provides an overarching framework for the production of local policy documents and the consideration of development proposals and should be considered as a material consideration by Councils in terms of decision taking.
- 6.33. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF makes clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Indeed, sustainable development is said to be at the heart of the NPPF at paragraph 10. As such, plan making and decision taking should be subject to a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.34. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF outlines what this means for decision taking. This includes:
“Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay”.
- 6.35. The proposed development relates to the implementation of an allocation within the adopted Site Allocations DPD and as such is in accordance with an up to date development plan document.
- 6.36. The NPPF states at paragraph 213 that policies within existing development plan documents should not be considered as out of date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the most recent iteration of the NPPF. Rather, the amount of weight to be attributed to adopted development plan policies is derived from the level of consistency between them and the provisions of the NPPF. Discussion regarding the level of accordance that development plan policies identified above have and therefore the level of weight that can be afforded to them in the determination of this application is discussed in Section 7 of this Planning Statement.
- 6.37. The NPPF also makes clear that weight may be granted to relevant policies of emerging plan. However, the level of weight that can be attributed is dependent on the stage of preparation of the emerging plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections, and the degree of consistency between the emerging plan's policies and the NPPF. The implications of this in terms of the emerging Single Local Plan is discussed later in this section.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.38. On 6th March 2014, the Department for Communities and Local Government launched its Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) web-based resource. This guidance provides a variety of practice guidance in respect of planning considerations and is amended to reflect the latest Government position on planning. A number of elements of the PPG are relevant to the determination of this application. The following paragraphs identify the key considerations.
- 6.39. Paragraph 21b-006 reiterates the guidance in the NPPF and states:
- “Where the development plan is absent, silent or the relevant policies are out of date, paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires the application to be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development unless otherwise specified...”* [Please note that paragraph 14 in now paragraph 11 in the revised NPPF but this change has not yet been reflected in the PPG.]
- 6.40. Paragraph 21b-009 considers what is a material consideration and what weight can be applied to it:
- “The law makes a clear distinction between the question of whether something is a material consideration and the weight which it is to be given. Whether a particular consideration is material will depend on the circumstances of the case and is ultimately a decision for the courts.”*
- 6.41. Section 26 of the PPG refers to Design. Whilst this proposal is in outline form, the advice set out in the PPG on Design issues has been considered and has informed the illustrative layout and design principles in the Design and Access Statement.
- 6.42. The PPG reconfirms the objectives in the NPPF that good design is an integral part of sustainable development (PPG paragraph 26-001). It seeks for developments to reflect the requirement for good design set out in National and Local policy. It also states that planning permission should not be refused for developments which demonstrate good design and which promote high levels of sustainability solely due to concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape (Paragraph 26-004). Design is not seen as the preserve of specialists but should also include the views of local communities.
- 6.43. The PPG states that development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development and that new development should integrate with its surroundings. The guidance highlights that new layouts should respond appropriately to existing layouts, spaces and buildings (PPG paragraph 26-009). It also notes that the urban block layout provides an efficient template for development with building fronts and entrances to public spaces and their more private backs to private spaces. Such layouts minimise the creation of unsupervised and unsafe public spaces and unsafe access routes.
- 6.44. Form, scale and use of materials are all highlighted in the PPG as important factors in considering good design. In particular, in relation to housing design the PPG states that well-designed housing should be functional, attractive and sustainable. It should also be adaptable to the changing needs of its occupants. In relation to affordable housing it is stated that it should not be distinguishable from private housing by its design, nor should it be banished to the least attractive part of the site (PPG paragraphs 26-019 and 021).

- 6.45. The PPG also provides guidance on Environmental Impact Assessments, travel plans, transport assessments and other technical reports (heritage, ecology etc). However, the PPG is purely guidance and is only therefore a material consideration in determining the application.

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

- 6.46. The policies of the Adopted Core Strategy and Local Plan are complemented by a number of documents that provide detail on certain matters. These include the SPG on Accessibility Zones for the Application of Car Parking Standards (2004) and SPD's on Affordable Housing (2013) and Sustainable Design and Construction Advice Note (2015). When relevant these will be discussed in Section 7 of this Planning Statement with regard to the compliance of the proposals to the provisions of the documents.

Local Allocation LA3 West Hemel Hempstead Master Plan

- 6.47. The Master Plan was Adopted in July 2017 (at the same meeting as the adoption of the Site Allocations DPD) and therefore represents a material consideration that should be afforded some weight, despite a lack of formal examination in public. In effect this Master Plan document builds and adds site specific detail to those sites identified within the Site Allocations DPD and therefore is informed by the policies therein.
- 6.48. The documents provide an overview of the site context and the specific development constraints and opportunities presented. Building upon that, the Master Plan identifies certain requirements for the development of the site based on those within the Site Allocations DPD and a indicative land use and access plan at Plan 9. The Master Plan then identifies a number of principles for development relating to various matters. These are outlined below for reference.

Green Infrastructure Principles

- Create a network of green infrastructure through the area by a 'green grid' of open spaces and movement corridors that link with opportunities for direct access to the countryside.
- Establish a central swathe of open space across the land as a green link to Shrubhill Common with a wide tree belt which will assist in retaining a treed skyline when viewed from the south and south east.
- Protect a wildlife corridor along the eastern side of the development adjoining Fields End.
- Reinforce structural planting along existing field boundaries within the allocation to create a well-structured development of landscaped compartments with particular emphasis on enhancing existing screening and maintaining a treed skyline.
- Retain an area of open space and associated structural landscaping on the more exposed south facing slopes.

Open Space Principles

- Meet Council standards for all types of open space as a basic aim.
- Design and manage the open space for clear, identifiable purposes.
- Use open space to define different parts of the neighbourhood and help distinguish it from Chaulden.
- Arrange the open space to ensure a pleasant, coherent and wildlife-friendly network throughout the neighbourhood.
- Ensure that the layout and design of new sports provision is fit for purpose.

Access and Movement Strategy Principles

(a) Access to Services

- Plan good pedestrian and cycle access between neighbourhoods and to key services, such as bus stops and community facilities.
- Support the enlargement of the Parkwood doctors' surgery (either financially or within the new neighbourhood).
- Accommodate a bus route within the new neighbourhood.

(b) Roads

- Take the main vehicular access from Long Chaulden and The Avenue.
- Support offsite road junction improvements where appropriate.
- Ensure no vehicular access from Pouchen End Lane.
- Provide local road junction improvements.
- Develop a vehicular access strategy which maximises the integration with the existing urban area, whilst minimising impacts upon the local highway network.

Homes and Neighbourhood Structure Principles

- Accommodate about 900 homes.
- Include a significant proportion of affordable homes (up to 40%).
- Incorporate 7 pitches for gypsies and travellers at the site with good access to the primary road network.
- Include family homes within a range of provision.
- Creating a clear sense of place and well defined and legible neighbourhoods.

Social and Community Uses Principles

- Provide public spaces in different parts of the development.
- Provide a central focus with a "community square", hall, shop and other commercial spaces, linked to a bus service.
- Locate the new 2 form entry primary school at the centre of the development (Community Hub).

Design Principles

- Optimise the potential for views across the Bulbourne valley.
- Limit buildings to two storeys normally.
- Design the development to the highest sustainability standards possible.
- Ensure sufficient, well-located parking.
- Take the character of buildings in the Chilterns area as a guide to high quality attractive design.
- Use traditional materials, such as red brick, clay tiles and timber boarding, where feasible.
- Arrange buildings and routes to achieve natural surveillance, good pedestrian access to facilities and an attractive relationship to open spaces.
- Sensitively plan the interface with existing built development including landscaped buffers where appropriate.
- Positively address views out of the site along defined 'view corridors'.

- New houses to help create a positive enclosure of internal open green spaces through the overlooking of village greens, 'pocket parks' and similar open spaces.
- Design, layout and landscaping to mitigate the impacts on the archaeological, heritage and ecological assets within and adjoining the site and safeguard those adjoining the development.

Surface Water Drainage Principles

- Provide locations for sustainable surface water drainage attenuation in appropriate locations depending on the extent of infiltration within the land as a whole.

Infrastructure, Services and Utilities Principles

- Link utilities to existing networks.
- Link to existing network to provide access to local services and facilities.
- Provide extra capacity where needed to serve the development.
- Work with Thames Water to ensure sufficient sewerage and sewage treatment capacity exists prior to the occupation of the development.
- Protect groundwater from pollution.
- Take the opportunity to extend existing networks towards Pouchen End hamlet.

Green Belt Boundary, Landscape and Countryside Principles

- Reinforce and enhance the existing structural landscape features adjoining Pouchen End Lane to enable a new, clear and defensible Green Belt boundary to be defined, and to reduce further the limited views of the development from the west.
- Soften views of housing from the countryside by use of tree planting, by retaining appropriate tree belts and by siting open space carefully (particularly in views from Little Heath and Westbrook Hay).
- Provide a soft edge to the countryside and ensure visual and physical separation from Potten End and Winkwell.
- Prevent further vehicular access onto rural lanes.
- Provide pleasant footpath and cycle access through the site to link with Chiltern Way, Hertfordshire Way, the Grand Union Canal and the Chilterns AONB.
- New strategic landscaping to mitigate the impact on the Bulbourne Valley.
- Protect the amenities and character of Pouchen End hamlet.
- Retain hedgerows and trees.
- Use native species in planting schemes.
- Maintain the rural character of Pouchen End Lane and Chaulden Lane.

6.49. The Master Plan specifies the supporting documentation that the Council would expect as part of a planning application on the site. However this is caveated with the point that the list will be dependent on the validation requirements at the time of submission.

- 6.50. The Master Plan details matters concerning the delivery, timings and phasing of development. The timing of development now follows the principles established within the Adopted Site Allocations DPD, that the site is suitable to come forward immediately. In terms of phasing of the development, the Master Plan makes two specific proclamations, that the primary school and community hub be delivered in early in the development (dependant on pupil yields) and the gypsy and traveller provision will be delivered in an early phase to ensure a five year supply of that type of accommodation. An indicative phasing plan is included at Plan 11.
- 6.51. In terms of planning obligations the Master Plan notes that the site is 'zero' CIL rated that therefore infrastructure and affordable housing would be provided by S106 agreement. This point is covered further below. The Master Plan document specifies the following main matters
- *Affordable housing* - the individual composition of the tenure will be determined at the time of the application in accordance with the Affordable Housing SPD;
 - *On-site and off-site junction improvements* – Long Chaulden and The Avenue are the primary vehicular access points and should be in place when development commences. The timing of improvements to be determined following advice from the local Highway Authority at the planning application stage;
 - *Sustainable transport contributions* - as advised by the Passenger Transport Unit at the County Council and Local Highway Authority relating to potential improvements to the cycle/footpath network;
 - *New 2 form entry school and education contributions* – to secure land for the school site and appropriate contributions towards the school as advised by the Local Education Authority;
 - *Other education and community contributions* - as advised by the Local Education Authority and County Council;
 - *Delivery of a new doctors' surgery or contributions towards enlargement of the Parkwood surgery* – support for new GP provision, which may be in the form of an off-site extension to Parkwood Surgery, provision of an on-site satellite surgery for Parkwood, or accommodation for a new GP practice on-site. Dependent on advice from the NHS/Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) as to how best to meet local health needs.
 - *Land for other community/commercial uses within the Community Hub.*
 - *Open space and play areas* – including the provision of Locally Equipped Play Areas (LEAPs) and Local Areas of Play (LAPs) on the site and contributions toward other facilities where a need is identified. Consideration should be given to the Fields in Trust (formerly known as the National Playing Fields Association) standards . Early liaison is encouraged with Sports England regarding advice on the provision and management of related sports pitches and, where justified, other facilities.

New Single Local Plan (to 2036)

- 6.52. The Council is in the process of collecting evidence to inform a new Local Plan which will in effect form a partial review of the Core Strategy. This will focus on household projections and their implications, the role and function of green belt and further cooperation with neighbouring authorities.
- 6.53. The latest iteration of the Single Local Plan was the Issues and Options draft published in November 2017 and consulted upon until 13 December 2017. At the time of writing the Council are considering the responses to this consultation. The most up to date available timescales for progress towards adoption of the plan are outlined in the Council's Local Development Scheme dated July 2018 and these are listed below.

- Publication of the Pre-Submission Plan (Reg 19) for Consultation – August – September 2019;
- Submission of Plan for Examination – February 2020;
- Examination of Plan – March – November 2020; and
- Adoption of Plan – January 2021.

6.54. No policies have currently been published as part of the Single Local Plan, as the last iteration was the Issues and Options Stage. Given that the Council is yet to establish a preferred strategy to guide policies, the plan should be considered to be at an embryonic stage. As such, in accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF.

South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment

6.55. The South West Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in January 2016. This document sets out the needs for the housing market area (HMA) that incorporates Dacorum Borough. Of particular note to this Application are the requirements for particular sizes of market and affordable dwelling within the housing market area. These are listed within Table 77 of the document and are as below:

Table 2 – SHMA Suggested Housing Mix

Tenure	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4+ Bed
Market	5-10%	25-30%	40-45%	20-25%
Affordable	30-35%	30-35%	25-30%	5-10%
All Dwellings	15%	30%	40%	15%

6.56. The findings of the SHMA show that in terms of market housing the greatest need is for 3 bedroom housing across the housing market area. However, the SHMA does note as paragraph 10.64 that there is a higher demand for 4+ bed dwellings within Dacorum Borough than across the rest of the HMA.

6.57. In terms of affordable housing the need is generally for smaller dwellings of 1 and 2 bedrooms. However, the SHMA specifically states that provision should reflect that there remains a need for a balanced mix of dwellings to come forward.

6.58. In terms of the make up of affordable housing provision, the SHMA states that 30% should be made up of intermediate housing, and the remaining 70% being social rented, in the case of Dacorum. This differs from the wider HMA which is 20% intermediate and 80% social rented.

6.59. The need for residential care provision appropriate for older persons is also covered within the SHMA. The report concludes that there is a need for 688 units of older persons accommodation in Dacorum Borough between 2013 and 2036. This is the highest demand within the housing market area.

Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011-31

6.60. Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP3) provides a framework for transport policy within Hertfordshire. Its purpose is to set out the county council's vision and strategy for the long-term development of transport in the county. Reference to the provisions of this plan are made within the accompanying transport related documentation and the Transport and Access chapter of the Environmental Statement.

Community Infrastructure Levy

6.61. The Dacorum Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule was Adopted by the Council on 25 February 2015 and formally came into effect on 1 July 2015. It sets a financial contribution rate per square metre of floor space which is payable by developers towards infrastructure listed on the Council's Regulation 123 List.

6.62. The site is identified as being within Zone 4 within the CIL Charging Schedule. As such, it is a zero CIL identified site and all required infrastructure contributions are collected by the negotiation of and concurrence of a S106 agreement, as previously discussing in relation to the Site Allocations DPD and LA3 Master Plan.

Affordable Housing SPD

6.63. The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was Adopted by the Council in September 2013 and relates to the findings of the Housing Needs and Market Assessment 2012. The Site Allocations DPD and 2016 SHMA provides more up to date policy and evidence on elements such as the percentage of affordable housing to be provided on site, tenure splits and the size of affordable units. However, the Affordable Housing SPD continues to be the most relevant source of guidance on the design and layout of affordable housing and incorporation of affordable housing with S106 agreements.

6.64. This guidance includes the requirement to avoid high concentrations of affordable housing in specific areas within larger developments. Furthermore, the document and associated pro-forma includes formulae to calculate off-site affordable housing contributions in the event that a 'remainder of a house' is present.

Summary

- The key constituent documents of the Development Plan in relation to this proposal are the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD;
- The site is identified as an Allocation for mixed use development within the Core Strategy and subsequent Adopted Site Allocations DPD;
- The site was originally not to come forward prior to 2021 in the Core Strategy, however this requirement has been removed by the Site Allocations DPD's subsequent adoption;
- The delivery programme for development estimates that it will take 8-10 years to complete;

Planning Statement

West Hemel Hempstead



- The site was identified for up to 900 units within the Core Strategy. However, this has been changed to a minimum requirement within the Site Allocations DPD with the number to be established through the planning application process;
- There are a number of specific requirements for the development of the site which are set out within the Adopted Site Allocations DPD and associated Master Plan document; and
- The Site is in a 'zero' CIL area and therefore all contributions to on-site, local and strategic infrastructure will be made using a S106 agreement.

7. Planning Assessment

Introduction

- 7.1. The following section of the Planning Statement will assess the proposals with reference to Development Plan policies and other materials considerations outlined in Section 6. A judgment will then be made as to whether the proposals represent sustainable development and should be permitted under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).
- 7.2. The Planning Application is submitted in hybrid form with the first 350 dwellings (Phase 1) along with associated infrastructure being submitted in full, as explained within Section 5 of this Planning Statement. The layout, landscaping, scale and appearance for the remaining 750 dwellings will be considered at the relevant reserved matters stage and can be governed by planning conditions and legal agreements.
- 7.3. The Application is accompanied by a series of parameter plans that set the framework for the development as required by the Regulations. The parameters have also been used to assess the environmental impact of the development. A range of technical reports and an ES demonstrate that the development is environmentally acceptable and technical issues can be addressed to allow development on the site. In terms of the detailed matters for consideration comprising access for the entirety of the site and layout, scale and appearance for the first Phase and foul pumping station, all required plans and drawings have been submitted in relation to these.
- 7.4. Various other illustrative plans are included to demonstrate how the site could be developed to meet the vision for a high quality mixed use extension to Hemel Hempstead. These plans will not form part of any decision notice and can be varied at the reserved matters stage.
- 7.5. This section considers the planning issues that underpin the determination of the application. These are considered to be:
- The Principle of Residential Development;
 - The Quantum and Type of Residential Development;
 - Provision of Non-Residential Development;
 - High Quality Design; and
 - Technical Considerations.
- 7.6. These issues will be considered in turn below. A subsequent section will consider the benefits of the proposal and conclude on the planning balance.

Principle of Residential Development

Location

- 7.7. The Core Strategy identifies Hemel Hempstead as being the most sustainable settlement within the Borough. Furthermore, the town is identified as the *'Main Centre for Development and Change'* within the Borough. This status is crystallised by the fact that of the Core Strategy housing requirement of 10,750 between 2006 and 2031, 8,800 homes are to be delivered within Hemel Hempstead. As such, the provision of dwellings in this settlement is in whole accordance with the spatial development policies of the Development Plan, specifically CS1 and CS2 of the Core Strategy.
- 7.8. Furthermore, the Site area of the proposals are in broad accordance with those shown within the plan shown in Policy LA3 of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD and associated Master Plan. This demonstrates further compliance with the spatial planning policy espoused by the Development Plan and other relevant guidance..
- 7.9. Adopted Site Allocations DPD Policy LA3 states that the Site should be brought forward immediately in order to contribute towards the housing and traveller site supply within the Borough. Given the considerations of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD and the Inspector's Report on the related Examination in Public, the site has now been removed from the Green Belt.

Quantum and Type of Residential Development

Quantum of Residential Development

- 7.10. Both the Core Strategy and the Adopted Site Allocations DPD state that the LA3 Allocation is capable of accommodating an estimated 900 dwellings, as well as other uses including community facilities, a primary school, open space and 7 Gypsy/Traveller pitches.
- 7.11. However, it is made explicitly clear at paragraph 6.21 of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD that the net capacity figures for allocations provide an estimated capacity and should not be seen as a maximum. The final dwelling capacities will be established through the Planning Application process and based on a scheme's adherence to planning requirements and other relevant policies and guidance.
- 7.12. As previously stated, this Planning Application is seeking permission for up to 1,100 homes which reflects the description associated with the EIA Scoping and Planning Performance Agreement. This is over the estimated 900 capacity of the site stated within the Core Strategy, Adopted Site Allocations DPD and Master Plan. However, the quantum of residential development proposed in this planning application has been determined based on a more detailed understanding of the site, through a full suite of further technical assessments and thorough design process. Furthermore, as this section of the Planning Statement will demonstrate, the proposals adhere to all relevant planning requirements and represent sustainable development.

7.13. As such, through the preparation of this Planning Application it has been demonstrated that the potential capacity of Allocation LA3 is greater than the 900 estimated in the Core Strategy and Adopted Site Allocations DPD. Given the flexibility inherent within the Site Allocations DPD in that the capacity of allocations should be determined through the planning application process it is clear that the quantum of residential development proposed is in accordance with relevant provisions of the development plan. Further discussion on the adherence with specific technical policies which relate to the capacity of the Site are outlined below.

7.14. Furthermore, the provision of additional dwellings above the 900 identified within the Core Strategy and Adopted Site Allocations DPD adds further security to the housing trajectory in the later years of the plan period, adheres to the NPPF's requirement to boost the supply of housing and makes efficient use of development land.

Density of Residential Development

7.15. Local Plan Policy 21 states that sites will be expected to demonstrate densities of between 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare. The policy goes on to state that for sites on the edge of the settlement particular attention should be given to the effect of development density upon open countryside and views.

7.16. The proposed development is at an average density of 36 dwellings per hectare across the Site, with the densities varying throughout it. The densities across the whole Site are outlined in the DAS as part of the Indicative Density Plan. The maximum density proposed is 55 dwellings per hectare in and around the Community Hub owing to the provision of flats and in order to generate a sense of place and arrival. Lower densities are found throughout the remainder of the Site, with the lowest densities at 35 dwellings per hectare on the sensitive edges of the site, such as Pouchen End Lane in accordance with the principles established within the LA3 Master Plan.

Mix of Dwellings and Affordable Homes

7.17. Core Strategy Policy CS18 – Mix of Housing states that new development should provide a choice of homes for all comprising; a range of housing types, housing for those with special needs, and affordable housing in accordance with policy. The policy also emphasises the need to refer to relevant evidence base documents in terms of determining the housing mix for new development. Local Plan Policy 18 also relates to the size and type of new dwellings to be provided and places particular emphasis on smaller units and lifetime homes.

7.18. The mix of dwellings for the element submitted in outline will be determined at the relevant Reserved Matters stage and will draw on the most up to date evidence on housing need at that time. For Phase 1, the mix is listed within Section 5 of this Statement. This has been developed with reference to the housing need set out within the South West Hertfordshire SHMA which is discussed in detail within Section 6 of this Planning Statement.

- 7.19. The mix proposed is reflective of the need across the Borough to accommodate a high proportion of the market facing development at 2 and 3 bedrooms, as well as the Borough specific need to maintain a level of 4+ bed dwellings. Furthermore, the affordable housing proposed incorporates high numbers of smaller units, including two beds. However, in order that affordable housing remains integrated with the wider development, a number of larger units are also proposed which corresponds to the SHMA requirement to retain a balance of affordable dwellings.
- 7.20. The adopted standard for affordable housing is within Core Strategy Policy CS19 which prescribes 35% on new developments. However, discussions with the Council have concluded that the 40% requirement within the Site Allocations DPD is more up to date and therefore a more suitable requirement. The affordable housing would be provided as part of a S106 agreement in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS19 and Local Plan Policy 13.
- 7.21. The proposals provide for up to 40% affordable housing subject to viability. This will be secured by a S106 agreement between the Applicant and the Council. The tenure split of this provision will be 50% affordable rent and 50% intermediate housing based on the 40% provision. It should be noted that this differs from the tenure split previously discussed in the context of the Core Strategy, but during pre-application discussions housing officers stated that the 50% / 50% split is most appropriate based on the most recent evidence.
- 7.22. While the location of affordable housing within the majority of the scheme is for determination at the Reserved Matters stage, it is to be fixed in terms of the First Phase area. The proposal demonstrates that the scheme avoids concentrating affordable housing in specific areas of the site and instead encompasses a clustered approach, in accordance with the provisions of the Affordable Housing SPD.
- 7.23. The development incorporates a 70 bed accommodation for older people (C2/C3 Use) within a Community Hub on the Site. This responds to a need for residential care provision for older people specified within the SHMA, which is the most up to date assessment of future housing needs in the area. This is in accordance with the lifetimes homes requirement of Local Plan Policy 18.
- 7.24. The proposals have been developed with reference for the needs for housing specified within the South West Hertfordshire SHMA which marks the most up to date assessment on this topic. As such, the proposals are clearly in accordance with the provisions of Core Strategy Policy CS18 and Local Plan Policy 18 as well as paragraph 47 of the NPPF. Furthermore, in providing for up to 40% affordable housing, the proposals are in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS19 and the LA3 Master Plan.
- 7.25. The quantum of affordable housing, its tenure and location within the Site have been discussed with Dacorum Council's Housing Officers during the pre-applications process. These discussions have informed the proposals which have been submitted as part of this Application.

Gypsy and Traveller Provision

- 7.26. The provision of land for 7 serviced Gypsy and Traveller pitches corresponds with the requirements of the Site Allocations DPD and thus the proposals represent compliance to policy in this regard.

7.27. Further consideration of the design of the gypsy and traveller provision is considered later in this section of the Planning Statement.

Provision of Non-Residential Development

7.28. As well as residential development the development proposes a range of other uses as part of the planning application. Core Strategy Policy CS23 – Social Infrastructure encourages the provision of new services and facilities for the community to be located to aid accessibility and allow different activities. The policy specifies that larger developments may include land and buildings to provide social infrastructure as well as making contributions as part of planning obligations where necessary. This is discussed in detail within Section 6 of this Planning Statement and the DAS. The Adopted Site Allocations DPD lists a number of other land uses required as part of the development of the allocation as part of Policy LA3 and associated LA3 Master Plan. In terms of built development, these are as follows:

- A shop;
- A doctors surgery; and
- Additional Social and Community Provision, including a primary school.

7.29. How these are addressed are discussed separately below.

7.30. Policy LA3 also makes provision for green spaces and playing fields. Provision of these will be discussed separately.

7.31. In providing for potential retail, leisure, education and employment uses on the site the proposals are demonstrating accordance with NPPF paragraph 104, which state the benefits of providing a range of uses within residential developments to encourage sustainable ways of living.

7.32. The proposed development provides sufficient land for all of the listed requirements in terms of non-residential uses and as such represents a compliant scheme in terms of the mix of built development and meets the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS23. The areas associated with those uses are shown on the parameter plan and section 5 of the Planning Statement.

7.33. The site is within a zero CIL area within the adopted CIL Charging Schedule and therefore the provision of the school will be incorporated within a S106 agreement.

7.34. In addition to the provision of land and buildings as specified above, the proposal will make contributions, where relevant to other infrastructure in the locality required as a result of the development, in accordance with paragraph 56 of the NPPF. This may include a financial contribution towards the expansion of Parkwood Surgery.

7.35. Details of these contributions are within the draft Heads of Terms at Appendix 1 of this Planning Statement. Again, these will all be detailed within a S106 owing to the zero CIL status of the Site. However, it should be noted that this is intended as a starting point to help future discussions with relevant officers and third parties. Thus, the Applicant remains open to negotiation during the determination period. However, at the current stage the Applicant will be aiming to fully comply with Core Strategy Policies CS22, CS23 and CS35 as well as Local Plan Policy 13.

- 7.36. The site does not include any playing field provision, save for that within the school, which is consistent with the LA5 Master Plan. This matter will be addressed within the S106 in the form of a contribution to offsite provision, if required.

Timing and Phasing

- 7.37. The Adopted Site Allocations DPD states that allocation LA3 may be brought forward for delivery immediately and therefore its status as Green Belt has been rescinded. As such, the submission of this planning application at this time is in keeping with the provisions of LA3 in that it seeks to provide housing and Gypsy/Traveller pitches as soon as practicable.
- 7.38. The Council's adopted Master Plan incorporates an indicative phasing plan. The submitted plans for Phase 1 are broadly reflective of the location of the first Phase within this indicative plan. The Council state that they are supportive of delivering the school and community hub in an early phase of development, subject to pupil yield and capacity.
- 7.39. The delivery of the proposals as early as possible is also in accordance with the amended NPPF which seeks to expedite the delivery of homes and will also aid the Council in meeting the Housing Delivery Test when this comes in to force.

High Quality Design

- 7.40. The submitted hybrid planning application is supported by a Design and Access Statement as well as various plans for approval and illustrative plans. In the case of Phase One detailed plans have been submitted in relation of the design and these are for consideration at this stage.
- 7.41. In terms of the wider masterplan area, the detailed design of the overall layout and individual buildings within it are for the reserved matters stage. However, the Applicant has provided a parameter plans within the DAS which serve to establish a structure for the development, as well as an illustrative masterplan which serves to show an acceptable configuration, but is not a drawing to be approved.
- 7.42. Section 12 of the NPPF places great emphasis on the role of good design in place making. While the level of detail provided between the full and outline elements differs, the design proposed clearly demonstrates that the proposals are in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF, development plan policies and other guidance. Matters of layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping are discussed below.

Layout

- 7.43. The illustrative masterplan shows a layout which is based on a clear hierarchy which aims to create strong east west routes linking Hemel Hempstead and the site to the countryside to the west. This layout is shown in detail within Figure 8 of the Transport Assessment which details the onsite road hierarchy. Where possible, the incorporation of a block structure encourages ease of movement by foot and a permeable design. Building frontages will focus activity on the edges of the development plot, ensuring and supporting the perimeter block structure, and approach to façades and access. Wherever possible, frontages overlook all key open spaces and public areas, to provide natural surveillance to aid security and to foster a sense of ownership. This arrangement is reflective of the principles established within the LA3 Master Plan and Policy LA3 of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD.
- 7.44. The incorporation of strong east west corridors in terms of roads and linear public open space optimises the potential for views across the Bulborne Valley, in accordance with adopted design principles.
- 7.45. The layout of the open space generally proposes linear spaces in accordance with the provisions of the green infrastructure plan shown at Plan 6 of the LA3 Master Plan. This encourages both establishment of wildlife corridors, particularly through to Shrub Hill Common and to the countryside to the west. Furthermore, this encourages walking and cycling in these areas with a clear separation to areas shared with cars.
- 7.46. The open space proposals for the site as a whole include the incorporation of a neighbourhood area of play (NEAP), 2 locally equipped areas of play (LEAP), a shared common games area (SCGA) and 13 informal play spaces.
- 7.47. The gypsy and traveller site located in the south west corner of the site has been the subject of an illustrative masterplan to show that the quantum proposed can be accommodated within the site area. This masterplan has been produced with reference to relevant Government guidance in the form of Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Good Practice Guide. This approach has been agreed by the Council's Gypsy and Traveller officer through pre-application discussions.
- 7.48. While the layout for the site as a whole is not for determination at this stage, the illustrative masterplan submitted and relevant parameter plans within the DAS clearly demonstrate that the design has incorporated the key relevant site specific principles within the Adopted Site Allocations DPD and LA3 Master Plan, as well as more general design considerations with Core Strategy Policies CS10, CS11, CS12 and CS13.
- 7.49. The Phase One Composite Site Plan shows a layout that is in keeping with the parameters established within the illustrative masterplan and parameter plans as a whole and those principles within the DAS. Furthermore, the layout reflects all relevant set back distances in order to ensure that appropriate residential amenity is guaranteed for all. As such, these proposals are wholly in accordance with the guidance and principles within Policy LA3 of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD and LA3 Master Plan as well as Core Strategy Policies CS10, CS11, CS12 and CS13.

7.50. In terms of parking, the submitted Transport Assessment outlines consultations held between the Applicant and the Council during which the Council requested that owing to the age of Appendix 5 of the Local Plan which set out parking standards, these should be used as a basis for provision rather than a rigid standard. A new set of maximum residential parking standards have been established following these discussions within the Transport Assessment. The parking shown in Phase One is in accordance with these standards. For other residential phases the quantum of car parking spaces will be reflective of these standards, but the exact number will be set when the final number of dwellings and mix have been established.

7.51. In terms of parking for the community hub, care home and school standards are outlined within the Transport Assessment. A future reserved matters application for this area will be reflective of these standards, but the exact quantum of development will be dependent on the precise floor space of each use present.

Scale

7.52. The proposed heights are detailed within the DAS (Figure 54) and the overall building heights parameter plan (Drawing No. PP05 (Rev:L) and these vary across the site based on design considerations. Taller buildings of up to 15m to the ridgeline, or up to 4 storeys, will be accommodated in and close to the Community Hub. Medium heights of up to 3 storeys, or 13m to the ridgeline, are located broadly in towards the centre of the masterplan site within the context of the individual blocks of development. Lower units or up to 10m to the ridgeline and two storeys will be accommodated along sensitive edges, as per the suggestions of the Landscape and Visual Character Assessment.

7.53. These height parameters have been assessed as part of the Landscape assessment, the results of which are discussed later in this Section of the Planning Statement and deemed to be acceptable.

7.54. The submitted Phase 1 Building Heights Plan demonstrates that the Phase 1 element of the development respects the parameters set for the wider site. There is a maximum height of three storeys on this element of the site which reflects that it is a residential area. The heights on the eastern edge of the development, closest to existing development at two storey to reflect the need to respect the amenity of existing local residents.

Appearance

7.55. In terms of Phase 1's appearance this is to be considered in detail as part of this planning application. The design principles inherent within Policy LA3 of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD and LA3 Master Plan state that the character of buildings in the Chiltern area should be used as a guide for attractive design and traditional materials such as red brick, clay tiles and timber boarding should be used where feasible.

7.56. The Phase 1 Materials Plan demonstrates that the materials proposed are reflective of the traditional ones identified by the Council in their principles. However, in order to add further interest to the streetscape further detailing such as render to first floors and some dwellings with grey slate tiles have been incorporated.

Landscaping

7.57. The submitted planning application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which has been included as a chapter within the accompanying Environmental Statement. The chapter details the impact of the proposals on receptors on and in proximity to the site in terms of landscape and visuals based on the submitted parameter plans during both the construction and operational phases.

7.58. The assessment of the impact of the proposal, both in terms of the construction and operational phase has been assessed on the baseline effect and the residual effect.

Construction Phase

7.59. In terms the construction phase, the residual effect on receptors is deemed to be negligible or minimal for all landscape receptors save for the site landform, site land use, category B trees on site, category C trees on site and footpath 20 and 21. All of these are expected to experience a moderate adverse impact. Footpath 21 has been deemed to experience a indirect moderate adverse residual effect.

7.60. A number of receptors have been assessed to experience a moderate or major residual on visual receptors. Broadly, these include users of the public footpaths on and around the site, as well as residents of neighbouring properties that directly look over the site.

7.61. It should be noted that by their nature the impact of the effects of the construction phase are time limited to the period of construction only.

Operational Phase

7.62. During the operational phase the only moderate adverse effect on landscape receptors relates to the site land use and is a result of accommodating urban development on a green field site. All other impacts are minor or negligible adverse. However, the effect of the proposal on the footpaths within and close to the site is assessed to be moderately beneficial based on hedgerow management and path resurfacing, while the effect on the setting is neutral.

7.63. In terms of visual impacts the residual effect on receptors is assessed to be neutral, negligible adverse or minor adverse for the vast majority of receptors. Moderate adverse impacts are expected for two receptors at Little Hay Golf Complex and Westbrook Hay. However, this will only effect a relatively low number of users.

7.64. The overall cumulative effect of the proposals is assessed to be limited with no individual effects being assessed as significant.

7.65. Given the considerations of the Landscape Character and Visual Amenity chapter of the Environmental Statement, as summarised above, it is clear that the proposals meet all of the relevant adopted Development Plan polices. These being the relevant provisions of Core Strategy policies CS10, CS12, CS25, CS26, CS27 and LA3, as well as Local Plan policies 79, 100 and 101.

7.66. Landscaping is not a matter for determination in terms of this Application. However, key principles are set out within the Landscaping Strategy submitted as part of Phase One and the recommendations of the DAS which includes a Landscape Strategy Vision at Figure 37. The key principles of this strategy are set out below:

- Create a connected network of green corridors throughout the site, allowing for pedestrian, cycle and wildlife movement. East-west corridors are particularly important, providing links from Hemel Hempstead to the countryside and softening views from the south. A network of pedestrian and cycle routes within the proposed open space network will link in with Pouchen End Lane to the north and west, The Avenue, Squirrel Chase, Chiltern Way and Long Chaulden to the east and Chaulden Lane to the south, encouraging sustainable methods of transport.
- Deliver a range of multifunctional green spaces and clear open space hierarchy and network of varied spaces, providing opportunities for children's play, recreation paths, nature conservation and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.
- Acknowledge the removal of some of the young native tree plantations within the site, but retain the network of mature trees and hedgerows and further supplement and reinforce these networks with new planting.
- Compensate for the loss of a small area of native woodland at the Long Chaulden entrance, with a larger area of new woodland on the site's western boundary.
- Deliver a street tree hierarchy which is linked to the movement hierarchy.
- Allow space to create a network of new tree planting within the built area, helping to integrate it into its landscape setting and softening the outline of buildings.
- Retain Category A and B trees on the site wherever possible and incorporate them within the open space network.
- Retain and actively manage all hedgerows other than where their removal is required to allow for access.
- Deliver a high quality hard and soft public realm across the proposed development, which is wholly inclusive in its design, the character of which progresses from urban to rural, east to west across the site.
- Deliver a new legible communal space adjacent to the Community Hub with direct connections with the existing community.
- Deliver opportunities to improve the biodiversity assets by providing for the existing habitats which are, or likely to be present and by creating new habitats.
- Deliver both natural and semi-natural landscapes, connected to the SUDS and biodiversity strategy.
- Minimising changes to the rural character of Chaulden Lane and retaining as much of the existing trees and hedges along it as possible.
- Create an attractive entrance to the development at Long Chaulden, incorporating open spaces with native tree and shrub planting and ponds.
- Provide strategic woodland planting along the site's western boundary, to limit views from Pouchen End Lane and the countryside beyond.
- Provision of two new ponds of permanent water as part of the Sustainable Urban Drainage System, together with numerous dry attenuation basins and swales.

7.67. These principles will be reflected within the Landscaping Strategy which is submitted for approval as part each reserved matters application. However, the Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates that they can be successfully accommodated on the site and that the proposals have the potential to be in compliance with the landscape principles established within Policy LA3 of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD, LA3 Master Plan and also contribute towards wider compliance with Core Strategy Policies CS10, CS12, CS13, CS25, CS26 and Local Plan Policies 99, 100 and 101.

Access

- 7.68. The highways and access element of the proposals are detailed within the Transport and Access chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) and has been prepared by Charles and Associates Consulting Engineers Ltd. A full Transport Assessment (TA) has also been produced which is within the appendix of the Environmental Statement, accompanied by a Framework Travel Plan.
- 7.69. The TA and Environmental Statement chapter assess the suitability of the access to the site as well as its highways impacts in the wider locality.
- 7.70. This Planning Application seeks approvals for vehicular access points to The Avenue, Long Chaulden, access to the gypsy and traveller site and foul drainage pumping station from Chaulden Lane, and an emergency access point to Chaulden Lane. These access proposals are shown in the drawings submitted for approval as listed in Section 1 of this Planning Statement. The access proposals as shown demonstrate junctions that meets all relevant standards for the quantum of development proposed. This is clearly demonstrated by the considerations of the TA. This is the case of both the construction and operational phases. No access is proposed to Pouchen End Lane or other rural lanes.
- 7.71. Furthermore, the impact of the proposal on the nearby highway confirms that there will be a permanent medium net positive impact as a result of the development during the operational phase owing to the implementation of mitigation works off site. The improvements involve works to Long Chaulden and Warners End, London Road/Fishery Road junction, St Johns Road/Fishery Road junction and the Long Chaulden/Northbridge Way junction. The details of these works are outlined within the aforementioned transport documents and drawings submitted for approval and are entirely located within adopted highway boundaries. Further, mitigation can be expected from the implementation and uptake of measures within the Framework Travel Plan based on the draft submitted as part of this planning application.
- 7.72. Given the conclusions of the TA and Transport and Access chapter of the Environmental Statement, the proposals are clearly in accordance with all national policy as outlined with Section 9 of the NPPF and local policy in the form of the relevant provisions of the Adopted Site Allocations DPD, Core Strategy policies CS8 and CS9, as well as Local Plan Policy 54. Furthermore, the proposal contributes where possible to achieving the aims of the Hertfordshire Travel Plan.

Other Technical Considerations

- 7.73. Full consideration of the environmental and technical issues are within the Environmental Statement and standalone technical documents which accompany this planning application. The assessment below will not serve to repeat the findings on the elements listed below in their entirety but relate their conclusions to relevant planning policy and material considerations in order to inform the planning balance.

Ecology

- 7.74. The submitted hybrid planning application is supported by an Ecological Assessment which is detailed within the Ecology chapter of the submitted Environmental Statement.

- 7.75. The chapter identifies ecological assets which may be subject to some impact as a result of the proposed development. These assets include statutory designations of national, county and local significance as well as notable habitats and protected species present. The chapter then assesses the baseline impact of the proposals on these assets, before suggesting mitigation and enhancement measures which relate directly to these impacts. Finally, the assessment identifies the impact of the proposal on assets once suggested mitigation and enhancement has been implemented. These mitigation and enhancement works are detailed within the proposed Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan, the implementation of which can be conditioned as part of a planning consent.
- 7.76. Overall, the assessment concludes that, subject to the implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures and the control of detailed landscape design, no significant effects are expected in terms of ecology. Indeed, some beneficial effects can be expected at the local level in terms of increased tree cover and an increased range of habitats, particularly for invertebrates. These principles can be accommodated within the landscaping strategy submitted as part of a reserved matters application.
- 7.77. Therefore it is clear that the proposals are in accordance with Development Plan policies in the Core Strategy, specifically CS26 and CS29, as well as Local Plan policies 99, 100, 101, 102 and 103; insofar that they relate to matters of biodiversity. Furthermore, compliance is demonstrated with the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF, specifically 170 and 175.

Heritage and Archaeology

- 7.78. The Archaeology and Heritage chapter details the results of survey work (including a comprehensive intrusive archaeological site investigation) undertaken in this regard which has informed the application proposals.
- 7.79. In terms of archaeological surveys the application contains the findings of a desk-based archaeological assessment, geophysical assessment, an intrusive on site trenching investigation, and historic landscape assessment. In terms of built heritage assets, a Built Heritage Statement has been prepared and is included as an appendix of the Environmental Statement.
- 7.80. The assessment concludes that while there are buried archaeological assets present within the site, these are not considered to be of more than local/county importance and therefore low to negligible sensitivity. Therefore, even with a large magnitude of change to the assets the overall effect on the level of sensitivity results in a minor overall effect to the buried archaeological resource.
- 7.81. The proposed development has the potential to cause a slight adverse impact to non-designated heritage assets at Former Stables and Barns to the east of Pouchen End Lane. However, this would result in a negligible impact on the significance of this asset. There will be no impact on designated heritage assets. The design proposal as submitted has been informed by the presence of this asset and the consideration of this can be seen in the submitted DAS.
- 7.82. Given the lack of any significant harm, the proposals are in accordance with NPPF paragraph 189, as well as Core Strategy Policy CS27 and Local Plan Policy 118.

Flood Risk and Drainage

7.83. The Hydrology chapter of the submitted Environmental Statement details considerations pertaining to matters relating to surface water drainage, flooding and foul drainage. This chapter has been supported by the preparation of a detailed Flood Risk Assessment, Surface Water Drainage Strategy and Foul Water Drainage and Utilities Assessment, which are all located in their entirety within the Appendix of the Environmental Statement.

7.84. In terms of the operational phase, the residual effects are summarised in the table below:

Table 3 – Hydrology Summary of Residual Effects

Matter	Mitigation	Residual Effect
Surface Water Drainage and Flooding	On-site infiltration or attenuation of surface water and discharge into the local sewer at a restricted rate not exceeding the existing runoff rate.	Not Significant
Foul Drainage	Local foul sewerage network and treatment facilities will be upgraded to cater for the additional flows generated by the Development.	Negligible Adverse
Surface Water and Ground Water Quality	The implementation of SuDS (at source and locally), surface water runoff from the proposed development will be subjected to minimum of two to three levels of treatment prior to discharging into the local sewer.	Negligible Adverse

7.85. Furthermore, there are no significant impacts predicted in terms of during the construction phase or in terms of cumulative impacts.

7.86. As such, when mitigation works detailed within the Hydrology chapter of the Environmental Statement, and supporting documents are implemented, the proposal will be in clear accordance with all relevant national and local planning policies. These comprise, NPPF paragraphs 155, 163, and 165 as well as Core Strategy Policies CS29 and CS31.

Ground Conditions

7.87. The Application is supported by a Phase I and II Geo-Environmental Site Assessment which has been used to inform the proposals.

7.88. The report concludes that the Site is suitable for the proposed end use in terms of levels of contamination and ground conditions, subject to a number of suggested considerations. These have either been incorporated into the submitted parameter plans, or are suitable to be included as a planning condition to inform future detailed design or construction works.

- 7.89. As such, the proposals are in accordance with NPPF paragraph 178 and 179 as well as Core Strategy CS32.

Air Quality

- 7.90. The Environmental Statement includes an Air Quality chapter which details the impact of air quality on the proposals on the site itself and the impact of the proposal on air quality in the wider context. This has been undertaken in the context of relevant national and European standards.
- 7.91. The baseline assessment confirms that the Site is suitable to accommodate the uses proposed as all relevant levels are met.
- 7.92. The construction phase has the potential for some temporary effect owing to the generation of dust, particularly in relation to those existing dwellings located in closest proximity to the Site. However, these can be mitigated by the implementation of controls to be agreed within a Construction Method Statement.
- 7.93. In terms of air quality impacts as a result of traffic generation, the absolute concentrations expected in 2027 are still below the current air quality objectives and therefore cannot be said to have a significant impact on local air quality.
- 7.94. Given the above the proposals are in clear accordance with Core Strategy policies CS8, CS28 and CS32, as well as Local Plan Policy 51 which relates to traffic impacts on air quality. The proposal also demonstrate accordance with NPPF paragraph 181.

Noise

- 7.95. AcousticAir have undertaken a full noise assessment of the site and the methodology and findings of this are detailed within the Noise and Vibration chapter of the accompanying Environmental Statement.
- 7.96. The conclusions of this assessment are that the baseline noise and vibrations levels on Site do not preclude the development of the uses proposed, and development would achieve all relevant standards by routine design measures. In terms of impact on existing development, there would be some temporary minor effects close to the site during the construction phase. However, this can be mitigated through the implementation of a Construction Management Plan which can be conditioned as part of an outline planning consent.
- 7.97. In terms of development traffic impact, there would be negligible impact in all locations, save for The Avenue. For The Avenue, the noise changes due to development traffic amount to a minor/moderate impact in the short term, and a negligible/minor impact in the long term. However, the overall noise level with development traffic still represents a relatively low level of noise exposure that would not adversely affect residential amenity for existing dwellings adjacent to this road.
- 7.98. Overall, the proposals have been assessed as not having a significant impact on any receptor, nor will be proposed development be subject to any noise impact that cannot be sufficiently mitigated against. Therefore, the proposals are in accordance with Local Plan Policy 11 and Core Strategy Policy CS32, insofar that they relate to noise. Furthermore, the proposals accord with the relevant provisions of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 180 and the more detailed guidance of the PPG.

Summary

- 7.99. The implementation of the Planning Application will result in the delivery of a residential allocation within both the Adopted Core Strategy and Adopted Site Allocations DPD (July 2017). While the number of dwellings is above that suggested within the Core Strategy, the design process and assessment of impacts of this proposal has demonstrated that the 1,100 units proposed would not result in any additional harm and would provide significant benefits. These benefits include additional dwellings to the Council's housing trajectory, thus adding certainty with extra numbers, for further into the plan period and meeting the NPPF's requirement to significantly boost the supply of housing and make best use of available land. Furthermore, a higher number of dwellings will result in a greater number of affordable units being delivered which is a material benefit. Furthermore, the potential of higher number of dwellings being accommodated on the Site, if circumstances allow, is explicitly acknowledged within the Adopted Site Allocations DPD in relation to this site. As such, the proposal is in whole accordance with the most up to date provisions of the development plan.
- 7.100. Additional weight is also to be gained from the provision of housing for older people and socio-economic impacts in terms of an increase in working age population, jobs during the construction phase, increased council tax receipts and New Homes Bonus payments. The introduction of facilities that can be utilised by the residents of the development, as well as the wider community is a tangible benefit in terms of the facilities and services within the community hub, school and associated playing fields representing key benefits, as are the proposed offsite highway improvements.
- 7.101. The considerations above, as well as within the relevant chapters of the Environmental Statement, DAS and other relevant submission documents confirm that there are no technical or environmental constraints to site delivery identified. Furthermore, the design of the site demonstrated within the parameter plan, and Illustrative Masterplan, and Phase 1 drawings and plans show that the Site can be delivered in an entirely appropriate manner in its wider context. The Site is also in accordance with all relevant provisions of the NPPF and PPG. This is the case for the Phase 1 detailed element of the proposals, as well as the wider masterplan area.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1. This Planning Statement forms part of an Application to Dacorum Borough Council for planning permission for the development as described in Paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 in this Planning Statement at West Hemel Hempstead.
- 8.2. The Site has been allocated for residential development by the Council through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, which was adopted in July 2017. This document also identifies a number of other uses to be accommodated on the site, such as a primary school, community hub and green space.
- 8.3. The Site has been assessed against all relevant policies of the Development Plan, as well as other relevant material considerations. Section 7 of this Planning Statement as well as the relevant chapters of the Environmental Statement, DAS and other standalone technical documents confirm that the proposals are in accordance with the development plan and relevant material considerations.
- 8.4. The planning balance clearly favours development of the proposals which represent a deliverable, sustainable and suitable development which will deliver much needed market and affordable housing. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 planning permission should be granted without delay.

Planning Statement

West Hemel Hempstead



Appendices

Planning Statement

West Hemel Hempstead



Appendix 1

Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms

Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms

Planning Obligations Schedule for a hybrid planning application for a mixed use proposed development to the west of Hemel Hempstead, pursuant to Policy LA3 of the adopted Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2017) to provide for up to 1100 dwellings (with up to 40% affordable housing), comprising full planning proposals for 350 dwellings and outline planning proposals (including means of access) for 750 dwellings.

It should be noted that this schedule intended for used to inform future discussions regarding the structure of a legal agreement during the determination of the planning application.

- Affordable housing;
- On-site and off-site junction improvements;
- Sustainable transport contributions;
- New 2 form entry school and off site education contributions;
- Delivery of a new doctors' surgery or contributions towards enlargement of the Parkwood surgery – to be determined in conjunction with the LPA and relevant health providers.
- Land for other community/commercial uses within the community hub.
- Open space and play areas – including the provision of Locally Equipped Play Areas (LEAPs) and Local Areas of Play (LAPs) on the site and contributions toward other facilities where a need is identified..

Other elements may be added if deemed necessary by the Council, relevant consultees and third parties and in agreement with the Applicant.

Roger Smith
Director



Matthew Dawber
Associate

