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| Report to | Planning Committee |
| Date | 9 March 2017 |
| By | Director of Planning |
| Local Authority | East Hampshire District Council |
| Application Number | SDNP/16/06381/FUL |
| Applicant | Burton Property Limited |
| Application | Erection of 3 dwellings (1 x 3 bed and 2 x4 bed) with associated access and the provision of 4 parking spaces for use by existing properties on School Lane following the demolition of 2 garden sheds and the removal of tennis courts. |
| Address | Land at Farnham Road, Sheet, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU32 2AS. |

Recommendation: That planning permission be refused for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed dwellings would be outside of the settlement policy boundary of Sheet, which would result in an unjustified form of residential development in designated countryside. In the absence of clear community support for development outside the settlement policy boundary, the proposals would be contrary to policies CPI0 and CPI9 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy 2014, the National Planning Policy Framework, the South Downs Partnership Management Plan 2013 and the First Purpose of the National Park.**
- 2. The proposed development would result in dwellings located outside of the settlement policy boundary of Sheet and it does not constitute a rural exception scheme for affordable housing which addresses a local need, nor does it provide a level of affordable housing required by the Development Plan. The proposed development is therefore contrary to policies CPI3 and CPI4 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (2014), the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), the English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and the statutory duty of the National Park.**

Executive Summary

The application proposes 3 open market dwellings on the rear garden area of nos.13 and 13a School Lane. This area comprises of a fenced tennis court and various outbuildings. The new dwellings would be accessed via an adjacent permitted scheme of 11 dwellings (SDNP/15/05485/FUL-see Appendix 2) on a site which is a draft allocation in the SDNP Preferred Options Local Plan 2015. The proposals also include 4 additional off-street parking spaces for nos.15-18 School Lane and an extension to the rear garden of no.14 School Lane.

The dwellings would be located outside of the settlement policy boundary (SPB) of Sheet. The East Hampshire District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy 2014 (JCS) affirms National Park purposes and general restraint to development in the countryside. Policy CPI0 permits small scale housing development in such locations where it meets certain criteria, as outlined in the report.

The site is included in the updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), published on 22nd December 2016. It has been included as part of a larger area of land which

comprises the adjacent draft allocation and permitted scheme. It has however been promoted separately. The JCS focusses new development in the most sustainable towns and villages. Sheet has a draft housing requirement of 20 dwellings in the SDNP draft Local Plan and the adjacent permission is the only draft allocation.

The application is recommended for refusal concerning the principle of development, in relation to Policy CPI0. It has not been demonstrated that the proposals meet all of this policy's criteria, namely that the scheme has clear community support and when balanced against objections. It is however considered to be an acceptable form of development in regard to its design and impacts.

A second reason for refusal has been recommended in regard to no affordable housing provision being proposed. Policy CPI3 of the JCS outlines a target of 40% of all new dwellings to be provided as affordable housing in schemes which result in one or more net additional dwelling. Subsequent to the adoption of the JCS, a written Ministerial Statement and thereafter national planning guidance outline a different position to policy CPI3, as outlined in the report. There is a complexity between the Ministerial Statement and a recently adopted Development Plan, which is still being considered through case law, however it is considered that the proposals conflict with adopted Development Plan policy CPI3 specifically. In addition, given the site's location outside of the SPB and the dwellings are not proposed as an affordable housing scheme, the development would also be contrary to policy CP14 of the JCS.

The application is placed before committee due to policy considerations in advance of the adoption of the SDNPA Local Plan and Member's previous consideration of the adjacent approved development.

I. Site Description

- I.1 Sheet is situated on the north eastern edge of Petersfield. Its southern parts are contiguous with Petersfield, whilst the A3 (London Road) separates the majority of the village from the town. It is also to the south east of the A3(M) and close to a main junction with it. The main railway line between Portsmouth and London also runs past the north western edge of the village and near to the application site. North of the site is the Ashford Stream which feeds into the River Rother on the eastern side of the village.
- I.2 There is a small village green in the northern part of the village which is surrounded by dwellings and a public house. The village extends further north and westwards from the green along Farnham Road, School Lane and further north on Mill Lane. The area around the green and much of the northern parts of the village are within a conservation area. There is a primary school at the western end of School Lane.
- I.3 The application site comprises of a large rear garden area of nos.13 and 13a School Lane. No.13 fronts onto School Lane and no.13a is directly behind it and both properties are joined internally and used by the same family. They also share a driveway onto School Lane. The application site abuts a new development currently being built. This scheme comprises of 11 dwellings and was considered and approved by members in February 2016 (see paragraph 2.1 and Appendix 2). The site includes a disused tennis court, surfaced in tarmac and bordered by a chain link fence, and various outbuildings and a boat. It also extends across the access of the adjacent new development and its associated public open space. In total, the application site covers 0.47 hectares and the garden area where the dwellings are proposed is 0.17 hectares.
- I.4 The rear garden area extends behind nos.14-18 School Lane, and Fir Tree Cottages. The land slopes down from School Lane and the site is on a significantly lower ground level to School Lane properties. The site is mainly on higher ground to the new development but its western side has an approximately similar ground level with the rear part of the adjacent development. The site boundaries include a mixture of hedging, trees and fencing and walls. Farnham Road is adjacent to the eastern site boundary and on a lower level.
- I.5 There are further dwellings north of the Ashford Stream. The site is adjacent to a conservation area which extends along Farnham Road and there is a church to the south east of the site.

2. Relevant Planning History

- 2.1 SDNP/15/05485/FUL: Erection of 11 dwellings and associated access, parking and open space, including an emergency rear access to Sheet Primary School and parking for residents of School Lane. Approved 21.04.2016. (**Appendix I**)

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The application proposes 3 open market dwellings which comprise of 1 no.3 bed and 2 no.4 bed properties. The no.3 bed property would be a bungalow and the no.4 bed properties would be two storey. They would be accessed from Farnham Road via the new private drive of the adjacent development and a new 'off shoot' from it, which would run in front of a detached dwelling in the approved scheme.
- 3.2 The 3 dwellings would be arranged as a small cul-de-sac, which would lead to a parking area of 4 spaces in the south east corner of the site. The dwellings would face onto private driveways and the shared access with varied orientations. They would also have single detached garages. The additional 4 spaces would serve 4 properties on School Lane.
- 3.3 Large conifers on the western side of the site would be removed. New hedging is proposed around the curtilages and site boundaries along with additional trees within the scheme.
- 3.4 Three street lights are proposed with a specification to limit upward light spill. These would be positioned along the shared access.
- 3.5 The dwellings would link with the drainage scheme of the adjacent development and the residents would have access its new public open space. The red line of the application includes this area.
- 3.6 The proposals also include the extension of the garden curtilage of no.14 School Lane. It would be extended by 4.5m and be the whole width of the garden.
- 3.7 A large outbuilding immediately adjacent to nos.13 and 13a is proposed to be removed to create garden space in response to the proposals.

Design of the dwellings

- 3.8 The dwellings on plots 1 and 2 would be of a traditional design with a minimal palette of materials. The dwellings on plots 1 and 2 would be near identical apart from the front porches. They would be faced with brickwork and have plain clay tiled roofs which would be dual pitched with gables. Chimneys are also proposed. They would have timber framed windows with stone cills and the upper floor windows would be positioned immediately below the eaves. They would be of a similar character to the adjacent approved scheme. They would have a ridge height of 6.7m.
- 3.9 A bungalow is proposed on plot 3. It would have a predominantly tradition form but with a more modern style timber clad porch and cladding on the side elevations and fenestration. It would be faced in brickwork with a gabled dual pitched roof clad with clay tiles. Timber windows and doors are proposed with brick detailing above them. It would have a ridge height of 5.1m.
- 3.10 The dwellings would be energy and water efficient and include a row of solar panels on their roofs. They would exceed national space standards.

4. Consultations

- 4.1 **Arboriculture:** No objection.

- 4.2 **Dark Night Skies:** No objection.

- Roof lighting not excessive or a significant threat to dark skies but would welcome a reduction if possible. (Officer note- Solar PV panels proposed on roofs, not roof lights.)
- This area is a transitional zone between the urban and rural environment so would expect light spill to be lost within the ambient surroundings.
- Low level bollard lighting preferable to street lighting and any reduction in output should adopt similar Hampshire County Council lighting schemes.

- 4.3 **Drainage:** No objection subject to conditions.
- 4.4 **Ecology:** No objection subject to condition.
- 4.5 **Environment Agency:** Awaiting response (members will be updated).
- 4.6 **Environmental Health (Pollution):** Awaiting response (members will be updated).
- 4.7 **Environmental Health (Protection):** No objection subject to condition.
- 4.8 **Highways:** No objection subject to conditions.
- Pedestrian improvements between the site and Sheet Primary School
- 4.9 **Historic Buildings Advisor:** No objection subject to conditions.
- 4.10 **Housing Officer:** No objection.
- Site has been included in the SDNPA's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
 - Falls outside of the settlement policy boundary, Joint Core Strategy policy CPI3 (affordable housing) relevant.
 - Disappointing the same developer is working on the adjacent site, if the total number of homes were submitted in one application the affordable housing contribution would have increased from 4.4 units to 5.6 units.
 - Proposals are less than 10 dwellings and so based on NPPG guidance no affordable housing required.
 - Do not support this piecemeal plan to develop but don't object to the application.
 - Application has ultimately reduced the total amount of affordable housing that could have been delivered on this site.
- 4.11 **Natural England:** Response received, no comments.
- 4.12 **Network Rail:** No objection. Sheet Level crossing is in proximity to the development. Insist that the developer educates new residents about the risks of rail infrastructure.
- 4.13 **Public Rights of Way:** Response received, no comments.
- 4.14 **Sheet Parish Council:** Support.
- Logical extension and completion of the plot and earlier application for 11 houses, which was widely canvassed and supported by the community.
 - Would like the homeowner at no.14 to be given the option of having the end of the garden raised and appropriate screening provided.
- 4.15 **Southern Gas Network:** No objection.
- 4.16 **Southern Water:** No objection.

5. Representations

- 5.1 10 third-party representations have been received to the original plans. These comprise of 4 objections and 5 responses in support. A neutral representation was superseded by a response in support following amended plans being submitted. The following comments have been received:

Objections:

- Insufficient consideration to parking issues along Farnham Road.
- Future visitors to 14 dwellings will likely park on Farnham Road and exacerbate issues of on street parking and be a hazard to highway safety.
- Suggest permanent narrowing of Farnham Road needed to reduce vehicles speeds but still provide some on street parking.
- Suggest visitor parking provided on site and whether the extra spaces allocated to School Lane residents could be shared.
- Additional traffic through the village, causing congestion, and highway safety concern and additional noise and disturbance to existing residents.

- Trees marked on the arboricultural survey have already been chopped down (adjacent site). Hedging on northern site boundary will need to be removed to build bungalow which is the only screening left for the site.
- Dwellings will not be secluded as described in the landscape report and will be obvious additions along Farnham Road.
- Future landscaping needed to reduce visual impact of properties from Farnham Road
- Would not want to see 'floodlights' from neighbouring gardens and low level lighting and a reduction in the number of street lights would be more appropriate and neighbourly.
- Previous application for 14 dwellings refused and this application would contravene that decision and proposal for 3 dwellings should not be seen as a separate site.
- Impact on visual amenity regarding car headlights shining directly into windows.
- Impact on overlooking and privacy due to height of the land
- Design does not reflect the architectural heritage of Sheet Village or local vernacular style buildings.
- Loss of a tennis court.
- Unacceptable density of development and would create a new dense urban space, inappropriate for a small rural environment.
- Landscaping for new shared access (adjacent scheme) already sparse and does not contain enough evergreen shrubs and trees to minimise further traffic noise and car light disturbance.
- Officers previously advised 11 dwellings for this location was appropriate.

Support:

- Pleased with approach taken by the applicant who has been in consultation face to face on numerous occasions and been open and accommodating to residents and taken views on board.
- Feedback prior to submission taken on board and considerate in approach.
- Well designed and carefully considered.
- Scheme links well with the development under construction.
- Sympathetic design to the environment and village.
- Proposed bungalow means minimal impact to neighbouring properties due to the differing ground levels.
- Providing additional parking spaces and rear access very important to families along School Lane who struggle with the dangerous and busy traffic on the road.
- New off street parking will help to ease congestion and parking/access issues on School Lane and be a benefit to highway safety.
- Development is on a site now enclosed by development, it has readily available access.
- Support is subject to additional parking being designated to 15-18 School Lane as per the plans.
- Would be a positive addition to the village.
- Request more extensive planting within the scheme than shown on the plans. Consideration to the landscaping around the proposed garden extension of no.14 to avoid shade on neighbouring property.
- Addresses a need for more housing in the area but would prefer to see more affordable houses.
- On balance the scheme is presenting what would be best possible plan for additional development in Sheet.
- Developing this site at the present time would reduce disruption and an alternative scheme may be proposed in the future.
- Number and size of houses and their plots are appropriate.

- Use of additional parking for visitors would not have the same positive effect as being designated for properties on School Lane, as local residents and visitors already park on Farnham Road.
- Unlikely to be a significant impact for Farnham Road residents in terms of on-street parking caused by visitors to the new development.
- Share concerns of objector that road improvement measures to slow down vehicles entering the village via Farnham Road/School Lane are urgently needed.
- Need to re-consider proposed street lighting in the scheme and adjacent development regarding its extent and design, potentially significantly reducing the lighting by half for proposals to gain full support.

6. Planning Policy Context

6.1 Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant statutory development plan is the saved policies of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Second Review 2006 and the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy 2014. The relevant policies are set out in section 7 below.

National Park Purposes

6.2 The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of their areas;
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 2010

6.3 Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was issued and came into effect on 27 March 2012. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection and the NPPF states at paragraph 115 that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the national parks and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations and should also be given great weight in National Parks.

6.4 The development plan policies listed below have been assessed for their compliance with the NPPF and are considered to be compliant with it.

6.5 The South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2013 is a material consideration in the determination of the application. The following policies are relevant:

- General Policy 1: conserve and enhance natural beauty and special qualities of the landscape
- General Policy 3: Protect and enhance tranquillity and dark night skies.
- General Policy 9: Historic Environment
- General Policy 50: Housing and social and economic needs of local people, high design and energy efficiency.

6.6 Section 72 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 relates to conservation areas. It requires "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

7. Planning Policy

7.1 The following saved policies of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Second Review 2006 are relevant:

- C6: Tree preservation, Forestry Operations, Management Plans

- C8: Flood Protection
- HE8: Development Affecting the Setting of a Conservation Area
- R3: Public Open Space Requirements
- T2: Public Transport Provision and Improvement
- T3: Pedestrians and Cyclists

7.2 The following policies of the East Hampshire District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2014 are relevant:

- CP1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- CP2: Spatial Strategy
- CP10: Spatial Strategy for Housing
- CP11: Housing Tenure, Type and Mix
- CP13: Affordable Housing on Residential Development Sites
- CP14: Affordable Housing for Rural Communities
- CP18: Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation and Built Facilities
- CP19: Development in the Countryside
- CP20: Landscape
- CP24: Sustainable Construction
- CP25: Flood Risk
- CP27: Pollution
- CP28: Green Infrastructure
- CP29: Design
- CP30: Historic Environment
- CP31: Transport
- CP32: Infrastructure

7.3 The South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options was approved for consultation by the National Park authority on 16 July 2015 to go out for public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The consultation period ran from 2 September to 28 October 2015 and the responses received are being considered by the Authority. The next stage in the plan preparation will be the publication and then submission of the Local Plan for independent examination. Until this time, the preferred Options Local Plan is a material consideration in the assessment of this planning application in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, which confirms that weight can be given to policies in emerging plans following publication. Based on the early stage of preparation, the policies within the Preferred Options Local Plan are currently afforded limited weight.

7.4 The Preferred Options Local Plan identifies 20 new dwellings for Sheet (policy SD23). The relevant planning policies of the draft SDNP Local Plan are SD4/WW, SD6, SD11, SD12, SD16, SD17, SD18, SD22, SD23, SD24, SD25, SD-WW02.

8. Planning Assessment

8.1 The dwellings are proposed outside of the settlement policy boundary (SPB) defined around Sheet in the Local Plan (2006). The SPB runs along the rear gardens of properties on School Lane up to the railway line. The site is therefore within designated countryside. Policy H13 of the Local Plan (2006) and more up to date policies CP19 and CP20 of the Joint Core Strategy 2014 outline general restraint against new housing development in principle in the countryside. This affirms National Park Purposes and paragraph 115 of the NPPF.

8.2 Whilst the site is within designated countryside, it is now surrounded by development and isolated from the wider countryside. Furthermore, its characteristics of a tennis court,

numerous outbuildings and general garden area do not give it a countryside appearance nor does it contribute to the wider countryside setting of the village. Also, whilst garden land falls outside of the definition of 'previously developed land' in the NPPF development clearly exists on site. In these regards, the development of this site with an appropriately designed scheme is unlikely to cause any wider landscape harm. This however does not detract from the fact that the site is outside of the SPB.

- 8.3 Policy CP10 of the JCS does however allow for small scale residential development outside of settlements. It outlines that housing should be accommodated through opportunities within existing settlements in the first instance. In addition to development which accords with policies CP14 and CP19, it outlines that housing and other small scale development outside of settlements will only be permitted where it:
1. meets a community need or realises local community aspirations;
 2. reinforces a settlement's role and function;
 3. cannot be accommodated within the built up area; and;
 4. has been identified in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan or has clear community support through a process which has been agreed by the LPA in consultation with the Parish or Town Council.
- 8.4 Regarding criterion (1), the scheme would provide additional housing, albeit no affordable dwellings. There is housing need and Policy CP2 identifies Sheet, and similar villages with SPBs, in a third tier of the District's settlement hierarchy within the National Park after Petersfield and Liss. This signifies that Sheet is one of the more sustainable villages where development would be focussed, where it is consistent with maintaining and enhancing its character. The site is therefore clearly in a sustainable location.
- 8.5 A draft housing requirement of 20 dwellings has been proposed in the SDNPA draft Local Plan, but the only allocation is the adjacent site of 11 new dwellings. This site was allocated with an indicative number of 15 dwellings but 11 were proposed for design and mitigation reasons. The application site would contribute to this draft housing requirement and it is now being promoted through the Local Plan process.
- 8.6 In terms of a specific community need or aspiration, the proposals do deliver some mitigation to lessen the impact of the scheme on the surrounding area by including alternative car parking provision for 4 properties on School Lane (nos.15-18). Parking along School Lane and access for parents dropping off and collecting children from the primary school is a persistent issue in this part of the village. The proposed additional parking would enable a reduction in parked cars on School Lane to help to ease this issue and enable the scheme to successfully integrate into the wider surroundings. Furthermore, the permitted 11 dwelling scheme also provides for 10 additional car parking spaces for other properties on School Lane and so there would be a cumulative benefit in regard to this local issue. This aspect of the scheme is also supported in representations.
- 8.7 (2) New development in the village would re-inforce its function as one of the more sustainable villages in the district (within the National Park) in regard to the spatial strategy of the JCS. In the SDNPA Local Plan, the draft housing requirement for Sheet has been devised through understanding objectively assessed need and taking a spatial 'landscape led' approach to proposing growth of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and function of each settlement. These proposals would create modest infill development to support both the adopted and emerging strategic approaches to Sheet with minimal impact to the wider landscape.
- 8.8 (3) It is reasonable to assume that potential infill sites may be limited based on the formation of Sheet and, in some places, a reduced SPB is being proposed around the village in the SDNPA draft Local Plan. Furthermore, in the SDNPA's updated SHLAA which was published on 22nd December 2016 all promoted sites in Sheet are around the edges of the village and none within the built up area. Many of these sites were also rejected. Whilst the site is outside of the SPB, when viewed 'on the ground' given its location, characteristics and the adjacent new development it could be seen as part of the built up area rather than countryside.

- 8.9 (4) Crucially, the scheme does not meet this criterion. The applicant undertook a public exhibition in January which was attended by 18 local residents. Invitations were sent to people living near to the site and the Parish Council. A notice was also displayed on a telegraph pole at the entrance to School Lane. It is understood, from a report submitted, that a broad acceptance of the scheme in principle was expressed and the queries were about more specific issues such as drainage, trees and overlooking. The exhibition, as well as representations, have resulted in amended plans being submitted. Door to door canvassing on School Lane was also undertaken. The responses show there are residents at 3 properties who are supportive but they have not submitted a representation (one is these is the resident at no.13 and part owner of the application site).
- 8.10 The relatively low level of response, particularly compared to the adjacent 11 dwelling scheme, suggests there is not wider general concern about the scheme. However, given the limited supportive representations received and the need to balance these against objections it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that there is 'clear community support.'
- 8.11 It is on this basis, in conjunction with the general policy of restraint for development in designated countryside, that there is an objection in principle. The SPB was defined in the 2006 Local Plan but policy CP10 is an up to date policy (adopted in 2014) within which there is scope for small scale development outside of defined urban areas, however, importantly not all of its criteria have been met. As detailed above, the policy requires there to be clear community support for proposals and the evidence provided and the representations submitted do not demonstrate this. Whilst the scheme would accord with 3 out of the 4 policy criteria, on balance, given the position of general restraint of new development in the countryside the proposals are on balance unacceptable. The site is being promoted through the Local Plan process and has not been rejected in the updated SHLAA, however, the draft Local Plan can only be afforded limited weight. Furthermore, the SDNPA can demonstrate an up to date 5 year housing land supply in regard to the housing requirements in the JCS.
- 8.12 It is noteworthy that those in support are predominantly immediate neighbours. It is clear that the developer has engaged extensively with these neighbours and sought to address their concerns prior to the application being submitted and through subsequent amended plans during the application process. This is also acknowledged in the representations which have been received. However, in the absence of clear community support as outlined above the proposals are contrary to Policy CP10.

Further policy considerations regarding the SDNPA draft Local Plan

- 8.13 The SDNP Local Plan can only be afforded limited weight in light of its status. The site is currently excluded from the housing allocation, which covers the adjacent 11 dwelling scheme. It is also excluded from the draft SPB based on the standard methodology which has been applied to all revised or new SPBs. The site was promoted separately through the process of updating the SHLAA, which concludes it has potential to be developed.
- 8.14 This assessment combined the site with the adjacent scheme and the updated SHLAA identifies this area of land as a whole of being able to accommodate 16 dwellings. Clearly, the approved scheme is already under construction and as previously advised at the time an 11 dwelling scheme was an appropriate level of development. It is extremely unlikely that further dwellings could be accommodated within it. The proposed 3 dwellings would also be an appropriate scale of development for the site which would equate to 14 dwellings overall. The SHLAA assessment is however only indicative and only one piece of evidence in the consideration of sites.
- 8.15 Small sites such as this are not anticipated to be specifically allocated in the draft Local Plan given their size. The threshold is 5 or more dwellings. The SPB in the draft Local Plan still excludes it from the built up area of the village. This could however be subject to change subject to the Inspector's conclusions from the Examination of the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan.
- 8.16 Draft policy SD24 outlines that a target of at least 40% of all net dwellings on schemes of 6 or more units are required to be affordable homes. This threshold is to be lowered in the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan (see agenda item 13, Appendix 3). However it will

not be published until this Autumn at which point it could be given more weight than the current draft Local Plan, albeit there is evidence to support this approach and the JCS does adopt a lower threshold.

- 8.17 Notwithstanding the concerns regarding the principle of development, the design and impact of the development is considered in more detail below.

Proposed design and its impact upon the character and appearance of the area and surrounding residential amenities

- 8.18 The layout has been subject to consultation between the Applicant and neighbours. Further amendments have also been submitted in response to representations during the application process. The concerns of immediate residents have largely been addressed and this is reflected in the representations received.
- 8.19 The access via the adjacent scheme would be the most suitable route. It would only pass one plot within the adjacent scheme and given the small scale nature of the proposals vehicle movements are unlikely to affect the amenities of future occupiers. The approved layout would not require amendments to accommodate the new access as there is already a drive in front of this approved plot.
- 8.20 The Highways Authority has not raised an objection to the proposed access arrangements and level of parking. Concern has been raised in representations about overspill visitor parking on Farnham Road and highway safety. The proposed dwellings have sufficiently large driveways and there is some potential for parking on the shared access to allow some visitor parking. This scheme is therefore unlikely to exacerbate parking on Farnham Road. Concern has also been raised about additional traffic through the village however the vehicle movement generated from 3 additional properties is unlikely to be significant.
- 8.21 The dwellings have been sited in an appropriate layout which responds to the site's size, shape, characteristics including topography, and the siting, orientation and outlook of neighbouring properties. Each dwelling would be commensurate with the size of its plot and have a good amount of useable garden space. The mix of housing is also acceptable, and when considered with the adjacent scheme, and a bungalow would provide a property that could support an older person's needs in particular. The bungalow would also have an acceptable relationship with the proposed two storey dwellings.
- 8.22 The properties on School Lane are on a higher ground level and a bungalow has been proposed on plot 3 to minimise the impact on their outlook. The siting and orientation of plots 1 and 2, their internal layouts, fenestration and scale would not have a significantly harmful impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. Aspects like the scale and the design of their roofs and layouts have been changed in response to neighbour's concerns.
- 8.23 Concern has also been raised about the impact upon the amenities of properties further north. Specifically concern about glare from car headlights has been raised. Given the location and route of the access and the siting of these dwellings this is unlikely to cause significant harm and new landscaping in the adjacent scheme would also serve to minimise any impact as well. Properties to the north are also a significant distance away from the proposals, with intervening new dwellings and planting in between and so there would not be any harmful loss of privacy.
- 8.24 The design of the garages would match with the proposed dwellings and their scale and siting would also not affect the amenities of neighbouring properties and would create an acceptable public realm within the scheme. The additional 4 parking spaces for properties on School Lane would be in a more secluded part of the site where they would not have a wider impact on the surrounding character and appearance of the area. They would also be contained by new boundary hedging. They would also be easily accessible for residents via new rear access gates which would be installed. The parking would also not cause harmful noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties.
- 8.25 The extension to the garden of no.14 School Lane fits within the overall design without constraining the proposed layout. No.14 is the closest neighbouring property to the

southern site boundary, this additional garden would add to the amenity of this property and would not cause any wider impact upon the character and appearance of the area.

- 8.26 The overall layout would be an acceptable approach to developing the site and respect the varied character of Sheet. Concern has been raised in representations about the overall density of development. There is a mix of densities within the surrounding area and the addition of these 3 dwellings would not create a significant impact in light of the surrounding built context and their prominence from public vantage points.
- 8.27 The scheme would remove all garden land for nos.13 & 13A. However, the removal of a large garage store immediately adjacent to no.13A is proposed to be removed to create new garden land. This aspect is not however included in the red line area of the application. This space would be smaller than surrounding gardens however, on balance, it would be a sufficient size.
- 8.28 A landscaping scheme has also been provided which shows an acceptable strategy from which more detailed hard and soft landscape treatment could be developed and provide a suitable setting.

Character and appearance of the dwellings

- 8.29 The design of the dwellings would respect the overall character of Sheet, which has a variety of styles and ages of properties. They would not have an overly 'fussy' appearance in terms of detail but do reflect architectural features seen in the village. Provided high quality materials are used their character and appearance could compliment the overall character of the village. Consideration of their impact upon neighbouring amenities has been considered at paragraph 8.21 above.
- 8.30 In addition, the ridge height of plot 2 would be 0.7m lower than no.14 School Lane, the closest neighbour, because of the alterations to the roof and the site's lower ground level, which reduce the impact. These 2 aspects would also create an acceptable relationship between plot 2 and no.13a School Lane. Obscure glazing is also proposed in the upper floor bathroom windows on the southern elevations of plots 1 and 2 to limit overlooking.
- 8.31 In regard to the relationship of the proposed dwellings with the adjacent scheme, the two storey dwellings would link in with the character of the adjacent approved dwellings. The closest approved dwelling on plot 1 is also a detached property of a similar appearance and scale and these three properties would relate well to one another which would help the two schemes 'knit' together. The bungalow would be a different style and scale of property but it would complement the character of the overall scheme and provide some variety.

Ecology and trees

- 8.32 No objection has been raised by the county ecologist or the arboricultural officer.

Dark Night Skies

- 8.33 Rooflights are not proposed in plots 1 and 2 and a single rooflight is proposed in plot 3. Concern is raised about the use of street lighting and low level bollard lighting could be more appropriate. This could however be conditioned if the application was recommended for approval.

Cultural Heritage

- 8.34 The conservation area boundary is along Farnham Road. In addition to the first national park purpose, paragraph 132 of the NPPF advises that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. Consideration has been given to the significance of the conservation area and its setting. In light of the proposed design and its context, it would not harm the setting of the conservation area. This view is supported by the Historic Buildings Officer.

Drainage

- 8.35 The proposals would link with the drainage of the adjacent scheme. This is a private drainage scheme will discharge into the Ashford Stream. The drainage engineer has not raised an objection. Suitable permeable paving would also be used to help manage surface water.

Affordable housing/contributions

- 8.36 The proposals do not include any affordable housing provision. Policy CP13 of the JCS sets out a target of 40% of all new dwellings to be provided as affordable housing in schemes which result in one or more net additional dwelling. Furthermore, it outlines that affordable housing will normally be provided on site and, on smaller sites (4 dwellings or less), where on-site provision is likely to be unsuitable a financial contribution or off site provision will be required.
- 8.37 Subsequent to the adoption of the JCS, a written Ministerial Statement and thereafter national planning guidance outlines that on site provision should not be sought on development of less than 10 dwellings but off-site contributions in lieu could be sought on schemes of between 6 to 10 dwellings in designated rural areas. There is a complexity between the Ministerial Statement and a recently adopted Development Plan (in this case the JCS) which is still being considered through case law, however, it is considered that the proposals conflict with policy CP13 of the JCS in regard to no provision towards affordable housing being proposed.
- 8.38 An Option Agreement to purchase the application site post-dates the granting of planning permission for the 11 dwelling scheme, which was subject to a separate Agreement with a different landowner. If these proposals had been included in the adjacent approved scheme, an additional affordable dwelling would have been required on site along with a further financial contribution for off- site provision, in line with the Development Plan and the Ministerial Statement.
- 8.39 As the site is outside of the SPB an affordable housing scheme could be more acceptable in principle in accordance with Policy CP14 of the JCS, given the proposals don't accord with Policy CP10. However, this type of scheme has not been proposed.
- 8.40 In light of the above considerations, a further reason for refusal relating to the provision of affordable housing is included in the recommendation.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The proposed development is outside of the defined settlement policy boundary for Sheet and, in the absence of a rural exception scheme, an open market housing scheme would not be acceptable because it does not meet policy CP10. No element of affordable housing has been proposed. The promotion of the site through the SHLAA in the draft Local Plan is noted although weight has been given to the current adopted and up to date planning policy. Notwithstanding the in principle concerns, the proposals are acceptable in terms of the overall design; impact on the character and appearance of Sheet; impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties; the setting of the conservation area; landscape; ecology; access and parking arrangements; and drainage. Furthermore, the addition of parking for School Lane residents would also be acceptable.
- 9.2 The issues raised with regard to this application are finely balanced. On the one hand the application site is surrounded by development on three sides and the scheme would integrate effectively with surrounding development without affecting the character of the village. Notwithstanding this, consideration must be given to policy CP10 and it is considered that the evidence before Officers does not demonstrate that there is clear community support for the scheme and, therefore, on balance, refusal is recommended for this reason. A further reason for refusal is also recommended in light of the considerations regarding the provision of affordable housing and policies CP13 and CP14 of the JCS.

10. Reason for Recommendation and Conditions

- 10.1 The application is recommended for refusal for the following reasons:
- I. The proposed dwellings would be outside of the defined settlement policy boundary of Sheet, which would result in an unjustified form of residential development in designated countryside. In the absence of clear community support for development outside the settlement policy boundary, the proposals would therefore be contrary to policies CP10 and CP19 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy 2014, the

National Planning Policy Framework, the South Downs Partnership Management Plan 2013 and the First Purpose of a National Park.

2. The proposed development would result in dwellings located outside of the settlement policy boundary of Sheet and it does not constitute a rural exception scheme for affordable housing which addresses a local need, nor does it provide a level of affordable housing required by the Development Plan. The proposed development is therefore contrary to policies CPI3 and CPI4 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (2014), the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), the English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and the statutory duty of the National Park.

11. Crime and Disorder Implication

- 11.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

12. Human Rights Implications

- 12.1 This planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

13. Equality Act 2010

- 13.1 Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

14. Proactive Working

- 14.1 In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the NPPF.

TIM SLANEY
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South Downs National Park Authority

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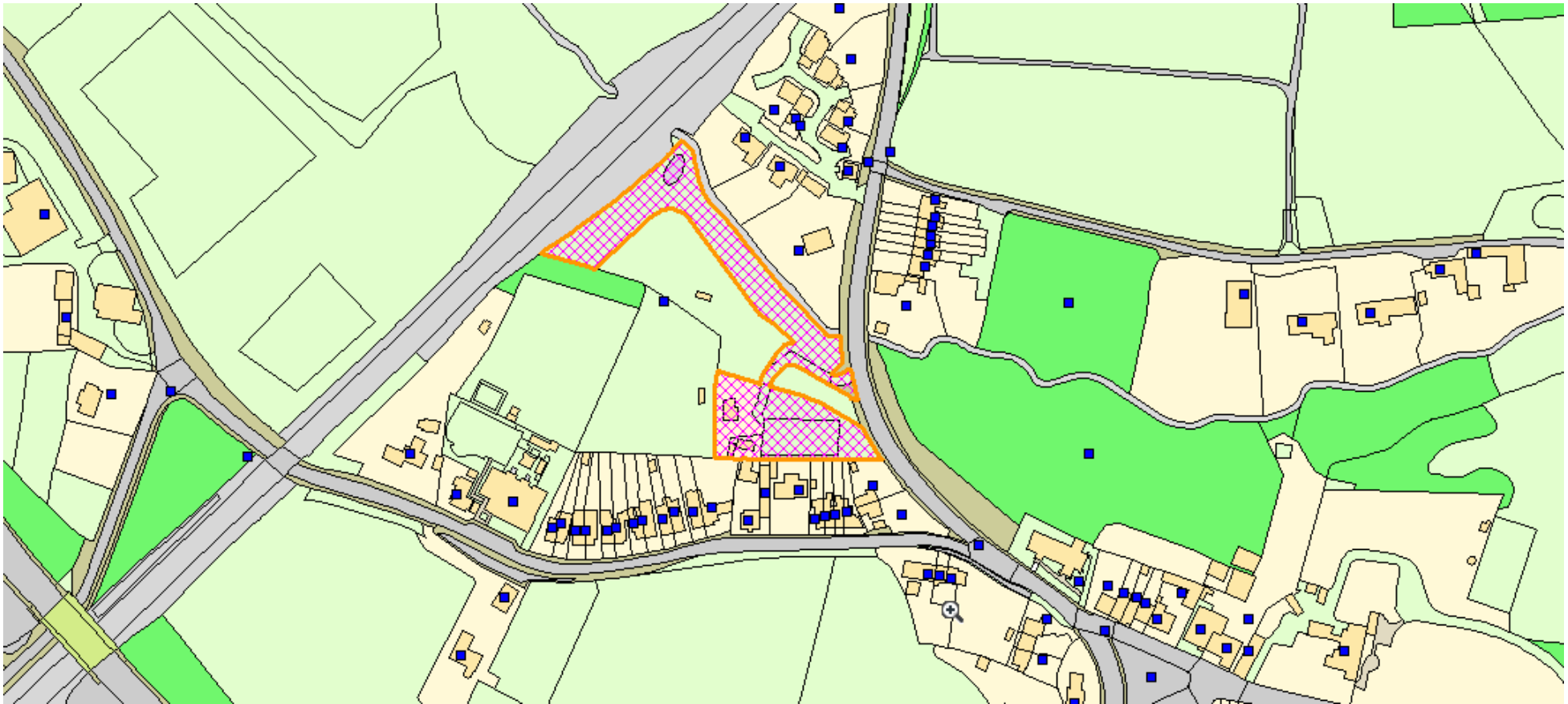
email: richard.ferguson@southdowns.gov.uk

Appendices
1. Site Location Map
2. Approved Layout of application SDNP/15/05485/FUL.
SDNPA
Legal Services, Development Manager.

Consultees

Background Documents
[All planning application plans, supporting documents, consultation and third party responses](#)
[National Planning Policy Framework \(2012\)](#)
[South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan 2013](#)
[South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2005 and 2011](#)

Agenda Item 14 Report PC22/17 Appendix I Site Location Map



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