

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 19 JUNE 2024

Application Number	3/23/2108/FUL
Proposal	Erection of 60 residential units (Use Class C3) with creation of access, car parking, landscaping, amenity and open space, substation, pedestrian/cycle paths and associated development. Provision of footbridge across the River Beane
Location	Land at Walkern Road, Watton-at-Stone, Hertfordshire
Parish	Watton-at-Stone
Ward	Watton-at-Stone

Date of Registration of Application	06 th November 2023
Target Determination Date	26 th April 2024
Case Officer	Amit Patel

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be GRANTED subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement and subject to the conditions set out at the end of the report.

1.0 Summary of Proposal and Main Issues

- 1.1 The application seeks the erection of 60 residential units (Use Class C3) with creation of access, car parking, landscaping, amenity and open space, substation, pedestrian/cycle paths and associated development. It further proposed the provision of a footbridge across the River Beane.
- 1.2 The site forms part of the development strategy in the East Herts District Plan 2018 as detailed in policies DPS1, DPS2 and DPS3 and part of the allocated site within Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) WAS3 which is defined as Village 1 within the village hierarchy.
- 1.3 The application site comprises undeveloped land to the south of the A602 on the northern edge of Watton-at-Stone and measures circa 3.69 hectares in area. The site is cut in two by the River Beane, with the northern part for residential development and the southern part remaining as Green Space. The southern part of the site is within the Green Belt with the northern part having been removed from the Green Belt by the Neighbourhood Plan, which redrew the Green Belt boundary to accommodate development within the northern part of the site. The

site falls within Flood Zone 2, 3 and 3b but this is concentrated either side of the River Beane.

- 1.4 The proposed scheme will result in 60 new homes, comprising 42 houses and 18 apartments. The development will include a range of unit types with the following mix:

6 x 1-beds,
14 x 2-beds,
16 x 3-beds and
24 x 4-beds.

The apartments are split over 3 separate blocks, with 6 apartments in each, arranged around the area of central open space. Of the 60 homes, 40% will be affordable housing. This equates to a total of 24 units, comprising 18 Affordable Rented units and 6 Shared Ownership units. A breakdown of the proposed tenure split is provided within the Affordable Housing Statement. All the proposed dwellings are 2 storeys. Where garages are provided these are single storey. The scheme has a density of 25 dwellings/ha which is considered appropriate in this context.

- 1.5 The development has been designed to accommodate 4 x character areas including 'The Landscaped Frontage', 'The green Corridor', 'The Mews' and 'The Park Edge'. The individual plots and buildings have been designed to respond to their respective character area.

- 1.6 The application is supported with the following documents:

- Drawings (prepared by DHA and Exterior Architecture)
- Design and Access Statement including Landscape Character Assessment (prepared by DHA)
- Affordable Housing Statement (prepared by Fairview New Homes Ltd)
- Planning Statement (prepared by Fairview New Homes Ltd)
- Statement of Community Involvement (prepared by Cavendish)
- Ecological Appraisal (prepared by Ecology Solutions)
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (prepared by Ecology Solutions)
- Tree Survey and Impact Assessment (prepared by Keen Consultants)
- Tree Constraints Plan (prepared by Keen Consultants)
- Tree Protection Plan (prepared by Keen Consultants)
- Noise Assessment (prepared by Anderson Acoustics)

- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan (prepared by KMC Transport Planning)
- Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy (prepared by Create Consulting Engineers)
- Air Quality (prepared by Anderson Acoustics)
- Geotechnical Report (prepared by CGL)
- Sustainability and Energy Statement (prepared by Abbey Consultants)
- Archaeology Assessment (prepared by RPS)
- Circular Economy Statement (prepared by THINK)
- Whole Life Carbon Assessment (prepared by THINK)
- Planning Noise Assessment

Further details were provided following a round of consultee comments, namely the design of the bridge and natural surveillance relating to design of the buildings. The additional details were provided on the 5th April and included a full set of drawings and the following reports:

- Fire and Rescue Strategy
- Sub Station
- Garage
- Cycle and Bin Store
- Pedestrian Access Audit
- Bridge Ramp Impact
- Landscape strategy
- Bridge Evolution Document Final
- Design and Access Statement Addendum

1.7 The main issues for consideration are:

- Principle of development
- Viability and Infrastructure Delivery
- Affordable housing provision and mix of housing
- Housing Delivery
- Good design/Landscape character
- Impact on Heritage Assets
- Access, Highways and transport
- Sustainability / water management
- Trees, Ecology and Biodiversity
- Amenity/Pollution
- Healthy and Safe Communities

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The whole of the application site was formerly within the Green Belt, pre-adoption of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan. However, the northeastern part of the site was released to enable the site to be allocated within the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) policy WAS3. The site is referred to WAS3 within the Neighbourhood Plan. The policy map for WAS3 shows the northeastern part of the site has been removed from the Green Belt to accommodate the dwellings. The southwestern part of the site remains within the Green Belt. The site also falls within an Area of Archaeological Significance No 128. The site historically has been in agricultural use.
- 2.2 The application site lies in open countryside, amongst other agricultural fields, with residential development to the south. Hedgerows lie to the north, east, west and east of the site, whilst agricultural land. Beyond the northern boundary is A602 and to the east is Walkern Road. At the southwestern corner the River Beane follows the boundary.
- 2.3 The nearest dwellings adjoin the land to the south. There are no other constraints on the site.

3.0 Design Evolution

- 3.1 The National Design Guide (2021) advises in paragraph 16 thereof that an expressed 'story' for the design concept is akin to producing well designed places and buildings. This 'story' should inform and address all ten characteristics:
1. *Context – enhances the surroundings.*
 2. *Identity – attractive and distinctive.*
 3. *Built form – a coherent pattern of development.*
 4. *Movement – accessible and easy to move around.*
 5. *Nature – enhanced and optimised.*
 6. *Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.*
 7. *Uses – mixed and integrated.*
 8. *Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.*
 9. *Resources – efficient and resilient.*
 10. *Lifespan*
- 3.2 The evolution of the design concept was formed through the initial site allocation within the Neighbourhood Process and pre-application and then a full consultation exercise on Master Planning before the application was submitted. The applicants have submitted a Statement

of Community Involvement which sets out the steps they took to inform all the local community and stakeholders, to ensure high quality design is seen throughout the development. Emphasis is placed on how the site will integrate into its wider setting through a series of pedestrian and cycle connections and a new bridge and prioritises pedestrian and cycle movement above the use of vehicles.

- 3.3 A Hertfordshire Design Review (DR) was held on 5th October 2023, following the above, to discuss the emerging design of the proposed development and Design Review comments on the masterplan aspirations.
- 3.4 It is considered that the policy WAS 3 in the Watton-at-Stone adheres to these principles and has created a narrative and story.
- 3.5 As such, EHDC officers welcome the scheme as a matter of principle underpinned by the significant public benefits it would deliver in terms of housing and district-wide and county-level contributions to infrastructure.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1 There is no relevant planning history for the site.

5.0 Main Policy Issues

- 5.1 These relate to the relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF), the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018 (DP), and the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Area Plan (Adopted Dec 2023) (NP).
- 5.2 The Written Ministerial Statement published on 24 May 2021 is also relevant which sets out the minimum requirements a housing unit must meet to qualify as a First Home

Main Issue	NPPF	DP policy	NP policy
Principle of Development	Chapters 5, 11	INT1, DES1, DES2, DPS1, DPS2, DPS3, DPS4, DEL1, DEL2, HOU1, HOU2, HOU3, HOU7	WAS 2, WAS 3
Delivery of Housing	Chapter 5	HOU1, HOU2,	WAS 1, WAS 3,

		HOU3, HOU7, HOU8	WAS 7, WAS 8
Scale and Design Quality	Chapters 8,11 and 12.	HERT3, DES1, DES2, DES3, DES4, DES5, HA1	WAS 3 WAS 6
Transport	Chapter 9	TRA1, TRA2, TRA3 CFLR3	WAS 3 WAS 9, WAS 10
Heritage Assets	Chapter 16	HA1, HA3	WAS 3 WAS 21 WAS 23
Sustainability and Climate Change	Chapters 2, 14	CC1, CC2, WAT4	WAS 3 WAS 20
Trees Ecology and Biodiversity	Chapter 15	DES2, NE1, NE2, NE3, NE4	WAS 19
Flood Risk and Drainage	Chapter 14	CC1, NE4, WAT1, WAT2, WAT3, WAT4, WAT5, WAT6	WAS 3
Contamination	Chapter 15	EQ1	
Neighbour Amenity	Chapter 12	DES2, DES3, DES4, DES5, EQ2, EQ3, EQ4	WAS 6
Viability and Delivery of Infrastructure	Chapters 2, 4	DEL1, DEL2, CFLR1, CFLR3, CFLR7, CFLR9, CFLR10	WAS 2 WAS 3

5.3 Equality Act 2010

Section 149 of the Equality Act (2010) confirms that a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into force in April 2011 and requires the Council to consider the equality impacts on all protected groups when exercising its functions. In the case of planning, equalities considerations are factored into the planning process at various stages. The first stage relates to the adoption of planning policies (national, strategic and local) and any relevant supplementary guidance. The policies and guidance referenced in the committee report and this updated report have all been subject to an equalities impact assessment (EqIA) therefore, the planning policy framework is considered to meet the first stage in the process. Officers have duly considered the equalities impacts on protected groups in the context of the development proposals, subject to this planning application which is set out in Section 8 of this report.

Other relevant issues are referred to in the 'Consideration of Relevant Issues' section below.

- 5.4 Other relevant Policy Considerations include the adopted, Supplementary Planning Guidance (Affordable Housing and Section 106 Agreements/Planning Obligations) and the Equality Act are referred to in the 'Consideration of Relevant Issues' section below.

6.0 Summary of Consultee Responses

- 6.1 HCC Highway Authority recommends that the development is acceptable subject to condition. Extensive negotiations have taken place with the applicant to get to this position.

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS:

A new vehicle access is proposed onto Walkern Road, at 5.5 metres wide and 6 metre kerb radii. 2 metre wide footways are shown on the submitted plans on both sides of the access, with pedestrian dropped kerbs and tactile paving over the access. Vehicle tracking exercise has been undertaken as well as visibility display which are shown on the submitted drawings and conditioned. The speed limit is to be reduced to 40mph and additional features to help the reduction of the speed limit gateway feature and speed activated signage which is included on plan reference 21850 300 Rev B, and is conditioned. A gate access was originally proposed but this has been removed as part of the engagement with the highways.

TRIP GENERATION / WIDER IMPACT ON NETWORK

This is an allocated site and policy WAS3 of the neighbourhood plan covers the allocation. As part of the East Herts Local Plan preparations and the Neighbourhood plan traffic modelling had already taken place.

The applicant has also undertaken a TRICS assessment in chapter 5 of the TA. This shows there is expected to be 30 vehicle trips in the busiest weekday peak hour (8-9am) and a total of 273 vehicle trips per weekday.

Off site highway works and sustainable transport contributions are sought through conditions and Section 106 but the increase in traffic is not considered severe.

OFF-SITE HIGHWAY WORK / SUSTAINABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL

Tactile paving to be installed over the Lammas Road junction, to ensure sight impaired residents and visitors can access the centre of Watton at Stone.

Raised Kassel kerbing to be installed at the nearest south-east bound bus stop along the main High Street, It is noted the north-west bound stop already has such kerbing and a shelter.

Together these works will provide a good quality pedestrian route from the site access to Watton at Stone centre and bus stops.

INTERNAL LAYOUT

150 parking spaces are proposed, which is in line with East Herts parking standards. There could be some more information regarding internal layout between the different surfaces and crossings. In addition, the paths do narrow down from 2m to 1.5, or 1.25m. However, due to the overall benefits of the scheme this could be acceptable.

Cycle parking is to be provided and a cycle route/s will be provided to link Walkern Road with High Street. Section 278 will allow for the delivery of this. New footpaths will be provided linking the residential site to the bridge and further on to the allocated site WAS4.

TRAVEL PLAN

A Travel Plan has been submitted and a condition has been recommended.

Section 106 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

Section 278 works are to be delivered as part of the works agreed with the highways.

Section 106 contributions are also required in the sum of:

- $0.45 * 267 = 120$ car trips to be changed from car to sustainable modes in the long term.
- $120 * £3030 = £363,600$

25% of the combined Section 278 works valuation (i.e. £111,500) is a suitable reduction to apply to the headlines Section 106 figure of £363,600, recognising these works will have some degree of wider public highway benefit. That reduces the figure down to £252,100 due to the degree of benefits to the existing users.

Much of this contribution would be earmarked for bus service improvements, in particular to help meet an existing demand for an earlier school day departure from Ware, and contribute towards additional evening 907 journeys via Watton-at-Stone.

An overall 'Bus Service and Accessibility Contribution' of £252,100 index linked by CPT from December 2023 to cover bus service improvements and LCWIP development is considered appropriate and CIL compliant.

- 6.2 HCC Historic Environment Unit have commented that there are currently negotiations with the applicant going ahead. No comments can be provided yet as these are still on going.
- 6.3 EHDC Landscape Advisor recommend that additional information submitted is required as the landscape proposals refer to being indicative.
- 6.4 Herts Ecology have been consulted. Initially they required further information. The applicants have provided the additional details and it is considered that this information is acceptable and recommend condition relating to Ecological Mitigation Strategy.

- 6.5 EHDC Environmental Health (Noise): Had initially commented that the application had provided insufficient information from a noise perspective. Further details and clarifications have been provided by the applicant and now consider that the sub station noise will not have an unacceptable impact upon nearby neighbours and therefore the recommended conditions are suggested relating to internal noise, external amenity noise, air source heat pump noise, substation noise, hours of work, neighbour consultation, dust, waste management and lighting are recommended.
- 6.6 The Conservation and Urban Design Team advise the updated information now addresses the previous concerns and therefore have no objection to the proposal.
- 6.7 The previous comments related to the natural surveillance, especially plots 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 13, 29, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57,59, 60, etc which were considered to not have suitable window layout to give the opportunity to provide natural surveillance over the driveways etc.
- 6.8 Another concern raised was the corner units and especially the prominent ones provided limited visual interest. With regards to the street scene, it was considered plots 53 to 60 lacked architectural interest. It was considered that the previous design was nondescriptive and a better understanding to the context and design was needed.
- 6.9 As stated above the applicants have now amended the scheme and addressed the points above by adding side windows to the plots requiring more natural surveillance. There has also been the redesigning of the corner units which now provide a break up of the corner elevations, with windows and detailing such as gables. In regards to the street scene, the applicants have mixed the unit types to give a better reflection of a varied house types and addition of porches and detailing to the façade, such as window headers etc.
- 6.10 Environmental Services (Waste). The initial comments stated that tracking diagrams are needed for a 12.1m vehicle. The applicants have provided these additional details and the Waste Team have now commented that there are no issues with the vehicle tracking and turning areas to be kept clear of parked vehicles also bin pull distances from bin stores should be taken into account.
- 6.11 Environmental Health (Air and Contamination): have not raised any objection or requested any conditions and informatives.

- 6.12 Growth and Infrastructure: The proposal is for 60 dwellings and therefore contributions towards Childcare, education, Library, Youth Services, Waste and Recycling, Waste and Transfer, Fire and Rescue and Monitoring Fees are required.
- 6.13 Active Travel England: No comment.
- 6.14 Thames Water: Had initially said that surface water drainage should follow a sequential approach and contact developers' services. No additional comments to add.
- 6.15 Affinity Water: have raised no objections subject to conditions relating to excavations, contamination during construction and surface water drainage, water efficiency and infrastructure connections.
- 6.16 Environment Agency: Initially the Environment Agency were holding an objection due to no information provided on flood modelling and no bridge drawings. These details have been provided and they have no objection to amending the condition wording to allow residential development to go ahead of the bridge.
- 6.17 Canal and River Trust: The development falls outside of the statutory requirements to comment.
- 6.18 NHS: the development will have an impact on NHS services and therefore a contribution of £106.380 is required to mitigate this.
- 6.19 East Herts Section 106: Contributions towards indoor and outdoor sports and leisure, allotments, community centre etc are required. The full details are available online.
- 6.20 Environment Agency: The additional information satisfies the previous objection and therefore recommend conditions regarding a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, Flood Risk Management, which has been added.
- 6.21 Waste and Mineral: The Waste and Minerals Team have reviewed the application and recommend a condition regarding Site Waste Management.
- 6.22 East of England Ambulance: They have commented that due to the nature of the development there will be some impact upon their

services and therefore a contribution of £22,996 is required to mitigate this, however, due to the funding of the NHS, as it is funded through the tax system, this would not be CIL compliant.

- 6.23 Housing Development and Strategy: 24 affordable dwellings to be provided. Shared ownership is unacceptable. No tenure plan and applicants should enter into a nomination agreement and owned and managed by registered provider.
- 6.24 Fire and Rescue: Have commented that a condition is required to secure hydrants and no cost to the council or fire and rescue.
- 6.25 Cadent Gas: No objection but add an informative
- 6.26 HCC Archaeology: Following geophysical surveys trial trenches were dug on site. Following the digging of the trial trenches it was found that there are no significant archaeological remains. In light of this it is unlikely that there will be an impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest and recommend no conditions or informatives.

7.0 Town/Parish Council Representations

- 7.1 Watton-at-Stone Parish Council. The Parish Council have commented the following. Those grounds will be summarised below:
- Broadly speaking the application follows the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - The delivery of the foot bridge is paramount and required by policy WAS3;
 - Gated entrance is not acceptable;
 - Traffic measures;
 - Construction Management needs to be controlled with the size of vehicles and construction times.
 - Removal of the trees is not acceptable and developers should look for a better solution;
 - No sustainable measures are shown;
 - Digital infrastructure is required;
 - Design of houses does not accord with the Neighbourhood Plan.
 - Better landscaping and planting required;
 - Community benefits should be delivered through Section 106.

The additional plans have been reviewed and the following comments remain:

- Footbridge is a shame that there are steps, more design thought with EA required in conjunction with the Wetland Meadow;
- Wetland Meadow design will help with flooding;
- Traffic Calming measures needs more thought;
- Landscape needs more detail;
- Section 106 needs to be delivered especially the 3G football pitch

8.0 Summary of Other Representations

8.1 In the first round of consultation 12 responses have been received objecting to the proposal. It should be noted that multiple people from the same address made representations:

- The development should integrate bird and bat boxes;
- Not sufficient information regarding car parking;
- Insufficient details on landscaping south of the river and bridge;
- Highway safety concerns with the proposed access;
- Safety of pedestrians is a concern;
- Ecology impacts through the river being polluted affecting wildlife drinking water;
- Noise and disturbance from the sub station;
- Health risks from the substation not mentioned;

8.2 Second round of consultation, 11 comments were received, these raised the following issues. Just like above multiple parties from the same address made representation:

- Unsustainable access to the Highway;
- Bird and Bat boxes are required as part of the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Highway safety and construction traffic disruptions.
- Traffic calming measures are going to cause highway safety concerns;
- Noise disturbance from the new road layout;
- Loss of privacy from new pedestrian access;
- Road layout will impact deliveries;
- Bridge access will not be fully inclusive;
- Route improvements are needed;

9.0 Consideration of Issues

Principle of development

- 9.1 The overall development strategy in the East Herts District Plan 2018 is summarised in adopted Policy DPS1 which identifies the need to deliver new housing growth, with 18,458 new homes required over the plan period 2011-2033 (839 new homes per year) to meet identified needs. Policy DPS2 of the District Plan (DP) sets out the Council's development strategy for East Hertfordshire. Sites that are considered urban extensions form part of the development hierarchy for delivering the needs of the District.
- 9.2 The site is located to the north of the village and on an allocated site within the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (WASNP) (2017 – 2033) (adopted Dec 2023). The Neighbourhood Plan forms a part of the Development Plan for East Herts and therefore, full weight must be given to the policies set out therein. In particular, significant weight must be afforded to the adherence with Policy WAS3 which comprises the site allocation policy in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 9.3 Policy WAS 3 of the WASNP states that "Development of this site will be supported, provided that it complies with the general design policies, the Watton-at-Stone Design Code, and other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan and meets all the following specific criteria:
- a) Given the site area and the target of 30 units per hectare, this site is suitable for 60 homes.
 - b) A physical boundary for the village and Green Belt should be created to form the western edge of the site with appropriate planting of native species, including field boundary trees, to create a clearly recognisable and permanent new boundary.
 - c) The frontage and set-back of the development along Walkern Road should follow the line of existing housing to the south. The space between Walkern Road and the housing must be landscaped and not be dominated by parking.
 - d) At the entrance of the site on Walkern Road, a scheme to reduce traffic speed is essential. A pedestrian/cyclist crossing point, as part of the circular path, to link to the opposite open green space and a new linking footpath along Walkern Road towards the village centre are also required.
 - e) Buildings should not be over 2 storeys in height or 2.5 storeys where this aligns with the Design Code exceptions.
 - f) The view on arrival into the village (Protected View 7, see Policy WAS 18) means that the design must ensure that the new buildings do not break the horizon line (the line formed by the

- heights of existing buildings) of the village and also that the buildings and landscape add interest in the foreground of the view.
- g) The site lies in an area of Archaeological Significance where District Plan Policy HA3 applies.
 - h) A mix of house types should be included, and consideration given to ensuring positive facades are achieved overlooking public and communal space and that the development as a whole is welcoming with a well-proportioned hierarchy of streets and spaces.
 - i) An efficient, effective and well-maintained SuDs system should be designed and implemented to ensure no polluting run-off flows into the River Beane and to provide a multi-functional recreational space, with high ecological value, overlooked by the new homes.
 - j) The public spaces should have well-designed, implemented and maintained landscaping and tree planting which provide structure, interest and character. Paths and green corridors will connect to existing green areas beyond the development site.
 - k) The development must include a connecting footpath that links from the entrance of the site to a new pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Beane, as part of the wider circular path around the village (see Policy WAS 10).
 - l) In accordance with East Herts District Plan Policy VILL1 III. The Neighbourhood Plan is accommodating additional development to the policy requirement, which will deliver community benefits. Specifically, this development will be linked (by way of negative conditions and/or Section 106 obligations) to a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the River Beane, across the field to the Stevenage Road to connect with the pedestrian access to Moorymead Close and the railway station provided through site WAS 4 Stevenage Road (see Policy WAS 10). The new pedestrian/cycle bridge must be designed and constructed to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.
 - m) The Environment Agency's approval of the bridge design must be secured before any development takes place on this site and a management plan to ensure the upkeep for the bridge and pedestrian/cycle path must be agreed before any part of the development is first occupied.
 - n) The provision of public amenity greenspace (which will remain in the Green Belt) will provide a buffer between the housing development and the River Beane. The greenspace will include public pedestrian/cycle access over the footbridge that will cross the river and link to the new circular path (see criterion l). The

space could also be combined with SuDs to make the best use of land.

- 9.4 As part of the delivery of the site, a public footpath and bridge are to be delivered from the site, connecting the site to Stevenage Road across the River Beane. Parts of the site that will accommodate the bridge and public footpath are still within the Green Belt and therefore, these parts of the development will be assessed accordingly. Policy GBR1 states that developments in the Green Belt:
- I. Planning applications within the Green Belt, as defined on the Policies Map, will be considered in line with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - II. The villages of Hertford Heath, Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets, and Watton-at-Stone will be encouraged to consider whether it is appropriate through the formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan to accommodate additional development especially where it contributes to wider sustainability objectives and the delivery of community benefits. Where such proposals would involve changes to Green Belt boundaries, the District Council will consider making these amendments either through the next Review of the District Plan or through a separate Site Allocations Development Plan Document if necessary.
- 9.5 Although the northeastern parcel of land (which contains all of the housing and main access) has been removed from the Green Belt the part of the site which contains the proposed bridge and footpath, in the south-western parcel has not. The NPPF states in paragraph 154 that "A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt". The bridge comprises a 'new building' and would therefore be considered "inappropriate development" in terms of the overall type of development. The proposed bridge would not fall within any exception in paragraph 154 parts a to g.
- 9.6 Notwithstanding the sub-categories set out in paragraph 154, paragraph 155 allows for exceptions for some forms of development within the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. Although the bridge comprises a form of development under exception c of paragraph 155 which constitutes "local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location", the bridge would not preserve the openness of the Green Belt and therefore, some

harm to the openness of the Green Belt would occur as a result of this part of the development.

- 9.7 The public footpath connecting the housing development with the High Street (excluding the bridge) would not harm the openness of the Green Belt and would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. In light of these factors, officers conclude that the development of the bridge would not fall within any exception under paragraphs 154 or 155 and would therefore comprise inappropriate development which the NPPF (paragraph 152) states will only be approved in very special circumstances.
- 9.8 The bridge has been defined as a necessary (sustainable travel) route for pedestrians and cyclists to connect the wider circular path around the village and in accordance with policy WAS10. Although there would be harm through the scale and size in terms of spatial and visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt it is considered that the wider public benefit of the bridge is considered to provide a "Very Special Circumstance" which would allow a better connection to the wider village and overall strategy for the village as a whole. Further weight is attached to the provision of the bridge as part of the footpath connecting the development with the High Street which is a policy requirement under WAS10 and WAS3 (the site allocation policy criteria (k) in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 9.9 In conclusion, it is considered that very special circumstances can be demonstrated which indicate that the proposed bridge (despite it being inappropriate development in Green Belt terms), is acceptable in planning terms and would be in accordance with the Green Belt policy guidelines and the District Plan policy GBR1.
- 9.10 In addition to the above, Policy VILL1 is also relevant. Part VII is the most relevant as there is a made neighbourhood plan for the area. Policy VILL 1 states:

VII. All development should:

- (a) Relate well to the village in terms of location, layout and connectivity;
- (b) Be of a scale appropriate to the size of the village having regard to the potential cumulative impact of development in the locality;

- (c) Be well designed and in keeping with the character of the village;
- (d) Not represent the loss of a significant open space or gap important to the form and/or setting of the village;
- (e) Not represent an extension of ribbon development or an addition to an isolated group of buildings;
- (f) Not unacceptably block important views or vistas and/or detract from the openness of the countryside;
- (g) Not be significantly detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

9.11 In conclusion, the submission of the application has been brought forward as part of the Neighbourhood Planning process for Watton-at-Stone which is supported under Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, subject to adherence with the criteria set out in VILL1 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan, in addition to the other relevant policies set out in the Development Plan (comprising the Neighbourhood Plan and District Plan) and NPPF policy guidance, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable.

The Masterplan Framework

- 9.9 Policy DES1 of the DP requires that all significant proposals will be required to prepare a Masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses, sustainable high quality design and layout principles, necessary infrastructure, the relationship between the site and adjacent land uses, landscape and heritage assets and other relevant matters. The Masterplan has been prepared collaboratively with the Council, town and parish councils and other relevant stakeholders and has gone through a rigorous design review and the pre-planning application appraisal.
- 9.10 The Masterplan Framework was developed in consultation with officers through pre-application discussions. A Steering Group was set up and comprised officers, local ward Members and representatives from Hertford Town Council, town and other relevant stakeholders.
- 9.11 The Masterplan Framework sets out key master planning principles that the site. The application broadly follows the Master Plan in that it will provide 60 homes and a development edge that will protect the wider area and connectivity from the site to the village of Watton-at-Stone. The Masterplan Framework addresses sustainable credentials and the pedestrian routes throughout the site. The proposed plans submitted

with the Planning Application reflect the general layout, connections/access points, provision of open spaces, density and block structure of the adopted Masterplan Framework. The Masterplan Framework generally conforms with the Neighbourhood Plan policy WAS3.

- 9.12 The Masterplan Framework forms a material planning consideration in the assessment of the submitted planning application. As the submitted application plans broadly conform with the Adopted Masterplan, the proposed development complies with the District Plan Policy DES1 requirements. The Adopted Masterplan Framework is therefore afforded positive weight in the planning balance.

Housing Delivery

- 9.12 The overall development strategy for the District, as summarised above, identifies the need to deliver 18,458 new homes over the plan period 2011- 2033 (839 new homes per year) to meet identified unmet needs. Policy DPS2 of the DP seeks to deliver homes in sustainable locations, including Village 1 such as Watton-at-Stone allocated to deliver a maximum of 60 homes on this site.
- 9.13 The NPPF requires local planning authorities to be able to demonstrate that they have identified the sites on which the first 5 years of housing will be supplied – a 5 year housing land supply (5YHLS). EHDC is currently able to demonstrate a minimum five-year land supply position of 5.57 years against the identified requirement of 5,560 dwellings across the five-year period 2023-2028 which has been reported on 4 March 2024. The NPPF also allows for "Affordability ratios" to be taken into account and an Addendum to the March Statement was produced in April which the council can now demonstrate a 5.95 YHLS and therefore the 'tilted balance' is not engaged in the decision-making process as per paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF. In this context, the policies are not considered out of date referred to in this report.
- 9.14 As such, it is considered that the proposed scheme would deliver significant public benefits by contributing to housing supply consistent with Policy DPS1, VILL1 and WAS 3 site allocation for large scale residential development within the village of Watton-at-Stone in accordance with Policies DPS1, DPS2, WAS3 of the DP and WASNP. The provision of housing is afforded significant positive weight in the planning balance.

Viability and Infrastructure Delivery including Affordable Housing Provision and Mix of Housing

- 9.15 Policy HOU3 recognises housing affordability as a significant issue in the district and seeks up to 40% of new homes on larger developments of 15 or more units to be affordable. The policy also states that a mix of affordable housing tenure types is sought on a case by case basis. Affordable housing should also be of similar design quality to private housing and integrated evenly throughout the site.
- 9.16 The applicant has agreed to the proposed planning obligations sought by both the Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts District Council Planning Obligations. A draft Section 106 has been submitted by the applicant which confirms this and will be agreed between the parties prior to the Decision being sent.
- 9.17 The provision of affordable housing is high priority in order to ensure significant public benefits that contribute to the housing supply in the District. Securing financial contributions for other benefits and mitigations to ensure the scheme is acceptable in planning terms as set out in the Heads of Terms also require careful consideration in the round.
- 9.18 The District Plan policy requirement is a tenure split of 75% affordable rent; 25% affordable home ownership, which is being delivered on site. Broadly, the proposals comply with the District Plan policy HOU3 in terms of the amount of affordable housing (as a % of the development) and the tenure split. There is a conflict between the housing mix requirements of the WASNP and the District wide Housing needs evidence which the Council's Housing Officers are informed by in producing their comments. This has resulted in concerns being raised by the Council's Housing Officer. The Council's Housing Officer advises that greatest need is for three and four bed houses, (flats are not the most suitable dwelling type for most households in need of two beds and there has been a significant over provision of new build two bed flats for affordable rent). The applicant considers that the provision of smaller units is acceptable and the resulting affordable housing mix has been arrived at following engagement through the Neighbourhood Planning process which resulted in the formation of the WASNP Policy WAS7. The Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan Policy WAS7 requires that priority for smaller Affordable Housing for those in housing need, one and two bed roomed is recognised in the housing mix. The policy was accepted under examination of the local needs evidence as part of

the Neighbourhood Planning process. Officers consider that this evidence is at odds with the current housing needs evidence (produced at District level) and therefore, officers need to give very careful consideration to the weighting given to the respective policies and evidence in coming to a view on the proposals. It is also a major factor that the Watton-at-Stone neighbourhood plan is more up to date (given its adoption in December 2023) than the District Plan and so regard needs to be given to this in determining the weight given to the respective policies.

- 9.19 The Housing officer raises concern about the type of affordable housing provided, given the proposed affordable housing provisions are skewed towards providing smaller house types. The Housing Officer suggests this is not meeting the needs for affordable housing in the District. However, the applicant has confirmed that the level of affordable housing is 40% and this is policy compliant. The type of dwellings to be provided for affordable housing are generally flatted type units. The Housing Officer considers that this is unacceptable (in terms of the District Plan requirements) as the need and demand for the type of units are in excess of what the council require (which is for larger homes). However, the overall mix that is provided by the appellant is a mixture of 12 x 1 and 2 bed flats and 6 x 3 and 4 bed houses which meets the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan Policy WAS7 (to give priority to smaller affordable dwellings). The following mix is proposed:

Affordable Rent

4 x 1B Flats
4 x 2B (3 persons) WC Flats
4 x 2B (4 persons) Flats
4 x 3B Houses
2 x 4B Houses
Total: 18 Units

Shared Ownership

2 x 1B Flats
4 x 2B Flats
Total: 6 Units
Overall Total: 24 Units (40%)

- 9.20 Policy WAS7 in the WASNP provides some basis for the proposed mix. The preamble to the policy in paragraph 6.34 of the WASNP states that:

The Housing Needs Register has the following information for Watton-at-Stone": All Applicants who have indicated Watton-at-Stone as a preferred location:

1 bed – 191
2 bed – 126
3 bed – 44
4 bed – 13

Applicants who have 75+ points on the Housing Needs Register and indicated Watton-atStone as a preferred location:

1 bed – 75
2 bed – 76
3 bed – 31
4 bed – 11

- 9.21 In coming to a view on the proposed affordable housing mix, officers consider that fuller weight should be given to the WASNP Policy WAS7 which clearly supports the provision of smaller affordable units, including flats in addition to the overall compliance with the affordable housing tenure split and quantum which meets both District and WASNP policy requirements. This indicates that in this particular case, given the policy circumstances, it is acceptable (on balance) to deviate from the District wide type policy guidance. If the overall housing mix was determined by the DMC to be non-compliant with the latest District wide evidence, it is officer's recommendation that it could not substantiate a reason for refusal (on this ground) given the absence of harm and that the WASNP is an up-to-date part of the Development Plan which supports provision of smaller affordable units (for this development).
- 9.22 The Council, and the developers are finalising the final draft Section 106 Agreement.
- 9.23 Although the overall mix may not be acceptable to the Housing Officer, the Council Planning Officers consider that the provision of the affordable housing at 40% and the mix from a range of 1 bed to 4 bed dwellings tips the balance in planning terms and is considered acceptable subject to the Section 106 agreement on this clause and the other obligations that will be provided by the applicant.

Overall Housing Mix

- 9.24 Policy HOU1 states that "On new housing developments of 5 or more gross additional dwellings, an appropriate mix of housing tenures, types and sizes will be expected in order to create mixed and balanced communities".
- 9.25 Policy WAS7 of the WASNP seeks the following, in regards to housing mix:
- WAS 7 Housing Mix
- I. Housing mix, as regards tenure, types and sizes, should be in accordance with current and future local housing need and housing market assessments. The priority for smaller Affordable Housing for those in housing need, one and two bed roomed, should be recognised in the housing mix.
 - II. Affordable housing for sale or First Homes should be provided in accordance with current government guidance or the local policy position set by East Herts Council.
- 9.26 As mentioned previously the proposal seeks to provide a mix of 1 bed to 4 bed dwellings on the site and it is considered that this reflects the need within the neighbourhood plan and the East Herts District.
- 9.27 Policy HOU7 requires provision on major sites of units which meet the changing needs of residents or society over their lifetime, and as such 90% of homes should comply with the M4(2) (accessible and adaptable) accessibility standards in the Building Regulations and 10% should meet M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings). A condition is recommended to secure this.
- 9.28 It is considered that the quantum of housing proposed by the scheme would deliver significant public benefits offering a range of housing types and tenures and therefore this attributes significant positive weight in the planning balance in accordance with Policy HOU1 and HOU7 of the DP and policy WAS7 of the WASNP.

Good design/Landscape character

- 9.29 Policy DES2 states that "*development proposals must demonstrate how they conserve, enhance or strengthen the character and distinctive features of the district's landscape*". Policy DES4 requires development to be of a "*high standard of design and layout to reflect and promote*

local distinctiveness” and should amongst other criteria “respect or improving upon the character of the site and the surrounding area, in terms of its scale, height, massing (volume, shape), orientation, siting, layout, density, building materials (colour, texture), landscaping, environmental assets, and design features”.

- 9.30 Part of the Master Plan of the site was to create a design code for the site. Section 5 of the WASNP covers the desires of good design through developing the site in accordance with the constraints of the site and the context within the village.
- 9.31 The proposal includes various house types including detached, semi-detached, terraced dwellings and maisonettes which are two storey in height. The varied typologies would help to promote a varied community and would break up the built form to provide visual interest.
- 9.32 The development includes 2 storey dwellings with the larger detached and semi-detached properties on the outer ring and centrally the terrace properties. These heights are considered appropriate for a residential area. The dwellings would front the highway to create active frontages and natural surveillance to public areas. In addition, the density of the development is 25 dwellings per hectare (dph) which allows the more natural transition between the village and the wider open countryside. It is considered that the proposal complies with parts a, c, e and h of policy WAS3 of the WASNP and the general policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) with regards to design.
- 9.33 With regards to materials, a Materials and Character Plan has been submitted. It shows that there will be a mixture of brick finish at ground floor with tile hung above or high-level tile hung design to the gable. The street scene drawings show that this will be mixed within each street and therefore will provide a visual interest. However, materials have not been defined and therefore a suitable condition is recommended.
- 9.34 As part of policy WAS3, part f seeks to protect views of the village and therefore policy WAS18 of the WASNP is relevant. Policy WAS18 states that:
- I. Eight important views and vistas are identified on the Policies Map (Figure 6) and listed below:

- V1: From Road Bridge to St Andrew and St Mary Church (south eastern approach)
- V2: From church of St Andrew and St Mary (eastward)
- V3: From Nigel Poulton Community Hall to church of St Andrew and St Mary (southward)
- V4: From Church Lane before the railway bridge (southward)
- V5: From Watton Road railway bridge (north eastward)
- V6: From entrance to village on Stevenage Road (south eastward)
- V7: From far side of Walkern Road bridge (southward)
- V8: From Mill Lane to The Lammas (northward)

II. Development proposals in the Parish that are identified as having an impact on the identified important views should include an assessment of the impact of the development on the key views and vistas, where appropriate.

- 9.35 V7 is the relevant view for this development. The site is on sloping land, whereby the entrance to the south is on lower level compared to the northern part, which is approximately 1.5m to 2m difference. The proposal will be for two storey houses and therefore will be visible from the V7 vantage point. The application is supported by a Landscape Strategy and Tree Constraint plan. The Landscape Strategy and Tree Constraint plan seek to retain the existing trees on the northern and southern boundary and enhance this. The Landscape Officer has commented that there is not sufficient information in regard to number of trees, species etc. However, it is considered that subject to a condition that this strategy would be acceptable and in accordance with policy WAS3, part f, WAS18 and policies DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).
- 9.36 Part b of policy WAS3 seeks to provide a defined boundary between the development site and the land to the southwest which will be retained in the Green Belt. The Landscape Strategy seeks to provide a clear boundary, likely to be meadow planting and subject to condition it is considered that the proposal complies with policy WAS3, part b and policies DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).
- 9.37 Regarding biodiversity, paragraph 174 of the NPPF requires net gains in biodiversity, as does policy NE3, where it is feasible and proportionate to do so.

- 9.38 The scheme would result in the gain of biodiversity (primarily through the enhancement of the boundary landscaping). Comments have been received from the County Ecology team. The applicants have provided a Biodiversity Net Gain Matrix and this considers that the additional planting will benefit the site in terms of biodiversity. The County Ecology Team have stated that the enhancement measures are welcomed and it is recommended that conditions relating to soft landscaping and implementation, Ecology Mitigation Strategy will achieve the outcomes with the submitted Biodiversity Net Gain.
- 9.39 Part j of policy WAS3 outlines that "public spaces should have well-designed, implemented and maintained landscaping and tree planting which provide structure, interest and character. Paths and green corridors will connect to existing green areas beyond the development site. Part n of the same policy states "The provision of public amenity greenspace (which will remain in the Green Belt) will provide a buffer between the housing development and the River Beane. The greenspace will include public pedestrian/cycle access over the footbridge that will cross the river and link to the new circular path (see criterion l). The space could also be combined with SuDs to make the best use of land."
- 9.40 Part m seeks to ensure that the bridge is delivered prior to occupation. The applicant has stated that this could have funding implications and therefore have agreed with the Environment Agency that the two different elements can be delivered separately. Officers, however, consider that the delivery of the bridge is paramount to the development and agreed with the applicant that no more than 30% of the development can be occupied prior to the delivery of the bridge. This would be secured by a Section 106 agreement.
- 9.41 The proposed site layout shows that there will be a play space located centrally within the development. Although this is welcomed the details of the equipment and management will need to be secured through a Section 106 agreement.
- 9.42 There will also be an area of green amenity space to the southwest corner of the site which will have a path leading to the proposed bridge.
- 9.43 The proposals are considered to result in a development which will demonstrate a good standard of overall design having regards to the design policies in the District Plan and Neighbourhood Plans. The

architecture of the housing, landscape provisions, layout of the site and scale are considered to respect the character of the settlement edge and rural area beyond. Officers consider the planning application process has resulted in a number of significant improvements to the overall design of the housing and flatted blocks, including enhanced designs to specified key plots which occupy landmark locations within the context of the site. The provision of the bridge over the Beane is of a modest design which officers consider appropriate to its setting whilst minimising flood risk and providing alternative access for pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed development is in broad compliance with the adopted masterplan.

- 9.44 Subject to condition and securing the Section 106 agreement it is considered that the proposed development is compliant with policies DES1, DES2, DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and policies WAS3 and WAS6 of the WASNP.

Amenity

- 9.45 Policy DES4 of the District Plan seeks that proposals do not result in detrimental impacts to the amenity of future occupiers or neighbouring residents.
- 9.46 The main source of noise would be from traffic associated with the Walkern Road which borders the east of the site and A602 which borders the north. A full noise report has been submitted alongside the application. The proposed development would be separated from the A602 by landscaping at a minimum distance of 20 metres. The dwellings facing Walken Road will be separated by a minimum distance of approximately 20m with landscaping and a road serving the dwellings. The Environmental Health Team have commented that the proposed noise would not give rise to any significant amenity for the future occupiers subject to conditions.
- 9.47 A substation is proposed southeast corner of the site and is positioned within a landscaped area. Concerns are raised regarding the possible impact of noise disturbance from this to the adjoining occupiers, however the Environmental Health Noise team have confirmed that subject to a condition mitigating any noise impact the proposal is acceptable.
- 9.48 It is considered that the layout, orientation, and design of the housing would help to ensure that they do not impact each other by becoming

overbearing or causing overshadowing or loss of light or privacy. In addition, the houses and gardens are considered appropriately sized and fit for purpose.

- 9.49 The proposed dwellings are considered to be sufficiently located away from other neighbouring dwellings to prevent detrimental impacts from occurring.
- 9.50 Subject to conditions, it is considered that a satisfactory level of amenity would be achieved for the existing occupiers of the wider development and the future occupiers of the proposed development, in accordance with policy DES4 and policy WAS6 of the WASNP in respect of amenity impact upon existing and future occupiers.

Parking and Highways

- 9.51 Policy TRA2 of the District Plan outlines that development should ensure safe and suitable access. Policy TRA3 outlines that suitable parking provision must be provided in line with the Council's Parking SPD.
- 9.52 The local highway authority have been consulted on the application. They have raised no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. They have commented that the applicants have had extensive consultation during the application in order to ensure that the access and wider works on highways are to be delivered in accordance with policy WAS3 part d which states:

At the entrance of the site on Walkern Road, a scheme to reduce traffic speed is essential. A pedestrian/cyclist crossing point, as part of the circular path, to link to the opposite open green space and a new linking footpath along Walkern Road towards the village centre are also required.

- 9.53 It is noted that the applicants have worked with the County Highways Team in order to deliver a safe and convenient access from the site. Gates were originally proposed at the entrant to the development but were removed after discussion with the Highways team.
- 9.54 The highways have also confirmed that in order to deliver the highway works a Section 278 agreement is required and has been part of the negotiations relating to crossing points and speed reduction measures. The site is accessed via Walken Road which is considered acceptable.

The proposed cycle and pedestrian routes circulate through the site and connect with the existing infrastructure.

- 9.55 The applicants have provided TRICS assessment which the local Highway team have assessed and agree with the data within it. They have confirmed that the overall package to the highways work would not be severe on the highway network from this development.
- 9.56 Park k of policy WAS3 requires that a bridge is proposed to connect the site over the River Beane, which would further enhance the connectivity of the site to the wider area. In addition, as part of the wider highway works a pedestrian crossing to connect the bridleway (006). As noted previously the design of the bridge has been designed to minimise flooding upstream, in liaison with the Environment Agency. Modelling analysis has been carried out to inform the specifications of the bridge. The applicants have submitted a bridge evolution document to set out the final design. The final design will be made up of timber, metal and concrete. The timber overlay on a metal frame gives the bridge some interest and the use of wood a more natural look. The use of concrete and metal are not considered to reflect the character of the rural location. However, these materials allow for the structure to be supported and avoid infilling underneath the steps to avoid causing a flood issue upstream. The use of these materials is considered to be functional and practical in this instance. It is considered that the overall design is regarded by officers to be of an acceptable standard of design which will provide a major benefit of the development in accordance with the site allocation policy in the WASNP.
- 9.57 There will also be the installation of tactile paving to help sight impaired future occupiers and will be conditioned. The bridge has been designed to ensure pedestrian and cyclist access is provided across the river Beane as an alternative route to the High Street in Watton-at-Stone. The route and bridge would not comprise a fully active travel route as the bridge contains steps to ensure there is sufficient clearance over the river and to manage level changes. The applicant has provided a robust justification for the bridge which has been designed to follow advice from the Environment Agency. Officers consider that the proposals strike the correct balance between achieving a good design appropriate to its rural setting, providing access for pedestrians and cyclists and minimising flood risk in the area.
- 9.58 A Travel Plan has been submitted and is considered broadly acceptable. A condition is recommended to ensure that this is delivered.

- 9.59 The overall car parking strategy for the site has been submitted as part of the drawings. This confirms that there will be sufficient space provided within the site to accommodate car parking for the respective dwellings. A total of 150 spaces are provided with a split of the following:

	Car Parking SPD	Units	Total
1 Bed dwellings	1.5	6	9
2 Bed dwellings	2.0	14	28
3 Bed dwellings	2.5	16	40
4+ Bed dwellings	3.0	24	72
		60	149 spaces

- 9.60 The car parking layout shows that the dwellings will have allocated parking. The maisonettes will be unallocated with visitor parking also being unallocated. Some of the properties will have garages which will be additional parking spaces. Considering the overall layout and proposed dwellings it is considered that the parking strategy is acceptable and in accordance with policy TRA3 and policy WAS6 of the WASNP.
- 9.61 Cycle storage would be provided either in garages or sheds within the curtilage of the property, with a cycle store provided for the flats. The provision of this will be secured through a condition.

Sustainability and Climate Change

- 9.62 Under policies CC1 and CC2 of the District Plan, all proposals must demonstrate how the design, materials, construction, and operation of the development would minimise overheating, reduce the need for heating, integrate green infrastructure and minimise carbon dioxide emissions.
- 9.63 Under policy WAT4 of the District Plan, development must minimise the use of mains water through water saving measures, the recycling of grey water, and reducing mains water consumption.
- 9.64 An Energy and Sustainability Statement and checklist has been submitted. The development would reduce energy usage through the installation of highly efficient fabric, ventilation, and heating systems,

together with an air-tight build. The Statement confirms that the proposal would meet Building Regulations L and O which require developments to conserve fuel and power and prevent overheating.

- 9.65 A range of potentially appropriate low carbon or renewable technologies have been considered in the Statement and it has been concluded that air source heat pumps and electric heating is the preferred and most viable technology for the site. It is noted that gas boilers will be used for the dwellings.
- 9.66 The report further adds that for ventilation and cooling a detailed design of the plant will be designed later. This will allow for a more appropriate ventilation strategy in combination with other factors such as position of the dwelling and noise assessment. It is considered that a suitable condition would be appropriate to control this.
- 9.67 It is considered reasonable to request conditions to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Energy and Sustainability Statement and requiring details of the air source heat pumps and other plant to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority
- 9.68 Low and reduced water demand fittings such as taps, showers and water consuming appliances will be provided to individual homes helping to reduce water demand from the development. All dwellings on the site shall achieve a water conservation standard of 110 litres per person per day (as required by policy WAT4). A condition can be added to secure this.
- 9.69 It is therefore considered that sufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate compliance with policies CC1, CC2 and WAT4 of the District Plan.

Flooding and Drainage and SUDS

- 9.70 Policy WAT1 of the District Plan states that development proposals should neither increase the likelihood or intensity of any form of flooding, nor increase the risk to people or property on site and to neighbouring land or further downstream. Policy WAT3 of the District Plan states that development proposals will be required to preserve or enhance the water environment.

- 9.71 The parcel of land that is to accommodate the housing development will be within flood zone 1 which is within a low risk area. The southwestern parcel of land which has the river Beane running through it. The banks of the river are within flood zone 2, 3, 3a and 3b and the rest of the land will be within flood zone 1.
- 9.72 The proposed bridge will be within flood zone 2 and 3. The bridge has been designed in conjunction with the Environment Agency. The applicants have submitted a Flood Risk Assessment and the Environment Agency have worked with the applicants to finalise the design of the bridge. The EA have now confirmed that the design is acceptable (from a flood risk design perspective) and therefore subject to conditions the proposal is acceptable.
- 9.73 With regards SUDS the applicants have submitted a Sustainability Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and Soakaway and permeability testing documents to support the application. The drawings show that an area of attenuation basin/bioswale is to be provided in the southeast part of the site and adjacent to the proposed central play area is a community green with informal play and SuDS features.
- 9.74 The Environment Agency have confirmed that subject to conditions the proposal is acceptable.
- 9.75 Affinity Water raise no objection subject to the construction works and operation of the proposed development site being carried out in accordance with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practices. This can be recommended via an informative.
- 9.76 Thames Water raise no objection subject to the developers contacting Thames Water in respect of surface water and therefore an informative is recommended.
- 9.77 It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact with regards to flooding and drainage or the water environment, subject to conditions in accordance with policies WAT1 and WAT4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and policies WAS3 part I and m of the WASNP.

Ecology

- 9.78 Policies NE1 and NE3 of the District Plan indicate that proposals should not result in detrimental impacts to biodiversity and should seek to

enhance biodiversity and create opportunities for wildlife. Policy NE2 of the District Plan outlines that all proposals should achieve a net gain in biodiversity.

- 9.79 As stated previously the applicants have submitted a Biodiversity Net Gain report which concludes that there will be an uplift of around 11.31% (habitat), 16.68% (hedgerow) and 20.08% (water course). This will mainly be through the enhancement of landscaping across the site. The Ecology Team have commented that this is welcomed and therefore conditions relating to Ecological Mitigation Strategy and lighting should be a condition for approval.
- 9.80 Subject to conditions and the enhancement of grassland in the country park, it is considered that the proposal would not result in detrimental impacts to ecology, in compliance with policies NE1, NE2 and NE3.

Infrastructure Requirements

- 9.81 Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition. Paragraph 57 of the NPPF states that planning obligations must only be sought where they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 9.82 Part I of policy WAS3 requires the development to deliver community benefits such as the cycle and pedestrian ways over the bridge.
- 9.83 A range of contributions have been requested by this Council to ensure that the infrastructure in the town can support the additional residents. The applicant has agreed the following contributions, which align with the Council requirement:
- Recycling and refuse (£4,320.00)
 - Affordable Housing 40%
 - Health Care Facility
 - GP provision (£106,380.00);
 - Allotment (£10,611);
 - Community Centre and Village Hall (£41,572);
 - Parks and gardens and amenity green space (£59,146.00);

- Fitness Gym (£15,263);
- Studio Space (£6,305);
- Swimming Pool (£35,121);
- Sports Hall (£34,344);
- Bowls (£14,451);
- Outdoor Tennis (£9,900);
- Playing Pitches (£104,791);
- The Childrens Play area and Natural and semi natural green space are provided on site and therefore no contributions are required for these.
- and monitoring costs.

9.84 The applicant has also agreed to pay all of the planning obligations requested by Hertfordshire County Council towards:

- Child Services 0 - 2 (£50,105),
- Child Services 5 - 11 (£783),
- Special educational needs and disabilities (£63,727),
- Library services (£20,549),
- Youth service (£20,173),
- Recycling centre (£5,807),
- Waste transfer station (£6,325),
- Fire and rescue service (£22,835),
- Monitoring costs.

9.85 It is noted that the East of England Ambulance Service have requested an obligation. However, due to the way they are funded, it is not considered that the request would meet the test within The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation 2010 section 122.

9.86 All the above contributions are proposed to be secured by heads of terms within the legal agreement. In accordance with policies DEL1, DEL2 and DEL3 of the East Herts Local Plan (2018) and policies WAS3 part I and WAS26 of the WASNP.

Other matters

Waste

9.87 The Waste Authority Team commented that there is sufficient turning area on site for bin vehicles and room within the dwellings to store waste and recycling materials.

- 9.88 Subject to conditions relating to delivering the storage facilities and routes it is considered that the proposal is acceptable from a waste facility point of view.

Contamination

- 9.89 The Environmental Health Team have commented that they have no objection to the proposal and do not request any conditions.

Historic Environment

- 9.90 The Historic Environment Unit note that the proposed development site is partially in an Area of Archaeological Significance identified in the Local Plan. This denotes an area containing cropmark evidence visible on aerial photographs that suggests potential prehistoric funerary and ritual activity, and possibly settlement evidence of likely late Neolithic, Bronze Age and/or Iron Age date. The most significant, within the development site, is that of a cropmark of a circular enclosure approximately 24m in diameter on the eastern side of the site, which probably represents the ploughed-down remains of a round barrow of Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age date [Historic Environment Record No 7654]. This interpretation is strengthened by the results of the geophysical survey carried out by Magnitude Surveys, which identified an anomaly that has the morphological characteristics of a ring ditch, with a break in the signal which is suggestive of the presence of an entrance and possible internal features, in this area. A second cropmark, comprising a linear ditch c. 100m long and partly superimposed on the ring ditch is also present within the site [HER 7655]. This may be of Bronze Age or later date. A further cropmark of a curvilinear ditch, approx. 60m long, to the east of the development site also may be contemporaneous with the features within the site [HER 7656].
- 9.91 It is noted that the applicants have submitted a desk top study and the HCC Archaeology Team had requested trial trenches to be dug to further analysis the geophysical survey. The applicant undertook this exercise, and it was found that there were no archaeological assets to be found. The HCC Archaeology have stated that this is acceptable and recommend no conditions. In light of the above, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with policies HA1 and HA3 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and the NPPF.

Third Party

- 9.92 It is noted that third party representations have been received with regards to the impact of the development on highway safety. However, as set out in the highways section the Highway authority have not raised any objection to the proposal and have agreed the Section 278 works with the applicant to deliver the proposal without having a significant impact on the highway network.
- 9.93 It is also recognised that the bridge design would be stepped and therefore not be as inclusive as a ramped bridge. However, the design of the bridge has been led by the Environment Agency as this will be in a flood zone and certain flooding mitigation measures are to be incorporated and taking an overall balance of delivering a bridge and connectivity to the wider area it is considered that the bridge design is acceptable.

10.0 Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 10.1 The report provides officer's comprehensive consideration of the Outline planning application and its supporting documentation, including the further/additional information submitted and any representations received. The report has considered the proposals in light of the adopted development plan policies and other material considerations or representations relevant to the environmental effects of the proposals.
- 10.2 In the planning balance, the most important policy is compliance with the criteria set out in Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan and general policies within the East Herts District Plan (2018) which allocates the site for 60 dwellings, which would contribute towards the councils 5 year housing land supply.
- 10.3 With regards to policy WAS3 of the Neighbourhood Plan (2023) the table below shows how the proposal has conformed with this policy:

WAS3 PROVISIONS AND ISSUES	WAS3 CRITERIA MET?
<i>a) Given the site area and the target of 30 units per hectare, this site is suitable for 60 homes;</i>	Yes – the scheme is for 60 dwellings.
<i>b) A physical boundary for the village and Green Belt should be created to</i>	Yes – the submitted plans and conditions will ensure

<p><i>form the western edge of the site with appropriate planting of native species, including field boundary trees, to create a clearly recognisable and permanent new boundary;</i></p>	<p><i>that the proposal will deliver the appropriate boundary treatment to maximise biodiversity and landscape benefits.</i></p>
<p><i>c) The frontage and set-back of the development along Walkern Road should follow the line of existing housing to the south. The space between Walkern Road and the housing must be landscaped and not be dominated by parking;</i></p>	<p>Yes –<i>The layout of the development facing Walkern Road follows the topography of the road and dwellings to the south. Additional landscaping is proposed along this frontage to ensure the housing is not dominated by parking.</i></p>
<p><i>d) At the entrance of the site on Walkern Road, a scheme to reduce traffic speed is essential. A pedestrian/cyclist crossing point, as part of the circular path, to link to the opposite open green space and a new linking footpath along Walkern Road towards the village centre are also required;</i></p>	<p>Yes – <i>The Highway Authority have confirmed that a Section 278 agreement between the parties will deliver the required crossing points and footpaths to link the routes to the wider village. In addition to this speed reduction changes to the highways are part of the overall package of the Section 278 agreement.</i></p>
<p><i>e) Buildings should not be over 2 storeys in height or 2.5 storeys where this aligns with the Design Code exceptions;</i></p>	<p>Yes – <i>All the proposed buildings will not exceed 2 storey in height.</i></p>
<p><i>f) The view on arrival into the village (Protected View 7, see Policy WAS 18) means that the design must ensure that the new buildings do not break the horizon line (the line formed by the heights of existing buildings) of the village and also that the buildings and landscape add</i></p>	<p>Yes – <i>The view from the protected view 7 will be protected with the combination of the buildings not being more than 2 storey in height and enhancement to the landscaping along the northern and eastern</i></p>

<p><i>interest in the foreground of the view;</i></p>	<p><i>boundaries, in conjunction with the retention of the existing landscaping.</i></p>
<p><i>g) The site lies in an area of Archaeological Significance where District Plan Policy HA3 applies;</i></p>	<p>Yes –<i>The applicants and County Council Archaeology have been working together and have raised no objection subject to the recommended of a condition.</i></p>
<p><i>h) A mix of house types should be included, and consideration given to ensuring positive facades are achieved overlooking public and communal space and that the development as a whole is welcoming with a well-proportioned hierarchy of streets and spaces.;</i></p>	<p>Yes – <i>The proposal will provide a mixture of 1 bed to 4 bed dwellings. The Urban Design Officer has commented that the amended scheme now provides natural surveillance of communal and public spaces from the dwellings and more visual interest within the street scene and space. The design achieves a well-proportioned hierarchy of streets and spaces.</i></p>
<p><i>i) An efficient, effective and well-maintained SuDs system should be designed and implemented to ensure no polluting run-off flows into the River Beane and to provide a multi-functional recreational space, with high ecological value, overlooked by the new homes.;</i></p>	<p>Yes – <i>SuDs Systems have been designed accordingly. The LLFA and The Environment Agency have not raised any concerns regarding the application in terms of flooding and water environment. The Ecology Team have also recommend conditions to ensure a high ecology value is delivered. As stated previously the Urban Design Team have commented that natural surveillance to overlook</i></p>

	<i>public spaces is now acceptable.</i>
<i>j) The public spaces should have well-designed, implemented and maintained landscaping and tree planting which provide structure, interest and character. Paths and green corridors will connect to existing green areas beyond the development site;</i>	Yes – <i>The public spaces have been well designed with sensitive planting of trees integrated into the layout. Landscaping, maintenance and implementation is subject to condition. The retention of the natural features on the site is also recommended as part of the list of conditions.</i>
<i>k) The development must include a connecting footpath that links from the entrance of the site to a new pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Beane, as part of the wider circular path around the village (see Policy WAS 10);</i>	Yes – <i>The submitted plans show that there will be a route through the development via the new bridge to connect with the circular path around the village.</i>
<i>l) In accordance with East Herts District Plan Policy VILL1 III. The Neighbourhood Plan is accommodating additional development to the policy requirement, which will deliver community benefits. Specifically, this development will be linked (by way of negative conditions and/or Section 106 obligations) to a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the River Beane, across the field to the Stevenage Road to connect with the pedestrian access to Moorymead Close and the railway station provided through site WAS 4 Stevenage Road (see Policy WAS 10). The new pedestrian/cycle bridge must be designed and</i>	Yes – <i>As part of the proposal a bridge is to be provided and a path linking the site to the bridge and onto Stevenage Road is provided. The bridge has been designed in conjunction with the Environment Agency. As part of the scheme the East Herts Council, Parish Council and Hertfordshire County Council have requested obligations in order for the development to meet a wider public benefit.</i>

<i>constructed to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.;</i>	
<i>m) The Environment Agency's approval of the bridge design must be secured before any development takes place on this site and a management plan to ensure the upkeep for the bridge and pedestrian/cycle path must be agreed before any part of the development is first occupied;</i>	Yes – <i>As noted above and the submitted plans and supporting documents, the bridge has been designed in conjunction with the Environment Agency.</i>
<i>n) The provision of public amenity greenspace (which will remain in the Green Belt) will provide a buffer between the housing development and the River Beane. The greenspace will include public pedestrian/cycle access over the footbridge that will cross the river and link to the new circular path (see criterion I). The space could also be combined with SuDs to make the best use of land;</i>	Yes – <i>The site layout shows that there will be public amenity space provided as a buffer between the dwellings and Green Belt. There will be a public footpath through here linking the development to the bridge. SuDs are incorporated into the site greenspaces.</i>

- 10.4 The table above has considered the application against the neighbourhood plan policies and the East Herts District Plan (2018) and it is concluded that the proposal is acceptable and delivers the objectives of the plans as a whole.
- 10.5 The developers will provide a range of housing with 40% being affordable and additional landscaping which will benefit to mitigate vista points from outside the site, BNG and ecology gains as well as creating a high-quality design.
- 10.6 The proposal will also attract Section 106 obligations which will benefit the wider society.
- 10.7 Coupled with this, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in relation to access and transport impacts, sustainability, drainage and residential amenity. Subject to financial contributions towards delivery of additional infrastructure, the proposals would not result in undue pressure upon local facilities and infrastructure. Appropriate mitigations for potential impacts around biodiversity / sustainability and water

management can be secured by condition. As such the scheme is considered to accord with all relevant District Local Plan policies, neighbourhood plan policies and the NPPF.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That planning permission is GRANTED subject to the conditions/reasons and the completion of a Section 106 agreement.

Draft Legal Agreement

Financial contributions set out below:

HCC Contributions

- Childcare Service Ages 0 - 2 towards Bennington private Nursery and/or provision serving the development (£50,105 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)
- Childcare Service Ages 5 - 11 towards Watton at Stone school and/or provision serving the development (£783 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) towards the delivery of new Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) special school places (EAST) and/or provision serving the development (£63,727 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)
- Library Service towards the re-provision of Stevenage Central Library and/or provision serving the development (£20,549 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)
- Youth Service towards sourcing a new young people's centre in Hertford and/or provision serving the development (£20,173 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)
- Waste Service Recycling Centre towards increasing the capacity of Stevenage Recycling Centre and/or provision serving the development (£5,807 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)
- Waste Service Transfer Station towards the new Eastern Transfer Station and/or provision serving the development (£6,325 index linked to BCIS 3Q2022) Fire and Rescue Service towards the new fire station at Hertford and/or provision serving the development (£22,835 index linked to BCIS 1Q2022)
- Monitoring Fees – HCC will charge monitoring fees. These will be based on the number of triggers within each legal agreement with each distinct trigger point attracting a charge of £340 (adjusted for inflation against RPI July 2021). For further information on monitoring fees please see section 5.5 of the Guide to Developer Infrastructure Contributions.

EHDC Contributions

- Affordable Housing – policy compliant affordable housing provision is required as set out in the May 2020 Affordable Housing SPD. Housing Strategy Officer to advise on tenure split and location within the development.
- Monitoring Fee Contribution – £4,200.00 (13 x £300 + £300) - £300.00 per EHDC financial Contribution Obligation Plus £300 – “for the Council’s costs of monitoring the Development over the lifetime of the planning obligations”. Payable prior to Commencement of Development and RPI Indexed from May 2020
- Recycling Contribution - financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £4,320.00 (PLUS INDEXATION from Oct 2008 to be added) – “towards the Council’s costs for the provision of refuse and recycling containers to the Dwellings in the Development”. Payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from October 2008 as per the requirements of the 2008 Planning Obligations SPD.
- NOTE: £4,320.00 is based on 60 dwellings @ £72 per dwelling and is to be indexed from October 2008 – (for information only the Contribution with Indexation from October 2008 to December 2023 = £7,520.81).
- Health Facilities Contribution – collected by East Herts Council – Contribution requirements as per their consultation response dated 16/02/2024 - NHS England and the HWE ICB reserve the right to amend and request that this be reflected in any Section 106 agreement:
- GMS GP Provision Contribution - Total GMS monies requested: 60 dwellings x £1,773.00 = £106,380.00 – towards increasing capacity of the Watton Place Clinic – Payable on 10th Occupation and RPI Indexed from Date of Agreement – NOTE: EHDC are the collection authority for the HWE ICB – see consultation response dated 16/02/2024 for full details of this contribution.
- Allotments contribution – financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £10,611.00 (Allotment facilities and improvements - £6,519.00 Plus Maintenance (20yrs) - £4,092.00) - “towards the cost of facilities provision, improvements, and maintenance of the Parish Council allotments (situated at the rear of Glebe Court) and/or other allotments and community growing spaces in Watton-at-Stone.” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.
- Community Centres and Village Hall contribution - financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £41,572.00 (Village Hall and Community Centre provision and improvements - £30,234.00 plus Sinking Fund (25yrs) - £3,779.00 and Maintenance (25yrs) - £7,559.00) – “Towards the provision of facilities, improvements, and maintenance

of Nigel Poulton Community Centre and/or the Memorial Hall (High Street) and/or the Scout Hut at Mill Lane and/or other community facilities in the Watton-at-Stone area used by the residents of the development” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.

- Parks and Gardens and Amenity Greenspace contribution – financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £59,146.00 (Parks, gardens, and amenity green spaces provision and improvements - £30,421.00 Plus Maintenance (20yrs) - £28,725.00) – “Towards the costs of provision, improvement, and maintenance of parks and gardens and amenity green space facilities at The Meadow and/or Gt Innings Green Space and/ or other public parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in Watton-at-Stone as used by residents of the development, including landscape planting and new access features such as gates, pathways and interpretation signage” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020

Required Indoor Sport and Leisure Facilities Contributions

- Fitness Gyms Contribution - financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = total contribution required = £15,263.00 (Fitness gym provision and improvements - £11,100.00 Plus Sinking Fund – 25yrs - £1,388.00 and Maintenance (25yrs) - £2,775.00) for Fitness gym provision and improvements – “Towards the costs of the provision of fitness gym facilities at Hartham Leisure Centre as used by the residents of the development and/or alternative provision serving the Development as agreed between the Owners and the Council in writing.” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.
- Studio Space Contribution - financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £6,305.00 (Studio Space provision and improvements - £4,586.00 Plus Sinking Fund – 25yrs - £573.00 and Maintenance (25yrs) - £1,146.00) - for Studio Space provision and improvements - “Towards the costs of the provision of studio space facilities at Hartham Leisure Centre as used by the residents of the development and/or alternative provision serving the Development as agreed between the Owners and the Council in writing” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.
- Swimming Pool Contribution - financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £35,121.00 (Swimming Pool provision and improvements - £25,542.00 Plus Sinking Fund – 25yrs - £3,193.00 and Maintenance (25yrs) - £6,386.00) for Swimming Pool provision and improvements - “Towards the costs of the provision of swimming pool facilities Hartham Leisure Centre as used by the residents of the

development and/or alternative provision serving the Development as agreed between the Owners and the Council in writing” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.

- Sports Hall Contribution - financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £34,344.00 (Sports hall provision and improvements - £24,978.00 Plus Sinking Fund – 25yrs - £3,122.00 and Maintenance (25yrs) - £6,244.00) for Sports hall provision and improvements - “towards the costs of provision of equipment/ facilities, improvements, and maintenance of the indoor community sports facilities at The Nigel Poulton Community Hall and/or other community halls providing indoor sports facilities as used by the residents of the development” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.

Outdoor Sport and Leisure Facilities Contributions

- Bowls - financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £14,451.00 (Bowls Club facilities and improvements - £5,612.00 Plus Maintenance (25yrs) - £8,839.00) - “towards the costs of provision, maintenance and improvements including the bowling green and clubhouse at Aston Bowls Club and/or Datchworth Bowls Club as used by residents of the development” - payable on 1st Occupation/ identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.

NOTE: There is not a Bowls Club in Watton-at-Stone – Aston and Datchworth are the two nearest clubs to the development.

- Outdoor Tennis – financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £9,900.00 (Outdoor tennis provision and improvements - £7,071.00 Plus Sinking Fund – 25yrs - £2,121.00 and Maintenance (25yrs) - £707.00) – “Towards the costs of provision, improvement, and maintenance of the outdoor tennis courts facilities , including relining and new nets, on the Multi-Purpose Play Area (MPPA) in recreation space at The Meadow open space and/or alternative provision serving the Development as agreed between the Owners and the Council in writing” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.
- Playing Pitches Contribution – total financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £126,690.00 (amount based on Sport England calculations for grass and artificial pitch facilities) – “Towards the costs of provision, improvement, and maintenance of the sports pitches and cricket pitch at The Meadow open space in Watton-at-Stone and/or towards the 3G Sports Pitch Project for new 3G playing pitches as outlined in the Watton-at-Stone 2017-2033 Neighbourhood Plan and/or alternative provision serving the Development as agreed

between the Owners and the Council in writing” - payable on identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.

On-site Facilities

- Children’s Play and Provision for Young People – play areas to be provided on site, but if no on-site provision or insufficient provision then a financial contribution would be required: Total financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £128,830.00 (Play and young people facilities and improvements - £51,608.00 Plus Sinking Fund – 20yrs - £51,608.00 and Maintenance (20yrs) - £25,613.00) - “Towards the costs of provision, improvement and maintenance of children’s play and young people’s facilities at The Meadow and/or Gt Innings Recreation Ground and/or other play areas within the village boundary as used by the residents of the development.” - payable on 1st Occupation/ identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020.

NOTE: EHC do not adopt play areas on new developments and a financial contribution will be required if no agreed play area(s) are provided on site.

- Natural and semi-natural green space – to be provided on site, but if no agreed on-site provision or insufficient provision then a financial contribution would be required: Total financial contribution based on a maximum of 60 Dwellings = £24,900.00 (Natural and semi-natural green space provision and improvements - £17,684.00 Plus Maintenance (20yrs) - £7,216.00) – “Towards the provision of improvements to the open green space at Watton Green and/or The Lammis and/or other green spaces used by the residents of the development” - payable on 1st Occupation/ identified Occupation triggers and RPI Indexed from May 2020. NOTE: Financial contribution will be required if no agreed or insufficient natural and semi-natural greenspace provision is provided on site.

Highways

- The Highways use the HCC’s Planning Obligations Toolkit (July 2019). £2133 per ‘sustainable travel trip’ index linked by SPONS from July 2019 (which equates to £3030 today) is considered suitable in principle.
 - $0.45 \times 267 = 120$ car trips to be changed from car to sustainable modes in the long term.
 - $120 \times £3030 = £363,600$
- 25% of the combined Section 278 works valuation (i.e. £111,500) is a

suitable reduction to apply to the headlines Section 106 figure of £363,600, recognising these works will have some degree of wider public highway benefit. That reduces the figure down to £252,100.

- Bus Service and Accessibility Contribution' of £252,100 index linked by CPT from December 2023.

Non-Financial

- The enhancement of approximately 11.31% (habitat), 16.68% (hedgerow) and 20.08% (water course) to achieve a net gain in biodiversity and management of no less than 30 years.
- The bridge shall be completed and open to the public prior to the occupation of 30% or less, of the development of the dwellings.

Conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of s 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by s 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed at the end of this Decision Notice.

Reason: the approved plans, drawings and specifications.

Prior to commencement:

- 3 Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, detailed plans showing the existing and proposed ground levels of the site relative to adjoining land, together with the slab levels and ridge heights of the proposed buildings, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: The details are required to be approved prior to the commencement of development to ensure that the development is properly related to the levels of adjoining development in the interests of neighbour amenity and good design in accordance with Policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

4 No development shall take place until a landscape and ecological management plan, including long-term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscaped areas (except privately owned domestic gardens), has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The landscape and ecological management plan shall be carried out as approved and any subsequent variations shall be agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include the following elements:

- Details of mitigation/compensation for impacts on riparian habitat from the bridge.
- Details of any proposed enhancements to the river Beane.
- Details of proposed planting and habitat creation.
- Details of any proposed footpaths, fencing and lighting.
- Details of any invasive species control and management.
- Details of treatment of site boundaries and/or buffers around water bodies.
- Details of how these former elements support the objectives of the Thames River Basin Management Plan i.e. how the proposals may prevent deterioration of the status or potential of surface waters and groundwater, and how proposals may support in achieving good ecological and chemical status.
- Details demonstrating how green/blue space will be protected during development and managed/maintained over the longer term, including adequate financial provision, and a named body responsible for management.

Reasons: To ensure the protection of wildlife and supporting habitat. Also, to secure opportunities for enhancing the site's nature conservation value, whilst considering and contributing towards achieving the aims of the Thames River Basin Management Plan in accordance with Paragraphs 174 and 180 of the NPPF and Policies NE3 and NE4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).

5 No development shall take place until a scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the provision of fire hydrants at the development. No dwelling shall be occupied until the fire hydrant has been installed as approved. Thereafter the fire hydrants shall be retained in their approved form.

Reason: To ensure a safety and Building and Fire Regulations in accordance with Policies DES5 of the East Herts District Plan September 2018.

- 6 Prior to the commencement of any part of the development hereby permitted apart from enabling works, details of the measures required to facilitate the provision of high-speed broadband connections shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include a timetable and method of delivery for high-speed broadband for each residential unit. Once approved, high speed broadband infrastructure shall be implemented thereafter in accordance with the approved details including the timetable and method of delivery.

Reason: In order to ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure to support the future sustainability of the development in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

- 7 Before the commencement of the development hereby permitted, a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for the approved development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The SWMP should aim to reduce the amount of waste produced on site and should contain information including estimated types and quantities of waste to arise from construction and waste management actions for each waste type during construction and operation of the development hereby permitted. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved SWMP for the duration of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To reduce waste from construction of the site in accordance with Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan.

- 8 Before commencement of the development, a 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' must set out:

- the phasing of construction and proposed construction programme.
- the methods for accessing the site, including wider construction vehicle routing.
- the numbers of daily construction vehicles including details of their sizes, at each phase of the development.
- the hours of operation and construction vehicle movements.

- details of any highway works necessary to enable construction to take place.
- details of construction vehicle parking, turning and loading/unloading arrangements clear of the public highway.
- details of any hoardings.
- details of how the safety of existing public highway users and existing public right of way users will be maintained.
- management of traffic to reduce congestion.
- control of dirt and dust on the public highway, including details of the location and methods to wash construction vehicle wheels.
- the provision for addressing any abnormal wear and tear to the highway.
- the details of consultation with local businesses or neighbours.
- the details of any other Construction Sites in the local area.
- waste management proposals.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the construction process on the on local environment and local highway network, in accordance with policies TRA1 and TRA2 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and guidance in the NPPF.

Prior to any above ground construction works:

- 9 Prior to any above ground construction works being commenced, the external materials of construction for the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and good design in accordance with Policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018

- 10 Prior to commencement of above ground works, details of sustainability measures to be incorporated with the development including energy efficient construction techniques, energy efficient lighting, services and controls, efficient energy supply, water efficiency measures which show that the higher building regulations standard (G2) for water efficiency (110L per day) is met, compliance with Future Homes standard (unless otherwise agreed) shall be submitted for approval to the local planning authority. The development, hereby permitted, shall be implemented and thereafter maintained in full accordance with these details.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and promoting the principles of sustainable construction (East Herts Sustainability SPD 2021) and policy CC1 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).

- 11 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved in accordance with the timing / phasing, details of the design of building foundations and the layout, with positions, dimensions and levels, of (a) service trenches (b) ditches (c) drains (d) other excavations on site insofar as they may affect trees and hedgerows on or adjoining the site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the protection of trees and hedgerows to be retained, and in particular to avoid damage to root systems in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

Prior to first occupation:

- 12 Prior to the occupation of the development, measures outlined in Anderson Acoustics report ref. 6723_001R_5-0_WR including the noise barrier on the northern boundary shall be implemented in order to achieve internal amenity noise standards in accordance with the criteria of BS 8233:2014 '*Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings*'. Approved details shall thereafter be permanently retained.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed development in accordance with Policy EQ2 Noise Pollution and DES4 Design of Development of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 13 Prior to occupation of plots 1 - 10, 14 – 30 and 45 whose external spaces exceed the upper limit of external amenity noise requirements provided under BS 8233, the proposed public external amenity space immediately adjacent to these units shall be completed and made available for use by occupants of the aforementioned plots.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed development in accordance with Policy EQ2 Noise Pollution and DES4 Design of Development of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 14 The occupation of the development authorised by this permission shall not begin until the details of the siting, type and specification of Electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs) (with one EVCP provided per dwelling unless otherwise agreed), the energy sources and the strategy/management plan for supply and maintenance of the EVCPs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All EVCPs shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and permanently maintained and retained. No dwelling shall be occupied until the EVCP serving that dwelling has been installed.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and to promote sustainable development in accordance with policy CC1 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and Policies 5, 19 and 20 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

- 15 Prior to first occupation full details of a strategy to keep turning areas to be kept clear of parked vehicles or any other obstruction shall be submitted to the local planning authority and approved in writing. No dwelling forming part of the development shall be occupied until the refuse vehicle circulation route has been laid out and constructed in accordance with the details thus approved, and thereafter the route shall be maintained in accordance with those details.

Reason: To facilitate refuse and recycling collections in accordance with the Hertfordshire Waste Local and policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).

- 16 All dwellings within the development (except those completed to M4(3) requirements) hereby approved shall be completed in compliance with Building Regulations Optional Requirement Part M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' (or any subsequent replacement) prior to first occupation and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development is adequately accessible for future occupiers in accordance with policy HOU7 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and WAS7 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023).

- 17 At least 10% of all dwellings within the development hereby approved shall be completed in compliance with Building Regulations Optional Requirement Part M4 (3) 'adaptable wheelchair user dwellings' (or any subsequent replacement) prior to first occupation and shall be retained

as such thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development is adequately accessible for future occupiers in accordance with policy HOU7 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and WAS7 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023).

- 18 Prior to the first occupation of any dwellings hereby approved, means of enclosure shall be erected in accordance with the details of all boundary walls, including acoustic fences or other means of enclosure having been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and good design, in accordance with Policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan September 2018 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 19 Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved the hard surfaced areas of the development, including roads, pavements, driveways and car parking areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall then be implemented in accordance with the approved details and retained as such.

Reason: To ensure safety and satisfactory appearance in accordance with Policies DES4 and TRA2 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).

- 20 Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved the site shall be landscaped in accordance with landscaping details having been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where relevant the details shall include full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals, finished levels or contours, hard surfacing materials, retained landscape features, planting plans, schedules of plants, species, planting sizes and density of planting.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design in accordance with Policies DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018).

- 21 Before first occupation of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed

engineering designs and construction of the vehicle access onto Walkern Road and associated highway works, as shown indicatively on drawing number 21850-300-Rev B. These works shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction, and completed before first occupation of the development.

Reason: To ensure the provision of a vehicle access which is safe, suitable, and sustainable for all highway users in accordance with policies TRA1 and TRA2 if the East Herts District Plan (2018) and guidance in the NPPF.

22 Before occupation of any part of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of all improvement works to Walkern Road as shown on drawing numbers 21850 300 Rev B and 082203-FH-02 rev H. This includes but is not limited to:

- Provision of a new footway on the western side of Walkern Road, northbound to the point opposite the public bridleway Watton at Stone 006, and a suitable pedestrian crossing which provides visibility splays on both sides of the carriageway, in both directions of 1.5m X 90m, as shown on drawing number 21850/302(3) Rev B.
- Provision of a new footway on the western side of Walkern Road, southbound to the point opposite the existing footway on the eastern side of Walkern Road, and a suitable pedestrian crossing which provides visibility splays on both sides of the carriageway, in both directions of 0.5m X 90m ,as shown on drawing number 21850/302(1) Rev C
- A reduction in the derestricted speed limit of Walkern Road down to 40mph, for a distance of circa 160 metres northwards of the current 30mph / National speed limit point, with supporting gateway feature on entry to the new 40mph speed limit buffer zone (as shown on drawing number 21850 300 Rev B).
- Supporting road markings (including a new priority / give-way setup), signage and other associated highway features.
- Suitable treatment at the point where the internal footpath/cyclepath joins High Street.

These works shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction, and completed before first occupation.

Reason: To ensure users of the development can travel safely, freely, and sustainably to Watton at Stone centre and other key destinations in accordance with policies TRA1 and TRA2 and Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) and guidance in the NPPF.

- 23 Before occupation of any part of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of pedestrian dropped kerbs and tactile paving points at the junction of Walkern Road / Lammas Road. This work shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction, and completed before first occupation.

Reason: To ensure users of the development can travel safely, freely, and sustainably to the Watton at Stone centre and other key destinations in accordance with policies TRA1 and TRA2 and Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) and guidance in the NPPF.

- 24 Before occupation of any part of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering design of raised Kassel kerbing at the existing (closest) High Street bus stop south-east bound. This work shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction.

Reason: To ensure all users of the development can travel by bus without disadvantage in accordance with policies TRA1 and TRA2 and Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) and guidance in the NPPF.

- 25 Before the development hereby approved is first occupied, all on site vehicular areas shall be accessible, surfaced and marked in a manner to the Local Planning Authority's approval so as to ensure satisfactory parking of vehicles outside highway limits. Arrangements shall be made for surface water from the site to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge into the highway.

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction, and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the premises in accordance with policies

TRA1 and TRA2 and Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) and guidance in the NPPF.

- 26 Prior to first occupation of any dwelling, the provision of facilities for cycle storage for the relevant dwelling shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To promote sustainable/active travel, in accordance with policies TRA1 and TRA2 and Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) and in line with paragraphs 114-116 of the NPPF.

- 27 At least two months before first occupation, a revised Travel Plan Statement shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. This shall consist of a written agreement with the County Council setting out a scheme to encourage, regulate, and promote sustainable travel measures for owners, occupiers, and visitors to the development in accordance with the provisions of the County Council's 'Travel Plan Guidance for Business and Residential Development'. The Plan shall be implemented in full thereafter.

Reason: To promote sustainable travel measures to the development, in accordance with policies TRA1 and TRA2 and Policy WAS3 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023) and paragraphs 114 to 118 of the NPPF (Dec 2023) and HCC's LTP4 policies 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Compliance Conditions:

- 28 All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscaping in accordance with the approved designs, in accordance with policies DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 29 The development hereby approved shall be completed in accordance with Ecology Assessment and Briefing Note: Pre-commencement Ecological Mitigation Strategy produced by Ecology Solutions Ltd.

Reason: To ensure the safeguard any ecological matters on site in accordance with policies NE1 and NE3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and WAS3 and WAS19 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023).

- 30 Prior to installation, a sensitive lighting scheme should be submitted for approval. This scheme should follow guidance from the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals (2023), and be designed to minimise light spill, in particular directing light away from boundary vegetation to ensure that dark corridors remain for use by wildlife as well as directing lighting away from potential roost / nesting sites, and the adjacent River.

Reason: To ensure the safeguard any ecological matters on site in accordance with policies NE1 and NE3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and WAS3 and WAS19 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023).

- 31 The development shall be carried out in accordance with Appendix F (Hydraulic Modelling Report, ref: JJ/VL/P20-2123/01 Rev I, dated 29/01/24) of the submitted flood risk assessment and the following mitigation measures it details:

- A clear span design with an inner span of 21000mm.
- The bridge soffits set to 59mAOD.
- The bridge deck 200mm above the soffit and the railings 1100mm above the bridge deck. The railings of open construction to address the potential for blockage.
- The inside edge of abutments set back 5000mm from the top of bank on the north side of the river, and 2190mm from the top of bank on the south side.
- The approach with stairs as agreed to minimise the floodplain affected, with stair length of 3320mm on the north side of the river, and 2800mm on the south side.

These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements. Drawings/plans that demonstrate that

the bridge has been delivered in line with the above mitigation measures and the FRA should be submitted and these measures shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding both on site (to the development and future occupants) and off site. To ensure the structural integrity of the riverbanks thereby reducing the risk of flooding. This condition is in line with Paragraph 167 of the NPPF and adopted policy WAT1 (Flood Risk Management) of the East Herts District Plan (2018).

- 32 The noise rating level of air source heat pumps shall not exceed 35dBA at any neighbouring habitable room window when operating at maximum capacity and inclusive of any penalty for tonal, impulsive or other distinctive acoustic characteristics. Should it not be possible to demonstrate that no tonality is present, a 6dB tonality penalty shall be applied to the specific noise level.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for occupiers in the vicinity of the proposed development in accordance with Policy EQ2 Noise Pollution of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 33 The level of noise (LAeq,15m) emitted from the proposed shall not exceed the predicted noise levels provided in Anderson Acoustics report ref. 6723_001R_5-0_WR when measured or calculated at 1 metre from the façade of the nearest noise sensitive property.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for occupiers in the vicinity of the proposed development in accordance with Policy EQ2 Noise Pollution of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 34 In connection with all site preparation, demolition, construction, conversion and ancillary activities, working hours shall be restricted to 08:00 – 18:00 hours on Monday to Friday, 08:00 – 13:00 hours on Saturdays, and not at all on Sundays or Bank / Public Holidays. Vehicles arriving at and leaving the site must do so within these working hours.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents in accordance with Policy EQ2 Noise Pollution of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 35 Best Practicable Means (BPM) shall be used in controlling dust emissions during all site preparation, demolition, construction and

ancillary activities. In times of exceptionally dry weather, additional measures should be put in place to mitigate against the spread of dust.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents in accordance with Policy EQ4 Air Quality of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 36 All waste materials and rubbish associated with site preparation, demolition or construction shall be contained on site in appropriate containers which, when full, should be promptly removed to a licensed disposal site.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents in accordance with Policy EQ4 Air Quality of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 37 Any external artificial lighting at the development hereby approved shall not exceed lux levels of vertical illumination at neighbouring premises that are recommended by the Institution of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note 9/19 '*Domestic exterior lighting: getting it right!*'. Lighting should be minimized and glare and sky glow should be prevented by correctly using, locating, aiming and shielding luminaires, in accordance with the Guidance Note.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for the occupants of nearby properties in accordance with Policy EQ3 Light Pollution and DES4 Design of Development of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 38 All existing trees and hedges shall be retained, unless shown on the approved drawings as being removed. All trees and hedges on and immediately adjoining the site shall be protected from damage as a result of works on the site, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with BS5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, or any subsequent relevant British Standard, for the duration of the works on site and until at least five years following contractual practical completion of the approved development. In the event that trees or hedging become damaged or otherwise defective during such period, the Local Planning Authority shall be notified as soon as reasonably practicable and remedial action agreed and implemented. In the event that any tree or hedging dies or is removed without the prior consent of the Local Planning Authority, it shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable and, in any case,

by not later than the end of the first available planting season, with trees of such size, species and in such number and positions as may be agreed with the Authority.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and hedges, in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 39 All existing trees, shrubs, natural and historic features not scheduled for removal, shall be fully safeguarded during the course of the site works and building operations. No work shall commence on site until all trees, shrubs or features to be protected are fenced along a line to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority with 2.3 metre minimum height metal fencing (i.e., weld mesh) to BS5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction (or any updated British Standard) securely mounted into the ground. Such fencing shall be maintained during the course of the works on site. No unauthorised access or placement of goods, fuels or chemicals, soil or other materials shall take place inside the fenced area. In the event that any tree dies or is removed without the prior consent of the Local Planning Authority, it shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable and, in any case, by not later than the end of the first available planting season, with trees of such size, species and in such number and positions as may be agreed with the Authority.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees and hedges, in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 40 A schedule of landscape maintenance for a minimum period of five years shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall include details of the arrangements for its implementation.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by the proper maintenance of existing and/or new landscape features, in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 41 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), or any amending Order, the areas shown for landscaping on the plans approved shall be retained and maintained as open landscaping, and

shall not be developed, enclosed or used in any way that is detrimental to that character.

Reason: To ensure a high standard of design and that good quality landscaping is maintained, in accordance with Policies DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan September 2018.

- 42 All pedestrian and cycle routes, including the bridge connecting the wider area and through the development shall be implemented prior to the occupation of 30% of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: to allow sustainable forms of transport and connectivity to the wider area in accordance with policies TRA1, TRA2 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and policies WAS3, WAS6, WAS9 and WAS10 of the Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Plan (2023).

- 43 Concurrent with the construction of the vehicle access, permanent visibility splays as shown on drawing number 21850 302(2) rev C shall be provided. The northern splay of 2.4m X 90 metres and the southern splay of 2.4m X 62 metres shall have no obstruction to visibility between 600mm and 2 metres above the carriageway level.

Reason: To ensure suitable visibility from the vehicle access, in the interest of highway safety in accordance with policy TRA2 of the East Herts District Plan (2018) and guidance in the NPPF.

Informatives:

1. This permission does not convey any consent which may be required under any legislation other than the Town and Country Planning Acts. Any permission required under the Building Regulations or under any other Act, must be obtained from the relevant authority or body e.g. Fire Officer, Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency (Water Interest) etc. Neither does this permission negate or override any private covenants which may affect the land.
2. East Herts Council has considered the applicant's proposal in a positive and proactive manner with regard to the policies of the Development Plan and any relevant material considerations. The balance of the considerations is that permission should be granted.
3. Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should

be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

4. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
5. Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
6. Construction standards for works within the highway. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

7. Estate Road Adoption: The applicant is advised that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority no longer adopts new highway as maintainable at the public expense unless a wider public benefit can be demonstrated. However, all internal roads should be built to adoptable standards. For any sections of highway that will not be adopted, the developer should put in place a permanent arrangement for long term maintenance, and at the entrance of any such residential estates, a road name plate should indicate that it is a private road to inform purchasers of their future maintenance liabilities. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

8. A 'Bus Service and Accessibility Contribution' of £252,100, payable before commencement, index linked by CPT from December 2023 towards:
 - i) New and/or improved bus services through Watton-at-Stone, including but not limited to additional 907 services through the village.
 - ii) Development and implementation of the East Herts Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in and around the vicinity of Watton-at-Stone.

9. The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit to be obtained for any activities which will take place:
 - on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
 - on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culvert (16 metres if tidal)
 - on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
 - involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
 - in a floodplain more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (16 metres if it's a tidal main river) and you don't already have planning permission.

For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities/environmental-permits> or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03702 422549. The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning

permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

10. At least 21 days prior to the commencement of any site works, all occupiers surrounding the site shall be notified in writing of the nature and duration of works to be undertaken. The name and contact details of a person responsible for the site works shall be made available for enquiries and complaints for the entire duration of the works and updates of work should be provided regularly. Any complaints shall be properly addressed as quickly as possible.
11. During any site preparation, demolition and construction phase the guidance in BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 '*Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites*' should be adhered to.
12. Cadent Gas Ltd own and operate the gas infrastructure within the area of your development. There may be a legal interest (easements and other rights) in the land that restrict activity in proximity to Cadent assets in private land. The applicant must ensure that the proposed works do not infringe on legal rights of access and or restrictive covenants that exist.

If buildings or structures are proposed directly above the apparatus the development may only take place following diversion of the apparatus. The applicant should apply online to have apparatus diverted in advance of any works, by visiting cadentgas.com/diversions.

Prior to carrying out works, including the construction of access points, please register on www.lineearchbeforeudig.co.uk to submit details of the planned works for review, ensuring requirements are adhered to.

Plans

082203-FH-01 Rev H Presentation Planning Layout
082203-FH-02 Rev H Supporting Planning Layout
082203-FH-03 Rev F Storey Heights Layout
082203-FH-04 Rev E Tenure Layout
082203-FH-05 Rev F Unit Types Layout
082203-FH-06 Rev A Location Plan
082203-FH-07 Rev F Fire Appliance Access and Refuse Strategy Layout
082203-FH-08 Rev E Parking Layout
082203-FH-01-MCP Rev F Materials and Characters Plan
082203-FH-SS01 Rev B Street Scene 01

082203-FH-SS02 Rev B Street Scene 02
082203-FH-SS03 Rev B Street Scene 03
082203-FH-SEC01 Rev C Site Section 01
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082203-4N-GR-E2 Rev B Green Corridor - Elevations - E2
082203-4N-PA-E2 Rev D Park Edge - Elevations - E2
082203-4N-P2 Rev A Floor Plan - P2
082203-4N-PA-E1 Rev B Park Edge - Elevations - E1
082203-4N-P3 Rev - Floor Plan - P3
082203-4N-PA-E3 Rev - Park Edge - Elevations - E3
082203-4N-GR-E3 Rev B Green Corridor - Elevations - E3
082203-4K-P1 Rev C Floor Plan - P1
082203-4K-ME-E1 Rev B The Mews - Elevations - E1
082203-4K-LA-E2 Rev C Landscaped Frontage - Elevations - E2
082203-4K-P3 Rev A Floor plan - P3
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082203-4K-GR-E3 Rev C Green Corridor - Elevations - E3
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082203-4K-LA-E1 Rev B Landscaped Frontage - Elevations - E1
082203-4J-P1 Rev B Floor Plan - P1
082203-4J-PA-E1 Rev B Park Edge - Elevations - E1
082203-4J-ME-E1 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E1
082203-4J-LA-E1 Rev A Landscaped Frontage - Elevations - E1
082203-4J(SP1)-P2 Rev B Floor Plan - P2
082203-4J(SP1)-LA-E2 Rev B Landscaped Frontage - Elevations - E2
082203-4J(SP1)-ME-E1 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E1
082203-3G-P1 Rev A Floor Plan - P1
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082203-3G-PA-E2 Rev A Park Edge - Elevations - E2
082203-3G-PA-E3 Rev B Park Edge - Elevations - E3
082203-3G-ME-E1 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E1
082203-3G-ME-E2 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E2
082203-3G-ME-E3 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E3
082203-2F-P1 Rev B Floor Plan - P1
082203-2F-LA-E1 Rev A Landscaped Frontage - Elevations - E1
082203-2F-(SP1)-P2 Rev - Floor Plan - P2
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082203-HA4-P1 Rev - Floor Plan - P1
082203-HA4-ME-E1 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E1
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082203-HA3-ME-E1 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E1

082203-HA3-ME-E2 Rev A The Mews - Elevations - E2
082203-B1a-ME-P1 Rev B Floor Plan - P1
082203-B1a-ME-P2 Rev A Floor Plan - P2
082203-B1a-ME-E1 Rev C The Mews - Elevations - E1
082203-B1a-ME-E2 Rev C The Mews - Elevations - E2
082203-B1b-ME-P1 Rev B Floor Plan - P1
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082203-B1b-ME-E1 Rev C The Mews - Elevations - E1
082203-B1b-ME-E2 Rev C The Mews - Elevations - E2
082203-B2-PA-P1 Rev C Floor Plan - P1
082203-B2-PA-P2 Rev C Floor Plan - P2
082203-B2-PA-E1 Rev D Park Edge - Elevations - E1
082203-B2-PA-E2 Rev D Park Edge - Elevations - E2
082203-GAR01 Rev B Garage 01 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-GAR02 Rev B Garage 02 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-GAR03 Rev B Garage 03 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-GAR04 Rev A Garage 04 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-CS01 Rev B Cycle Store 01 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-CS02 Rev B Cycle Store 02 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-BS01 Rev B Bin Store 01 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-CS-BS-01 Rev C Cycle Store and Bin store 01 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-SUB01 Rev A Substation 01 - Floor Plans and Elevations
082203-BRDG-01 Rev B - Bridge Plan and Elevations
1518-KC-XX-YTREE Rev A Tree Protection Plan01
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2227-EXA-00-DR-L-00110 Rev 04 Rendered Masterplan
21850 – 300 Rev B Site Access General Arrangement
21850 - 301(1) Rev B Site Access Swept Path Analysis (Sheet 1 of 2)
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