Residential development at West Boldon

Planning Support Statement

Ethical Planning (North East) Ltd
December 2020

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Ethical Planning (North East) is a limited company registered in England and Wales and trading as ethical partnership.

Commission Notice
We have been appointed By Mr A Le Blond

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1. Introduction

1.1 Applicant

1.1.1 The applicant is Mr A Le Blond.

1.2 Agent

1.2.1 The agent for the planning application is Ethical Partnership.

1.3 Purpose of this Statement

1.3.1 Ethical Partnership has been commissioned to prepare and submit this outline planning application on behalf of Mr A Le Blond, and as part of this to prepare this planning statement in support.

1.3.2 This application is seeking outline planning permission for the construction of 36 houses and 9 apartments.

1.3.3 As such, this application seeks to establish whether the scale and nature of a proposed development would be acceptable to South Tyneside Council, as the local planning authority.

1.3.4 The purpose of this statement is to describe the proposed development, summarise the benefits and demonstrate how the proposals accord with the relevant national and local planning policies.

1.4 Reserved Matters

1.4.1 Approval is not sought for the following matters and therefore these matters will be the subject of an '*Application for approval of reserved matters'*:

- Layout
- Scale
- Appearance
- Access
- Landscaping

1.5 Supporting Information

1.5.1 The submission includes the following details:

- Geo-environmental assessment
- Preliminary Ecology Appraisal
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Indicative layout (revised October 2020)
- Arboriculture Impact Assessment

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- Tree Protection Plan
- Sustainable Drainage Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Archaeology Assessment
- Open Space Assessment

1.5.2 If South Tyneside Council are of the view that additional information is required to inform the determination of the application, then this will be provided as quickly as possible.

1.5.3 The applicant wishes to assist the local planning authority to determine the application as expeditiously as possible and to this end will attend meetings as required.

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2. Site Description and Surroundings

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section describes the existing site and adjacent land uses.

2.2 Site Location

2.2.1 The proposed site is 17925m2 and is located within the administrative boundary of South Tyneside Council, within West Boldon. The site is also located within the West Boldon Conservation area.

2.2.2 The area is currently classed as agricultural. The site is dominated by improved grassland, which is used as permanent pasture, with tall ruderal patched. There are a variety of scattered trees along the river. The land slopes towards the river.

2.2.3 Hedgerows border parts of the site, including a species-poor managed hawthorn hedge with ivy along the northern border of the site.

2.2.4 There is a corrugated iron building on site historically used as a stable, with an associated hard standing access route.



Figure 2.1 –red line boundary plan

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2.3 Boundaries

2.3.1 The site is bound to the north east by North Road. Hedgerows and barbed wire fencing separate the site from the road. To the north west, the River Don forms a natural boundary. To the south and the east, the site is bounded, by trees.

2.4 Surrounding Area

2.4.1 The surrounding area is dominated by residential developments to the north and east, and an industrial estate to the west. Immediately to the south east is a small stand of trees and further residential properties.

2.4.2 The site is adjacent to a wildlife corridor which runs along the River Don. This is recognised in the Adopted Local Plan.

2.4.3 To the north of the River Don, is a greenfield site which physically separates the site from those residential properties to the north. On the neighbouring greenfield site, there is a Public Right of Way (bridleway), which runs parallel to the River Don.

2.4.4 To the south east (adjacent to Don Gardens) is a brownfield site, which was previously the site of Boldon C of E Primary School. This was demolished in 2017.

2.5 Planning History

2.5.1 There is no planning history pertaining to the site.

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3. The Proposed Development

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section presents the details of the development proposals which are the subject of planning permission.

3.2 Description

3.2.1 The description of the application is

Outline application for residential development including demolition of agricultural building for up to 36 dwellings and 9 apartments with all matters reserved

3.3 Scope of the application

3.3.1 The scope of this application is to establish whether scale and nature of a proposed development is acceptable to South Tyneside Council.

3.4 House Types

3.4.1 The proposed development is anticipated to include:

- 10 Type A (2 storeys, 4 bed)
- 10 Type B (2 storeys, 3 bed)
- 8 Type C (3 storeys, 4 bed)
- 4 Type D (2.5 storeys, 3 bed)
- 4 Type E (2 storeys, 3 bed)
- 9 Block F (3 storeys, 2 bed apartments)

3.5 Transport

3.5.1 It is anticipated the existing access to the site from North Road will be upgraded to 5.5m wide with 4.5m x 45m visibility splay with a 6-metre radius. This will be the main access into the site.

3.5.2 The junction with North Road and all internal roads will be constructed to adoptable standards and transferred to South Tyneside Council.

3.5.3 The proposed development includes at least two car parking spaces per dwelling, one car parking space for each of the apartments with 1 visitor space for every 3 apartments.

3.5.4 There are no designated Public Rights of Way located within the red line boundary of the site.

3.5.5 Further details will be the subject of a reserved matters application.

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3.6 Architecture

3.6.1 An indicative site plan has been provided within the submission of the application to demonstrate how the site could be developed. However, layout is a reserved matter and will be subject of an application for approval of reserved matters.

3.6.2 The approval of the detailed design and therefore scale of each dwelling is not being sought as part of this outline application and will therefore be subject of an application for approval of a reserved matter.

3.6.3 The appearance of the 36 houses and 9 apartments will be the subject of an application for approval of a reserved matter.

3.7 Landscaping, Boundary Treatment

3.7.1 The applicant is committed to providing a high-quality level of landscaping and boundary treatment commensurate with the available land and setting of the site.

3.7.2 A Phase 1 habitat survey was commissioned for the site and is submitted with this application. The report outlines a series of recommendations which have been taken into account. The approval of the detailed landscape design is not being sought as part of this application and will therefore be subject of an application for approval of a reserved matter.

3.8 Arboriculture

3.8.1 The indicative arrangement has been amended to mitigate the impact of the proposed development on the existing trees with, and adjacent to, the site.

3.9 Biodiversity Net Gain

3.9.1 The applicant is committed to providing biodiversity net gain where possible.

3.9.2 An Ecology Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of this application.

3.9.3 Any detailed design and mitigation measures implemented to preserve and enhance biodiversity will be the subject of a subsequent application for approval of a reserved matter.

3.9.4 The biodiversity measures will be discussed and agreed with South Tyneside's ecology officers and Eco North, to ensure the most appropriate gains are secured for the site.

3.10 Flood Risk

3.10.1 The site is located adjacent to the River Don.

3.10.2 Although there are areas of the applicant's land which are within Flood Zones 2 and 3, it must be noted that no development subject of this application is proposed within these areas.

3.10.3 A Sustainable Drainage statement and Flood Risk Assessment have been submitted in support of this application.

3.10.4 It is anticipated detailed drainage measures will be the subject of a subsequent application for approval of a reserved matter.

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3.10.5 Notwithstanding the above, the applicant seeks to minimise any potential impact on the site from further flood risk through high quality design and landscaping.

3.11 Noise

3.11.1 To the north of the site, the nearest residential properties are located 150m from the site and to the east 30m. To the south, there is currently a vacant site separating the site from residential properties on Don Gardens, approximately 100 metres away. To the west, Boldon Business Park is located just over 100 metres away. The south east of the site is directly adjacent the curtilage of residential properties on Don Gardens.

3.11.2 Detailed noise mitigation measures will be the subject of a subsequent application for approval of reserved matters.

3.12 Air quality

3.12.1 The site is not located with an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

3.13 Affordable Housing

3.13.1 The applicant has not at this stage specified the amount of affordable housing that will need to be provided in relation to the proposal. The applicant is committed to providing an amount agreed with the Council through the planning process either on the site or off site and if required enter into a section 106 legal agreement in order to deliver this.

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4. Heritage Assessment

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The site is located on the northern boundary of West Boldon Conversation Area.

4.1.2 In determining applications, the NPPF considers local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting[1].

4.1.3 This chapter seeks to describe the significance of the conversation area and assess the potential impact of the proposed development.

4.2 Overview

4.2.1 West Boldon Conservation Area was designated in 1975. The designation was due to the fact the village has medieval origins- a '*isolated, introspective, cluster of historic and modern housing in a traditional village setting, shrouded in mature trees and sited on a prominent hill between the Tyne and the Wear*[2]'

4.2.2 The West Boldon Conservation Area Management Plan was adopted in August 2007 as a Supplementary Planning Document to the adopted Core Strategy. A Conservation Area Character Appraisal was conducted and published in March 2006.



Figure 2.1 – West Boldon Conservation Area Boundary

4.2.3 The site is designated under 'Character Area 12' within the Management Plan which is identified as 'open countryside'.

4.2.4 The key priority for resisting development in these areas, is to retain important views in and out of the village.

[1] Paragraph 189 NPPF 2019
[2] Page 6 West Boldon Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

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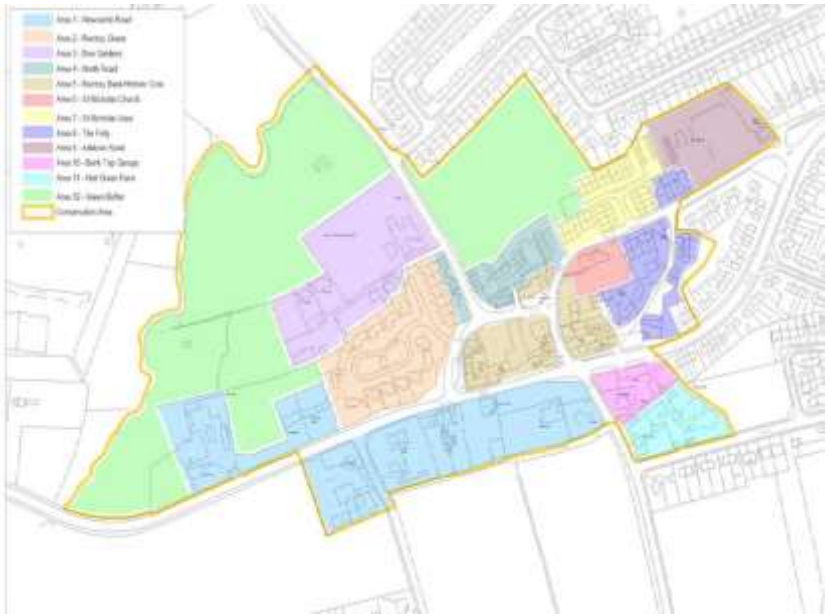

Figure 4.1 –West Boldon Conservation Area Character Areas Map

4.3 Appraisal

4.3.1 The conservation area is based on a historic hilltop setting which includes open countryside below to the north and west, which are considered important to its setting.

4.3.2 The site is considered to provide an important green ribbon between the village and Boldon Colliery. The existing flat-roofed stable block is considered to intrude on the hillside scheme.

4.3.3 It is considered views in and out of the conservation area should be protected, especially from the hill behind St Nicholas View which marks West Boldon as one of Tyneside's best vantage points.

4.3.4 West Boldon's built form is a mix of styles and materials, but with identifiable themes which relate to age. All buildings are two, one-and-a-half or one storey, and all the historic buildings are in a simple, traditional, local vernacular style, e.g. pitched roofs, plain eaves, vertical windows, with little ornamentation, etc.

4.4 Assessment of potential impacts

4.4.1 The proposed development has the potential to change the nature of the conservation area

4.4.2 The nearest listed building to the site is located 200m away and is not visible from the site. It is therefore considered the listed doorway at Rectory Green will not be significantly impacted by the proposed development.

4.4.3 The Grade 1 listed church of St Nicholas is within 250m of the site and sits at the highest point of the village and is therefore visible from the site.

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4.4.4 The Conservation Area Management Plan identifies that the views from the hill adjacent to St Nicholas church should be protected (see Figure 4.2).

4.4.5 The site is visible from the hill adjacent to the church and therefore has the potential to impact on the setting of the listed building and conservation area.

4.4.6 However, the site is partially obscured from this view. The field to the north of the river is a more prominent feature in the landscape than the site of the proposed development.

4.4.7 Notwithstanding this, the view from the hill reveals an urban landscape with varying quality of the overall built form. As such, the development of the site for housing would be able to fit comfortably in the surrounding area and the existing built landscape.



Figure 4.2 –View of the site from hill to the north of St Nicholas' Church

4.4.8 The Conservation Area Management Plan considers the site to be 'open countryside'.

4.4.9 There are several trees located on the site of the old school to the south of the site. These trees provide a screen so that the site is not particularly visible from the south approach on North Road. The existing tree coverage reduces the potential impact of the proposed development on the 'openness' of the conservation area.

4.4.10 The topography of the site further mitigates the potential visual impact of the proposed development, as it reduces visibility of the site from the south.

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Figure 4.3 –View of the site from the south at North Road (partially obscured by site topography and tree coverage)

4.4.11 Approaching from the north, the site is more open and has the potential to negatively impact on the approach into the village.



Figure 4.4 –View of the site from the north at North Road

4.5 Policy Analysis

4.5.1 NPPF paragraph 193 considers that when assessing the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, the more important the asset, the greater weight should be given to its protection.

4.5.2 It is acknowledged that the proposed development is within a conservation area.

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4.5.3 The nearest listed building to the site is located 200m to the south of the site. It not visible from the site. It is therefore considered the listed doorway at Rectory Green will not be directly impacted by the proposed development.

4.5.4 There is inter-visibility between the Grade I Listed church, and the site. However, given the site is located 200m north east from the church, and the view of the site is partially obscured, the potential heritage impact is not considered to be significant in this instance.

4.5.5 Notwithstanding, it is appreciated that the setting of a heritage asset contributes to the way in which a heritage asset is experienced[3]. As such, the topography and the views from St Nicholas are considered important in how the conservation area and listed buildings are experienced.

4.5.6 Whilst the site is identified as open countryside in the Conservation Area Management Plan, the site is not designated within the adopted South Tyneside Core Strategy, nor the emerging South Tyneside Local Plan as countryside. As such, although the management plan is a material consideration, it is considered that the weight attributed to the designation should be limited.

4.5.7 Furthermore, the Character Appraisal and Management Plan for the Area were produced in 2006 and 2007 respectively. Whilst both documents are relevant in determining this application, the documents are more than 10 years and as such consideration of these documents should be read in the context of the changing urban landscape of West Boldon in 2020.

4.6 Mitigation

4.6.1 The proposed development will impact on the openness of the site. However, it is anticipated that a detailed landscape design will mitigate many of the potential impacts. Additional planting will assist in screening the site from existing sensitive receptors in the conservation area. As such, the impact is considered 'less than significant'. Notwithstanding, the approval of the detailed landscape design not being sought as part of this outline application and will therefore be subject of an application for approval of a reserved matter.

4.6.2 The indicative layout intends to create a strong frontage onto North Road. It is considered that by developing along the northern boundary of the site with appropriate off set distances, as indicated in the indicative this would be give back in a positive manner to the surrounding area and the conservation area through appropriate design. It is anticipated the detailed design, including materials, will take inspiration from the existing characteristics in West Boldon.

4.6.3 We are of the view that the above analysis and proposed mitigation measures will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of the conservation area and the nearby listed buildings. As such, it considered any potential harm should be weighed against the

[3] NPPF p71

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economic and public benefits of providing much needed housing in the borough. Analysis of the housing need in the area can be found in Chapter 9 of this statement.

4.7 Conclusions

4.7.1 It is considered that the above mitigation measures would help reduce the potential impact of the proposal on heritage assets to 'less than significant'.

4.7.2 We are of the view that any potential harm to the conservation area is outweighed by the public benefit which the provision of housing on site would be able to provide.

4.7.3 Notwithstanding the above, it is anticipated that detailed discussions with South Tyneside Council will ensure that sufficient mitigation measures will be able to be integrated into the detailed design stage in subsequent applications.

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5. Preliminary Ecology Appraisal

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section provides an overview of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal undertaken by Eco North ecologists, incorporating a Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment. Full details can be found within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which has been submitted in support of this planning application.

5.2 Baseline survey

5.2.1 The purpose of this assessment was to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site incorporating a Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment to establish the likelihood of the site supporting protected species.

5.2.2 The survey provides details on the need for any additional, more detailed protected species surveys, likely mitigation and any opportunities for enhancement.

5.3 Findings of survey

5.3.1 The site is dominated by improved grassland, which is used as permanent pasture, with tall ruderal patches. There are a variety of scattered trees along the river. There are small hawthorn trees in the northern section of the site. Fencing borders most of the side, apart from along the eastern boundary. Hedgerows are also present along sections of the site boundary. This includes a species-poor managed hawthorn hedge with ivy along the northern border of the site.

5.3.2 The likely presence of other protected species was also considered. Notably the habitat which borders the river is considered suitable for otters to use for commuting and foraging purposes.

5.3.3 A range of water vole field signs were recorded adjacent to the site during the survey. The river and riparian habitats are considered suitable for water vole to use for burrows, commuting and foraging purposes.

5.4 Assessment of potential impacts

5.4.1 The scheme has the potential to cause the loss or disturbance of local value habitats, and primarily habitats of low value. This could include the loss or disturbance of habitats of low value for badgers, and of local value for breeding birds, otter and water vole.

5.4.2 The stables building has been assessed as having low bat roost potential. A bat activity survey has been conducted. This noted that no bats were recorded emerging from or entering the structure. However, moderate levels of foraging activity was recorded on site.

5.4.3 There is a potential negative impact to the River Don. This includes the potential pollution, damage and loss of habitat, and the potential impact to migratory fish, otters and watervole.

5.4.4 There is potential impact to the West Farm Meadow SSSI via impacts upon the River Don.

5.5 Mitigation

5.5.1 Hawthorn trees on site will be retained to mitigate the impact on nesting and foraging birds. If the trees are removed, they will be replaced like for like and in an appropriate location.

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5.5.2 The hedgerows along the boundaries will be retained to mitigate impact on nesting, foraging and commuting bird species.

5.5.3 The trees along the boundary bordering the River Don will be retained to mitigate any bank stability issues and any potential roosting bats.

5.5.4 An area of land is proposed to be retained between the proposed development and the river. This will mitigate the possible to harm to riverside species, including watervole and otters.

5.5.5 It is considered within the design of the road network in order to allow drainage of rainwater to slowly permeate into the soil reducing the risk of runoff into the River Don and flooding caused by standard impermeable materials.

5.5.6 Vegetation clearance and building works will not be undertaken during the bird nesting period (March – August inclusive) unless a checking survey by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) has been undertaken within the five days prior, which confirms that no active nests are present. In the event a nest is identified, the SQE will implement a buffer zone around the nest into which no works will progress until the SQE confirms the nest is no longer active.

5.5.7 Further detailed avoidance measures for mitigation which will be taken are detailed in the separate report.

5.6 Conclusion

5.6.1 In conclusion the proposed development with the mitigation measures as proposed above complies with the relevant policies as outlined in Chapter 10.

5.6.2 It is considered any residual ecology concerns can be secured by condition. Notwithstanding, detailed design measures will be the subject of subsequent reserved matters application. As such, the detailed design can be discussed and agreed with South Tyneside's ecology officers.

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6. Geo-Environmental Assessment

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section provides an overview of the Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Assessment conducted by BWB Consulting. Full details can be found within the full report which has been submitted in support of this planning application.

6.2 Baseline survey

6.2.1 Information published by the British Geological Survey (BGS) indicates that the site is underlain by Till across the majority of the south-eastern half of the site, with superficial deposits absent across the north-western half of the site.

6.2.2 Alluvium (clay, silt, sand and gravel) is indicated to be present encroaching along the north-western boundary and the Pelaw Clay Member (silty clay with pebbles and cobbles) across the south-eastern boundary.

6.2.3 The bedrock geology is anticipated to comprise Pennine Upper Coal Measures Formation described as mudstone, siltstone and sandstone across the western half of the site and specifically sandstone in the east of the site.

6.2.4 The Environment Agency (EA) classifies the superficial deposits of Alluvium as a Secondary A Aquifer, the Till deposits as a Secondary (undifferentiated) Aquifer and the Pelaw Clay Member as an unproductive strata. The bedrock deposits of Pennine Upper Coal Measures Formation are classified as a Secondary A Aquifer.

6.3 Findings of Survey

6.3.1 The geotechnical review considers there are no significant risks identified within the desk-based assessment. It is considered likely that a shallow spread foundation would be suitable for lightly loaded structures.

6.3.2 The site slopes from east to west from approximately 36mAOD to 30mAOD, therefore earthworks may be required prior to the development of the site.

6.3.3 The site is within an area of historical coal mining activity with three underground seams recorded under the site ranging in depth between 434m bgl and 562m bgl. Given the depth of the coal seams, they are not considered to represent a ground stability risk to the proposed development. No shallow workings or mine entries are recorded on the site or within 100m of the enquiry site boundary.

6.4 Assessment of potential impacts

6.4.1 When considered in the context of the indicative site plan and the historical activities that have taken place, the potential for contamination to impact on the proposed development is generally considered to be low to moderate. It is considered that the main driver for the risk rating for human health is ground gas generation, albeit from potentially limited sources.

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6.5 Mitigation

6.5.1 The report recommended that a ground investigation should be undertaken to support any future development. This should characterise ground conditions, the presence/ absence of contamination and determine the site's geotechnical properties. This could be broached by way of a condition.

6.6 Conclusions

6.6.1 The potential for contamination to impact the proposed development is considered to be low to moderate. The main driver for a low to moderate risk is based on the risk of ground gas generation.

6.6.2 Notwithstanding, a ground investigation should be conducted prior to the commencement of construction works. It is considered best practice to for testing of soils as part of any ground investigation to confirm the absence of any contamination, as well as to determine the suitability of soils for reuse as part of the proposed development

6.6.3 The details of further assessments will be confirmed as part of subsequent applications for reserved matters.

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7. National Planning Policy Context

7.1 Background

7.1.1 In England, there is a hierarchical structure of policy covering national and local planning. At a national level the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. At a local level, development plans set out planning policy for the area.

7.1.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.1.3 The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and must be taken into account in accordance with section 38 of the Act 2004.

7.1.4 The purpose of the Framework is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and advises that planning serves three roles: an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. The roles should not be undertaken in isolation as they are mutually dependent, and the planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable locations.

7.1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

7.1.6 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.

7.1.7 The NPPF states at paragraph 7 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

7.1.8 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

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- an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

7.1.9 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way.

7.1.10 With reference to paragraph 11 of the NPPF, it is important to note that for decision-taking this means.

- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

7.1.11 Further advice on decision-taking which is of relevance to the current scheme is provided at paragraph 38 of the Framework.

7.1.12 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.

7.1.13 The early engagement evoked by the NPPF has been undertaken in a bid to assist in the efficiency and effectiveness of the determination of this planning application; paragraphs 39 to 46 of the NPPF highlight the importance of pre-application engagement.

7.2 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

7.2.1 It is important a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. As such, a range of size, type and tenure of housing need should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.

7.2.2 Major Development should include at least 10% affordable housing to be available for affordable home ownership.

7.2.3 Local planning authorities should support the development of entry-level exception sites, suitable for first time buyers (or those looking to rent their first home), unless the need for such homes is already being met within the authority's area. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:

a) comprise of entry-level homes that offer one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework; and

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b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework, and comply with any local design policies and standards.

7.3 Promoting healthy and safe communities

7.3.1 Delivering the social objectives of sustainable development cannot be achieved without healthy, safe and inclusive places. There places should:

a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling[4]

7.4 Promoting sustainable transport

7.4.1 An integral component in delivering sustainable development and achieving wider sustainability and health objectives is the promotion of sustainable transport, as set out in Section 9 of the Framework. This includes identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use.

7.4.2 This section states that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. 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[5].

7.4.3 Paragraph 109 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

7.4.4 This confirms that a refusal of planning permission on transport grounds will only be justifiable if there are severe impacts arising from the development which cannot be mitigated.

[4] Paragraph 91 NPPF 2019
[5] Paragraph 103 NPPF 2019

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7.5 Making effective use of land

7.5.1 Paragraph 122 of the NPPF considers planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land in the following ways:

a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;

b) local market conditions and viability;

c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;

d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

7.6 Achieving well-designed places

7.6.1 The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

7.6.2 Planning policies and decisions should ensure 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;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

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; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

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7.7 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

7.7.1 The ability of the planning system to support the transition to a local carbon future, is key to meeting environmental objectives of sustainable development. Planning applications should take full account of flood risk and coastal change.

7.7.2 Paragraph 148 states the planning system should help to: ' *shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure*'

7.7.3 New developments can support this transition though;

a) *Avoiding increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and*

b) *can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.*

7.7.4 It is considered areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Necessary development should be made safe so as to not increase flooding elsewhere.

7.7.5 Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding.

7.7.6 Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where;

a) *within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;*

b) *the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient;*

c) *it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;*

d) *any residual risk can be safely managed; and*

e) *safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.*

7.8 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

7.8.1 The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is fundamental to supporting sustainable development goals.

7.8.2 Paragraph 170 states that "*planning policies and decisions should contribute to, and enhance the natural environment by:*

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a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate".

7.9 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

7.9.1 Paragraph 180 states planning applications should consider the "*significance of any heritage assets affected by development including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance"*

7.9.2 As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation[6].

7.9.3 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

7.9.4 Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

[6] Paragraph 180 NPPF 2019

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8. Local Planning Policy Context

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given); b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)[7] .

8.2 Adopted South Tyneside Core Strategy

8.2.1 The South Tyneside Core Strategy was adopted in 2007.

8.2.2 The policies are still being used to guide and determine planning applications by the Council. The planning policies detailed in this local plan will gradually be replaced by the new policies contained within the South Tyneside Local Plan, which is currently being prepared by the Council.

Policy ST1 Spatial Strategy for South Tyneside

8.2.3 Policy ST1 supports development which helps to regenerate the River Tyne and coastal corridors; supports development that reflects the scale and functions of the main towns; promotes opportunities along the A19 Economic Growth Corridor; ensure sustainability of our settlements; and maximise the re-use of previously developed land in built up areas.

8.2.4 The policy supports the overall principles of the NPPF in promoting sustainable development principles.

Policy ST2 Sustainable Urban Living

8.2.5 Policy ST2 outlines design principles to support high quality sustainable urban living. This includes ensuring that;

a) highest standards of urban design are promoted so that buildings and their settings make a positive contribution to the local area;

b) the use of environmentally sound and energy efficient construction materials and operational techniques are achieved and that developers work towards low carbon and zero carbon standards;

c) on-site generation of renewable energy is maximised, with a target of 10% of each scheme's energy requirements;

d) use is made of 'sustainable urban drainage systems' and water conservation features including 'grey water recycling' and other technologies wherever possible;

[7] Paragraph 48 NPPF 2019

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e) priority is given to alternative modes of transport to the private car, and access by: i) requiring travel plans for developments which would have significant transport implications; ii) enhancing electronic communication infrastructure;

f) the need to design out crime and eliminate the fear of crime has been addressed;

g) buildings and their settings are designed to be flexible, enabling them to adapt to future needs and to take into account the needs of all users; and

h) all new development is encouraged to incorporate biodiversity and geological features at the design stage.

Policy SC3 Sustainable Housing Provision

8.2.6 It is considered sustainable residential communities will be created and promoted in several ways, including managing the phased release of land for new housing development consistent with:

i*) the spatial strategy and regeneration priorities for South Tyneside, restricting any housing development to within the extent of the existing built-up urban area;*

ii) the sequential approach to housing development in PPS3;

iii) the prioritisation and assessment of suitability and availability of sites within the Council's urban capacity study; and

iv) the Borough's indicative Regional Spatial Strategy allocations for net additional new dwellings.

Policy SC4 Housing Needs, Mix and Affordability

8.2.7 Policy SC4 supports a range and choice of good quality, energy-efficient and affordable homes. It is considered development proposals will be assessed according to how well they meet identified needs and aspirations of the Borough's Individual Housing Market Areas. It identifies *the 'urban fringe villages*' as requiring 2-bed starter and 3 and 4-bed executive/family homes' detached, semi-detached and terraced houses and bungalows; for owner occupation.

8.2.8 The policy requires a minimum of 25% of all new dwellings to be affordable. However, this is negotiable to ensure genuine affordability and reflect local housing needs.

Policy EA1 Local Character and Distinctiveness

8.2.9 The best qualities of South Tyneside's built, and natural environment will be conserved in several ways, including,

- Preserving the special and separate characters of urban fringe villages including West Boldon
- Implement the Great North Forest's strategies for access, education, enterprise and biodiversity in a forestry framework by enhancing the River Don Valley farmland into a well-wooded recreational landscape enclosing a network of open corridors.

8.2.10 **Policy EA2 Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

8.2.11 Developments should optimise conditions for wildlife and tackle habitat fragmentation by**;**

a) Securing and enhancing the integrity of designated sites

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b) Maintain, enhance, restore and add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests.

c) ensure that new development would result in no net loss of biodiversity value of several Priority Habitats including rivers and wetlands.

d) Reduce fragmentation of, improve or extend exiting Priority Habitats;

e) Create new Priority Habitats, especially in the Habitat Creation Zones of the River Done Valley

f) protect and strengthen populations of Priority or other protected species

g) enhance the biodiversity value of wildlife corridors; and

h) where appropriate, restrict access and usage in order to conserve an area's biodiversity value.

8.3 Emerging South Tyneside Local Plan

8.3.1 The draft Local Plan (the Pre-Publication Local Plan) was published for consultation during an 8-week period stretching from mid-August 2019 to mid-October 2019. The next iteration of the draft Local Plan will be the Publication Draft Local Plan. The Council presently anticipate this will be published for consultation during the summer 2020 (though they are presently looking to finalise this programme). We will look to determine when the Local Plan will be adopted (subject, of course, to a supportive Inspector's Report) when we have finalised the programme.

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9. Housing Need

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 This section intends to identify the housing need in the area and how the proposed development will assist in meeting housing need. This must be placed in the correct context. It is widely recognised at all levels that there is a housing crisis in this country which has arisen as a direct consequence of too few houses being completed to keep pace with a growing population and household formation rates.

9.2 National housing need

9.2.1 Each local authority must ensure that a five- year supply of housing is achieved based on objective assessments of their needs.

9.2.2 In recognition of this need, the Government responded in their 2017 Autumn budget with a commitment to deliver 300,000 new home a year. Since the start of this the delivery of new homes has not come close to this figure.

9.2.3 The Ministry of Housing and Communities and Local Government published figures from 2008 to 2015 (which considered housing supply, net additional dwellings, by local district , England 2001-02 to 2017 (Accessed January 2019).

Year	Net Additional Dwellings
2007/08	223,534
2008/09	182,767
2009/10	144,870
2010/11	137,394
2011/12	134,896
2012/13	124,722
2013/14	136,605
2014/15	170,693

9.2.4 The then Minister of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government said in a Times interview on the 4 January 2019 said '*if we want to achieve 300,000 homes a year, we need to have one million homes in production and four to five million in planning*'.

9.2.5 As such this application respond to the national crisis and the need to grant additional planning permissions in order to meet the government objectives.

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9.3 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

9.3.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a technical background document intended to identify and assess sites which have the potential to provide for housing in the area. The SHLAA report should provide deliverable sites for the first five years of the plan, then a supply of specific developable sites in the next 15 years.

9.3.2 The most recent report for South Tyneside was updated in April 2019.

9.3.3 The theoretical capacity identified in the SHLAA is not enough to meet the Borough's housing need over the next 15 years. The SHLAA identifies a shortfall of at least 391 dwellings over the 15-year SHLAA period.

9.4 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2015

9.4.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2015 reviews the changes in the local and national housing market to ensure that South Tyneside's housing offer is able to respond to the market.

9.4.2 The assessment identified that whilst there is not a significant gap in the overall number of affordable homes within South Tyneside, there is an identified mismatch of type, size and location of affordable accommodation[8].

9.4.3 The report indicated that the greatest demand is for first time buyers and growing families. This also indicated there is a need for rented single person affordable accommodation.

9.4.4 The analysis found that open market accommodation should mainly be medium sized homes, with the need for some two-bed housing for older persons and newly forming households[9].

9.5 Site Allocations Topic Paper (August 2019)

9.5.1 South Tyneside published a Site Allocations Topic Paper in August 2019, which forms part of the evidence base for the emerging local plan.

9.5.2 This paper identifies that there is a potential realistic capacity of 3056 housing units to be delivered over the plan period from non-Green Belt sites, against a residual need of 4936.

9.6 Conclusion

9.6.1 An analysis of existing housing need assessments identifies a clear shortfall of dwellings within the next plan period. The Site Allocations Topic Paper, identifies there is an '*acute shortfall of housing when relying on non-Green Belt Sources*[10]

9.6.2 The site which is the subject of this planning application is considered to present a suitable site for a housing development. The proposed housing will reduce the need for green belt release sites.

9.6.3 The site is located within Flood Zone 1. Although there are areas of the applicant's land which are Flood Zone 2 and 3, no development has been proposed within these areas. Approval is not

[8] Strategic Housing Land availability assessment 2015 paragraph 5.26
[9] Paragraph 6.5
[10] Page 17 Site Allocations Topic Paper August 2019

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sought at this stage for detailed design. However, it is anticipated that sustainable drainage design will be submitted as part of an '*Application for approval of reserved matters'.*

9.6.4 Whilst the site is in a Conservation Area, a sensitive design and layout would be able to it is considered mitigate any potential negative impact. It is considered any residual harm will be *'less than substantial*[11]*'* and is therefore not considered a material reason to refuse this planning application.

[11] NPPF 2019 p56

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10. The Planning Case for the Development

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 This section tests the proposed development against relevant planning policies, both national and local.

10.1.2 All planning applications must be determined by the local planning authority in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In arriving at a decision, the local planning authority are required to comply with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the relevant Town and Country planning Acts.

10.2 Accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework

10.2.1 The NPPF states at paragraph 7 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three interdependent, overarching objectives that the planning system must perform in order to contribute to sustainable development. It is considered the proposed development supports the objectives of the NPPF in the following ways

10.2.2 **Economic**

- Providing essential housing in close proximity to key employment sites within the surrounding area.
- Providing local employment opportunities in the construction and management of the site.
- Local authority benefits through New Homes Bonus and Council Tax
- Jobs created through contractors relating to the development of the site
- Contributions to fund new facilities and services through section 106 emanating from the development
- Increased spending with the local area and the multiplier effect

10.2.3 **Social**

- Increase the available housing provision to meet local demand in the area.
- Provide a strong frontage onto North Road to contribute to a stronger sense of place.
- The development will be able to provide a range of house types including new entry housing

10.2.4 **Environmental**

- Promoting effective use of underused land.
- Provide opportunities to improve biodiversity within the wildlife corridor adjacent to the River Don.

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Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

10.2.5 The development of 36 houses and 9 apartments would be able to deliver a range of house types including first time buyer homes, which paragraph 71 of the NPPF supports. Furthermore, the proposal is an expression of the current housing demand in the area (see Chapter 9). The site is within the existing settlement boundary for West Boldon. The site is physically well related to the existing settlement and services and meets the demand for housing in the area. As such, it is considered the proposed development is compliant with the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

10.2.6 The indicative street layout has intended to create a strong frontage onto North Road. This will help define a positive edge to the northern boundary that will be able to help integrate the proposed development with those existing residential dwellings in the surrounding area.

10.2.7 Additionally, this will encourage a stronger neighbourhood and support the character of the conservation area. The proposed development includes a variety of house types. This will encourage social interaction and a mixed neighbourhood.

10.2.8 Landscaping details will be the subject of a subsequent application. As such, there will be an opportunity to discuss and agree the detailed designs with South Tyneside Council prior to submission. This will help to ensure the scheme is compliant with Chapter 8 of the NPPF.

10.2.9 The site is located within the village of West Boldon. The site will integrate new roads and walkways with existing infrastructure. Furthermore, the River Don provides an opportunity to access recreational walking and cycling opportunities.

Promoting sustainable transport

10.2.10 The site is also located within 50 metres of a bus stop which runs regular services into Sunderland, South Shields, Durham and beyond.

10.2.11 The site is ideally located to encourage walking and cycling to nearby employment opportunities at Boldon Business Park. Furthermore, there is a Public which runs to the north of the site, following the course of the river. This provides an ideal opportunity to encourage residents to walk or cycle to work if possible.

10.2.12 As such, the site is ideally located to encourage the use of sustainable transport nodes, and is considered with local and national policy pertaining to sustainable transport

Achieving well-designed places

10.2.13 Approval for design is not sought at this stage. It is considered the detailed design of the scheme will be approved through a subsequent reserved matters application. Notwithstanding this, the client is committed to achieving a high standard of urban design and will seek to make a positive contribution to the area through detailed design and carefully chosen materials.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

10.2.14 The indicative plan has carefully considered the location of the dwellings so as to minimise any potential flood risk on site. As a result, the site is not within flood zone 2 or 3. In addition to this, the proposed houses closest to the river have been set back within their individual plots.

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10.2.15 The site has been deliberately separated from the highest flood zones area. At detailed design stage, it is anticipated the development will evolve to be appropriately flood resistant and resilient. This will assist in protecting against any increased flood vulnerability in the future.

10.2.16 Furthermore, maintaining a buffer between the proposed development and the river allows the opportunity to invest in the green infrastructure adjacent to the river.

10.2.17 As such, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the aims and objectives of Chapter 14 of the NPPF.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

10.2.18 The overall development footprint has been restricted to reduce the impact on the local wildlife, including mitigating the impact on protected species such as otter and water vole. The area proposed for biodiversity measures is not presently maintained. Sensitive restoration and management of this area has the potential to positively contribute to biodiversity on site. The detailed design will be confirmed in subsequent reserved matters applications. It is anticipated the biodiversity measures will be discussed and confirmed in liaison with STC. The proposed development has the potential to unlock funds which will enable improved management of the site and its opportunities for habitat creation.

10.2.19 It is anticipated the scheme will include permeable paving and respect the mitigation measures as set out in the attached Preliminary Ecology Appraisal (PEA).

10.2.20 The trees along the boundary bordering the River Don will be retained. This will also mitigate any potential bank stability issues and any potential roosting bats.

10.2.21 All of the hawthorn trees on site are proposed to be retained. In addition to this, the hedgerows along the boundaries are all proposed to be retained.

10.2.22 The implementation of the above mitigation measures, and those set out in the PEA, are considered to mitigate significant impact to the natural environment. Measures to enhance biodiversity on site will be discussed and agreed with the South Tyneside Council prior to the submission of any subsequent applications.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

10.2.23 The significance of the conservation area has been identified and assessed in Chapter 4.

10.2.24 The applicant is committed to achieving a high-quality design which is in keeping with the principles of the conservation area. It is considered that detailed design, which are the subject of subsequent reserved matters applications, will mitigate any potential harm to the conservation area. Any residual harm is considered to be ‘less than substantial’ As such, it is considered the public benefits of housing supply should be given significant weight against the low level of impact which the proposed development may cause.

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10.3 South Tyneside Core Strategy 2007

Policy ST1 Spatial Strategy for South Tyneside

10.3.1 The site is located less than one mile from the A19 Economic Growth Corridor.

10.3.2 The proposed development supports the A19 Economic Growth Corridor by providing additional housing required to house potential employees of the area. Furthermore, the site is located within walking distance of Boldon Business Park (0.5 miles).

10.3.3 The site is also located within 50 metres of a bus stop. Six bus services stop here, with a total frequency of up to 10 an hour. These services run to Sunderland, South Shields, Durham and beyond.

10.3.4 The proposed housing is ideally located to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes, thus encouraging the principle of sustainable settlements, as stipulated in Policy ST1. As such, the proposed development is considered to support the principles of the spatial strategy.

Policy ST2 Sustainable Urban Living

10.3.5 Approval for design is not sought at this stage. It is considered the detailed design of the scheme will be approved through a subsequent reserved matters application. Notwithstanding, the client is committed to achieving a high standard of urban design and will seek to make a positive contribution to the area through detailed design and carefully chosen materials. A detailed sustainable urban drainage system will be submitted in a subsequent application.

10.3.6 The site is in close proximity to existing services at Boldon Colliery and existing bus routes, thus supporting the principles of sustainable urban living.

10.3.7 The scheme intends to include permeable paving, so as to mitigate any negative impacts on local biodiversity and habitats. This can be conditioned as such. The preliminary design has sought to retain all hedgerows and trees on the site. Furthermore, the building footprint has been restricted to reduce the impact on the local wildlife, including mitigating the impact on protected species such as otter and water vole. Notwithstanding, details of design and landscaping will be submitted as part of a subsequent application. The detailed measures will be discussed with the relevant South Tyneside officers prior to submission.

10.3.8 This planning application is seeking approval on the scale and nature of the proposed development. The proposed development is considered to be supportive of Policy ST2 principles with regards to supporting alternative transport methods. Sustainable drainage, landscaping and biodiversity measures will be the subject of a subsequent application. Any concerns regarding the detail of design will be mitigated appropriately in a subsequent application.

Policy SC3 Sustainable Housing Provision

10.3.9 Policy SC3 supports opportunities to create and promote sustainable residential communities.

10.3.10 The site is located within the existing built-up urban area, within the village of West Boldon.

10.3.11 The sequential approach to housing development in PPS3 has since been superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, the proposed development has been assessed against the criteria identified in the NPPF in section 10.2.

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Policy SC4 Housing Needs, Mix and Affordability

10.3.12 Policy SC4 supports the delivery of good quality, energy-efficient and affordable homes.

10.3.13 The policy identifies that 'urban fringe villages' such as West Boldon, have demand for 2-bed starter homes and 3-4 bed family homes. As identified in Chapter 9, the most recent SHLAA assessment identifies that the greatest demand is for first time buyers and growing families.

10.3.14 By proposing a variety of 2 to 4-bedroom homes, it is considered the scheme will positively contribute to achieving the principles, aims and objectives of policy SC4 in South Tyneside.

Policy EA1 Local Character and Distinctiveness

10.3.15 Chapter 4 how the proposed development will seek to maintain the character of the urban fringe village of West Boldon.

10.3.16 It is recognised that the site is located adjacent to the River Don. The edge of the River is identified as a habitat creation zone and wildlife corridor. The indicative site layout has included a 'buffer zone' which will allow the wildlife corridor to be retained. There are opportunities to enhance the River Don Valley corridor. The details of these measures are not the subject of this planning application. It is anticipated measures to enhance the biodiversity in this area will be the subject of discussions and confirmation with the relevant officers at STC, prior to a reserved matters application. As such, it is considered the detailed scheme will be compliant with Policy EA1. Any concerns regarding landscape design will be the subject of ongoing consultation prior to the submission of a reserved matters application.

Policy EA2 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

10.3.17 It is appreciated that developments should optimise conditions for wildlife.

10.3.18 The PEA has identified that hedgerows and trees on site should be prioritised to be retained. The preliminary design has sought to ensure these are protected. Details of design and landscaping will be submitted as part of any subsequent application. The detailed measures will be discussed with the relevant South Tyneside officers prior to submission.

The indicative site layout includes a 'buffer zone' between the proposed houses and the River Don. At present, this area of the site is not maintained but has the potential enhance the biodiversity value of this section of the site. Furthermore, subject to a subsequent reserved matters application, the sale of the properties will act as enabling development for the improved management of the site and its opportunities for habitat creation.

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11. Planning Conclusions

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 This section brings together the information presented within this planning statement and provides a reasoned conclusion for the approval of this planning application.

11.1.2 The proposed development will help support and revitalise the local economy by improving the image of the area and attracting further investment to these areas.

11.2 Accordance with local and national policies

11.2.1 The proposed development has been designed with regard to relevant national and local planning and environmental policies, ambitions and aspirations and will assist in achieving many of the objectives contained therein.

11.2.2 The scheme will deliver economic, social and environmental benefits. The proposed development meets an identified housing need within the area and will be able to deliver positive economic outcomes for the local area. A strong street frontage along North Road will help ensure a stronger sense of place within West Boldon. There is also the potential for the scheme to positively contribute to net biodiversity gain.

11.2.3 As demonstrated in this statement the proposal represents a sustainable development and given this it is supported by national planning policy.

11.2.4 Given the reasons as set out above, we respectfully request that the proposal is approved.

11.3 Additional information

11.3.1 In the event that additional information, clarification, or further details concerning the proposed development is required during the determination period the applicant is prepared to provide this on request.

11.3.2 This statement makes reference to the willingness of the applicant to engage in a dialogue with the local planning authority to agree a timely planning permission.

11.4 Conditional Permission

11.4.1 The local planning authority is requested, wherever possible, to minimise the imposition of pre-commencement conditions to allow for the discharge of conditions in a phased manner. To that end, we would welcome early discussion in this regard.

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