

<b>Application Number:</b>	P/OUT/2023/01166		
<b>Webpage:</b>	<a href="https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/">https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/</a>		
<b>Site address:</b>	Land to the south of Ringwood Road Alderholt		
<b>Proposal:</b>	Mixed use development of up to 1,700 dwellings including affordable housing and care provision; 10,000sqm of employment space in the form of a business park; village centre with associated retail, commercial, community and health facilities; open space including the provision of suitable alternative natural green space (SANG); biodiversity enhancements; solar array, and new roads, access arrangements and associated infrastructure (Outline Application with all matters reserved apart from access off Hillbury Road)		
<b>Applicant name:</b>	Dudsbury Homes (Southern) Ltd		
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Ursula Fay		
<b>Ward Member(s):</b>	Cllr Tooke		
<b>Publicity expiry date:</b>	30 June 2023	<b>Officer site visit date:</b>	28 April 2023
<b>Decision due date:</b>	18 July 2023	<b>Ext(s) of time:</b>	n/a

**1.0** This application is taken to committee at the request of the Nominated Officer due to the scale of the proposal.

**2.0 Summary of recommendation:**

**REFUSE permission for the reasons set out at the end of this report.**

**3.0 Reason for the recommendation:**

- Adverse impacts on the Dorset Heathlands, New Forest, and Avon Valley Habitats sites which it has not been demonstrated can be mitigated
- Unsustainable development contrary to the settlement hierarchy
- Poor masterplanning and positioning of uses in particular proposed local centre
- Application is not accompanied by a sequential test or retail impact assessment
- Proposal would not deliver necessary education infrastructure
- Proposal would not make a policy-compliant contribution to affordable housing
- It has not been demonstrated there will not be unacceptable impacts on the highways network and highways safety

- Impacts on the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB have not been adequately identified and mitigated
- Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that surface water can be managed appropriately

#### 4.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Approach to application assessment and negotiation (16.1 – 16.4)	Not appropriate to extend time to enable additional negotiations. Applicant given chance to withdraw.
Principle of development (16.5 – 16.21)	Contrary to development plan and settlement hierarchy. However, the East Dorset area cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing and so the proposal is considered under paragraph 11 of the NPPF.
Emerging Policy (16.22 – 16.34)	Proposal is substantial and would represent a decision about the location of new development, which would have serious implications for the development of the spatial strategy. However, the draft Dorset Council Local Plan is not at an advanced stage so this cannot be a reason for refusal of the application. Very limited weight attached to emerging policy.
Deliverability (16.35 – 16.42)	Gaps in the submission create a lack of certainty over whether the scheme as a whole can be delivered. The applicant did not engage in pre-application advice with the Local Planning Authority. Significant weight placed on the failure to demonstrate a realistic prospect that housing completions will begin on site within five years. However individual aspects considered to ensure full assessment of the application and input to a planning balance exercise.
Cumulative Effects (16.43 – 16.45)	Environmental Statement does not assess cumulative effects of planning development within Fordingbridge and Ashford, resulting in uncertainty regarding effects of development, particularly in relation to transport and air quality.
Housing (16.46 – 16.52)	Proposal could deliver substantial number of homes, and based on the submitted trajectory could deliver 264 homes within the five-year supply. Very significant weight attached to potential longer-term benefits.
Green Belt (16.53 – 16.57)	Site is outside the Green Belt. No conflict with Green Belt policies. Impacts of development of this site on areas designated as Green Belt would require strategic review and so cannot be considered ahead of the plan-making process. Negligible weight attached to Green Belt impacts.
Affordable Housing (16.58 – 16.69)	Policy requires 50% affordable housing. Proposal is for 35% and this has not been justified. Viability Assessment submitted

Issue	Conclusion
	but key elements to input to this have not been agreed. Very significant weight attached to potential delivery of affordable housing. Significant weight attached to failure to demonstrate viability.
Housing for Vulnerable People (16.70 – 16.73)	Evidence of need for extra-care units. Applicant proposes 80 dwellings with mix of tenures. Afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
Housing Mix (16.74 – 16.83)	Housing mix acceptable and has the support of the housing team. Delivery of affordable family homes is a benefit of the scheme. Afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
Economic impacts – business park (16.84 – 16.88)	Evidence of need for employment uses and park could be conditioned to meet requirements of town centre uses policy. Significant weight attached to economic benefits from business park and creation of temporary construction jobs.
Economic impacts – local centre (16.89 – 16.95)	Sequential test and Retail Impact Assessment for proposed town centre uses has not been submitted. Impacts on existing and proposed centres cannot be understood. Moderate weight placed on potential adverse impacts.
Education (16.96 – 16.110)	Proposal to expand St- James First School has not been discussed with Local Education Authority, Department for Education or Regional Schools Commissioner. Not known whether proposal is achievable. New first school should be provided on site. Education needs to be delivered within Dorset’s three tier system. Very significant weight to failure to ensure sufficient school places are available.
Highways and Transport (16.111 – 16.161)	Substantial concerns regarding fundamental aspects of the submitted Transport Assessment particularly trip generation. Insufficient work submitted to demonstrate impacts and deliverability of improvement works. Proposed local centre not optimally located and uncertainty regarding deliverability. Bus service would have limited impacts due to dispersed patterns of travel and viability not demonstrated. Significant weight attached to failure to demonstrate highways impacts and mitigation.
Public Rights of Way (PRoW) (16.162 – 16.163)	Proposal would create pressures on PRoW and intensification of these is part of transport strategy. Applicant has agreed to financial obligations which could be secured through a legal agreement.
Sustainability (16.164 – 16.186)	The existing settlement of Alderholt is isolated and unsustainable. Proposal does not limit the need to travel or provide a genuine choice of transport modes. Although infrastructure is proposed it is not sufficient to make the proposal well supported by facilities and infrastructure. Very significant weight is attached to the unsustainable location and nature of the proposal.
Urban Design	Insufficient evidence and rationale to demonstrate that masterplanning of the proposal will create a development which

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
(16.187 – 16.202)	functions well in the long-term. Benefits do not outweigh defects. Significant weight is attached to poor design.
Public Art (16.203 – 16.204)	No requirement to deliver public art and so no weight is attached to suggested financial obligation.
Healthy Lifestyles and Communities (16.205 – 16.240)	Proposal would meet open space standards including allotments. Applicant has agreed to make identified financial contributions to sports. Approach to children and young people’s provision is not acceptable. Proposal would provide new doctor’s surgery to support development. Outstanding matters could be agreed through a legal agreement. Facilities are primary to mitigate the impacts of the development however could have some wider social benefits which are afforded modest weight.
Biodiversity (16.241 – 16.245)	Biodiversity Net Gain would be delivered and in advance of the activation of the Environment Act this is afforded significant weight.
Habitats Regulations and Appropriate Assessment (16.246 – 16.264)	Appropriate Assessment has identified adverse effects upon the integrity of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA), Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heaths Ramsar, and New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar. This forms a clear reason for refusal of the proposal.
Landscape and Visual Impacts (16.265 – 16.274)	Impacts on rural character and visual amenity would be largely confined to a localised area. Landscape sensitivity is low – medium. Limited weight attached to landscape impacts in the planning balance.
Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB (16.275 – 16.281)	Concerns regarding light pollution could be addressed through a condition. Concerns around specific impacts on the AONB arising from additional traffic and recreation have not been adequately evidenced or mitigated. Impacts not so significant as to warrant a clear reason for refusal but afforded moderate weight in planning balance.
Solar Array (16.282 – 16.287)	Solar array would be acceptable. Benefits arising are not considered intrinsically linked to the other elements of the application and so are afforded limited weight in the planning balance.
Flooding / Drainage (16.288 – 16.306)	Applicant has not provided level of technical information expected at outline stage. Upstream catchments have not been considered and the proposal may increase flood risk for third party land. Afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
Foul Drainage (16.306)	Foul drainage strategy agreed with Wessex Water.
Environmental Health (16.307 – 16.309)	Further information would be needed to accompany reserved matters and this could be secured via condition.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Air Quality (16.310 – 16.313)	Assumptions based on trip rates which are not accepted and does not take account of planned development. However it is unlikely that impacts (excepting Habitats sites) would be so significant as to warrant a reason for refusal and so limited weight is attributed in the planning balance.
Heritage and Archaeology (16.314 – 16.316)	Proposal would not have a significant impact on heritage assets. Further archaeological work required and would be best provided to inform outline decision. Although not ideal, this could be secured through condition and so limited weight is attached to this in the planning balance.
Trees (16.317 – 16.322)	Vast majority of trees are proposed to be retained. Loss of trees to create access is necessary but has been minimised. Impacts on trees afforded limited weight in the planning balance.
Minerals (16.323 – 16.327)	Site within minerals safeguarding area but condition could require investigation and extraction. Mitigation required to protect amenity of residents from minerals site at Bleak Hill in Hampshire. Potential impacts on minerals sites proposed through emerging policy in Hampshire can only be afforded very limited weight as it plans have not yet been submitted for examination.
Waste (16.328 – 16.330)	Condition could require minimisation of waste on site. Proposal would add pressure to current Household Waste Recycling Centres however there is not clear information regarding a necessary obligation so very limited weight is attributed to this.
Climate Change (16.331 – 16.334)	Assessment against the policies in the NPPF and the CED Local Plan is considered the correct method by which to address climate change. Climate change is not afforded weight separately but through the weighting of other issues throughout the report.
Amenity (16.335)	Impacts on neighbours could be avoided. A good standard of amenity for future residents could be provided, subject to detailed design. Amenity impacts from neighbouring minerals sites could be conditioned. Negligible weight attached to amenity impacts.
Street lighting (16.336)	Street lighting requirements could be considered through the reserved matters process.
Horses (16.337 – 16.338)	Impacts on adjacent stables could be addressed through condition. No bridleways are proposed to be closed. Some increase in traffic but also road closure on Ringwood Road. Very limited weight attributed to impacts on horses.
Other comments (16.339 – 16.341)	Other comments considered and attributed limited and no weight accordingly.
Conclusion and planning balance (16.342 – 16.355)	Very significant benefits are not collectively sufficient to outbalance the very significant adverse effects. Adverse

Issue	Conclusion
	impacts on Habitats sites form a clear reason for refusal of the proposal.
Additional Details (16.356)	Many reasons for refusal may be overcome if further details are submitted. Further planning balance exercise would be required but is unlikely to find benefits outbalance adverse impacts.

## 5.0 Description of Site

The site is located to the south and west of the village of Alderholt, and is 122ha in size. The majority of the site is within agricultural use, with fields separated by mature hedgerows and/or trees. To the north the site adjoins the existing settlement of Alderholt, with Ringwood Road adjoining the site to the north-east, then cutting through the site further south, creating two parcels. The eastern edge adjoins Hillbury Road. To the south and west lie agricultural land.

The parcel to the north-east of Ringwood Road includes three large agricultural fields to the north, and three smaller fields to the south. All fields are currently used for crops. Within these is a poultry house and some silos. The site has a gradual slope from north to south. The parcel abuts existing residential properties to the north at Hillbury Park, Saxon Way and Hazel Close. To the west and south-west of this parcel is the Alderholt Recreation Ground and play area. To the south-east the site is bounded to Foxhill Farm and Ringwood Road. A dwelling at Oak Tree Farm is excluded from the site area.

The majority of the parcel to the south-west of Ringwood Road is in agricultural use, and predominantly used for crops. The site includes Sleepbrook Farmhouse and some associated farm buildings. This parcel also slopes gradually from north to south.

The parcel is generally bounded to the north-east by Ringwood Road but extends to the south to exclude the Alderholt Riding & Livery Stables and some individual dwellings on Ringwood Road. The far east of this parcel includes an area of woodland extending to the west of Hillbury Road, where it adjoins a scouts' centre. To the south of the parcel is Warren Park Farm, and the related fishing lake. The southernmost boundary adjoins Plumley Forest. To the west the boundary adjoins further agricultural fields.

To the northwest corner the site includes land forming part of Cross Roads plantation, beyond which is further agricultural and wooded land. A PRoW cuts through the corner of the site here. Excluded from the site, positioned towards the north-west, is an existing solar farm. To the north of this parcel, the site adjoins a field with some existing properties along Ringwood Road.

A substantial number of trees are included within the site boundary, and a Tree Protection Plan has been submitted showing these. Of particular note are bands of protected trees forming field boundaries within the eastern parcel, and individually protected trees along Ringwood Road.

The prevailing pattern of development in the existing village of Alderholt is predominantly detached and semi-detached dwellings, with some small terraces. Dwellings are generally two-storey houses, with some groups of bungalows. These are arranged informally within a mixture of perimeter blocks and cul-de-sacs. Newer development tends to be on smaller plots however in general the density is relatively low.

Key facilities in Alderholt include:

- St James First School, approx. 300m north of the eastern parcel, 300m east of the western parcel
- Co-op / post office located approx. 70m to the north of the western parcel
- Community hall located approx. 70m to the north of the western parcel
- Recreation ground and play area adjoining the eastern parcel (to south-west)
- Churchill Arms pub approx. 250m north of the western parcel
- Various places of worship

All measurements taken from the closest edge of that parcel.

Further facilities are available in the town of Fordingbridge (New Forest District), approx. 3.7km from Alderholt; Verwood, approx. 6.1km and Ringwood approx. 7.2km. It is 18km to Salisbury, 20km to Wimborne and 23km to Totton. (all distances travel by road)

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located approx. 1.95km to the north-west. The New Forest National Park (NFNP) is approx. 4.1km to the east.

## **6.0 Description of Development**

The proposal is in outline with all matters except access reserved. Parameter plans and an indicative masterplan have been submitted. Vehicular access to the site would be from a new roundabout on Hillbury Road, and from a new junction where Ringwood Road enters the site to the north. Ringwood Road would be closed to the majority of traffic and a new primary route created looping through the development, crossing Ringwood Road to the south.

The proposed development would include:

- Up to 1,700 homes

These would be concentrated within fields to the north-east and south-west of Ringwood Road.

- 10,000sqm of employment space in the form of a business park

This would be located to the east of the site, adjoining Hillbury Road, to the south of the site access. The employment would fall within use class E (Commercial, Business & Service).

- Village centre with associated retail, commercial, community and health facilities

This would be located to the south of the site, just to the east of Ringwood Road, to be accessible from the new primary route. The village centre would include 4,000 sqm of Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) uses.

- Open space and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

An extension to the Alderholt Recreation Ground is proposed. This would be located to the north of the existing ground.

Areas of space for children/young people's play, natural and semi-natural greenspace are incorporated into the residential areas.

Two areas for allotments are proposed, a strip at the north of the site and at the centre to the north-west of the residential areas.

Three areas of SANG would be provided, 'Cross Roads Plantation SANG' to the north-west of the site would wrap around the existing solar array. This would include existing parts of the plantation.

'Alderholt Common SANG' would be provided to the south-west in existing agricultural fields. Connections are shown between this SANG and 'Cross Roads Plantation SANG'.

'Harbridge Drove' would be provided to the south-east of the site, to the north and south of Ringwood Road, adjacent to the scouts' centre.

- Biodiversity enhancements

Biodiversity enhancements are proposed to deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain.

**Solar Array** A 6.4h a solar array is proposed, to be situated to the west of the site.

## 7.0 Relevant Planning History

### Relevant planning history on this site

P/ESP/2022/07270 - Decision: Scoping Opinion Given - Decision Date:  
21/12/2022

Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report

### Relevant planning proposals on adjacent land

#### Land Adjacent Blackwater Close

3/13/1146/OUT - Decision: Refused - Decision Date: 24/02/2014

Erect a Residential Development of 25 dwellings, as amended on 24th February 2014



*This site of this proposal is a field situated to the north of the application site.*

### Solar Farms

3/14/0774/FUL - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 04/11/2014

Temporary 30 Year Change of Use from Agriculture to Agriculture and Solar photovoltaic Farm. Amended by 3/15/0380/NMC

*This solar farm is situated within a field which is excluded from the application site to the north. The access is via the PRow from Blackwater Grove.*

3/15/1020/FUL - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 17/12/2015

Proposed temporary (30 years) change of use from agriculture to agriculture and solar photovoltaic farm with associated static arrays of photovoltaic panels together with cabins to contain inverter cabinets and transformers, storage cabin and a cabin to house a substation, with perimeter fencing, trackways, landscaping and ecological enhancements.

*This solar farm site is to the south-west of the site, with access via a track through Warren Park Farm. Change of use was granted however the development was not implemented and has now lapsed.*

### Hawthorn's Nursery

3/16/1446/OUT - Decision: Refused - Decision Date: 11/11/2016

Outline planning permission for the demolition of The Hawthorns former horticultural nursery and bungalow and erection of up to 60 dwellings (including up to 50% affordable housing), introduction of structural planting and landscaping, informal public open space, surface water flood mitigation and attenuation, primary vehicular access off Ringwood Road, pedestrian access off Broomfield Drive and associated ancillary works. All matters to be reserved, with the exception of the site access points.

*This application on an adjacent site at the former Hawthorns Nursery was allowed on appeal. The site is situated to the north of Ringwood Road, south of Broomfield Drive / Fern Close, and west of the recreational ground's play area.*

### Alderholt Sports and Social Club

3/16/2370/FUL - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 06/09/2017

Demolition of existing social club and erection of new, in connection with the refurbishment and extension of existing changing rooms building to join the proposed new social club.

### Rifle Range

3/18/0568/FUL - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 10/10/2018

Change of Use of land from Rifle Range to general Scouting activities (camping). Recontour land, modify existing access and form car park.

3/19/0827/FUL - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 08/07/2019

Proposal for single storey Scout Group HQ building (Storage container and flagpole)

*The site for Scouting activities is located to the south-east of the application site boundary*

## **Applications sitting with Hampshire County Council**

### Hamer Warren Quarry

19/11326 - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 01/12/2021

Planning permission for an extension of mineral working at Hamer Warren Quarry, to extract some 600,000 tonnes of sand and gravel from Bleak Hill III, including works to create an extended haul road and back filling with inert material and progressive restoration to agriculture with increased nature

19/11325 - Decision: Granted - Decision Date: 01/12/2021

Variation of Condition 1 of Planning Permission 19/10014 to allow an extension of time for the working of minerals and the tipping of materials at Bleak Hill I and II until 31 December 2025

## **8.0 List of Constraints**

Outside settlement boundary of Alderholt

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) reference: - EDDC/AL/7; EDDC/AL/15; EDDC/AL/14; EDDC/AL/54; EDDC/AL/59; TPO/2022/0086

Adjacent Alderholt Recreation Ground

PROW – Public Right of Way: Bridleway E34/10 crosses the site

NG - National Grid Overhead Line LOVEDEAN - MANNINGTON - NURSLING  
Operating 400; - Distance: 41.13

NG - National Grid Tower 10021184.0 (height 55.11); - Distance: 113.71

NG - National Grid Tower 10018774.0 (height 48.92); - Distance: 48.81

NG - National Grid Tower 10018946.0 (height 45.69); - Distance: 242.95

NG - National Grid Tower 10021183.0 (height 45.77); - Distance: 423.73

NG - National Grid Tower 10020329.0 (height 69.93); - Distance: 469.16

SGN - Medium pressure gas pipeline 25m or less from Medium Pressure Pipelines  
(75mbar - 2 bar); - Distance: 0

Parts of site at risk of Surface Water Flooding

Parts of the site at risk of Groundwater Emergence

Dorset Heathlands SPA/SAC – partially within 400m buffer, partially within 5km  
buffer

Avon Valley SPA/SAC - Distance: 1595m

New Forest SPA/SAC - Distance: 3520m

Sleepbrook Farm Site of nature conservation interest (SNCI) adjacent

Scheduled Monument: Length of deer park bank and ditch at Alderholt (List Entry:  
1002394); - Distance: 446.92

Within Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Area

Parts of site within Contaminated Land register

## 9.0 Consultations

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

### Consultees

#### **Natural England**

- Cannot confirm there will not be adverse effects on the integrity of:
- Dorset Heathlands SPA/Ramsar and Dorset Heaths SAC
- River Avon SAC, Avon Valley Ramsar
- New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar

#### *River Avon*

- Full assessment of nutrient phosphate has not been provided
- No certainty that agreed and deliverable mitigation mechanism in place

#### *New Forest recreational impacts*

- 13.8km zone of influence proposed around New Forest
- Additional measures required over and above the measures in the Dorset Heathlands SPD
- The site is c. 3km from the New Forest
- There will be a likely significant effect without mitigation

#### *New Forest air quality impacts*

- Air pollution modelling is inadequate
- Uncertainty surrounding interim measures set out in the Interim Air Quality Strategy
- Advise unable to conclude there will not be an adverse effect either alone or in-combination

#### *Dorset Heathlands*

- SANG management plan ok in principle but more details needed. Size, profiling and management of SuDS and other waterbodies. Details of enhancement to ensure SANG quality is suitable. Active management of Cross Roads Plantation.
- The three SANG areas could provide capacity for the proposed development
- Cross Roads plantation would intercept existing public pressures
- More information on phasing needed
- Mechanisms do not include sufficient detail to allow Natural England to confirm that the mitigation will be secured. Proposed mechanisms should be narrowed to a preferred option.
- Concern re. risk of public access westwards to Cranborne Common and Ringwood Forest. Barrier should be constructed - land outside site boundary suggested for this.
- Financial contribution towards SAMM (Strategic Access Management and Monitoring) would be appropriate in accordance with the Dorset Heathlands SPD
- Strong objection to Transport Assessment referencing provision of access to Ringwood Forest and Cranborne Common. This proposal has not been considered as part of the shadow Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

#### *Other matters*

- Lighting Strategy will be needed to avoid impacts to bats and nightjars
- Visitor management measures in adjoining forestry will be needed to avoid adverse impacts on rare reptiles and breeding goshawks
- Concur with the advice of the Dorset Natural Environment Team (NET) dated 28/4/23
- Advise the Council to take full account of the matters raised by the AONB Partnership as they relate to the AONB

### **Historic England - comments**

- Several bronze age barrows within woodland south of Alderholt and Cranborne Common
- No highly graded designated heritage assets within application site
- Potential for proposal to impact on unidentified archaeological sites
- Broadly agree with proposals set out in Written Scheme of Investigation
- Programme of works should be agreed in consultation with the Local Authority Archaeologist
- Designated assets in the vicinity of the site include scheduled Bronze Age round barrows and medieval Deer Park boundary
- Proposed development would not have a significant impact on the settings of these assets and would not require further detailed assessment
- However any unidentified assets within the site would have their own setting
- Recommend that the local authority's conservation and archaeology advisers are closely involved throughout the preparation of the application impact assessments

### **Sport England – objection (initial consultation)**

- Additional population will generate additional demand for sports facilities
- Insufficient information on the sports facilities that will be delivered by the development
- Sport Facilities Calculator can help to provide an indication of likely demand and provides a robust justification for requesting contributions. It is for Dorset to decide what level of contribution would be sought towards which typology.
- Existing issues with built facilities in the area include lack of indoor spaces, shortage of pool space, limited gym and dance offers.
- There are shortfalls in youth grass pitches and in full size 3G pitches

### **Sport England – objection withdrawn (re-consultation)**

- Contributions offered towards sports is very generous and more than can be justified
- Unclear where contributions would be spent
- Possibility of a Local Leisure Centre
- Applicant has addressed Sport England's concerns
- Absence of objection does not constitute support

### **National Highways – holding objection**

- Primary concern relates to the A31 trunk road, particularly the A31/Verwood Road junction
- Since the Transport Assessment was written in October 2022 the Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 02/2013 has been superseded by DfT Circular 01/2022, this should be referred to within any updated assessment
- Agree that the majority of everyday needs are currently met by car travel to neighbouring settlements
- The current infrequent 2 hourly community bus service does not assist in reducing private car travel
- It is noted that an hourly bus service is proposed however a more frequent bus service should be considered, particularly during the weekday peak hours
- Collisions at the A31/Verwood Road junction all occurred in a similar manner which highlights the importance of ensuring that the proposed highways works are sufficient and suitable
- Assumed residential trip generation is low and the weekday peaks would be expected to be 0.5-0.65 per dwelling rather than the assumed 0.3-0.35
- A robust sensitivity test is needed for the A31/Verwood Road junction including only minimal levels (5-10%) of internalisation flows within the site
- The Transport Assessment shows 252 bus trips in the morning peak hour however it is not clear how this would be achieved with the proposed hourly bus service
- Reduction in car trips appears to be overly optimistic
- Trip distribution and assignment are accepted
- Model files for the junction operation assessments undertaken for the A31/Verwood Road junction are required
- Assessment of the A31/Verwood Road junction for the development year of opening is needed. Further information on traffic growth and flows may also need to follow on from this
- Further evidence needed to demonstrate that the proposed A31/Verwood Road junction layout is compliant and acceptable to National Highways
- Detailed design comments on the A31/Verwood Road junction scheme design plan are provided which need to be addressed (11 issues identified which can be read in full within the response saved on the planning portal)
- Modelling files and a revised scheme and required before the scheme can progress to a Road Safety Audit
- Recommend Dorset Council do not grant permission for a period of 6 months

### **Environment Agency – no objection**

- Subject to conditions regarding water efficiency and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

### **Highways Authority – objection (initial consultation)**

- Alderholt is a village in a rural area, the nearest small towns are Fordingbridge, Verwood and Ringwood – major towns and urban centres are much further away
- This dispersed pattern of settlements means that most car journeys are longer compared to an edge of town/settlement development
- Alderholt has very few alternatives to the private car – no rail service, no bus service, very limited community bus
- The village is not close enough to walk or cycle to nearby settlements nor is there the provision of safe, all-weather routes to these settlements
- The NPPF supports sustainable travel which is needed to assist in meeting net zero targets
- Significant /majority numbers of trips from the development would be longer-distance and car based to dispersed urban centres
- Information on phasing needed to understand how travel behaviours might be embedded with new residents. Early delivery of employment, education and services would be needed to encourage new residents to use alternative travel modes to the car from the beginning.
- The feasibility of 100% trips to secondary school by bus is not accepted
- Proposed hourly bus service not consistent with Dorset's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) – a regular connection to Fordingbridge would be preferable (where existing links can be connected to)
- Evidence is needed to demonstrate a bus service can become self-sufficient after 5 years
- Bus service is not frequent enough to meet the needs of commuters
- Rural character of roads makes them unsuitable to carry increased traffic
- Existing PRoWs are not suitable for use during inclement weather and would only be used for fair weather leisure trips
- Cycling on B, C and D class roads will only be for keen and competent cyclists and is outside of recommended cycling distances
- Details of the access are not reserved. The submitted Road Safety Audit (RSA) identifies issues which need to be resolved as part of this application.
- The swept path analysis does not demonstrate that all vehicles can safely undertake manoeuvres
- The spine road is too narrow (4.8m) for the entrance to a development of this scale, the internal spine road (a reserved matter) would need to be 6.7m to accommodate a bus route

- Pedestrian footway improvements and advisory cycle lanes are proposed which would be acceptable if LTN1/20 compliant
- A TRO will be needed (at the developer's expense) to extend the 30mph limit along Hillbury Road
- The trip internalisation assumptions are flawed and have not been fully agreed with the Highways Authority
- The assumed levels of trip internalisation will impact on the assessment of impacts on junctions which will require reassessment
- The low level of submitted details (no topographic surveys) mean there cannot be complete confidence that proposed widening and mitigation can be delivered
- There is no consideration of impacts of construction traffic in the TA – a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) would be required
- Travel Plan needs to take realistic impacts into account e.g. trip internalisation may not be as high as assumed hence greater traffic generation. The Travel Plan will need to include mitigation measures to ensure that new residents are not totally car dependent and are fully aware of the alternative travel modes available to them
- Overall TA provides insufficient detail to consider impacts fully and seeks to resolve these matters at a future date – this approach is unacceptable

### **Highways Authority – objection (re-consultation)**

- Submitted Infrastructure Delivery Plan further confirms reliance on private car
- Residential occupancies completed in advance of facilities will embed travel behaviour with new residents
- Construction Traffic Management Plan (CEMP) and Travel Plans could be conditioned
- Access is not a reserved matter and road safety audit issues for Hillbury Road Roundabout need to be considered now. There is not surety that safe and appropriate access can be achieved
- Ringwood Road priority junction is overly complicated, priority junction would be safer and more legible
- Off-site highways works acceptable in principle but surety is needed that they can be delivered. Details of individual works on an accurate survey base needed to demonstrate this
- Concerns regarding sustainability were explained in the previous response
- Regardless of level of self-containment, a large proportion of trips will be external, car-based and medium to long distance. This is because the development is not in a sustainable location from a transport perspective. These problems would not exist if the development location was closer to a



larger settlement with a greater range of services which people could access via a choice of modes

- Extra evidence of operator engagement for public transport is noted however concerns remain around the bus service
- Dispersed nature of trip patterns resulting from the isolated situation mean that peak hours would be difficult to cater for through public transport
- Hourly frequency and limited destinations will be unattractive alternative for majority of frequent regular trips. If the hourly service cannot be maintained a two-hourly service would be even less acceptable
- One operator's view from a bus company without a proven track record of delivering commercial services locally
- Estimated £704,911 contribution for 5 years is insufficient to support service as described. 7 year support would be more appropriate to length of build-out
- Contributions would be needed to bus stop infrastructure
- Welcome the commitment to provide a free annual pass to each household and discounted pass thereafter
- Discussions regarding transport of school children to schools in other settlements should be undertaken with the Education service and Dorset Travel

#### **Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) – objection (initial consultation)**

- Site is within Flood Zone 1
- Buildings not proposed within areas at Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW)
- RoSWF mapping does not show flood extents along all drainage lines, likely due to lines not being detected by the model. This does not mean there will be no surface water flow / flooding
- Flood risks from upstream catchments have not been adequately assessed or addressed
- Attenuation basin '2' is not sufficient in size to accommodate upstream catchment
- Infiltration is proposed as the preferred method of disposal of surface water run-off but has not been tested. Groundwater monitoring needs to be carried out to demonstrate that the strategy is viable. This would need to include monitoring over a winter period.

#### *Objections due to:*

- The flood risk to part of the proposed development from an upstream catchment.
- The potential increase in flood risk from the site affecting third-party land.

### **Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) – objection (re-consultation)**

- Outline application should show indicative flows through development as part of the masterplanning
- Calculations for QBAR rate (mean annual flood) should be submitted. Indicative values are in excess of approximate QBAR rates for the Dorset area
- Climate change allowance has been addressed
- It is not clear how the upstream flow will be managed/routed to bypass the proposed attenuation basin

*Continued objections due to:*

- The flood risk to part of the proposed development from an upstream catchment.
- The potential increase in flood risk from the site affecting third-party land.

### **Local Education Authority (LEA) (initial consultation)**

- A development of 1700 qualifying houses would require:
  - Early Years/KS1/KS2 – 221 places
  - Upper KS2 and KS3 – 191 places
  - Upper KS3 & KS4 – 143 places
  - Post 16 – 67 places
- Dorset Council will look to provide for these children through extension of the existing educational structures in East Dorset
- For the First/Primary aged children – the existing St James Alderholt First school would be used and in addition a 2ha (minimum depending on topography) school site should be secured on the new housing development
- Developer contributions would be sought to ensure that there is sufficient capacity at both Emmanuel Middle and Cranborne Middle to support the additional children in Upper KS2 and KS3
- Post 16, Dorset would use developer contributions towards ensuring sufficient provision across the appropriate institutions in East Dorset
- Total contribution of £9,996,595 - £5,880.35 per qualifying unit

### **Local Education Authority (LEA) (re-consultation) – verbal advice**

- It is not accepted that there is capacity to meet the needs of this development at existing schools.
- Developer's proposals for redevelopment of St James First School include a standard design building, building appears acceptable.
- The St James site is too small for a primary school, it would need to be 2ha. To change this school to a primary it would need to move to a new site big enough to accommodate it.
- St James is an academy so there is limited control over it from the LEA. It is not possible for the LEA to agree changes to this school.
- Consent would be needed from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Regional Schools Commissioners (RSC) for St James to become a primary and for any change in size.
- More work would need to be done and due process followed. The DfE would look closely at the impacts on other schools and the three tier education system.
- The LA believes that a new school site – large enough for 2 FE provision would be required – with the existing institution moving to the site when numbers warranted it.
- Additional support from the developer to ensure Middle and Upper School capacity will be required.
- The movement of the new school from one site to another – though subject to approval of the DFE/RSC – may be less complex – though the phase change from First School to Primary School will still be subject to consultation and RSC/DFE approval – significant change legislation.
- Significantly more work would need to be done to demonstrate the applicant's proposed education approach is deliverable. Without a school on-site, and if St James cannot be extended, expansions would be necessary at schools in other settlements with school transport provided – which is not viable for this age range.
- An education plan that focuses on the Dorset system to provide is required at this stage. Subsequent to that more detailed discussions will have to be had with the Trust and the DFE/RSC if any changes involve a new school in addition to the St James and any change in Phase (First to Primary).

### **Minerals Planning Authority**

- Site almost entirely within Mineral Safeguarding Area
- Applicants acknowledge likely presence of mineral across the site and suggest this could supply aggregate demands of the development, minimising HGV movements
- The Minerals Planning Authority are supportive of the onsite reuse of aggregates however the process may not be straightforward

- The planning statement does not explain how aggregate would be processed to bring it to a suitable quality
- Options for the process are considered and issues identified, it is unlikely the aggregates can be used onsite to the level suggested without some kind of lorry impacts
- Condition recommended

### **Waste Planning Authority**

- The applicant should demonstrate compliance with Policy 22 of the Waste Plan – that waste arising from construction can be minimised, that there will be adequate facilities to store and sort waste on site, and that there is adequate capacity at sewage treatment facilities.

### **Planning Policy**

- The location of the development is outside the policy envelope of Alderholt and development would be contrary to saved policy A1
- The scale of development would elevate Alderholt to a higher tier in the Local Plan's settlement hierarchy (rather than conforming to it) and would not be consistent with Alderholt's function as a 'Rural Service Centre'
- The scale of development at a settlement in the fourth tier of the settlement hierarchy and outside existing urban areas (predominantly on greenfield land) would not be consistent with the proposed broad location and scale of development in the Local Plan
- The proposed overall level and mix of affordable housing is not policy-compliant
- East Dorset has a lack of a five-year housing land supply and the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF, is engaged
- A housing trajectory is needed to understand how the proposal could contribute to the five year supply however the need to implement mitigation and extract minerals may require significant lead-in times

### **Housing**

- Policy requirement is 50% affordable housing, a robust viability case has not been submitted. The application is not compliant as 50% affordable housing is not proposed.
- Affordable and market housing needs to be integrated, appropriately clustered and 'tenure blind'
- Housing mix for affordable rented is not acceptable

## **Conservation**

- Confirmed no impacts on heritage assets (buildings)

## **Archaeology**

- Desk assessment and geophysical survey are adequate
- Trial trenching is required before an informed planning decision can be made

## **Urban Design (initial consultation)**

- Further consideration needed of how the development would link with the existing settlement of Alderholt
- Further consideration needed to rationalise a clear vision and identity for the development
- Further consideration of climate adaptation and sustainability considerations
- Scheme should be designed to give walking and cycling the highest priority, with safe and attractive routes into Alderholt. Plans to redesign these roads to encourage active travel is supported from a design perspective.
- New village square is less accessible for existing dwellings towards the north of Alderholt. Further consideration needed to demonstrate where this new space could support economic and social activity and integrate the community.
- Play provision is well dispersed but there is an over-reliance on LAPs which offer limited play value. Fewer but larger play spaces needed.
- Consideration of design for young people
- Density parameter plans do not offer variation or contribute to character areas
- Design Code is missing key components and is overly general. Specific criteria are needed.

## **Urban Design (re-consultation)**

- Not convinced local centre is 'within 1,200m' of almost all homes in Alderholt. A radius map showing walking distances to new and existing facilities should be provided
- As well as distance to the local centre, the quality of routes is important as well. It is important to ensure that key routes prioritise walking and cycling
- Location of employment space appears to be encouraging the use of the private car

## **Landscape**

- Site within the Heath/Forest Mosaic Dorset Landscape Character Type
- Currently has an open, rural and agricultural character
- Sites assessed within Dorset Council East Dorset and Purbeck Areas Landscape & Heritage Study – Landscape sensitivity of eastern parcel assessed as low to medium; Landscape sensitivity of western parcel assessed as moderate
- Submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment accepted in general
- Agree that visibility of the proposed development would be largely confined to a localised area
- Agree potential landscape and visual impacts can be mitigated through the SANG, public open space and significant amounts of tree planting
- The strategy relies upon issues being satisfactorily resolved at the reserved matters stage
- Design Code does not include sufficient information to demonstrate that the landscape led vision would be achieved

## **Trees**

- Majority of trees are being retained and could be effectively protected during construction
- Ringwood Road has a distinctive character arising from the large number of maturing oaks growing directly next to it. Two prominent trees are proposed to be felled to facilitate a bridge between the two residential areas. It is not clear if this loss could be prevented through a different route.
- If the loss cannot be prevented then mitigation is needed to retain the country road aesthetic
- Details of work site access needed to ensure canopies are not damaged or removed to enable access. Arboricultural method statement needed
- Further details will be needed at reserved matters stage to understand relationships and approach to tree planting

## **Economic Development**

- The population of Dorset is becoming skewed, with increases in over 65s and declines in people of working age and children
- Houses people can afford to rent/buy and well paid jobs to pay for them have to go somewhere

- Confirmed there is a need for employment uses in this part of East Dorset and it would be attractive to local businesses

### **Environmental Protection**

- Noise assessment of proposed employment uses will be required
- Some Class E uses may have impacts on amenity which would need to be assessed
- Conditions recommended regarding further assessments and opening hours, contaminated land, lighting, construction management and heat pumps
- Noise assessments of minerals sites within Hampshire may also be required at reserved matters

### **Dorset Natural Environment Team – Dorset Heathlands**

- Proposed SANG appears to adequately mitigate against harm to Dorset Heathlands
- Detailed SANG design advice provided

### **Dorset Natural Environment Team – Biodiversity**

- Habitats and protected species surveys comply with best practice
- Areas away from recreational areas will be needed to mitigate impacts on protected species
- Conditions recommended – Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (LEMP); Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP); Lighting strategy

### **Dorset Waste**

- The road network is not free flowing and that there are too many cul de sacs

### **Commercial Waste & Strategy**

- Proposed development would add pressure to current Household Waste Recycling Centres

- There may be a need for additional infrastructure to accommodate future needs

### **Street Lighting**

- Advice given on adoptable standards and details to be considered at reserved matters.

### **Highways Asset Management**

- Use of roads off the B3078 to access the site with heavy plant, and construction materials may cause accelerated deterioration of the carriageway, given the limited construction in these roads.
- A pre road condition assessment should be carried out, and an agreement to reassess the road condition post construction with a requirement of the applicant to fund any repairs identified.

### **Public Health**

- Support aspects of the proposed development including energy efficient development, provision of greenspace, development of community hub and aspiration to minimise car use
- Further information welcomed in relation to food growing opportunities, parking and travel and cycling infrastructure
- Allotments do not meet minimum standards
- Improved bus service will be essential
- GP service essential
- Community space in Alderholt needed
- Minimum space standards should be met
- Housing types and tenures should be spread evenly through the development
- More detail needed on how the design of open space will meet the needs of residents
- Scheme should consider routes to providing employment for local people

### **Rights of Way**

- Contribution needed towards projects to mitigate extra pressures on rights of way



### **Alderholt Parish Council**

- Outside village envelope and out of keeping with scale of existing village
- Densities would harm the existing open character along Hillbury and Ringwood Roads
- Adequate housing land supply elsewhere in Dorset
- Poor public / sustainable transport to Fordingbridge
- Proposed infrastructure would not be able to support development, a greater population would be required
- Schools may be over-subscribed
- No evidence businesses would be attracted to employment land
- Unacceptable highways and drainage impacts
- Proposed SANG does not comply with guidelines
- Adverse impacts of solar farm

### **Cranborne Parish Council**

- Travel Assessment and Plan are flawed
- Cranborne Middle School has not been consulted on plans - a detailed study of the effect of the development on existing schools is required
- More information is needed on phasing for medical centre

### **Fordingbridge Town Council**

- Proposal should come through Local Plan process
- Transport & Flood Risk Reports inadequate
- Fordingbridge does not have sufficient infrastructure and is not self-contained
- Proposal should be called in by SoS
- Consideration alongside gravel removal at Midgham required

### **Hale Parish Council**

- Proposal would more than double the size of Alderholt
- Concerns regarding impacts of traffic on Fordingbridge
- Ringwood Road known to be dangerous, no provision to make this road safer
- Roger Penny Way from Fordingbridge to the Cadnam Roundabout is used by commuters to Southampton in preference to the A31. A well-known road for

animal deaths caused by traffic collisions. 1700 houses in Alderholt would increase traffic on this route

### **Hyde Parish Council**

- Increase would put strain on Fordingbridge and the services therein
- Health Centre could become a branch of the Fordingbridge practice however staffing is not guaranteed
- Hampshire County Council is not obliged to find places for Dorset pupils
- Concerns regarding traffic to and through Fordingbridge, increases in air pollution and adding to hazards on narrow roads/pavements
- Accidents on the road through the New Forest to Southampton, the M27 and M3
- Insufficient assessment of the adverse impacts of recreational use of the New Forest
- Environmental Statement does not take sufficient account of impacts on New Forest and SANG mitigation cannot compensate for long term harm

### **Hampshire County Council (HCC)**

#### *Highways*

- Site very close to Hampshire County boundary and impacts on roads in Hampshire
- Local facilities in Alderholt are limited with poor public transport and cycle links
- Concerns about deliverability of proposed cycle route to Fordingbridge via Hillbury Road and Midgham Lane, contribution requested
- Midgham Lane and Ashford Road are not considered safe for cycling as they are narrow and unlit
- The proposal will not reduce the need to travel by private car or provide sustainable transport opportunities.
- Issues identified with methodology and assumptions in Transport Assessment (TA)
- Personal Injury Accident (PIA) Data needs to be updated to the most recent 5-year period
- Trip rates used in the TA are not realistic and do not reflect averages used elsewhere in Fordingbridge and Ringwood. Vehicle movements would be significantly greater than forecast
- Approach of 'internalisation' not justified

- Traffic distribution assumptions are not accepted
- Traffic impacts in Fordingbridge, particularly impacts on junction in Provost Street, have not been correctly and adequately addressed. Nor would mitigation proposal be adequate. Would have a severe impact on Hampshire's highway network
- Swept path analysis shows some areas where vehicles cannot pass. Widening is proposed but insufficient information is submitted to demonstrate this is achievable

#### *Education*

- Development would generate 289 additional secondary age children (60 per year group – 2 forms of entry) based on Hampshire's demographics
- 183 secondary age children will be generated through developments allocated within New Forest DC area [in Fordingbridge]
- Burgate school has historically accepted students from Dorset
- Hampshire CC cannot confirm availability at Burgate School
- Discussions would need to take place to identify if the school can be expanded and the approach that Dorset Council intend to take regarding the secondary age impact from this development
- Further information is needed

#### *Public Rights of Way*

- Application does not propose to protect and enhance the PROW network or demonstrate safety for users of PROWs
- Financial contributions sought towards protection and enhancement of the PROW network

#### *Minerals and Waste*

- Site adjoins existing and proposed minerals sites at Bleak Hill
- Current and potential minerals sites need to be protected from pressures arising from other development including where nearby land uses impact their ability to continue operating
- Mitigation measures would to be provided by a developer of adjacent uses to prevent this
- The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan – Partial Update has recently been through the Regulation 18 Draft Plan stage. Within the Draft Plan are three proposed site allocations within close proximity to the proposed development site – Midgham Farm, Cobley Wood and Hammer Warren Quarry

- Previous responses from NFDC on consultations undertaken on the CED joint Local Plan and Dorset Council Local Plan addressed proposals for growth options at Alderholt. The submitted planning application has not addressed many of these concerns
- The NFDC Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy sets out significant development growth at Fordingbridge and Ashford. This includes three strategic sites totalling planned development for at least 870 homes
- It is essential that planned development within the Fordingbridge area is fully taken into account
- NFDC endorses the response from HCC and shares concerns raised
- Proposal would not encourage active travel or sustainable transport
- Alderholt is not an accessible location
- Increases in vehicle movement would impact character and amenity of Fordingbridge, Ashford and Harbridge Drove
- Concerns about trip rates - if Air Quality Assessment is based on the Transport Assessment it significantly underestimates potential vehicle movements and therefore the impact on local air quality.
- The consultant has failed to have regard to the Fordingbridge monitoring presented in the Air Quality Annual Status Report 2022
- Work undertaken by NFDC with HCC concluded there are sufficient spaces at the Burgate School to meet needs from planned development in Fordingbridge. This was subject to students from outside Hampshire being excluded.
- NFDC endorse the response from NFNPA regarding recreational and air quality impacts on sensitive habitats in the New Forest. NFDC considers it would not be possible to conclude that likely significant effects would not occur. Suitable mitigation would need to be secured
- Impacts on the River Avon need to be identified and mitigated
- Concerns regarding impacts on the rural character and visual amenity of the countryside in New Forest District
- Access route would result in removal of trees, combined with scale of works to form roundabout would have a significant impact on the rural character of Hillbury Road
- Access works are likely to expose the development to views from land to the east.
- Lack of parameters proposed for scale of commercial/industrial buildings is a concern
- Planning system should be plan-led and this site should be promoted through the local plan process to enable opportunities for public scrutiny
- Concerns regarding infrastructure to support the scale of development proposed
- Fails to address local environmental and cross-boundary impacts in New Forest District

### **New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) (Initial consultation)**

- Application site is less than 5km from the New Forest National Park
- Site is within 13.8km 'zone of influence' for recreational pressures on New Forest SPA. The National Park Authority does not support the position that recreational impacts on the New Forest can be addressed through measures set out in the Dorset Heathlands SPD
- The Dorset Heathlands Framework does not deliver mitigation measures within the New Forest
- Potential air quality impacts on the New Forest SAC/SPA cannot be scoped out at HEA stage. Uncertainty remains around the impacts of in-combination traffic growth and related air pollution – the precautionary principle should be applied
- Major projects are best considered through the plan-making process rather than through speculative applications

### **New Forest National Park Authority (NFNPA) (re-consultation)**

- In-combination effects from other plans and projects, including those in other planning authorities, need to be considered when carrying out an assessment of the impacts on air quality under the Habitats Regulations
- Further clarification on the sites taken into consideration when assessing in-combination effects required

### **Cranborne Chase AONB Partnership**

- The AONB is an International Dark Sky Reserve and the visibility of stars, particularly the milky way, is a key attribute of the AONB
- Light pollution is a key concern
- Lighting in this location would need to comply with Environmental Lighting Zone E1
- Concern that submission has focussed on visual interrelationships between the site and AONB
- Every dwelling should have at least one bird, one bat and one bee box in line with the AONB Partnership's Position Statement on Biodiversity Net Gain
- Proposal ought to come through the local plan process due to its strategic scale
- Affordable housing is welcomed
- Increases in operational traffic in Cranborne of 25% shown in TA, but no mitigation for these impacts on the AONB proposed

- Impacts on AONB understated with no mention of damage to verges and pollution
- Doctor's surgery should be constructed and operational before 50 dwellings occupied
- Concern around solar array and cumulative effects
- Too many details left to reserved matters
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) is primarily focussed on ecological matters with very little attention to landscape
- LEMP should be redrafted
- Implementation of LEMP is vague and management company may collapse
- Fine line between naturalist management and neglect

### **NHS Hampshire & IOW**

- Development would generate estimated population of 4,080 residents
- Alderholt would more than double in size and the population profile would change
- As the proposal is not in a plan it has not been considered when planning infrastructure requirements
- The existing building operated by the Fordingbridge Surgery is not suitable
- It is expected that most if not all new residents would register with the Fordingbridge Surgery
- A new purpose-built GP surgery is needed, it makes sense for this to be a branch of the Fordingbridge Surgery
- A 600sqm building is needed, to be delivered in two phases
- Initial discussions have been on the assumption that a new branch surgery would be built and fitted out to required standards, then transferred to the NHS to be used in perpetuity for health care delivery

### **Dorset Police**

- Objection – no information on how security will be addressed
- Potential to increase crime

### **Dorset Fire & Rescue**

- Guidance on building regulations requirements provided

### **Bournemouth Water**

- No response received.

### **Wessex Water**

- Foul water capacity has been assessed and upgrades identified. Payment towards these (via Wessex Water's charging arrangements) would be made if the proposal was consented
- Proposed foul water drainage strategy is noted
- Improvements at Fordingbridge Water Recycling Centre (2025-2030) will take into place planned development within the catchment
- LLFA to comment of surface water strategy
- Surface and foul water systems can be offered for adoption to Wessex Water
- Existing sewer along Ringwood Road must be taken into consideration in any detailed layout

### **Ramblers**

- Would like further consultation on any proposed changes to PRow

### **East Dorset Environmental Partnership**

- Object to impacts on Bakers Hanging Junction being left to reserved matters
- Proposals would destroy an existing ecological network
- Prior mineral extraction would affect noise, dust, drainage and habitats
- Eastern SANG is not suitable
- Assessment of current recreational impacts on Cranborne Common is inadequate
- Soil carbon has not been addressed
- No information on disposal of unwanted clay or needs to import material if land is excavated
- Proposal would double size of Alderholt
- Proposal should provide 50% affordable housing
- Question suitability of care home location
- No phasing plan submitted
- Too much technical work proposed for a later stage in the planning process
- Shortfalls in housing supply due to requirement for nutrient neutrality
- Proposal may not be deliverable due to unresolved issues
- Limitations of survey work
- No assessment of the impact of solar farm on nightjars
- No information on what will happen to farm buildings and tracks

- ES has not included cumulative impacts from all consented applications in the area
- Insufficient groundwater testing, existing surface water flooding issues
- Ecology reports have not considered impact of prior extraction of minerals
- Limitations of ecology surveys
- Buffers needed for retained hedgerows
- Bat corridors need to be 15m as set out in ecological work but are only shown as 10m
- Survey needs to continue to other side of Hillbury Road
- Commitment to street trees needed
- No discussion of risk of dogs disturbing skylark nests within the SANG
- Illustrative layout would prevent nightjar foraging in the east
- Impacts of minerals extraction on nightjars have not been considered
- Invertebrate survey was carried out during drought, significant numbers of bats, birds and amphibians suggests greater importance for invertebrates
- Welcome removal of invasive non-native plant species
- 'Injurious weeds' should also be removed
- Harbridge Drove space is only half recommended walking route and should not be identified as SANG. It is also next to minerals extraction and divided by a road
- Disturbance of nightjar in Alderholt Common and Cross Roads Plantation has not been considered
- Recommendations in bird report for heathlands restoration have not been taken forwards and the SANG planting proposals do not take account of what existed prior to cultivation etc.
- SANG habitats should be restored to heathlands

### **Amphibian and Reptile Conservation**

- Proposal does not comply with policy
- Not appropriate to defer technical information required to assess proposal to a later stage in the process
- Concerning that amphibian and reptile surveys were undertaken in drought conditions
- Map 5 indicates considerable losses of native species rich hedgerows
- Rare bats identified, dark corridors required but have not been accommodated within development proposals
- Mapping in bird survey insufficient
- Pond creation / mitigation not appropriate within SANG, could introduce fish and disturbance. Ponds need sequencing within landscape
- Reptile mitigation is required for reptiles in solar farm area



- Buffer for fire prevention would be helpful
- Eastern SANG unsuitable for reptile translocation
- Further survey of invertebrates required
- Non-native plants need to be removed and disposed of legally
- No timeline identified for SANG proposals

### **Dorset Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)**

- Housing land supply figures calculated incorrectly
- Scale matters when considering the tilted balance
- Alderholt Meadows development will not offer a genuine choice of transport modes
- Economic assumptions not supported and long term benefits exaggerated
- Green belt policy should not drive development to unsustainable locations
- Slow phasing issues with delivery of infrastructure

### **Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB)**

- Adverse impacts on internally protected habitats sites
- Potential to impact breeding birds including nightjar and curlew
- Limitations in bird survey report means that species may have been missed
- More assessment of Cranborne Common needed
- Missed opportunities to restore heathland areas within SANG

### **Representations received**

<b>Total - Objections</b>	<b>Total - No Objections</b>	<b>Total - Comments</b>
311	4	<b>315</b>

### **Action for Alderholt – Objection (initial consultation)**

- Contrary to Dorset Council and Hampshire County Council transport policies
- Phasing plan not included
- Insufficient detail and evidence provided to support claims
- No evidence of demand for housing in Alderholt - existing consents not being built out. Gladman appeal won (7 years ago) on basis development would start immediately but has not yet commenced
- Transport Assessment does not include risk analysis
- The scheme is unlikely to deliver the suggested traffic growth mitigation

- Impacts on protected heathland
- No evidence of feasibility of education strategy
- Impacts on climate change and ability to meet 2050 net zero target
- Likely that number of car trips per person will increase as new residents more likely to travel for work/leisure
- Trip rate assumptions flawed
- Transport Assessment only includes most optimistic scenarios around employment commuting
- Alderholt particularly challenging for bus services as workplaces split between Fordingbridge (10% of the workforce), Bournemouth (9%), Ringwood (8%), Salisbury (8%) and Southampton (6%)
- Bus service may not be sustainable, funding period insufficient
- Assumption that nobody in Alderholt uses cars for trips below 400m is incorrect
- Cycling routes not properly evaluated
- Impacts of proposed cycle path on heathland
- Electric cars may not be as sustainable as thought
- Lack of details about proposed healthcare facility
- Conclude proposal would make Alderholt less self-contained

#### **Action for Alderholt – Objection (re-consultation)**

- Viability Appraisal is based on flawed assumptions and shows that the proposal will not be able to deliver community benefits and affordable housing promised
- The assumed speed of development is unrealistic which will impact the cash-flow and finance costs of the development
- Capital receipts for land for employment, village centre and pub demonstrate that the applicant has no plans to actively support the creation of these elements of the scheme. No proof of demand for the local centre
- Flaws in Transport Assessment and further work required will lead to increased highway and mitigation costs not covered in the viability figures
- Additional highways work will require a revised Environmental Impact Assessment

#### **Harbridge Protection Society - Objection**

- Proposal does not comply with Local Plan policies
- Concern regarding increased traffic, in particular along Hillbury Road, Harbridge Drove and Alderholt Road
- Increased HGV traffic
- Impacts on road safety and horse riders
- Flooding on Kent Lane causeway often leads to road closures adding to congestion on other routes
- Increases in noise, dust, pollution and vibration
- Dorset Council traffic modelling pre-dated Fordingbridge expansion proposals
- Impact on schools needs to be considered
- Waste disposal facilities inadequate
- Impacts on Habitats Sites

- Delivery of referenced retail, commercial, community and health facilities are outside the control of the applicant

### **North Dorchester Consortium - Objection**

- Proposal would not meet the wider housing needs of Dorset
- Proposal would contribute to housing supply in East Dorset
- Alderholt cannot provide a solution to meeting a significant housing need in the wider Dorset area, including central Dorset and Dorchester
- The application should not be considered on the basis of meeting this wider housing need

### **Cranborne Estate - Objection**

- Not anti-development, support development to a scale appropriate to support rural communities
- Concerns regarding impacts of Cranborne Common, this currently benefits from not being close to built up areas, unlike many other areas of heathland. This proposal would turn it into an urban heath with resulting pressures
- Estate is undertaking a Wild Heath project to remove amount of human interference and ten beavers reside on the heath
- Redline application site includes component elements of the SSSI/Ramsar heathland
- Object to proposed lack of details regarding proposed widening of Cranborne Road
- Proposed dwellings would impact on housing mix and tenures within Cranborne
- Concerned regarding impacts on Cranborne Middle School, and feeder schools in Sixpenny Handley, Cranborne and Wimborne St Giles
- Housing needs to support rural areas not require people to live in towns

### **Public Objections**

#### *Policy*

- Contrary to Local Plan
- Premature in light of early stage of Dorset Council Local Plan
- Contrary to Hampshire's Local Transport Plan
- No unmet housing need in New Forest District
- Sufficient sites for development in Alderholt permitted
- Consented sites in Alderholt have not been built out – why would this one be different?

#### *Location*

- Unsustainable location which would create 'dormitory' village
- Separate new village/town in location with better transport connections would be more sustainable
- Sites are available elsewhere in Dorset (outside East Dorset area)
- Brownfield land should be used for development rather than greenfield
- Out of scale with village
- Loss of farmland and impacts on food production

### *Design*

- Out of character with village/rural area
- Net density too high
- Should include bungalows
- Volume housebuilding is generally of poor design
- Lack of building heights parameter plan

### *Sustainability*

- No evidence Alderholt is an appropriate location for major growth
- Increase in carbon emissions
- Busing of children to neighbouring towns/villages for school
- Additional convenience store would only continue to provide for needs as current
- Already vacant shopping units in Fordingbridge
- New retail uses would threaten viability of existing
- Lack of information on phasing and timeline

### *Historic Environment*

- Archaeology report fails to cite relevant sources such as New Forest Archaeological Research Framework and does not identify sites such as Nationally important site of Nea Farm, Somerley

### *Landscape & ecology*

- Impacts on landscape character
- LVIA based on indicative masterplan rather than parameter plans
- Impacts on New Forest National Park
- Impacts on Dorset Heathlands
- Loss of wildlife habitats
- Impacts on protected species
- Increase in phosphates / impacts on Avon Valley
- Development should not be promoting cycling on Cranborne Common

### *Economic Impacts*

- No evidence of need for employment
- No evidence employment would be viable
- No evidence as to the amount of jobs that would be created
- Employment in this location would not be attractive to businesses
- Damaging to tourist economy
- Negative impacts on rural businesses such as riding stables
- Impacts of increased traffic on viability of shops and employment in Fordingbridge

### *Highways*

- Impacts of traffic on local roads, which are already congested e.g. Harbridge Drove, B3078
- Pinch points in local roads where widening cannot be achieved e.g. B3078 to Fordingbridge, Provost Road in Fordingbridge, West Street, Sandleheath Road, Ringwood Road

- Proposed road reduction at Station Road will cause congestion
- Roads going up to St James church and around Drove End don't have pavements
- Poor transport connections – no buses or rail station
- Transport Assessment underestimates impacts
- Transport Assessment does not allow for development phasing
- Reliance upon mastermap for road measurement a flawed approach – not accurate enough
- Road widths have not taken account of car parking
- Passing widths for rural roads should be higher than in urban areas
- Assessment should use micro- rather than macro-simulation
- Trip rate assumptions unrealistic
- Impacts of 'rat running' through nearby villages
- Assumed car ownership too low
- Assumptions around walking distances should be based on distances along roads and footpaths (rather than as the crow flies)
- Lack of safe footpaths to adjoining villages/towns
- Proposed cycle routes are not practical
- Cycle lane needed for connection to Fordingbridge
- Impacts on road safety
- Impacts on horse riders
- Bus service will not be viable after initial funding period
- Bus would not provide direct service to key commuter locations e.g. Southampton, Salisbury, Bournemouth
- Unclear what will happen to 97 mini-bus service to Verwood, the only service to access a supermarket

#### *Education*

- St James First School does not have capacity
- Alderholt is not in catchment for Burgate School – catchment schools are Cranborne Middle School and QE (Queen Elizabeth's school) in Wimborne
- No feasibility work to demonstrate strategy for education is achievable
- Reliance of busing children to school

#### *Flooding and drainage*

- Site subject to surface water flooding
- Risk of groundwater flooding
- Proposed recreation ground field has poor drainage, not suitable for sports uses

#### *Minerals extraction*

- Incompatible with Hamer Warren gravel pit and proposed minerals site at Midgham Farm

#### *Viability*

- Affordable housing may not be delivered
- Lack of evidence development is viable

### *Amenity*

- Concerns around noise, light air pollution
- Increased risk of crime
- Impacts on health and wellbeing of existing residents

### *Infrastructure and services*

- Insufficient existing infrastructure to support proposal
- Inadequate information on how proposed infrastructure will be delivered
- Infrastructure would not be delivered
- NHS staffing shortage
- Low water pressure
- Lack of capacity for waste disposal
- Sewage capacity inadequate
- Poor broadband connectivity

### *Other*

- Support responses of other statutory bodies and consultees
- Inadequate pre-submission consultation, views of community not taken into consideration
- Inaccuracies and inconsistencies within application documents
- Right to village life

### **Public Support**

- Sustainable development
- Takes into consideration constraints of Dorset Heathlands and New Forest
- Support as long as roads are improved
- Support as long as services and facilities are provided
- Support if affordable housing is provided
- Will bring business opportunities
- Would welcome additional facilities
- Sympathetic to wildlife and rural area

## **10.0 Duties**

s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

## **11.0 Relevant Policies**

### **Adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Core Strategy – Part 1 2014 (CED):**

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this proposal:

KS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

KS2- Settlement hierarchy  
KS4 – Housing Provision in Christchurch and East Dorset  
KS5 – Provision of Employment Land  
KS6 – Town Centre Hierarchy  
KS7 – Role of Town and District Centres  
KS8 – Future Retail Provision  
KS9 – Transport Strategy and Prime Transport Corridors  
KS11 - Transport and Development  
KS12- Parking Provision  
ME1- Safeguarding biodiversity and geodiversity  
ME2- Protection of the Dorset Heathlands  
ME3 - Sustainable Development Standards for New Development  
ME4 – Renewable Energy Provision for Residential and Non-residential Developments  
ME5 – Sources of Renewable Energy  
ME6- Flood Management, Mitigation and Defence  
ME7 – Protection of Groundwater  
HE1 - Valuing and Conserving our Historic Environment  
HE2 - Design of New Development  
HE3 - Landscape Quality  
HE4 - Open Space Provision  
LN1 - Size and Type of New Dwellings  
LN2 – Design, Layout and Density of New Development  
LN3 - Provision of Affordable Housing  
LN6 - Housing and Accommodation for Vulnerable People  
LN6 - Community Facilities and Services  
PC4 – The Rural Economy  
PC5 – Shops and Community Facilities in Local Centres and Villages

### **East Dorset Local Plan (EDLP)**

HODEV2 – Criteria for new housing developments in urban areas and village envelopes  
HODEV3 - Criteria for development of elderly person's accommodation  
DES2 - Criteria for development to avoid unacceptable impacts from types of pollution  
DES6 – Landscaping scheme in rural areas and on the edge of settlements should be comprised of indigenous species  
DES7 – Criteria controlling the loss of trees  
A1 – Housing development will be permitted in Alderholt within the village envelope

### **Minerals Strategy 2014**

### **Mineral Sites Plan 2019**

### **Waste Plan 2019**

### **Other Material Considerations**

#### **Emerging Local Plans:**

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation took place between January and March 2021. Being at a very early stage of preparation, the Draft Dorset Council Local Plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):**

Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date then permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of approval would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

Other relevant NPPF sections include:

- Section 4. Decision taking: Para 38 - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- Section 5 'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes' outlines the government's objective in respect of land.
- Section 6 'Building a strong, competitive economy', paragraphs 84 and 85 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' promotes the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, through conversion of existing buildings, the erection of well-designed new buildings, and supports sustainable tourism and leisure developments where identified needs are not met by existing rural service centres.
- Section 7 'Ensuring the vitality of town centre' outlines how decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities.
- Section 8 'Promoting healthy and safe communities' outlines approaches to deliver communities which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lifestyles. Paragraphs 98-103 set out measures in relation to open space and recreation.
- Section 9 'Promoting sustainable transport' requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stage of development proposals. Paragraph 110 states it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up. Paragraph 111 provides that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.



- Section 11 'Making effective use of land' outlines how decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- Section 12 'Achieving well designed places' indicates that all development to be high quality in design, and the relationship and visual impact of it to be compatible with the surroundings. In particular, and amongst other things, Paragraphs 126 – 136 advise that:

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

- Section 14 'Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change' describes how the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.
- Section 15 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' sets out how decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. In Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty (para 176). Paragraphs 179-182 set out how biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.
- Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'- When considering designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (para 199). The effect of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should also be taken into account (para 203).
- Section 17 'Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals' sets out the approach to ensuring there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide for the country's needs.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

- Viability – Sets out key principles in understanding viability in plan making and decision-taking
- Flood Risk and Coastal Change - Advises how to take account of and address the risks associated with flooding and coastal change in the planning process

### **Supplementary Planning Document/Guidance**

Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 Supplementary Planning Document  
Dorset Heathlands Interim Air Quality Strategy  
Affordable and Special Needs Housing and the Provision of Small Dwellings SPD  
River Avon Advice Note for Developers

### **Other material considerations**

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Cranborne Chase Landscape assessment  
East Dorset Landscape Character Assessment  
Cranborne Chase AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

### **Material considerations - Adjoining Authorities**

Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2013

- Policy 20 provides for the extraction of remaining reserves at Bleak Hill Quarry and extension of Bleak Hill Quarry

New Forest District Council Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

- Strategic site allocations in Fordingbridge: 16 (Land to the north of Station Road, Ashford), 17 (Land at Whitsbury Road) and 18 (Land at Burgate)

## **12.0 Human rights**

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

## **13.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty**

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

A summary of impacts of the proposal is as follows:

<b>Impacts on who or what?</b>	<b>Choose impact</b>	<b>How</b>
Age	Mixed impact	<p>The delivery of 1700 houses without appropriate provision of education would have a negative impact on younger people. Provision of play spaces and sporting opportunities could have a positive impact.</p> <p>Provision of extra-care units, including affordable extra-care units, would have a positive impact on older people in need of care.</p>
Disability	Positive impact	<p>Provision of extra-care units, including affordable extra-care units, would have a positive impact on disabled people. Provision of a doctor's surgery would also have a positive impact.</p>
Gender reassignment and Gender Identity	Neutral impact	<p>There is no evidence that gender reassignment and gender identity is associated with disproportionate advantage or disadvantage arising from the proposed development.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	Negative impact	<p>There is no evidence that marriage or civil partnership is associated with disproportionate advantage or disadvantage arising from the proposed development.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral impact	<p>The provision of an on-site doctor's surgery could have a positive impact on pregnancy and maternity. However, the isolated location of the development would result in long travel distances to access hospital care, having a negative impact.</p>
Race and Ethnicity	Neutral impact	<p>There is no evidence that race and ethnicity is associated with disproportionate disadvantage arising from the proposed development.</p>
Religion and belief	Neutral impact	<p>There is no evidence that religion and belief is associated with disproportionate disadvantage arising from the proposed development.</p>
Sex (consider men and women)	Neutral impact	<p>There is no evidence that sex is associated with disproportionate disadvantage arising from the proposed development.</p>

<b>Impacts on who or what?</b>	<b>Choose impact</b>	<b>How</b>
Sexual orientation	Neutral impact	There is no evidence that sexual orientation is associated with disproportionate disadvantage arising from the proposed development.
People with caring responsibilities	Negative impact	There is no evidence that caring responsibilities are associated with disproportionate disadvantage arising from the proposed development.
Rural isolation	Negative impact	<p>Alderholt has limited facilities and infrastructure, and is isolated with long journey times requires to access facilities in other settlements. Sustainable transport options are very limited and there is a lack of evidence regarding deliverability and long-term viability of an additional bus route proposed. Even should this be provided public transport services would remain minimal. Services would be provided to support the development, in particular a doctors surgery, community hall and sporting facilities. However, there is uncertainty regarding deliverability of other aspects of the proposed local centre and significant travel would be required to access education. These factors combined with the scale of the development would have a negative impact on rural isolation.</p> <p>The proposal would deliver houses that could help support existing facilities and services to ensure these remain viable. It would also deliver some employment uses which could provide jobs for existing and future residents of Alderholt although not sufficient to cater to all new residents. These factors would have a positive impact on rural isolation.</p> <p>It is considered the negative impacts on rural isolation outweigh the positives in this instance.</p>

<b>Impacts on who or what?</b>	<b>Choose impact</b>	<b>How</b>
Socio-economic deprivation	Neutral impact	The provision of affordable housing as part of the development could have a positive impact on people in socio-economic deprivation. However, the isolated location would require travel to access facilities and services which would place a financial burden on these groups. Overall it is considered the impacts are neutral.
Armed forces communities	Neutral impact	There is no evidence that armed forces communities are associated with disproportionate disadvantage arising from the proposed development.

#### 14.0 Financial benefits

<b>What</b>	<b>Amount / value</b>
<b>Material Considerations</b>	
Affordable housing	595 dwellings (35%)
2ha business park with 10,000sqm employment space (Use Class E)	564 jobs
Up to 4000sqm Class E uses (village centre, to include medical facility)	
Education contribution	£10mil (£5.3mil for primary, £4.7mil for secondary)
Bus Service Contribution providing an hourly return service (Monday to Saturday) to Cranborne, Fordingbridge and Ringwood for 5 years	£704k to be paid to the 'Bus Operator'
Travel Plan Monitoring	£470,690
Highway Management Contributions	£200,000
S278 commuted sums	£100,000
Strategic Access Management & Monitoring Contribution (SAMM)	£625,328
Community Hall contribution	£1.5mil
Swimming contribution (towards off-site provision)	£1mil
Public Art contribution	£250k
PRoW Dorset	£400,000
PRoW Hampshire	£400,000
3G sports pitch contribution	£1mil

<b>What</b>	<b>Amount / value</b>
Recreation ground extension	Circa. 5ha. To include 2 on-site football pitches and potential tennis centre
Allotments	At least 1.02ha
Allotments maintenance contribution	TBC
SANG	3 x areas of SANG totalling 53ha
SANG bond	£100,000 to reduce to £20,000 after 5 years
Play Areas	1 x Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP); 4 x Local Area for Plan (LAP). Specification and works to be agreed
Healthcare contribution	£1mil allowance for a 600sqm facility to include GP consulting rooms
<b>Non Material Considerations</b>	
Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) Contribution	£500,000
CIL	As the proposal would include an on-site SANG residential elements would be zero-rated for CIL. Any convenience retail would be charged at £110/sqm (index-linked).
New Homes Bonus	Estimate £1,009,302
Business rates	Applicant estimates £529k p/a

## 15.0 Environmental Implications

An Environmental Statement (ES) accompanies the application and includes the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Background to the development
4. Planning policy
5. Development description
6. Alternatives
7. Transportation
8. Landscape and visual
9. Ecology
10. Society, population and economy
11. Drainage and flood risk
12. Archaeology/heritage
13. Climate change
14. Air quality
15. Cumulative effects
16. Overview and conclusions

The Environmental Statement submitted satisfactorily includes the information required by Regulation 18 and Schedule 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 to constitute an 'Environmental Statement'.

## 16.0 Planning Assessment

### Approach to application assessment and negotiation

- 16.1 Paragraph 38 of the NPPF requires the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Paragraphs 39-46 set out the benefits to pre-application engagement to resolve as many issues as possible at the pre-application stage. Paragraph 47 of the NPPF seeks decisions on applications to be made as quickly as possible.
- 16.2 The LPA offers a pre-application advice service and the applicant was made aware of this and encourage to engage before submitting a planning application. The applicant has chosen not to obtain pre-application advice from the LPA.
- 16.3 Consultation on the submitted application resulted in a large number of objections from statutory consultees, many raising multiple technical issues and requesting additional information which it is considered would require a considerable length of time to resolve, if resolution is possible. The applicant has been given the opportunity to respond to these, as far as possible, within the life of the application.
- 16.4 Regard has been had to whether it would be appropriate to agree an extension of time to enable additional negotiations. This has not been considered appropriate given the extent of outstanding issues. The applicant has been made aware of consultee comments and issues arising during the application, with re-consultation on a set of additional information where this can be accommodated. The applicant has been advised of recommended reasons for refusal and given the opportunity to withdraw the application.

### Principle of development

- 16.5 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 says planning applications shall be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
- 16.6 Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that '*the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making*'.

### *The Village Envelope*

- 16.7 Policy A1 of the East Dorset Local Plan 2002 states that '*housing development at Alderholt will be permitted under Policy HODEV1 within the policy envelope defined on the Proposals Map*'. When the plan is read as a whole it is clearly intended to limit housing at Alderholt to sites within the policy envelope. As this site lies outside the policy envelope, it would conflict with saved Policy A1 of the EDLP.

### *Settlement Hierarchy*

- 16.8 Policy KS2 of the Christchurch and East Dorset (CED) Local Plan 2014 sets the Settlement Hierarchy for the plan area and it is expected that the location, scale and distribution of development will conform with this. The policy sets six levels in the hierarchy: main settlements, district centres, suburban centres, rural service centres, villages and hamlets. The strategy focuses development in those settlements which provide the best access to services, facilities and employment. Alderholt is defined as a rural service centre at level 4 in the hierarchy.
- 16.9 Rural services centres are expected to be *'main providers for the rural areas where residential development will be allowed of a scale that reinforces their role as providers of community, leisure and retail facilities to support the village and adjacent communities'*.
- 16.10 The location, scale and distribution of the proposed development is wholly out of alignment with the settlement hierarchy. The significant expansion proposed would more than double the existing population of Alderholt and would be at a significantly greater scale than that needed to reinforce its role as a rural service centre.

### *Local Centre*

- 16.11 The proposal includes 4,000sqm of Class E uses described as a local centre. The applicant has provided an indicative schedule of how these uses might be delivered, which identifies 1,259sqm retail (E.a), 673sqm food and drink (E.b), 316sqm community/sports (E.d), 724sqm medical (E.e), and 1,026sqm offices (E.g (i)).
- 16.12 The assumed mix includes 2,958sqm 'main town centre uses' as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF.
- 16.13 Chapter 7 of the NPPF seeks to support and protect the role of town centres, by applying a sequential test where proposed main town centre uses are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Policy KS7 of the CED Local Plan requires an impact assessment where retail uses of over 500sqm are proposed outside of town centres (outside of Wimborne and Ferndown). The proposal triggers a requirement for both a sequential test and an impact assessment – neither have been submitted.
- 16.14 The proposed uses on this site could have impacts on the viability of existing centres within East Dorset. The proposal could also have impacts on the viability of the town centre of Fordingbridge (within New Forest District). This is considered further in the assessment of economic impacts below.
- 16.15 It is understood that as the proposed residential dwellings are not allocated in the CED Local Plan, neither are Class E uses that could potentially support them. However, the extent of uses is significant and the impacts of these need to be assessed and understood. The impacts on other aspects also need to be properly considered, particularly what trips into Alderholt might be generated (e.g. to access the 'local centre') to feed these into the Transport Assessment.

### *Business Park*



- 16.16 There is no evidence identifying a specific need for employment uses in Alderholt however an assessment of need within the East Dorset area has been submitted. The Council's Economic Development team have confirmed that there is a need for employment space across East Dorset, to enable existing businesses to expand without leaving the area. Industrial Estates in similarly rural locations have proved popular locations with businesses.
- 16.17 This proposed business park would differ in that uses are proposed as Class E, the application has advised that these are envisaged to be office/light industrial use with potential for some other uses such as vets. Excepting some small-scale office development, the NPPF would not support the inclusion of any 'main town centre uses' in this location.

### *Summary*

- 16.18 The proposal is contrary to the development plan and the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy KS2. The development plan was found to be sound, and a logical approach to the delivery of housing in relation to employment, retail, services and facilities.
- 16.19 However, at present the East Dorset area cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the current supply position standing at 4.17 years. This means that for applications involving the provision of housing, the policies which are most important for determining the application are deemed to be out of date, and the application should be considered favourably unless the proposal conflicts with specified NPPF policies or the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (NPPF paragraph 11).
- 16.20 In relation to this particular proposal, paragraph 182 of the NPPF provides that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site. As an Appropriate Assessment has concluded that the proposal would adversely affect the integrity of the Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA)/ the Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (the Dorset Heathlands), the New Forest SPA/SAC (the New Forest) and the Avon Valley SAC (the Avon Valley), and that the impacts cannot be satisfactorily mitigated, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply to this proposal.
- 16.21 This position notwithstanding, for completeness an assessment of material considerations is provided throughout this report and summarised in a planning balance exercise.

### Emerging Policy

- 16.22 As set out above, this proposal is contrary to the settlement hierarchy and the sustainable approach to development set out in the CED Local Plan. Since the CED Local Plan was adopted a restructuring of local authorities in Dorset has created Dorset Council (incorporating the former East Dorset District Council) and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council (incorporating the former

Christchurch Borough Council). The CED Local Plan continues to cover areas within Dorset and BCP, pending the adoption of new Local Plans.

*Weight to policies in emerging plans*

- 16.23 Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in 'emerging plans' when determining planning applications (as stated in Paragraph 48 of the NPPF).
- 16.24 East Dorset District Council undertook consultation on options for the review of the East Dorset Local Plan in July 2018. Consultation draft Policy 5.28 in the East Dorset Local Plan Options document proposed 'a minimum of 1,000 dwellings' at Alderholt to the south and west of the village including (but not limited to) land within the application site. However, East Dorset District Council no longer exists and the East Dorset Local Plan Review is no longer being taken forward by Dorset Council (as noted in the current Local Development Scheme). As this is no longer an 'emerging plan', Paragraph 48 of the NPPF does not apply.
- 16.25 The currently 'emerging plan' for the area is the Dorset Council Local Plan. The policy team have advised that this plan is still at a very early stage and there are many unresolved objections, both to the consultation plan and to the proposals for Alderholt. Consequently, the consultation policies in this 'emerging plan' should only be given very limited weight in decision-taking.

*Housing need in emerging policies*

- 16.26 The emerging Dorset Council Local Plan was subject to Regulation 18 consultation between January and March 2021. This consultation included a Local Housing Need calculation that, through the application of the Standard Method at the time of the consultation, concluded 30,481 new homes were required in the Dorset Council area over the period from 2021 to 2038. The consultation document included a proposed spatial strategy for distributing this growth across Dorset. The consultation also considered how unmet need in BCP and New Forest District council areas might be accommodated should the need arise.
- 16.27 Para 2.6.2 of the consultation document set out that growth was proposed at the large built-up areas, towns and other main settlements (i.e. the settlements in Tiers 1 and 2 of the settlement hierarchy) to meet the development needs of Dorset. The policies also proposed growth to meet development needs at a few of the more sustainable settlements in Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy.

*Emerging policies at Alderholt*

- 16.28 The consultation draft Dorset Council Local Plan identifies Alderholt as a 'Tier 3' settlement. It lies within the South Eastern Dorset Functional Area, and the strategy for growth in that area is set out in consultation Policy DEV2. The consultation policy lists the locations of the new 'proposed allocations' in South East Dorset, but makes no mention of growth at Alderholt, where only more tentative 'options' are identified. Paragraph 2.6.6 explains 'a further option of significant growth at Alderholt has been considered, but this would need to lead to a significant improvement in the self-containment of the village to enable it to be considered sustainable development'.
- 16.29 Consultation Policy ALD1 in Section 18 sets out Option 1 for the 'small-scale expansion' (about 300 homes) of Alderholt on land north of Ringwood Road. The option for the possible 'significant expansion' of Alderholt (Option 2) is only

discussed in the supporting text of the consultation document (Paragraphs 18.4.12 to 18.4.14) and not in a consultation policy, although the range of possible sites that could accommodate significant growth are shown as options areas on a map (in Figure 18.1) rather than as preferred sites. This includes, but is not limited to, the land within the application site. Since the significant expansion of Alderholt is only discussed in the supporting text and not in a policy, Paragraph 48 of the NPPF does not apply to Option 2.

- 16.30 In summary, the overarching strategy proposed for consultation in the consultation draft Dorset Council Local Plan was to direct the majority of housing towards towns and main settlements. The plan did not identify a need for significant growth at Alderholt however this was discussed as an option.

#### *Prematurity*

- 16.31 Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:
- a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and
  - b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.
- 16.32 Regarding the first test, the proposed development is substantial, and its consent would represent a decision about the location of new development that departs from the approach set out at consultation Policy DEV2. Concerns have been raised regarding the suitability of this site to meet housing needs within Dorset, in particular needs in central Dorset and Dorchester. Such matters would be best considered as part of a plan-led approach with the benefit of a full public examination.
- 16.33 The scale of development proposed is such that it would have implications for choice about the location of development within the Local Plan, the Local Transport Plan and resulting infrastructure requirements.
- 16.34 However, in relation to the second test, the consultation draft Dorset Council Local Plan is not at an advanced stage. The Local Development Scheme sets out a timetable for submission of this plan in April 2025 and adoption in Spring 2026. Consequently, while this proposal would have serious implications for the development of the spatial strategy and Local Plan, these do not justify a reason for refusing this application.

#### Deliverability

- 16.35 A theme running through the submission is the assumption by the applicant that issues can be resolved at a later stage, either by condition or through reserved matters. Regarding reserved matters, these are limited to layout, scale, appearance and landscaping. All other matters fall to be fully considered under this Outline application.

- 16.36 Conditions can be used to enable development to proceed where it would otherwise have been necessary to refuse planning permission. However, conditions can only be imposed in line with NPPF para. 56 which requires they are '*necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects*'.
- 16.37 Several consultees have highlighted that the application lacks essential information that they would expect to be provided as part of the outline application. The applicant did not take up the Council's pre-application advice service, and responses to the application would indicate that there has been insufficient engagement with key statutory consultees before submitting this proposal.
- 16.38 Where there is no certainty that realistic options exist to mitigate impacts, the placing of a condition would not be '*reasonable in all other respects*'. Such an approach risks a permission that is nullified by a condition that cannot be met, and so cannot be delivered. It also raises doubts about the prospect of this site making a contribution to the five year supply as significant detail will need to be addressed prior to the delivery of new homes.
- 16.39 The NPPF seeks to encourage pre-application engagement and front-loading, with local planning authorities required to encourage other parties to take advantage of the pre-application stage. The applicant was encouraged to engage in formal pre-application advice with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) however chose not to take up this service.
- 16.40 Gaps in the submission create a general lack of certainty over whether the scheme as a whole is deliverable. Further, many gaps relate to information to inform an Appropriate Assessment of the proposal. **The applicant has been invited to withdraw the application, with the option to resubmit once additional information is available, but has declined this approach.**
- 16.41 The NPPF defines deliverable in the context of the five year supply, and states that '*to be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years*' and '*where a site has outline planning permission for major development... it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years*'. It is not considered that such clear evidence exists in this instance.
- 16.42 The application has been determined on the basis of information as submitted, where this information was submitted with adequate time for its assessment during the life of the application. For completeness each aspect is assessed to enable a planning balance conclusion. Nonetheless, significant weight is placed on the approach taken, the resulting failure to demonstrate deliverability, and the consequent lack of certainty regarding the potential for this proposal to contribute to the five year supply.

### Cumulative Effects

- 16.43 Chapter 15 of the Environmental Statement (ES) assesses cumulative effects arising from the proposed development alongside consented development sites within Alderholt, Fordingbridge and Verwood. However, the cumulative effects of

planned development within Fordingbridge and Ashford has not been fully assessed. New Forest District Council (NFDC) have advised that the NFDC Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy (6 July 2020) sets out planned development for at least 870 dwellings in Fordingbridge and Ashford.

- 16.44 The Scoping Opinion provided to the applicant (P/ESP/2022/07270, December 2022) advised that the assessment of cumulative effects should include plans and projects which are reasonably foreseeable, i.e. projects for which an application has not yet been submitted, but which are likely to progress before completion of the development and for which sufficient information is available to assess the likelihood of cumulative and in-combination effects. This would include planned development in Fordingbridge and Alderholt and the cumulative impacts of these should have been assessed.
- 16.45 The failure to correctly identify and assess cumulative effects impacts upon the conclusions made in Chapter 15, particularly regarding transport and air quality. There is resulting uncertainty regarding the effects, and this is considered further in the relevant sections below.

### Housing

- 16.46 As explained above, the East Dorset area cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. This proposal could deliver a substantial number of homes.
- 16.47 A phasing plan has been submitted which shows commencement of the development in 2026 with build-out over 12 years to 2038.
- 16.48 Based on the assumptions as set out in the phasing plan and leaving aside the lack of clear evidence of deliverability as considered above, the contribution this site could make to the five-year supply (from April 2024) equates to 264 dwellings. There have been significant concerns raised regarding lead-in times for delivery due to the potential need to extract minerals, and the need to agree and deliver mitigation at an early stage in the project, much prior to first occupation. These may impact on the ability of the site to deliver housing in the short-term.
- 16.49 While the proposal would not represent a swift resolution to the housing supply deficit, once underway it is likely to provide steady delivery of housing. In the long term it could be expected to make a substantial contribution to the supply.
- 16.50 It would be possible to condition a consent to require early submission of reserved matters, and to reduce the time period for commencement (in accordance with PPG para.027 Reference ID: 21a-027-20140306). Such an approach would minimise lead-in times for the project.
- 16.51 Regarding mineral extraction, the adverse effects of the development of this site on minerals safeguarding are assessed below; these would be considered in the planning balance. While the Local Authority has a duty to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, this is only insofar as is '*practical and environmentally feasible*' (NPPF para. 210). Should it not be practical to extract minerals, or should extraction be limited due to the required housing trajectory, this does not represent a barrier to the development.

- 16.52 Overall, the proposal could make a substantial contribution to East Dorset's housing land supply, albeit this is likely to be in the longer term rather than within five years. This is attributed very significant weight.

### Green Belt

- 16.53 The site is situated outside of the South East Dorset Green Belt. The applicant has put forward a case that delivery of this proposal would protect this by meeting housing needs without the need to release Green Belt land.
- 16.54 Paragraphs 140-142 of the NPPF set out the criteria for the review and alteration of Green Belt boundaries. Paragraph 140 states that this process should only take place in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or updating of plans. Paragraph 141 states that the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development.
- 16.55 Paragraph 142 requires regard to promoting sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account when reviewing Green Belt boundaries. The consequences of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary should be considered.
- 16.56 The appropriate mechanism for a potential review of the Green Belt boundary is through the Dorset Council Local Plan. It is not considered that this can be progressed through the consideration of an individual planning application.
- 16.57 It is acknowledged that this site falls outside the Green Belt boundary, for the purposes of decision making on this application this means that there is no conflict with Green Belt policies. The impacts of development of this site on areas designated as Green Belt would require strategic review and so cannot be considered ahead of the plan-making process. The impacts of this site on the Green Belt are afforded negligible weight.

### Affordable Housing

- 16.58 There is a substantial need for affordable housing across the Dorset Council area, which is reflected by over 4400 households on the housing register. CED Policy LN3 sets out the Council's approach to the provision of affordable housing. This requires all residential developments to meet affordable housing requirements, with greenfield developments expected to provide up to 50% of residential units as affordable housing.
- 16.59 The policy states that '*any Planning Application which on financial viability grounds proposes a lower level of affordable housing than is required by the Policy Percentage Requirements must be accompanied by clear and robust evidence that will be subject to verification.*'
- 16.60 The applicant has indicated their intention to deliver 35% affordable housing as part of the development. At 595 affordable homes this would represent a substantial amount of affordable housing, but would fall short of policy requirements by 255 affordable homes.

- 16.61 Paragraph 58 of the NPPF states that *'It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. All viability assessments, including any undertaken at the plan-making stage, should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.'*
- 16.62 A Viability Statement was submitted alongside the application but it did not set out any explanation of what particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. Nor did it provide clear and robust evidence or reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance.
- 16.63 During the course of the application a more comprehensive Site Wide Viability Report (SWVR) was submitted however due to the late submission of this information there was insufficient time to conduct an independent verification of its findings. In any case, it is considered that the SWVR cannot provide a robust assessment of viability as it relies upon inputs and assumptions that are not accepted by the Local Planning Authority and statutory consultees. Before undertaking an independent review these assumptions would need to be agreed.
- 16.64 Key elements which are not agreed, and which would affect viability include highways improvements, education strategy, Habitats site mitigation and s106 contributions. Assumed costs are likely to be optimistic as statutory consultees have objected, stating that infrastructure required to mitigate the development's impacts will be greater than has been assumed.
- 16.65 There is also limited information in the SWVR regarding the assumptions have been made when valuing the employment and village centre land. More information is needed to demonstrate that these elements can viably be delivered without impacting the delivery of affordable housing.
- 16.66 As such, the level of affordable housing that can be delivered on this site has not been demonstrated.
- 16.67 The applicant has pointed to viability negotiations on allocated sites in East Dorset where similar levels of affordable housing were achieved. This is acknowledged however sites have varying constraints and delivery costs, and it is not appropriate to extrapolate to this site. It is for individual proposals to demonstrate the viability of their project, using standardised inputs in line with the guidance set out in the PPG.
- 16.68 Overall, there is a need for affordable homes, and this proposal could go a substantial way towards meeting that need. Very significant weight is placed on the contribution this proposal could make to affordable housing.
- 16.69 However, a policy-compliant scheme could go further to meeting needs. Significant weight is placed on the failure to demonstrate that a policy-compliant level of affordable housing cannot be viably accommodated on the site.

- 16.70 Policy LN6 of the CED Local Plan 2014 sets out the Council's strategy on housing for vulnerable people, which includes older people. The supporting text sets out the Council's intention that larger scale developments and new neighbourhoods make provision (market and affordable) for older people, to enable opportunities for older people to live securely, independently, and inclusively within communities. Saved East Dorset Local Plan policy HODEV3 supports the delivery of specialist accommodation within settlements.
- 16.71 The description of development references 'care provision'. The applicant has confirmed the intention that 80, C3 dwellings are delivered as extra-care housing, with 35% (28) of these to be affordable. This could be secured through a legal agreement.
- 16.72 Policy LN6 of the CED Local Plan states that care development proposals would need to demonstrate *'any impacts upon, or risks to, the strategic aims and objectives of Dorset County Council...are taken into account and mitigated against'*. The strategic aim of Dorset Council (which includes the functions of former Dorset County Council) is to focus on the provision of extra care accommodation.
- 16.73 The Dorset Council Adult Social Care Team have confirmed a large shortage in specialist accommodation for older people in Dorset across all tenures. This is a material consideration for relevant applications. The delivery of 80 extra-care dwellings, with 35% delivered as affordable, is afforded significant weight in the planning balance.

#### Housing Mix

- 16.74 Policy LN1 requires that the size and type of new market and affordable dwellings reflects current and projected local housing needs identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). While the application is in outline the housing mix is not reserved, along the layout etc. thereof and so it is considered appropriate to consider this matter at the outline stage and secure through a legal agreement.
- 16.75 Following an objection from the Housing team regarding the submitted affordable mix an amended mix was submitted. This is compared to the requirements identified for Eastern Dorset within the 2021 SHMA update.
- 16.76 The proposed tenure split on the site is as follows, this has the agreement of the Housing team.

#### *Tenure split*

Market	65%
First Homes	9%
Affordable Rent	18%
Shared Ownership	8%

- 16.77 Mixes for each tenure are set out below.

#### *Market housing (excluding extra-care)*

Bedrooms	Proposal	Proposal %	SHMA %
1	72	6.9%	5%



2 (flat)	86	8.2%	32%
2 (house)	300	28.6%	
3	349	33.3%	44%
4+	242	23%	18%
TOTAL	1,049		

- 16.78 There are less 3 bed units that recommended in the SHMA, and slightly more 1, 2 and 4 beds. Overall, it is considered the proposed market mix adequately reflects the SHMA expectations.

*First Homes*

Bedrooms	Proposal	Proposal %	SHMA %
1	45	30.5%	N/A
2 (flat)	20	13.5%	
2 (house)	20	13.5%	
3	43	29%	
4+	20	13.5%	
TOTAL	148		

- 16.79 The SHMA does not include mix requirements for first homes. This proposed mix includes a large proportion of 1-bedroom homes however this is considered acceptable given that first homes are intended to help people take their first step into home ownership.

*Affordable Rent (excluding extra-care)*

Bedrooms	Proposal	Proposal %	SHMA %
1	82	28.9%	34%
2 (house)	95	33.5%	36%
3	80	28.1%	26%
4+	27	9.5%	3%
TOTAL	284		

- 16.80 The proposed mix meets the expectations of the SHMA. The provision of 2-bedroom houses would provide good quality accommodation for families in-line with the expectations of the Housing team.

*Shared ownership*

Bedrooms	Proposal	Proposal %	SHMA %
1	46	34.5%	18%
2 (flat)	10	7.5%	36%
2 (house)	25	18.9%	
3	35	26.3%	34%
4+	17	12.8%	12%
TOTAL	133		

- 16.81 The mix includes more 1-bedroom homes than expected by the SHMA, and less 2 and 3 bed homes. However, overall it is considered the mix would adequately meet needs.

*Extra-care*

- 16.82 The proposal would include 56 market and 28 affordable rented extra-care 1-bedroom units.

#### *Summary*

- 16.83 The proposal meets the expectations of Policy LN1 and the SHMA, subject to securing the mix through a legal agreement. The proposed housing mix would meet the current needs of the population. The delivery of a good proportion of affordable family homes is considered a benefit of the scheme. This is attributed significant weight in the planning balance.

#### Economic impacts

- 16.84 Policy KS1 of the CED Local Plan seeks to secure development that improves the economic conditions in the area. Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that *'significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development'*.
- 16.85 This proposal includes 14,000sqm Class E uses. These would take the form of a business park (10,000sqm) and local centre (4,000sqm). The description of development states the local centre would include retail, commercial, community and health facilities. The applicant has advised that the business park would focus on office and light industrial uses with scope for some other E class uses such as a vets practice. Technical Appendix 10.1 estimates that operation of the development would create 564 direct jobs.

#### *Business Park*

- 16.86 Para. 89 states that the sequential test should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other development. It is considered the town centre uses proposed across the site are not small scale in nature and that the sequential test should apply to the full extent of town centre uses proposed. In the absence of a sequential test it would be necessary to restrict the uses in the business park to exclude town centre uses, which would restrict retail and office space.
- 16.87 Evidence of local need for employment space has been provided and the Council's Economic Development Team have confirmed there is a need for employment land in the East Dorset area. Recently developed industrial sites e.g. at Three Legged Cross have experienced high demand. It is not considered that a condition restricting uses would prevent suitable employment uses coming forward.
- 16.88 Significant weight is attached to the economic benefits that would arise from the proposed business park. Significant weight is also attached to the temporary jobs generated by the construction of the development, which would be a long-term project.

#### *Local Centre*

- 16.89 As set out above, 4,000sqm of Class E uses is proposed to form a 'local centre'. The following assumptions around the mix of these has been provided by the applicant:

<b>Unit no.</b>	<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Commercial Area (sqm)</b>
1	Retail	109
2	Retail	72
3	Retail	72
4	Retail	72
5	Dentist	167
6	Retail	334
7	Retail	164
8	Community Building	316
9/10	Public House/Restaurant	673
11	Doctor's Surgery	557
12	Pharmacy	190
13	Business Hub-touchdown space	163
14	Estate Office	98
15	Office	318
16	Office	172
17	Retail	246
18	Office	275
<b>Total</b>		4,000

16.90 This can be summarised as the following balance of uses, and a condition could limit these accordingly:

<b>Use</b>	<b>Area (sqm)</b>
<b>Retail (Class E.a)</b>	1,259
<b>Food &amp; Drink (Class E.b)</b>	673
<b>Sports/community (Class E.d)</b>	316
<b>Medical (Class E.e)</b>	724
<b>Office (Class E.g(i))</b>	1,026

16.91 Paragraph 87 of the NPPF requires the application of a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Para. 90 states applications for retail development outside town centres are further required to carry out an impact assessment to evaluate the likely impact on neighbouring centres. Policy KS7 requires an impact assessment for retail proposals over 500sqm in this area.

16.92 Main town centre uses are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF and relevant to this proposal are retail, restaurants, pubs and offices.

16.93 Neither a sequential test nor an impact assessment been carried out. Even assuming a restriction on the balance of uses in the local centre these assessments would be required. In this respect the proposal is contrary to KS7 and to chapter 7 of the NPPF which seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres.

- 16.94 While the proposed local centre has the potential to deliver employment opportunities and generate expenditure, this could be to the detriment of existing town, district and local centres. Any condition to further restrict uses at the local centre may impact upon its viability and the 'vision' for sustainability and internalisation within Alderholt. This is particularly relevant given the reliance in the Transport Assessment (TA) on delivery of specified uses within the centre (as set out below).
- 16.95 More information is needed to understand and assess the impacts both on existing and proposed centres to ensure these support local business needs and sustainable economic growth. Evidence is needed to demonstrate that local centre uses will be viable in the long-term to ensure that economic benefits are deliverable. In the absence of this information, moderate weight is placed on the potential adverse impacts.

### Education

- 16.96 Paragraph 95 of the NPPF states '*it is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities*'. It requires great weight to be given to '*the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions of applications*'.
- 16.97 East Dorset provides a three-tier form of education. The present education provision for Alderholt starts with the 1 Form Entry (1FE) St James First School. This is located centrally within the village of Alderholt on an approx. 1.2ha site. This feeds into the Cranborne Middle School, then to the QE upper school in Wimborne. School transport is provided to the middle and upper schools due to the distances from Alderholt.
- 16.98 Alderholt is not within the catchment area for the Burgate School in Hampshire, however children are able to join the school if there is sufficient capacity after places have been allocated to those in the catchment. School transport is also provided for these children. The allocation of sites for around 870 new homes in Fordingbridge may impact on capacity at the Burgate School.
- 16.99 The application proposes to expand St James School, which would become a primary and part of a two-tier education approach linked to the Burgate School in Fordingbridge. The applicant says that extensive discussions have taken place with these schools over several years, however no engagement has taken place with Dorset as the Local Education Authority (LEA). Nor have Hampshire County Council (the LEA responsible for the Burgate School) expressed support for the proposal.
- 16.100 Dorset's Education team have advised that provision for this proposal would need to be made within Dorset, and within the existing three-tier system. St James First School does not have sufficient space to expand, and a development of this scale in Alderholt would require a new school to be delivered on-site. The following provision and contributions would be required:

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Places required</b>	<b>Provision</b>
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Early Years/KS1/KS2	221 places	School site (Minimum 2ha, topography dependant) along with a £2,196,187.50 contribution
KS2 & KS3	191 places	£3,090,430 towards expansion at Cranborne Middle and / or Emmanuel Middle
Upper KS3 & KS4	143 places	£3,216,570 towards increasing capacity within East Dorset utilising & extending existing educational establishments as deemed most strategically appropriate to achieve that outcome
Post 16	67	£1,493,407 towards ensuring sufficient provision across the appropriate institutions in East Dorset
TOTAL	662	School site + £9,996,595 (£5880.35 per qualifying unit)

- 16.101 This application proposes a significant number of new dwellings, generating the need for up to 662 additional school places yet fails to make appropriate provision for this. The proposal has not had regard to the educational approach within Dorset, or to the requirements of the LEA.
- 16.102 The site at St James First School does not have space to expand on its existing site and there is no land adjacent which could be used. The suggested approach to education is fundamentally flawed in this respect.
- 16.103 In response to this, the applicant has submitted an Education Impact Report, this sets out more details of the applicant's vision for education delivery in Alderholt. The report carries out an assessment of the need for school places coming to a very similar conclusion in terms of number of pupils to that provided by the LEA.
- 16.104 The report goes on to consider that there are current surpluses in schools and that these will increase due to birth rate forecasts, although it is not clear if regard has been had to population increases from existing sites.
- 16.105 A case is put forward that one 2FE primary school in Alderholt would be sufficient to meet the needs of existing children and those from the development. Plans are submitted showing how St James First School could be expanded to provide for these children and become a primary school. These plans would demolish the existing building and re-build.
- 16.106 The LEA have advised that while the proposed replacement building appears acceptable, the St James First School site is insufficient to accommodate the outside space that would be required for a 2FE primary school.
- 16.107 The proposed design for St James First School has not been accepted by the LEA, nor does it have the benefit of planning permission. It has not been demonstrated that the required outdoor spaces can be delivered while meeting standards.
- 16.108 The transition of this school to a primary is not a decision that can be made without due process including agreement by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC). There is considerable uncertainty over whether the proposed strategy can be achieved. Were the

proposal to prove unachievable significant numbers of children would have to be bused or driven to first schools in neighbouring villages.

- 16.109 Regardless, it is for the LEA to develop the education strategy. It is considered inappropriate to create a primary school in Alderholt and join this to the Burgate School – Alderholt is not in Hampshire and such an approach would have knock-on effects on the delivery of education within Dorset.
- 16.110 The proposal would fail to ensure that sufficient school places are available, contrary to paragraph 95 of the NPPF, and this is attributed very significant weight.

### Highways and Transport Impacts

- 16.111 Policy KS11 of the CED Local Plan sets out the approach to transportation, with the goal being to reduce the need to travel, provide improved access to key services and facilities and promote alternative modes of travel. Development should be in accessible locations that are well linked to existing communities by walking, cycling and public transport routes. Development will be permitted where mitigation against the negative transport impacts which may arise from that development or cumulatively with other proposals is provided.
- 16.112 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF advises that '*development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe*'.
- 16.113 A Transport Assessment (TA) has been submitted (dated October 2022) which aims to assess the impacts of the proposal on the highways network, and propose appropriate mitigation. The TA includes chapters providing details on:
- Existing conditions
  - The proposed development
  - Development accessibility
  - Trip generation, distribution and assignment
  - Strategic modelling
  - Highways impacts – methodology, junctions and links
- 16.114 Concerns regarding the approach and assumptions within the Transport Assessment have been raised by National Highways, the Dorset Highways Authority, Hampshire Highways Authority, Parish and Town Councils, local community groups and individuals.

### *Existing conditions*

- 16.115 The assessment of existing conditions includes descriptions of Ringwood Road, Hillbury Road, Station Road, Fordingbridge Road, Daggons Road/Cranborne Road and Batterley Drive.
- 16.116 Concerns have been raised by members of the community that existing conditions have not adequately considered the impacts of parked cars on these streets, which can create pinch points. Concerns are also raised that rural roads used as 'rat runs' have not been included in the study. However, both Dorset and

Hampshire Highways have accepted the existing road conditions as an appropriate starting point.

- 16.117 The assessment continues providing details of existing walking and cycling routes, including footways and Public Rights of Way (PRoW). The assessment accepts there is no dedicated cycle infrastructure within the vicinity of Alderholt, but identifies roads considered suitable for on carriageway cycling as Ringwood Road, Hillbury Road and Station Road.
- 16.118 Bridleway E34/10 is identified as providing a direct route between Alderholt and Verwood for pedestrians and cyclists (distance approx. 4km). The TA states that the proposed development will '*seek to make connections to these routes to ensure the opportunity to walk and in particular, cycle to Verwood is an attractive possibility*'.
- 16.119 Concerns have been raised regarding the suitability of existing unlit rural roads for carriageway cycling. Dorset Highways have advised that these roads will only be used by keen and competent cyclists, and that possible destinations are outside of recommended cycling distances.
- 16.120 Further concerns exist regarding the suggestion that bridleway E34/10 is a suitable cycle/pedestrian route to Verwood. The existing bridleway is mostly unsurfaced and Dorset Highways advise it is only suitable for fair weather leisure trips.
- 16.121 The assessment identifies existing public transport connections and facilities. The only service is no. 97, a two-hourly community service funded by local parish councils. Local facilities within Alderholt are limited, with residents having to travel to Fordingbridge, Cranborne or Wimborne to access basic services. Local residents report that they are having to travel further afield to access services as provision declines in Fordingbridge.
- 16.122 Details of road collisions are included, concluding that most accidents are primarily the result of driver error, with one safety issue identified at the Verwood Road/A31 slip road. Off-site highways works are proposed to address the safety issue at this junction. Hampshire Highways have raised concerns that this data is not based on the most recent 5-year period.

#### *The proposed development*

- 16.123 The TA describes the facilities assumed to be delivered by the development as follows:
- 1700 dwellings (including sheltered housing and care home)
  - 10,000sqm employment land (business park / start up units)
  - Expansion to the existing first school, becoming a primary school as part of a two-tier education linked with the Burgate School in Fordingbridge
  - New square/town centre circa. 4,200sqm with shops, café, new convenience supermarket and pub
  - New healthcare facility
  - New recreation space and potential outdoor tennis centre
  - New library
  - Digital infrastructure (fibre to front door)
  - New improved bus service
  - New pedestrian / cycle infrastructure

- 16.124 Vehicular access is not reserved, with access proposed via a new roundabout on Hillbury Road, and from a new priority junction at Ringwood Road. A Road Safety Audit (RSA) of the proposed accesses has been carried out. This identified several issues with the junctions, which have been accepted by the applicant. Amendments have been made however not all issues have been addressed. Dorset Highways advise this is unacceptable as the access element of this application is in full, and so issues need to be resolved as part of this application.
- 16.125 It is proposed to extend the 30mph limit along Hillbury Road to include the development access, and the applicant would need to pay for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to achieve this.
- 16.126 Dorset Highways have also advised that the width of the access point is insufficient and that it has not been demonstrated through swept path analysis that all vehicles can safely undertake manoeuvres.
- 16.127 Regarding the proposed access from Ringwood Road, the Highways Authority have advised that the proposal is overly-complicated, and that a simple priority junction would be safer and more legible.
- 16.128 Preliminary concepts for a new internal spine road and additional crossing of Ringwood Road are included. Dorset Highways have commented that the spine road will need a minimum width of 6.7m (rather than the 6.5m mentioned) which could be addressed through reserved matters.
- 16.129 Pedestrian and cyclist access points are shown and Dorset Highways have confirmed these are acceptable.
- 16.130 Offsite connections and improvements are identified as follows:
- Advisory cycle lanes along Station Road and Ringwood Road
  - Improved connections to PRow routes between Hillbury Road and Migham Lane with the potential to improve footpaths and make them accessible to cyclists, subject to viability. Could open up option of route for cyclists along Migham Lane and Ashford Road
  - Connections into PRow E34/10 to Verwood and forestry trails to the south of the site for sustainable travel and leisure
  - An hourly bus service between Cranborne, Alderholt, Fordingbridge and Ringwood
- 16.131 Concerns have been raised regarding the suitability of the proposed improvements. Hampshire Highways have advised that while contributions could upgrade the PRow between Hillbury Road and Migham Lane, the rural roads these lead to (Migham Lane and Ashford Road) are unsuitable for cyclists. Consequently, this would not create a safe and attractive route.
- 16.132 Particularly concerning is the suggestion that cycle and pedestrian connections into the E34/10 PRow (which runs through Cranborne Common) and forestry trails in Ringwood Forest would be encouraged. Such an approach would be counter to the strategy within the Shadow HRA which seeks to divert people from these routes. Natural England have strongly objected to the proposed connections.



- 16.133 Dorset and Hampshire Highways have advised that insufficient work has been carried out to provide surety that the proposed offsite improvements can be delivered, detailed schemes would need to be drawn up on surveyed bases.

*Development Accessibility*

- 16.134 The Development Accessibility chapter proposes the creation of a '15 minute neighbourhood' in Alderholt. This concept aims to provide facilities within a 15 minute walk from dwellings, to minimise car travel. A map is included (figure 12) which aims to demonstrate that both the existing and new development would be located within a 15 minute walk of the proposed local centre.
- 16.135 The map uses distances 'as the crow flies' rather than walking routes on the ground, a concern raised by the community who have submitted maps to demonstrate that these would be considerably longer. Concern has been raised by the Council's Urban Design officer that the local centre may not be optimally located within Alderholt; there are locations within the application site where a greater number of dwellings would be within a 400m radius, and fewer within the 1.2km zone (as defined by the applicant).
- 16.136 The concept of a 15 minute neighbourhood is symbiotic in that not only can residents access uses, but that a critical mass of dwellings (density) ensures viability of the non-residential uses. In this instance much of the land within a 15 minute radius would be farmland, raising concerns around whether sufficient density of residential development would exist to ensure viability of the local centre.
- 16.137 Facilities described in this chapter as being provided within the 'market square' include a village store, a pub and restaurant, a café, a community building and youth centre, a library and 7 other retail units, a new GP surgery, dentist, pharmacy and opticians. This list differs from those described in the proposal chapter, excluding the supermarket and including a dentist, pharmacy and opticians.
- 16.138 Concerns have been raised that these facilities may not be delivered. Apart from the GP surgery the applicant has not evidenced any operators or businesses have indicated their intention to move into Alderholt. A community building is proposed to be funded by the developer through S106, and the applicant believes this could support youth services as part of its function.
- 16.139 There is no developer identified as having an interest in building out the other local centre elements and the TA accepts that delivery will depend on demand. The submitted trajectory identifies when local centre facilities will be delivered and this could be secured through a s106 legal agreement. However, the nature of small retail and office spaces is such that investment is usually made up-front, with units then leased. Concerns remain regarding the enforceability of an obligation should no developer express interest in the local centre, and around its long-term viability.
- 16.140 The proposal includes employment space which is identified in this chapter as space for offices/light industrial uses. Experience on other employment sites in the district are that industrial sites are often built out to accommodate specific employers as need arises and the Economic Development team have advised there is a need for industrial space, reducing concerns regarding deliverability of

this element. It is considered that employment could be secured through a s106 legal agreement.

- 16.141 The Transport Assessment states that the proposed development 'would give rise to in excess of 2,035 jobs' however this does not tally with the Expenditure Assumptions appendix 10.1 which estimate 564 direct jobs created by the development.
- 16.142 The TA says that the inclusion of employment space will reduce the need for residents to travel outside of Alderholt for employment. This is a reasonable assumption however with direct delivery of 564 jobs the majority of residents will work elsewhere, while if 2,035 jobs are created it is likely significant trips would arise from employees travelling to Alderholt from elsewhere.
- 16.143 Regarding education, this chapter assumes that the three-tier education system would be superseded within Alderholt with St James School being expanded to cater for all primary ages. Links between the settlement and Dorset schools would be broken, with secondary education being provided in Hampshire. On this basis trips out of the settlement would be reduced.
- 16.144 The approach to education is not suitable or feasible as explained above. Consequently the assumptions around trip reduction arising from this strategy are unfounded. Overall, while the aim of a 15 minute neighbourhood has merit, in this instance the assumptions are overly-optimistic and rely on approaches that have not been agreed with the relevant statutory bodies.

#### *Trip Generation*

- 16.145 The Trip generation, distribution and assignment chapter begins by explaining that only the dwellings and employment land have been used to calculate trip generation for the proposal, as the other uses would attract very limited vehicular trips from outside the settlement. Given the scale of Class E uses, which the TA states could include a supermarket, it is likely that Class E uses would create inward trips, and these should be assessed.
- 16.146 The chapter goes on to explain how assumptions have been made regarding the reduction in trips undertaken by existing residents, who would be able to access shops, cafes, medical facilities and employment in Alderholt. It also assumes that children would no longer be driven to Cranborne Middle School.
- 16.147 Significant concerns have been raised regarding this methodology. Dorset Highways have advised the trip internalisation assumptions are flawed and have not been agreed by them. Hampshire Highways have stated they do not believe the trip rates are realistic, and they do not reflect averages used in Fordingbridge. National Highways have also queried the assumptions and advised they require testing of the A31/Verwood Road junction assuming higher trip rates / lower internalisation. The trip rates would be significantly higher than assumed which would have knock-on effects on the assessment of impacts on the highway network.
- 16.148 The approach is fundamentally flawed and the TA cannot be relied upon to provide an assessment of likely impacts nor to identify mitigation for these.
- 16.149 The Highways Authority have advised that regardless of the level of self-containment that can be achieved, as the development is isolated and without

sustainable transport options, a large proportion of trips would be external, car-based and of medium to long distance.

#### *Strategic Modelling*

- 16.150 This chapter describes traffic modelling carried out by Dorset Council in the Alderholt area. It is noted that this modelling did not apply reduced trip rates as currently proposed.

#### *Highway Impacts*

- 16.151 Three chapters provide assessment of traffic impacts and capacity analysis. Detailed assessment has been undertaken for:
- Proposed site access roundabout on Hillbury Road
  - Station Road / Ringwood Road
  - Hillbury Road / Station Road
  - Provost Street / Shaftsbury Street / High Street
  - Verwood Road / A31 Eastbound
- 16.152 The assessments are based on the flawed trip rates, so are not accepted. Hampshire Highways have raised concerns regarding the impacts on Provost Street and the mitigation strategy, advising they believe there would be a severe impact on the Hampshire highway network.
- 16.153 Areas where road widening is needed have been identified as follows:
- Harbridge Drove between Alderholt and the A31
  - B3078 between Alderholt and Cranborne
  - Batterley Drove between the B3078 and Verwood
  - B3078 between Alderholt and Fordingbridge
- 16.154 Concerns have been raised as the road widening proposals rely on OS mapping, rather than topographical surveys. This means that the proposed mitigation measures may not be deliverable. Dorset and Hampshire Highways have made it clear that this approach is unacceptable as it fails to provide surety that the mitigation can be delivered.

#### *Impacts on the A31/Verwood Road junction*

- 16.155 Concerns have been raised by National Highways regarding the Transport Assessment assumptions, modelling, and design of the proposed improvements to the A31/Verwood Road junction. Clusters of collisions have occurred at this junction, including one serious injury, and these all occurred in a similar manner.
- 16.156 It is very important that works to this junction are sufficient and suitable to accommodate predicted traffic and at present this has not been demonstrated.

#### *Public Transport*

- 16.157 The applicant has offered to provide a bus service between Cranborne and Ringwood via Alderholt, funded for five years following which they believe the service would be commercially viable. The submitted Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifies the new bus service as coming into effect from 2027 by which time 96 dwellings are estimated to have been completed. The trajectory shows the spine road/bus route being implemented between 2027-28 so it is not clear how buses would begin in 2027.

- 16.158 There are concerns that this service would not be frequent enough to meet the needs of commuters. The trips arising from Alderholt are dispersed and difficult to meet through public transport. It is also unclear how an hourly bus service would accommodate the assumed numbers of school children and commuters, particularly during the morning peak. The applicant has not engaged with the LEA, and it is not known whether the operator of the proposed bus service can rely upon the contract to provide bus transport for school children, which they identify as key to a viable service.
- 16.159 Dorset Highways have raised concerns that this proposal is contrary to the Dorset Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which seeks local services to connect to transport corridors. A regular connection to Fordingbridge where other services can be connected to would be preferable however this could be subject to detailed negotiations as part of a legal agreement. More information would be needed to demonstrate how the service would become viable.
- 16.160 There are also concerns that 5 years may not be the appropriate level of funding given the trajectory of the proposal, that the proposed bus contribution is inadequate to deliver the service proposed, and that there is no contribution identified for the provision of bus infrastructure.

#### *Summary*

- 16.161 The submitted TA is fundamentally flawed and consequently does not correctly identify the highways impacts arising from this proposal. It therefore cannot demonstrate that it mitigates its impacts. In addition, there is insufficient information to demonstrate that those mitigation measures which are proposed can be delivered. This carries significant weight against the proposal.

#### Public Rights of Way

- 16.162 The proposal would create extra pressures on rights of way, and the TA proposes intensification of the use of these as part of its strategy for sustainable transport and trip reduction. While the conclusions of the TA are not accepted, there would nonetheless be impacts on rights of way arising from the proposal.
- 16.163 Both Dorset and Hampshire PRoW Teams have requested financial contributions towards improvements, and it is considered these would meet the CIL Regulations Reg 122 tests. The applicant is willing to make these and obligations could be secured through a legal agreement.

#### Sustainability

- 16.164 Paragraph 105 of the NPPF requires that *'the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives [set out at para. 104]. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health.*
- 16.165 Paragraph 73 states that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, however this is

*'provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).'*

- 16.166 The applicant acknowledges that the existing settlement of Alderholt does not currently represent a sustainable settlement, being heavily reliant upon car travel and with 'very limited services and facilities' which require residents to travel to meet their daily needs. The limited community bus service, and distance and suitability of road connections for walking and cycling do not currently provide genuine alternatives to the private car.
- 16.167 As such it is considered that, as is, this location is not one which would not represent sustainable development. Significant development would therefore be contrary to paragraph 105 of the NPPF, unless Alderholt can be '*made sustainable*'. To be made sustainable paras. 73 and 105 reference '*limiting the need to travel*', '*offering a genuine choice of transport modes*' and being '*supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities*'; it is considered the application would need to satisfactorily evidence that all would be achieved.

*Limiting the need to travel*

- 16.168 The applicant's position is that their proposal represents a 'significant opportunity to establish a self-sustaining settlement'. This would include co-delivery of a local centre, employment, infrastructure and sustainable transport initiatives including a bus service. The TA references described this as creation of a 15 minute neighbourhood.
- 16.169 The concept of a 15 minute neighbourhood is not defined in national or local planning policy, nor in the submitted TA. However, it is considered that this concept relies upon more than just illustrating houses within a 15 minute walk of a local centre. Rather a symbiotic relationship would need to exist where mixed uses meeting daily needs can be easily accessed by walking or cycling, and where density is sufficient to provide a critical mass of dwellings ensuring long-term viability of non-residential uses.
- 16.170 As explained above, there is a lack of clarity and certainty over delivery of the proposal generally, and particularly in relation to education infrastructure, sustainable transport proposals, and uses within the local centre. Improvements to walking and cycling networks within Alderholt are proposed however more evidence would be needed to demonstrate that these would create sustainable links to the local centre and that the centre is positioned in the most accessible part of the site.
- 16.171 A breakdown of the intended uses within the local centre has been provided by the applicant and is included in this report. The submitted Infrastructure Delivery Plan shows that the doctor's surgery and community building would be secured through a legal agreement and delivered alongside the local centre. However there remain some doubts over whether the applicant intends to deliver this infrastructure directly or only provide a contribution.
- 16.172 Employment phasing is included and is shown with delivery aligned with housing. The local centre and employment would be delivered within the first half of the development. The applicant is willing to enter into a legal agreement providing triggers for delivery of the employment and local centre, which is acceptable. However, the lack of evidence regarding interest and potential operators for the

retail and office uses does not provide confidence in the long-term viability of these elements.

- 16.173 Regarding education infrastructure, there is insufficient capacity at St James First School, and it does not have space to expand. The proposed financial contribution could perhaps expand a first school elsewhere however pupils would have to travel to this, either by car or on school transport. Pupils will also need to travel via school transport to middle and upper schools.

*Genuine choice of transport modes*

- 16.174 It is considered that to demonstrate a genuine choice of transport modes, the application would need to evidence sustainable transport options including via public transport and walking/cycling to higher order settlements where additional facilities, services and employment opportunities are located. The closest 'higher-order' settlements are Verwood and Fordingbridge and it is considered it would be appropriate for genuine choices to exist for travel to each.
- 16.175 In relation to pedestrian and cycle links from Alderholt to the settlements of Verwood and Fordingbridge, there is evidence that these cannot constitute safe and attractive cycling links. Both Dorset and Hampshire Highways have advised that factors including distances, traffic, surfacing and lighting will discourage residents from walking or cycling these routes. Natural England have objected to the suggested routes to Verwood as it would have adverse impacts on the Dorset Heathlands.
- 16.176 There is an existing community transport service to Verwood, this is funded by the local parish councils. This service is very limited, and it is not considered to operate with sufficient frequency to offer a genuine choice.
- 16.177 A new bus service is proposed from Cranborne to Ringwood via Fordingbridge, to be subsidised for 5 years. This could be secured through a legal agreement. There are limited services at Cranborne and it is not clear why this destination has been chosen rather than Verwood. A letter of interest from a bus provider has been submitted. This offers 'hope' that the hourly service might continue to be viable following the five-year subsidy. There is more confidence that a two-hourly service would be viable.
- 16.178 It is noted that the viability relies upon the use of the bus travel for school transport to Fordingbridge. It is not clear how the practicalities of this would work as it would not be possible to accommodate both children and commuters on a single morning bus.
- 16.179 It is considered the evidence is not sufficient to show that an hourly service would be viable beyond the subsidised 5-year period. It is further considered that the more certain two-hourly service would not offer a 'genuine choice' as required by the NPPF.

*Infrastructure and facilities*

- 16.180 Significant infrastructure is needed to support the new development, and this is accepted by the applicant who has identified land for a local centre and employment uses, as well as providing a draft s106 Heads of Terms. The deliverability of employment uses is accepted; however, it is only anticipated that 1 job per 3 dwellings would be created, which would result in significant travel outside the settlement for work.

- 16.181 The deliverability and long-term viability of the local centre in its entirety is not accepted. No evidence of interest from opticians, dentists or pharmacies in opening in Alderholt has been provided. There are no plans to open a library in Alderholt as suggested in parts of the application. The closest supermarket to the development would be in Verwood, with very limited public transport available significant car travel would take place to access this.
- 16.182 The s106 identifies financial contributions towards education, swimming, 3G pitch provision. There is no guarantee that additional education provision can be delivered within Alderholt, travel to other settlements for first schooling could be required. Access to middle and upper schools would require travel to other settlements. The vast majority of travel for swimming and 3G pitches would be by car given the lack of public transport services.
- 16.183 The scheme would provide outdoor and indoor sports opportunities, play areas and a community hall. These would be delivered on-site and would support the development. The scheme would provide a doctor's surgery to meet its needs.
- 16.184 Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not be well supported by facilities and infrastructure, and that the majority of everyday services would require travel by car to other settlements.

#### *Rural location*

- 16.185 Paragraph 105 of the NPPF says that '*opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making*'. It is accepted that there are limitations to the sustainable transport solutions that exist for Alderholt, given its location and status in the settlement hierarchy. However, the proposal is for a significant expansion more than doubling the size of the settlement. As such it goes beyond the extension of an existing rural area and so greater weight is given to those parts of para. 105 which apply to significant development.

#### *Summary*

- 16.186 Overall, it is considered that the application has not evidenced the proposal would adequately limit the need to travel. Nor has it been evidenced that genuine choices of transport modes would be created and sustained. Alderholt does not provide the necessary infrastructure and facilities to support everyday needs and this situation would not be substantially altered by the proposal. The location is unacceptable for a development of this scale, contrary to paragraphs 73 and 105 of the NPPF, and this is attributed very significant weight.

#### Urban Design

- 16.187 Chapter 12 of the NPPF sets out the approach to achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF sets criteria to ensure developments are well designed. Of particular relevance to this proposal is the requirement that developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks

16.188 Para. 134 states that development that is not well designed should be refused.

16.189 The Council's Urban Design Officer has raised concerns regarding the rationale and evidence that has informed the design of the site. The submitted Design & Access Statement includes very little analysis of the existing settlement of Alderholt, its existing context, opportunities and constraints. Analysis often stops at the site boundary. Without this wider assessment it is difficult to understand how design decisions were reached.

#### *Landscape-led development*

16.190 The applicant has described the proposal as 'landscape-led' with a focus on retaining existing landscape features such as tree belts and hedgerows, and creating new networks of open spaces and SANG. The framework for this approach is demonstrated through the green infrastructure parameter plan, and is considered to be a benefit of the scheme.

#### *Masterplanning*

16.191 Key design considerations at this outline stage include the rationale behind the positioning of the proposed spine road, bridge/crossing of Ringwood Road, business park and local centre. Parameter plans including the land use plan and access and movement plan would position these key elements at the outline stage and so they fall to be considered in principle here.

16.192 The positioning of the local centre is a key concern. The analysis of existing and proposed pedestrian connections and illustrative layout do not demonstrate that this would be positioned for easy access by sustainable transport by existing and proposed residents. The local centre is proposed at the southern edge of the settlement, with very little residential development supporting it to the south-east and south-west. The local centre is less accessible for existing dwellings towards the north and is not positioned to integrate communities.

16.193 The Council's Urban Design Officer has requested space syntax analysis or similar be submitted to demonstrate the local centre is positioned within the area of the site with greatest connectivity. It is considered this is a reasonable request to demonstrate that the proposed development will *'function well and add to the overall quality of the area'*.

16.194 The applicant has responded that the local centre is located on the new primary route through the development, is within 1.2km of almost all homes within Alderholt and visible to anyone passing through the village. The centre is intended to be adjacent to the recreation ground and to be a 400m walk from the proposed employment park.

16.195 The centre is positioned 1.2km from homes on the northern side of Alderholt. However, were this proposal to be implemented, the expanded settlement of Alderholt would only be 1.3km across. This indicates that a much more central location for the 'centre' should be feasible. It is not considered the proposed local centre would be adjacent to the recreation ground, being located circa. 200m away and without a direct and legible connection. A close relationship with the



employment uses would be of benefit – however reducing the distance would make it more attractive as a lunchtime destination.

- 16.196 Overall, taking into consideration the lack of commitment to delivery of the local centre as set out above, and the concerns regarding the placement of the ‘local centre’ it is not considered that the applicant has demonstrated the ‘*design of the site will be optimised to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development*’ or that the proposed development will ‘*function well*’, contrary to paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

#### *Density*

- 16.197 The Council’s Urban Design Officer has commented that the density parameter plans do not offer variation or contribute to character areas. Concerns have been raised by the community that the density is too high, and concerns have also been raised regarding the lack of height parameter plans.
- 16.198 The Density parameter plan unusually sets exact requirements for density within ‘neighbourhoods’, rather than giving a range, which would not allow for flexibility at later stages. However, all areas are to be 30dph or over, which complies with Policy LN2. It would be possible for character areas to be created without variation in density. It is not considered that the lack of a range in density warrants refusal of the scheme.
- 16.199 No height parameter plan has been submitted however it is not necessary at this stage - scale is a reserved matter and could be considered appropriately at a future time.

#### *Design Code*

- 16.200 Concerns have been raised by the Council’s Landscape and Urban Design Officers regarding the submitted Design Code, which the applicant has confirmed is illustrative. This is missing key components and it is overly generic. It does not follow the approach set out in the National Model Design Code (NMDC), does not provide a framework for the development, or clear criteria against which future reserved matters applications could be assessed.
- 16.201 A condition could be placed requiring submission of a Design Code including specific elements to be covered therein.

#### *Summary*

- 16.202 It is considered there is insufficient evidence and rationale to demonstrate the masterplanning of this proposal sets the framework for a development which functions well for the long-term and will support an appropriate mix of uses and facilities. The proposal is contrary to para. 130 of the NPPF. There are benefits arising from the design in particular the approach to green infrastructure however this does not outweigh the identified defects. Para. 134 of the NPPF is clear that ‘*development that is not well designed should be refused*’ and so significant weight is attributed to this.

#### Public Art

- 16.203 The applicant has offered to make a contribution of £250k towards public art. Art may help with placemaking and the creation of new communities. The inclusion of public art within the development would be acceptable.

- 16.204 However, there is no requirement to deliver public art alongside development within the CED Local Plan and it is not considered that this is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. The applicant has indicated that this contribution could be combined with required elements, for example space for children and young people, however this is not advanced enough to place any weight on. As drafted this obligation would not meet the CIL Regulations Reg 122 tests and cannot be given weight in decision making.

#### Healthy Lifestyles and Communities

- 16.205 Paragraph 98 of the NPPF states that '*access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change*'. Para. 92 seeks developments to '*enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs*'. Policy HE4 of the CED Local Plan sets out standards for provision of open space including active outdoor sports space, children and young people's space, and allotments.
- 16.206 As this application has come forward outside of the Local Plan process, detailed considerations of the infrastructure required to support the development have not been identified through a plan-led approach. This has led to a need to refine requirements and obligations during the application process.
- 16.207 The Public Health team support aspects of the proposed development as it relates to healthy lifestyles, in particular the provision of greenspace and community hub. However, they felt more detail was needed on how the open space would be designed to meet the needs of residents.
- 16.208 Paragraph 57 of the NPPF states that planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:
- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
  - b) directly related to the development
  - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development
- 16.209 Any other obligations offered should not be afforded weight when determining an application.

#### *Open Space requirements*

- 16.210 The quantity requirements for open space for 1,700 dwellings based on a population of 2.4 people per dwelling (4,080 occupants) are:

<b>Open Space type</b>	<b>Quantity standard (ha. Per 1,000 population)</b>	<b>Recommended Provision</b>
<b>Active (outdoor) sports space</b>	1.25ha	5.1ha
<b>Children &amp; young people's space</b>	0.25ha	1.02ha
<b>Allotments</b>	0.25ha	1.02ha

- 16.211 Policy HE4 states that contributions will be directed towards meeting the quantity, quality and accessibility standards for each of the Local Needs Areas as set out in

the 2007 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study. For Alderholt, this identifies a significant existing shortfall in open space provision, particularly in terms of recreation grounds, active sports space and children & young people's space.

- 16.212 The study identifies that improvements are needed to the existing recreation ground, to the existing tennis club and to play areas. Provision for young people is also needed. The study does not identify which sports may need additional provision and as the application site is not allocated for development no studies into this have been carried out by the Local Planning Authority.
- 16.213 The location, type and quality of provision is material to successful delivery of healthy lifestyles. The applicant has worked with Sport England and other bodies to identify needs for sports provision both on- and off-site.

*Sports (outdoor and indoor)*

- 16.214 The applicant has identified a site of approx. 5ha as an extension to the existing Alderholt recreation ground. This would provide two 11-aside football pitches (estimated cost £240k) and a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) catering for older children, to complement the existing play area. A tennis centre could also be provided through the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) with a contribution of £500k identified for this.
- 16.215 Sport England have also identified the need for indoor sports space to meet the needs of the development as follows, these have been expressed in a range.

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Need generated</b>	<b>Estimated cost (if financial contribution)</b>
Indoor sports	1.12 – 1.57 courts 0.28 – 0.39 sports halls	£809,016 - £1,132,623
Indoor bowls	0.1 - 0.14 rinks 0.02 centres	£45,304 - £63,425
Swimming	0.81 – 1.14 lanes 0.2 – 0.29 pools	£899,231 - £1,258,924

- 16.216 There are existing limitations and shortfalls in provision of indoor sports across the area, in particular lack of capacity on indoor courts, shortage of swimming pool space and limited availability of local gym or dance offers. It would not be reasonable to require this development to address existing issues however it does demonstrate that it is necessary that the development address its own needs.
- 16.217 There is a requirement to travel outside Alderholt to access indoor sports and swimming facilities, so on-site provision would be sought where possible to make the development as sustainable as possible. As identified by Sport England, a Local Leisure Building (a community hub incorporating small swimming pool, small hall and café which could be linked to outdoor provision) would be ideal to create a sustainable settlement and reduce the need to travel. However, the scale of the development is not such that it necessitates delivery of such a facility in full.
- 16.218 The applicant has agreed to provide a community building in the local centre to provide for indoor sports. This would provide a single sports court and could also be used for fitness classes. This approach would meet the needs arising from the development, although the facility will be small in scale and therefore limited in

terms of activities that can take place. Sport England have advised that such facilities are less likely to be financially viable than a Local Leisure Building.

- 16.219 The applicant has offered a contribution of £1mil towards off-site swimming pool provision. However, existing pools at which this contribution could be spent are some distance from the site, in Wimborne and Shaftsbury. Both would require travelling by private car as there are no public transport services existing or proposed to these settlements. While this may meet the swimming needs of the development, it would not do so in a sustainable way.
- 16.220 With regard to the need for 3G pitches, Sport England have identified a need for 0.1 – 0.14 pitches, with a cost of £101,673 - £142,342. The applicant initially offered to provide an on-site 3G pitch however the advice of Sport England is that such a facility requires management and so would best be delivered in a sports hub or linked to a Local Leisure Building. The scale of development does not necessitate this level of provision.
- 16.221 The applicant has therefore offered to pay £1mil towards pitches on and off-site. In decision-making only contributions that can be evidenced as necessary should be given weight. In this instance this is £142,342 plus any onsite delivery. Similarly, to swimming pools, future residents would need to travel to use 3G facilities.
- 16.222 The other pitches identified for on-site delivery are two 11-aside grass football pitches. These are estimated to cost £120,000 each however should be delivered directly rather than through a financial contribution. This would leave £617,658 of the applicant's offer of funding unaccounted for.
- 16.223 It is not clear how this potential funding would be spent however the two pitches would not fill the recreation ground extension and additional pitches e.g. mini-football could be accommodated. The submitted Landscape Strategy indicates an area of informal open space within the recreation ground extension however Policy HE4 requires delivery of 5ha for sporting use and informal space would not contribute to meeting this requirement. While additional on-site delivery may be necessary to meet policy requirements, a financial contribution would not meet the CIL Regulations 122 tests and so weight cannot be given to this when making a decision on the application.
- 16.224 A £500k contribution towards an on-site tennis facility is also offered, however this is not backed up by evidence of local need. Sport England are not aware of a particular demand for tennis in this area however it is understood there is support for the project from the LTA. It is not known how far this funding would go towards delivery of the facility nor are there specifics in terms of the scale and number of courts that would be included and the facility is not shown on the submitted Landscape Strategy. It is understood that the facility would be open to booking by the community and would not require membership.
- 16.225 Policy HE4 is primarily quantity based and does not stipulate in terms of the outdoor sports uses to be delivered. Therefore, if delivered as part of the on-site provision it is considered the tennis facility could contribute to meeting the requirements of Policy HE4 and can therefore be considered to meet the CIL Regulations 122 tests. However, there would need to be certainty that the facility was deliverable.

- 16.226 Policy HE4 requires the delivery of outdoor sporting opportunities. Sport England have identified the need for grass pitches which can be located on the recreation ground extension, these and the tennis facility would contribute to meeting quantity standards. However, from the information submitted it is not clear if any additional pitches or sports uses would be required to meet these standards. The delivery of 5ha of on-site sporting uses would meet the CIL Regulations 122 tests.
- 16.227 Sport England have also identified the need for indoor sports provision to meet the needs of the development and the applicant proposes to deliver this on-site. Evidence of need for contributions towards swimming and 3G pitch provision has been identified through the Open Space Study 2007 and by Sport England, it would be appropriate for this proposal to make a financial contribution. These obligations meet the CIL Regulations 122 tests.
- 16.228 A further £617,658 offered towards pitch provision does not meet an identified need nor form part of on-site delivery. However, it is possible that this may be required to deliver pitches on site to meet the quantity standards of Policy HE4. There is insufficient information regarding this part of the proposal to understand whether the CIL Regulations 122 tests and in the absence of clarity weight cannot be given to this when making a decision on the application.

#### *Children & Young People*

- 16.229 The approach to children's play is, in addition to the LEAP at the recreation ground, to provide four Local Areas for Play (LAP) within the residential areas. Concerns were raised by the Council's Urban Design Officer about the quality of this approach, as LAPs often offer limited play opportunities. A smaller number of larger play facilities would be more appropriate.
- 16.230 The applicant has responded to the effect that they consider a more natural approach to play to be appropriate and would look to provide planting and timber equipment. This may be acceptable however it would still be appropriate to provide such play areas as LEAPs and group timber play equipment together.
- 16.231 Regarding young people's provision, the applicant has advised that the design of the recreation ground 'could' include a skate park and seating / hang out areas with the design of these developed with young people. Additionally, youth groups could be held in the community hall. This approach would be reasonable however space for young people is not identified within the recreation ground on the submitted plans, and there is no evidence of any funding for youth groups.
- 16.232 As elements would be delivered directly it would not be necessary to identify costings as part of an obligation. However, it is noted that the assumed facilities and associated costs in the submitted Viability Appraisal would not be sufficient to provide acceptable standards of provision.
- 16.233 There is a clear policy basis to seek the provision of space for children and young people to meet the needs of the development. Although details are reserved it is necessary to secure appropriate provision at the outline stage. Currently the proposals are not adequately developed and would not be acceptable, however it is considered that this could be addressed by obligations to be secured through a legal agreement.

#### *Allotments*

- 16.234 The applicant has agreed to enter into an obligation to provide 1.02ha of allotments. There is a clear policy basis to require the provision of these allotments and this would be acceptable subject to details to be worked up through a legal agreement.

#### *Healthcare*

- 16.235 The Hampshire & IOW Integrated Care Board (ICB) have responded to the consultation, having been passed it by the Dorset ICB as residents at Alderholt are currently served by the Fordingbridge GP practice. Nearly 80% of Alderholt's existing population are registered with the Fordingbridge Surgery however it is already over-subscribed causing patients to need to travel to Ringwood.
- 16.236 The ICB have identified that a new surgery is required to meet the needs of the existing settlement and the development. A 600sqm surgery is needed, of which 300sqm is necessary to meet the needs of the development. This would need to be delivered directly and fully fitted out to required standards. A further 300sqm extension would be funded via the NHS as a second phase.
- 16.237 The applicant has indicated their agreement to enter into a legal obligation to provide for the need arising from their development as requested by the NHS, and this obligation would meet the CIL Regulations 122 tests.

#### *Summary*

- 16.238 In summary, the proposal could provide required facilities to enable healthy lifestyles and the applicant has indicated their intention to deliver these as part of the development. The quantum of space proposed is acceptable. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding delivery, in particular in relation to children and young people's provision, the provision of on-site facilities at the recreation ground and the necessity of contributions offered to sports pitches.
- 16.239 The applicant has worked to resolve these issues as far as possible during the course of the application. It is not considered appropriate engage in further negotiations at this stage as the application is considered unacceptable in principle. Outstanding matters could be resolved through the development of a legal agreement.
- 16.240 The facilities would be intended primarily to mitigate the impacts of the development however they could have some wider social benefits which are afforded modest weight.

#### Biodiversity

- 16.241 Policy ME1 of the CED Core Strategy states that the Core Strategy aims to protect, maintain, and enhance the condition of nature conservation sites, habitats and species. Where development is considered likely to impact upon particular sites, habitats or species, it will need to be demonstrated that the development will not result in adverse impacts.

#### *Protected Species*

- 16.242 The habitat and protected species surveys comply with best practice, identifying species that might be affected by the proposals and mitigation measures. More surveys may be required as any reserved matters progress. This is considered

acceptable subject to conditions including a Landscape & Environmental Management Plan (LEMP), a Construction & Environment Management Plan (CEMP) and a Lighting Strategy. Appropriate licenses will need to be secured from Natural England.

#### *Biodiversity Net Gain*

- 16.243 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF requires planning decision to provide net gains for biodiversity. The forthcoming Environment Act will require development to deliver a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) from November 2023.
- 16.244 The applicant has submitted a BNG report which describes how the proposed development would deliver a net gain in habitat units of 13.16%, an increase in hedgerow units of 10.74% and an increase in ditch units of 69.8%.
- 16.245 The Dorset Natural Environment Team (NET) have reviewed the submitted report and are satisfied with the approach and calculations. In advance of the activation of the Environment Act this is afforded significant weight.

#### Habitats Regulations and Appropriate Assessment

- 16.246 A Shadow HRA has been submitted which identifies potential impact pathways on habitats sites - the Dorset Heathlands, River Avon and New Forest.
- 16.247 A Strategic Access Managing and Monitoring (SAMM) payment of £625,328 has been offered by the applicant as part of the mitigation package. However, the Dorset Heathlands SPD states that SAMM costs will be funded through CIL receipts. There is no policy basis to require this contribution and therefore no weight should be attached to it.

#### *Dorset Heathlands*

- 16.248 Policy ME2 of the CED Core Strategy 2014 states no residential development will be permitted within 400m of protected European and internationally protected heathlands. Within 400m-5km residential development can be permitted subject to demonstrating there will be no adverse impacts on the heathlands, through the application of policies in the SPD.
- 16.249 The site is located partially within the 400m zone, and partly within the 400m-5km zone. All residential elements are proposed to take place outside the 400m zone.
- 16.250 An on-site 53ha SANG is proposed, which Natural England have confirmed would provide sufficient capacity for the development. The SANG has the potential to divert people away from Cranborne Common. However, there is insufficient detail regarding phasing plans, and the mechanisms for ongoing management. In the absence of these Natural England cannot confirm that mitigation would be secured adequately, and further detail is required at the outline stage to provide certainty.
- 16.251 There is also a risk of public access westwards through the site to Cranborne Common and Ringwood Forest. Natural England have advised that mitigation could take the form of a barrier on agricultural land to the west of the site. Land within the control of the applicant has been identified by Natural England as having potential to deliver this however details would need to be set out and included within the applicant's ES to enable this mitigation to be considered.

- 16.252 Concerns have also been raised regarding suggestions that the existing PRow across Cranborne Common be promoted as a cycle route linking Alderholt and Verwood. The applicant has responded to the effect that the promotion of this route could be disregarded. However, the Transport Assessment assumes promotion of this route and it therefore forms part of the submitted strategy. A contribution towards upgrading local PRow has been proposed and is necessary to mitigate the development's impacts. It is not considered appropriate to alter approaches in an ad-hoc fashion, rather any changes to the transport strategy would need to be incorporated within that document and consulted on.

*Avon Valley*

- 16.253 The Avon Valley is known to be sensitive to effects arising from water pollution by phosphorus loading. The Shadow HRA includes a nutrient budget which states that the 1,700 dwellings would annually generate 160.94kg/year of phosphorus through discharge of treated wastewater. Taking into account land uses and applying the 20% precautionary buffer as required by Natural England an outline mitigation liability of 228.87kg/year has been identified.
- 16.254 The Shadow HRA states that it is possible this level would fall should central government enact legislation requiring upgrades to wastewater treatment.
- 16.255 The Shadow HRA suggests that surface water drainage could be used to reduce phosphorus leaving the site. However it relies upon preliminary indications rather than a full assessment of the potential benefits. There is no evidence regarding deliverability of this proposed mitigation. This links to concerns raised by the Local Lead Flood Authority that insufficient information has been submitted to provide certainty that a drainage solution can be delivered on the site.
- 16.256 The Shadow HRA proposes a Grampian condition to allow recalculation of the nutrient budget and identification of appropriate mitigation at a later stage in the planning process. This is not considered appropriate or adequate to demonstrate with certainty that effects can be mitigated. It also means that the cost of mitigation is unknown, resulting in uncertainty regarding the impact of required mitigation on development viability.
- 16.257 Natural England have objected as the applicant has not provided any details to provide certainty that they have secured an agreed and deliverable mechanism in principle e.g. through securing credits available from approved phosphate offsetting projects in the river.

*New Forest recreational impacts*

- 16.258 Natural England have advised that the predicted level of development coming forward around the New Forest habitats site will require mitigation over and above the measures for in the Dorset Heathlands SPD. A 13.8km 'zone of influence' is proposed within which recreational effects will require mitigation. A strategy for mitigating these effects has yet to be agreed.
- 16.259 This site is approx. 3km from the New Forest and Natural England have advised there will be a likely significant effect arising from this proposal. Mitigation measures may be possible but are not yet confirmed. The lack of information and detail on the SANG means it is not possible to conclude that it will adequately mitigate for New Forest recreational pressures.

*New Forest air quality*



- 16.260 The Shadow HRA scopes out impacts on air quality in the New Forest. In doing so regard is had to the expected number of trips generated by the development, however this figure is not accepted by Dorset or Hampshire Highways. It is not clear what other plans and projects have been considered in-combination, and para. 7.34 of Technical Appendix 9.2 only refers to other committed development as having been considered.
- 16.261 This approach is not accepted, and air quality of this Habitats site is scoped in. Natural England have advised that the submitted air pollution modelling is inadequate to allow a conclusion that there will not be a likely significant effect on the New Forest or an adverse effect upon integrity either alone or in-combination with significant development coming forward through other plans and projects.

### *Summary*

- 16.262 An Appropriate Assessment (Background Document 1) has been carried out assessing the impacts of the proposal on the Dorset Heathlands, New Forest and Avon Valley. This finds that adverse effects on the integrity of these Habitats sites would arise from the proposal and does not demonstrate that these can be adequately mitigated.
- 16.263 The applicant has not put forward a case for consideration of this site as an exception under the Habitats Regulations. Alternative solutions have not been submitted. It is not considered that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest which would outweigh or justify the risk of harm to the Dorset Heathlands, New Forest or Avon Valley.
- 16.264 The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy ME2 of the CED Core Strategy, and to the Habitats Regulations, forming a reason for refusal of the application. The adverse impacts upon these designated sites is given weight of the highest significance and provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed.

### Landscape and Visual Impacts

- 16.265 Policy HE3 of the CED Local Plan requires development to protect and seek to enhance the landscape character of the area. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF requires developments to be sympathetic to the surrounding landscape setting.
- 16.266 The site lies within the Heath/Forest Mosaic Dorset Landscape Character Type which forms part of the wider 'Poole Basin' an extensive and expansive area of former heathland on acidic and impoverished soils. It forms part of an elevated plateau cut to its west by the River Crane, to its north by the Allen River/Ashford Water, and to its east by the river Avon. The landscape type is characterised by a patchwork of farmland, heath, forest and scrub on sandy soils between straight roads with extensive blocks of conifer plantation. These plantations blanket former heathland sites but can help to soften the visual impact of development. Housing, military and industrial development have a significant impact on the area.
- 16.267 Despite the presence of Alderholt to its northeast and the large poultry shed at Oak Tree Farm the site has an open, rural and agricultural character when viewed from the sections of Ringwood Road.
- 16.268 The 2021 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for the site (SHLAA Ref: LA/ALDE/007) notes that the extensive area of woodland south of Warren

Park Farm helps to screen views of the site and concludes that the site is suitable for development subject to policy change but would require comprehensive masterplanning.

- 16.269 The site occupies the greater part of assessments areas ALD 2 and ALD3 of the Dorset Council East Dorset and Purbeck Areas Landscape & Heritage Study Stage 2 Assessments: Tier 3 Settlements. These areas were assessed as having low-medium sensitivity and medium sensitivity respectively.
- 16.270 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted in support of the application which provides an assessment of visual impacts. This includes assessment of the visual impacts of the site from 15 viewpoints including along Ringwood Road, from Cranborne Common and from PRow to the east in Hampshire.
- 16.271 The physical landscape impacts that would give rise to perceived changes in landscape character are generally limited to some loss of vegetation within the site to achieve access and a change in the overall character from rural agricultural to urban residential. However, the proposed scale and extent of development increase the significance of the change in character.
- 16.272 The Council's Landscape Officer has confirmed that the selected viewpoints and Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) within Appendix 8.4 of the EIA demonstrate that the visibility of the proposed development would be largely confined to a localised area. The potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development could be mitigated by the provision of SANGs and public open space, and significant amounts of tree planting within them and throughout the proposed residential areas.
- 16.273 Concerns have been raised by NFDC regarding the impacts of the proposal on the rural character and visual amenity of the countryside. It is considered that there would be a significant change in character in the immediate vicinity of the site, such a change is inevitable for a development of this scale within the countryside and impacts must be considered within this context. The value of the landscape that would be affected is not high and designated assets would not be affected. Given the localised nature of this change it is afforded limited weight in the planning balance.
- 16.274 The Council's Landscape Officer has commented that the stated aim of creating a landscape led development is laudable however will depend on the detailed design. Concerns are raised regarding the submitted Landscape Strategy and Design Code which are non-committal in places. Further clarity and commitments would be needed and could be delivered via an agreed Design Code, to be secured by condition.

#### Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB

- 16.275 Policy HE3 of the CED Local Plan requires development proposals within and/or affecting the setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to need to demonstrate that account has been taken of the relevant Management Plan. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF seeks protection and enhancement of valued landscapes while para. 176 gives great weight and protection to Areas of

Outstanding Natural Beauty, requiring their landscape and scenic beauty to be conserved.

- 16.276 The Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located approx. 2km to the north-west and this site is considered to fall within its setting. The LVIA has identified limited intervisibility and it is considered the development would not have a visual impact on the setting of the AONB. However, other aspects including dark skies and recreational impacts are also matters for consideration. The AONB is designated as an international dark sky reserve.
- 16.277 The AONB Management Plan includes ambitions including conserving its character and tranquillity, and minimising light pollution.
- 16.278 The AONB have expressed concerns regarding the impacts of light pollution to protect its dark skies. The submitted lighting strategy stipulates lighting designed to meet Lighting Zone E2 (rural) however the AONB believe that E1 (natural) would be more appropriate. An appropriate lighting strategy to meet E1 standards could be conditioned. The applicant has confirmed this would be deliverable and the AONB Team have confirmed this would be acceptable to them.
- 16.279 Concerns have also been raised by the AONB over the potential impacts of traffic into the AONB on the B3078 through Cranborne. They believe the projected levels of traffic are understated (as is concluded in the section of highways impacts above) and are concerned that specific impacts arising on the AONB such as verge damage, pollution and loss of tranquillity have not been considered.
- 16.280 The submitted ES states that the potential recreational pressures on the AONB can be mitigated through the on-site open space and SANG. The on-site SANG is primarily intended to mitigate impacts on the Dorset Heathlands and further information would be needed to demonstrate how this would also mitigate for recreational impacts on the AONB, particularly as this is referenced as mitigating for impacts on tranquillity and traffic as well as recreation.
- 16.281 In summary, the application has failed to adequately evidence impacts arising from the development on increased traffic into the AONB (with resultant impacts on tranquillity and environmental impacts), and the impacts of recreation. While these impacts are not considered so significant as to warrant a clear reason for refusal of the scheme, they are nonetheless afforded moderate weight in the planning balance.

### Solar Array

- 16.282 The Council's assessment 'Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in East Dorset District' identifies the site as being in an area with a sensitivity to solar developments of 1-10ha as moderate-high. An existing solar array is situated to the north-west of the application site, outside the site boundary but surrounded by this site. This application includes a proposed 6.4ha solar array to be situated to the south of the existing array, divided by a strip of proposed SANG.

- 16.283 Permission was granted for a further solar array within two fields to the south-west of the site; this permission has now lapsed without being implemented.
- 16.284 The submitted LVIA includes a separate assessment for the solar array, which demonstrates that visibility of this from existing viewpoints would be limited. However, the solar array would be visible from the proposed SANG within the site.
- 16.285 There is limited information provided on the height parameters for PV units within the solar array, assumptions used to inform the LVIA have not been provided. There is likewise no information on how long the array would be expected to remain on the site – the majority of solar array consents are temporary in nature to prevent sterilisation of agricultural land and minerals deposits. These matters could be resolved via condition.
- 16.286 Overall, it is considered that a solar array in the position identified would be acceptable, subject to conditions restricting the height of panels and imposing a timeframe for their removal. The cumulative impacts of this proposal and the implemented array would be acceptable.
- 16.287 The applicant has suggested that the solar array would be a benefit and could deliver part of the energy requirements for the proposed housing and other uses however has not evidenced how this relationship would operate. While solar arrays are beneficial it is not considered there is evidence that this array is intrinsically linked to other elements of this application and so it is afforded limited weight in the planning balance.

#### Flooding / Drainage

- 16.288 Policy ME6 of the CED Local Plan sets out how flood management and mitigation proposals proposed as part of new development will be assessed. This includes a requirement that the design, construction, operation and maintenance of SuDS meets national standards. Paragraph 169 of the NPPF requires that major developments incorporate sustainable drainage systems and take account of advice from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).
- 16.289 The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which identifies existing areas of flood risk, flood risk arising from the development and details of proposed surface water management.

#### *Risk of flooding*

- 16.290 The application site falls within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of fluvial flooding). Small parts of the site are at risk of flooding from surface water (RoFSW). In the eastern parcel areas at medium-high risk are shown as concentrated around field boundaries and drainage ditches. The land use parameter plan does not propose development in these areas which would be retained and enhanced as green infrastructure.
- 16.291 In the western parcel, there is a low RoFSW within the field proposed for the recreation ground extension, and in the north-eastern field proposed for residential development. The LLFA have confirmed the pattern shows a low risk of flooding which is not considered to trigger the requirement for a sequential test. There is no indication that any playing pitches provided within the proposed

recreation ground extension could not be adequately drained through an appropriate drainage strategy.

- 16.292 However, there are a number of drainage lines which traverse the site where no RoFSW has been captured within the FRA. The LLFA have advised this is likely to be because the drainage lines were not detected in flood modelling. This does not mean that there is no surface water flow or flooding along these lines. Further assessment is required and in the absence of this it is not considered that the existing RoFSW has been adequately assessed.

*Risk of flooding from upstream catchment*

- 16.293 There are a number of areas of the proposed development where there is a flood risk from an upstream catchment, and where the applicant has not assessed the flood risk.
- 16.294 Approved development at Hawthorns Nursery (3/16/1446/OUT) has an attenuated discharge into an existing ditch along Ringwood Road which then enters the western parcel of the site. A further catchment enters the western parcel from the north-west. Both of these catchments discharge through the site along open drainage lines and the FRA identifies these as watercourses. However, the parameter plan and illustrative masterplan show these as built over to form part of the residential development.
- 16.295 Culverting of watercourses is not permitted, and culverting of drainage lines is discouraged. There is an increased flood risk to the proposed development and to upstream third party property because these drainage lines have not been properly assessed and considered. The impact of removing these drainage lines has not been included in the FRA.
- 16.296 This is contrary to the requirements of the NPPF which requires all major development proposals to take due consideration of surface water management and offer a drainage strategy that does not create or exacerbate off site flooding, and mitigates flood risk to the site.
- 16.297 The applicant has responded to the effect that the masterplan is illustrative only and these issues could be picked up as part of reserved matters. The LLFA are not satisfied with this approach. It is considered that while the masterplan is illustrative, the Land Use parameter plan is not and this continues to show these drainage lines as being developed as homes.

*Sustainable Drainage*

- 16.298 The NPPG provides additional guidance on what information on sustainable drainage needs to be submitted with a planning application (Paragraph: 059 Reference ID: 7-059-20220825). This advises that applicants need to submit a sustainable drainage strategy containing proportionate information on the proposed sustainable drainage systems as part of their planning application (including outline applications). This includes the proposals for managing and discharging surface water from the site using sustainable drainage systems and accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change.
- 16.299 The proposed method of disposal of surface water is through infiltration. Ground investigations and infiltration testing were not submitted alongside the application however testing has now been carried out which has found infiltration is unlikely

to be viable . This information was submitted in response to concerns raised by the LLFA regarding the need for this information at the outline stage.

- 16.300 The LLFA have also identified key pieces of information in the submitted surface water drainage strategy and additional information that have not been resolved:
- In some areas the QBAR rate (mean annual flood) has not been provided. In others it is not clear what the catchment area for the QBAR rate is.
  - Attenuation Basin 2 will receive discharge from the upstream catchments mentioned at para 16.171 but has not been sized to receive these flows, it is not expected that the flows will be attenuated here but it is unclear how these will be managed/routed to bypass the attenuation basin
- 16.301 These factors risk a potential increase in flood risk from the site affecting third party land.
- 16.302 The LLFA have advised that insufficient information has been provided regarding SW management from the development. They are unable to verify the appropriateness of any SW management in accordance with the Ministerial statement 'Sustainable Drainage System' 2014, chapter 14 of the NPPF and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). They are unable to confirm that the applicant has met DEFRA's technical guidance or relevant local and national policies concerning drainage.
- 16.303 The applicant's position is that they consider sufficient information has been submitted considering the Outline nature of the proposal. They consider that a drainage strategy could be subject to a Grampian condition.
- 16.304 Further information was submitted by the applicant in response to the LLFA's concerns however it was submitted with insufficient time remaining to carry out further consultation within the life of the application. Consequently, this information has not been taken into consideration when making this recommendation.

### *Summary*

- 16.305 It is considered that the level of information requested from the applicant is in line with policy requirements, and that it is reasonable to ask an applicant to demonstrate that a sustainable drainage strategy is achievable. Flooding and drainage are not reserved matters and need to be fully considered at the Outline stage.
- 16.306 Given the extent of information outstanding, moderate weight is attached to these impacts in the planning balance.

### Foul Drainage

- 16.307 The application is accompanied by a Proposed Foul Drainage Strategy Sewers whereby development parcels would drain to an on-site pumping station, with pumping main connecting to the downstream public sewer network. Exact capacity improvements are to be determined but have been discussed with Wessex Water who have no objection to the scheme. The proposal would not have an adverse impact on foul drainage. As other legislation exists to ensure

suitable provision for foul drainage this is afforded very limited weight in the planning balance.

### Environmental Health

- 16.308 While the application is in outline and uses within the employment and local centre areas would be limited to those which are suitable in a residential area (Class E), there may be some impacts on amenity resulting in the need for assessments of noise and odours dependent on the final mix of uses.
- 16.309 Information will be needed regarding opening hours, lighting, construction management and heat pumps. Impacts arising from contaminated land would need to be monitored.
- 16.310 All these matters could be secured by condition.

### Air Quality

- 16.311 The application is accompanied by an ES, which includes an assessment of impacts on air quality (Chapter 14 and technical appendixes 14.1 & 14.2). This identifies that the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> rates are expected to decline from their existing baseline.
- 16.312 An assessment of impacts on air quality on receptors with and without the proposed development is provided, including town centre sites in Fordingbridge. This concludes the proposed development will result in a negligible impact on annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at all existing receptors.
- 16.313 However, this conclusion is based upon trip rates which are not accepted by the Highways Authority, and does not take account of planned development in Fordingbridge/Ashford. The impacts on air quality are likely to be greater than assumed in the ES.
- 16.314 Given the general downward trend, it is considered it is unlikely that impacts on air quality (excepting on air quality for Habitats sites) would be so significant as to warrant a reason for refusal. As such limited weight is attributed to the impacts on air quality.

### Heritage and Archaeology

- 16.315 CED Policy HE1 provides that heritage assets will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced. There are several bronze age barrows within woodland south of Alderholt and Cranborne Common. The nearest is Bowl Barrow in Plumney Wood located c. 650m from the site. Historic England have advised the proposed development would not have a significant impact on the settings of these assets and further detailed assessment is not required.
- 16.316 There are no built heritage assets that would be affected by the proposal.
- 16.317 The Council's Archaeologist has confirmed that the desk assessment and geophysical survey are adequate however considers trial trenching is required to inform an outline decision. Given the scale of the proposal and the potential impacts this is considered a reasonable requirement and would be sought were

other elements of the proposal considered satisfactory. However, given that a condition could be placed to secure this work prior to commencement of the development, the adverse impacts of failing to provide this information are afforded limited weight in the planning balance.

### Trees

- 16.318 CED Policy HE2 of the Core Strategy states that development will only be permitted if it is compatible with or improved its surroundings in terms of its relationship, amongst other things, to mature trees. Para. 131 of the NPPF requires that existing trees are retained wherever possible.
- 16.319 There are a significant number of existing trees on the site. The Council's Tree Officer has advised that the majority of these are being retained and could be effectively protected during construction.
- 16.320 The need to remove two prominent trees on Ringwood Road is raised as a concern. These trees are subject to a TPO and contribute to the character of Ringwood Road and its country road aesthetic. They would be removed to enable the proposed link road to cross Ringwood Road.
- 16.321 The applicant has been asked to justify the loss of these trees and responded that the structuring of the layout for Alderholt Meadows is premised on the basis of an enhanced local park and recreation ground in the centre of the expanded settlement. The main access and therefore connecting road will run to the south of the existing Alderholt Recreation Ground. This determines the point at which it crosses Ringwood Road and how it provides the connection to the new local centre. Any new road crossing Ringwood Road will have some impact, but it has been carefully designed to minimise loss of trees.
- 16.322 The crossing is illustrative at this stage due to the outline nature of the proposals however is shown on the submitted access parameter plan. It is considered very likely that tree loss would be required to implement it. It is not considered the trees could be retained within the scope of the current design approach.
- 16.323 The loss of these two trees is regrettable however is necessary to implement the design vision. The tree loss relating to this proposal has been minimised with the vast majority of trees retained and incorporated into the design. In this respect the proposal meets the requirements of para. 131 of the NPPF. The impacts on trees are therefore afforded limited weight in the planning balance.

### Minerals

- 16.324 A significant part of the site is within a Minerals Safeguarding Area which is defined on the Adopted Policies Map and supported by a clear policy. The applicants have acknowledged the likely presence of mineral across the site and suggest this could supply aggregate demands of the development. There are also existing and proposed minerals sites situated in close proximity to the site at Bleak Hill (existing), and Midgham Farm, Cobby Wood and Hammer Warren Quarry (proposed).
- 16.325 A desktop assessment of the viability of the site for mineral extraction, and of the quality of minerals underlying the site, has not been submitted. Aggregates may



be suitable for extraction for use on or off site. Should the development be found acceptable in other respects, a condition could be placed requiring submission of a mineral resources method statement to investigate and set out amounts and timescales for any extraction. The development trajectory allows for the extraction of minerals.

- 16.326 This would meet the requirements of the safeguarding policy and therefore the potential sterilisation of minerals is afforded limited weight in the planning balance.
- 16.327 Hampshire County Council (HCC) have advised that the current minerals site at Bleak Hill would need to be protected from pressures arising from other development including where nearby land uses impact their ability to continue operating. Mitigation measures would need to be provided by this proposal to mitigate harm to amenity of the residential uses and these could be addressed via a condition and through reserved matters.
- 16.328 HCC have also raised concerns regarding the impacts on sites proposed through the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan – Partial Update, which is emerging policy. It is understood that this emerging plan has not been submitted for examination and consequently under paragraphs 49-50 of the NPPF it is not considered that a consent for this development would prejudice the plan-making process. At this time, only very limited weight can be attributed to impacts of the spatial strategy for minerals in this emerging plan.

### Waste

- 16.329 Dorset Waste have commented that the layout would not meet their standards for residential developments. As this outline is illustrative at this stage this could be resolved through reserved matters.
- 16.330 The applicant would need to demonstrate that waste arising from construction can be minimised, and that there will be adequate facilities to store and sort waste on site. These could be secured by a condition.
- 16.331 The Commercial Waste & Strategy team have commented that the proposed development would add pressure to current Household Waste Recycling Centres, a concern shared by the local community. There may be a need for additional infrastructure to accommodate future needs however without clear information regarding a necessary obligation that meets the CIL Regulations Reg 122 tests only very limited weight can be attributed to this.

### Climate Change

- 16.332 Policy ME4 of the CED Local Plan requires larger developments to investigate the opportunity of options for district heating and and/or power facilities. This has been investigated in relation to several urban extensions and found to be unviable. However, given the nature of this development and the level of management that is proposed for other purposes, it is considered this typology may represent a more viable opportunity. A condition could require that this be investigated and implemented if appropriate.

- 16.333 There is also a requirement that 10% of the total regulated energy be provided from renewable sources. A condition could be placed to secured this.
- 16.334 Concerns have been raised regarding the sustainability of the proposal and the impacts this would have on delivery of the UK's sustainability and climate change targets. Government policy provides the framework within which the target will be met, with national planning guidance and legislation forming part of this. The NPPF states that sustainability objectives should be delivered through the application of policies within the NPPF but are not objectives against which every decision can or should be judged.
- 16.335 The assessment of this application against the policies in the NPPF and the CED Local Plan is considered the correct method by which to address this issue. As such climate change is not afforded weight separately; rather the application and weighting of policies throughout this report assess the sustainability of this proposal.

#### Amenity

- 16.336 The impacts on existing and proposed residents have been considered. There is no indication that satisfactory layout could not be achieved at reserved matters to avoid impacts on neighbours. The landscape led approach would generally provide a good standard of amenity for future residents, subject to detailed design. Amenity impacts arising from neighbouring minerals sites could be conditioned. Accordingly negligible weight is placed on the impacts on amenity.

#### Street Lighting

- 16.337 The Council's Street Lighting team have highlighted advice on adoptable standards and layouts to reduce light pollution. These could be considered through the reserved matters process.

#### Horses

- 16.338 Concerns have been raised regarding the impacts on horses. There is an existing stables located on Ringwood Road, and impacts on this during the construction stage would need to be considered as part of a CEMP.
- 16.339 The use of roads and bridleways for riding has been considered, and no bridleways are proposed to be closed. While there would be increases of traffic on some roads the closure of Ringwood Road to most traffic could have a positive effect on the use of this for horse riding. On balance, very limited weight is attributed to the impacts on horses.

#### Other comments

- 16.340 Considerations such as the detailed design and building heights fall to be considered as reserved matters rather than as part of this outline application.

- 16.341 All other considerations including, the impacts on village life, the adequacy of pre-application public consultation, water pressure, broadband connectivity, have been considered are afforded limited weight.
- 16.342 Considerations such as the NHS staffing shortage are not material planning considerations and as such are not afforded weight in the planning balance.

### **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 16.343 The proposal would bring about public benefits. The delivery of housing, including affordable housing, is afforded very significant weight in the planning balance. The delivery of specialist housing to meet the needs of vulnerable people is afforded significant weight. The proposed mix of housing would meet SHMA expectations, and this is afforded significant weight.
- 16.344 The proposal would have economic benefits in the form of long-term employment opportunities at the business park and local centre, along with short-term creation of construction jobs, and longer-term benefits in terms of additional expenditure and use of services in the local area. These economic benefits are afforded significant weight.
- 16.345 The proposal would make substantial contributions, including the on-site SANG, open space, sports facilities, play areas, GP surgery and community sports hall. Financial contributions would be made to offsite infrastructure including education, swimming pool, highway and PRoW improvements. Such benefits are primarily to mitigate the impacts of the development however some modest weight is attached to the wider social benefits these could bring.
- 16.346 Moderate weight is attached to the landscape-led design strategy and green infrastructure proposals. Limited weight is attributed to the benefits arising from the solar array which is not considered integral to the scheme. The foul water strategy is acceptable however this is covered by other legislation and so afforded very limited weight. Very limited weight is attached to the impacts of this site on the Green Belt.
- 16.347 Against the proposal, the adverse impacts on Habitats Sites are afforded weight of the highest significance. An Appropriate Assessment has been carried out which cannot conclude that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of these sites. The Habitat Regulations and NPPF are clear that permission cannot be granted where this is the case, except where there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.
- 16.348 The location of the proposal adjoining the tier-4 settlement of Alderholt, with limited existing facilities and sustainable transport options, is afforded very significant weight. This is not mitigated by the measures proposed to make Alderholt sustainable as there is insufficient evidence that these will be viable in the long-term. As a related issue, significant weight is placed on the masterplan approach to land uses, which does not demonstrate how the development would function successfully in the long-term. Significant weight is also attached to issues around deliverability, which it is considered cannot be demonstrated due to the extent of outstanding technical information.
- 16.349 Significant weight is attached to the approach taken to education, which does not demonstrate that the proposal can adequately meet its needs. The failure to

demonstrate the impacts on the highway network and appropriate mitigation is also afforded significant weight. The failure to provide adequate technical evidence to demonstrate that surface water management has been adequately considered and that a sustainable drainage can be achieved on site is afforded moderate weight.

- 16.350 The failure to justify the provision of a non-policy compliant level of affordable housing is attributed significant weight due to the high need for affordable accommodation within East Dorset.
- 16.351 Moderate weight is placed on the potential impacts on existing town and local centres arising from the main town centre uses within the proposed local centre. Moderate weight is also attached to impacts arising from recreation and from traffic, on the environment and tranquillity of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.
- 16.352 Impacts arising from prematurity both to the Dorset Council Local Plan and the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan – Partial Update are afforded very limited weight given these plans are not at an advanced stage.
- 16.353 The impacts on landscape, archaeology, trees, mineral safeguarding, public rights of way, air quality, and all other considerations are afforded limited weight in light of the assessments carried out above. Negligible weight is attached to residential amenity, as this could be addressed through condition and as part of reserved matters.
- 16.354 Notwithstanding the individual weight attributed to the above benefits, their collective weight would be very significant. However, as the benefits are not of over-riding public interest there is no mechanism for these to be balanced against the harm to the Dorset Heathlands, New Forest and Avon Valley.
- 16.355 In addition, the benefits are not collectively sufficient to outbalance the very significant adverse effects.
- 16.356 The proposal would have an adverse impact on the Dorset Heathlands SPA, the Dorset Heaths SAC, the New Forest SPA/SAC and the River Avon SAC which could not be mitigated. This forms a clear reason for refusal of the proposal in accordance with NPPF para 11 d) i.

#### Additional Details

- 16.357 Many of the reasons for refusal may be overcome if, at a future date, the applicant provides further or additional details to address specific technical concerns. Were these reasons for refusal to be resolved, a further planning balance exercise would be required. It is likely that such an exercise would conclude that the very significant benefits of the scheme are not outbalanced by the very significant adverse impacts, particularly the unsustainable location and nature of the proposal.

## **17.0 Recommendation**

**Refuse permission for the reasons set out below**

1. The proposal would have adverse impacts on the Dorset Heathlands Special Protection Area (SPA), Dorset Heaths Special Area of Conservation (SAC), New Forest SPA/SAC and River Avon SAC and it has not been demonstrated that appropriate mitigation can or will be provided, contrary to Policy ME2 of the adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan – part 1 2014, the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 SPD, and paragraphs 180-182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This forms a clear reason for refusal of the proposal in accordance with NPPF para 11 d) i.

2. The proposed development would represent significant development contrary to the settlement hierarchy, which is intended to direct development to the most sustainable locations. While facilities and transport options are proposed, it has not been demonstrated that these would be successful and viable in the long-term. It has therefore not been demonstrated that the proposal would limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes. Contrary to Policy KS2 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan: Part 1, 2014, and to paragraphs 73 and 105 of the NPPF.

3. The submitted masterplan does not demonstrate how the proposed uses will function well in terms of their relationship to each other and to the existing settlement of Alderholt. In particular, the positioning of the local centre is not considered to be optimised to accommodate and sustain an appropriate mix of development. Contrary to paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

4. The proposed development fails to make an appropriate contribution to affordable housing, contrary to Policy LN3 of the adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan – Part 1, 2014.

5. The proposal includes uses defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as ‘main town centre uses’ expected to total 2,958sqm and include 1,259sqm of retail. The application is not accompanied by a sequential test or retail impact assessment, contrary to Policy KS7 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan: Part 1, 2014, and to paragraphs 87 and 90 of the NPPF.

6. The proposal does not include the on-site education infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of the development, and it is not possible to accommodate the projected increase in first-school age children within the existing St James First School. The development would not ensure a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities, contrary to paragraph 96 of the NPPF.

7. The submitted Transport Assessment fails through the use of an unacceptable methodology and the inclusion of insufficient information to correctly identify the highways impacts arising from the proposal and how these could be mitigated. It has not been demonstrated that there would not be an unacceptable impact on highways safety, nor that residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe. Contrary to Policy KS11 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan: Part 1, 2014, and to paragraph 111 of the NPPF.

8. The proposal, by bringing additional traffic and recreational activity into the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), would result in environmental impacts and a loss of tranquillity the extent of which has not been adequately identified and mitigated within the application. Contrary to Policy HE3 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan: Part 1, 2014, and to paragraphs 174 and 176 of the NPPF.

9. Insufficient information has been provided regarding surface water management from the development. It has not been demonstrated that the proposed surface water drainage scheme can be viably achieved on the site. Contrary to Policy ME6 of the adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan – part 1, 2014, and paragraphs 167 and 169 of the National Planning Policy Framework.