

**Former Thakeham Mushroom Site, Storrington
Road, Thakeham**

Planning Statement

Date of report: February 2026

PREPARED FOR



PREPARED BY



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Savills to accompany a detailed planning application submitted to Horsham District Council (“HDC”) on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (Strategic Land) (“Bellway”). The application seeks consent for the development of the former Thakeham Mushroom Site, located on land west of Storrington Road, Thakeham (“the Site”), for the provision of 150 new homes. The application seeks detailed planning permission for:

Demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the to provide 150 dwellings, including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.

- 1.2 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to explain the proposal and how it accords with relevant planning policy.
- 1.3 This application follows a previous planning application for 247 dwellings, flexible non-residential floorspace (Class E) with public open space, landscape and associated infrastructure which was previously submitted to HDC (ref: DC/24/0021). This application was refused and then an appeal was subsequently dismissed in June 2025. The previous proposal will be referred to as ‘The Appeal Scheme’ from herein.
- 1.4 This application proposal has been carefully developed to respond directly to the issues identified by both HDC and the Inspector in determining the previous application and subsequent appeal. In contrast to the earlier scheme, the current application represents a substantially reduced and more sensitively designed development, decreasing the number of dwellings from 247 to 150 and adopting a lower-density, landscape-led layout that reflects the organic character of the village. The proposal delivers a significantly enhanced design approach with increased areas of accessible open space, improved integration with the surrounding settlement pattern, and a stronger placemaking strategy that better respects local context. These amendments result in a scheme that offers clear and tangible benefits for the village and the wider district. The full extent of these benefits is outlined throughout this Planning Statement and summarised in Section 9.

1.5 The Applicant

- 1.5.1 This application, which is made by a national house builder, illustrates that the site is deliverable. In the event the application is approved Bellway intend to construct the development as soon as the relevant consents have been obtained.
- 1.5.2 Bellway have a strong record in the delivery of high-quality development in Abingworth, having delivered the later phases on the Abingworth Meadows development on the opposite side of Storrington Road which in total provides 209 dwellings alongside additional facilities including a new Village Hall, Nursery School, Cricket Ground, Café and Store.

1.6 Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.6.1 Prior to submitting this application, Bellway has engaged with HDC, including undertaking pre-application discussions with HDC, the determination of a previous application and discussions throughout the appeal process on the previous application. Since the dismissal of the appeal, Bellway has remained in contact with officers and met for a pre-application meeting regarding the reduction in quantum and proposed design vision for the site in late 2025.

1.7 EIA Screening

- 1.7.1 HDC has a statutory duty under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the EIA Regulations) to provide a Screening Opinion confirming whether the Local Planning Authority (LPA) considers the Proposed Development to be EIA development.
- 1.7.2 It is the Applicant's view that the Proposed Development is not EIA development on the basis that no significant environmental effects are likely to result from the Proposed Development. HDC considered that The Appeal Scheme for 247 homes was not EIA development. The current proposal is for a smaller scale development so likely to achieve the same outcome.

1.8 Statement Structure

- 1.8.1 This Statement sets out the planning context for the proposed development;
- **Section 2** describes the site and surroundings;
 - **Section 3** details the previous planning applications at the site;
 - **Section 4** describes the proposed development and evolution from the previous scheme;
 - **Section 5** provides an overview of the relevant planning policies and guidance;
 - **Section 6** details the affordable housing provision;
 - **Section 7** details the principle of development;
 - **Section 8** sets out the planning considerations for the proposal;
 - **Section 9** details the planning benefits of the scheme and concludes the Planning Statement.

2. Site and Surroundings

2.1 The Site

- 2.1.1 The Site is located within the Parish of Thakeham.
- 2.1.2 The Site is located on the west side of Storrington Road, which links the historic settlement (Herein referred to as “Thakeham (The Street)”) to the north with more recent development to the south (Herein referred to as “Abingworth”).
- 2.1.3 The 13.04ha Site currently comprises a range of buildings most recently used by Monaghan’s Mushrooms for the growing, processing and storage of mushrooms. It comprises a mix of buildings, ranging from single storey growing / processing and packing sheds to a 3-storey administration block. These existing buildings are largely comprised of red brick with corrugated steel sheet roofs and are of a functional industrial character.

2.2 Surrounding Context

- 2.2.1 The parish of Thakeham is located to the south of the HDC area, around 1km to the north of Storrington and a similar distance to the east of West Chiltington Common. The South Downs National Park is located around 2km to the west and 3km to the south.
- 2.2.2 The Site adjoins existing late 20th Century and early 21st Century residential development on Massey Close to the east and Hardbarrow Woods and High Bar Lane to the south.
- 2.2.3 The wider Site also encompasses open land to the immediate north of the built area.

Figure 2.1: Immediate Site Context (Google Image)



2.3 Accessibility

- 2.3.1 The A24 which links the M25 (Leatherhead, London) to the north and A27 (Worthing) to the south is located 4.3 km to the east. Pulborough Railway station is located 7k to the west, providing 2 trains per hour to London Victoria (Northbound) and 2 trains per hour to Bognor Regis (Southbound).
- 2.3.2 Bus stops are located on Storrington Road within close walking distance to the Site. These are served by route 71 (Chichester – Storrington, 1 service a day, Wednesdays only) and the 74A (Horsham – Storrington, 1 trip a day, Monday to Friday) and 74B (Horsham – Storrington, 1 trip a day, Thursdays). These services are operated by Compass Travel.

2.4 Landscape

- 2.4.1 The Site is located around 4km to the north of the prominent South Downs Scarp, and sits at a lower contour than the Thakeham Conservation Area to the north (See Section 2.5 of this Statement).
- 2.4.2 The HDC Landscape Character Type and Landscape Character Areas Assessment defines the Landscape setting as F1 Pulborough, Chiltington & Thakeham Farmland. This area is described as *“Undulating mixed farmland landscape of arable and horticulture, with small areas of pasture” and the area is noted as retaining a rural character with “localised visual intrusion from direct nurseries and small-scale industrial uses.”*
- 2.4.3 Key characteristics of this area are identified as including;
- Extensive arable and some horticultural use with glasshouses and mushroom farms.
 - Small orchards and Vineyards.
 - Leafy sunken lanes with sandstone exposure (Notably including the section of Storrington Road between the Site and Thakeham).
 - Small historic villages built of sandstone and half-timber.
- 2.4.4 The land immediately opposite Storrington Road is designated as a Green Gap between the built areas of Thakeham (The Street) and Thakeham (High Bar Lane / Abingworth).
- 2.4.5 Going forward the report recommends that the *“redevelopment of derelict glasshouse sites should be well integrated within the surrounding landscape by planting of small woodlands and hedgerows. In addition, the low density, traditional settlement pattern and local design and materials should be responded to.”*

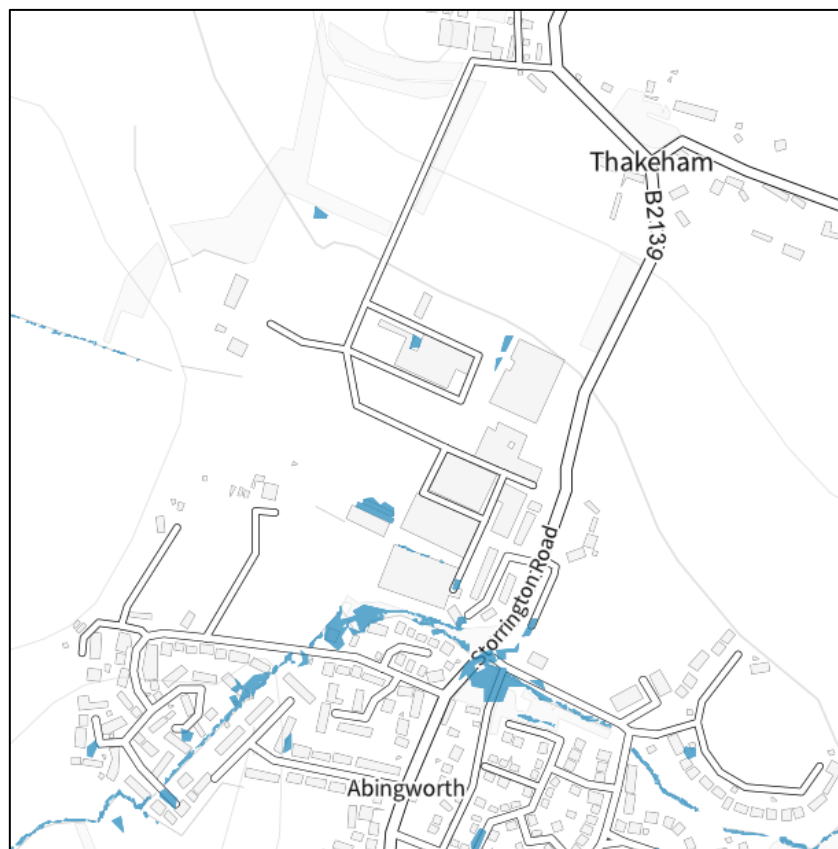
2.5 Heritage

- 2.5.1 In terms of nearby heritage assets, Thakeham includes numerous Listed Buildings, and the historic core of the village around ‘The Street’ forms the Thakeham Conservation Area, located around 150m to the north.
- 2.5.2 Nearby Listed Buildings within Thakeham (The Street) include the Mansion House (Grade II, LEN: 1027213) and Martins (Grade II, LEN: 1285062) both located within the Thakeham Conservation Area to the north.
- 2.5.3 The existing open field between the former mushroom growing and processing buildings and Thakeham (The Street) (and which is within the Site boundaries) forms an Archaeological Notification Area. Part of this also forms part of a Site of Archaeological Importance. This also extends to include the small cluster of buildings known as South Hill Farm, outside of the Site boundary to the immediate north.

2.6 Flood Risk

- 2.6.1 Environment Agency flood mapping for planning identifies that the Site is located entirely within flood zone 1.
- 2.6.2 The site has also been established to be at low risk of flooding from all other sources and all land uses, including vulnerable uses such as residential, are appropriate in Flood Zone 1.
- 2.6.3 The Site is subject to limited surface water flood risk with some pooling identified at the edge of some of the existing buildings.

Figure 2.2: Surface water flood map 1 in 30 year interval (Environment Agency)



2.7 Ecology

- 2.7.1 The Site has limited existing ecological interest, and there are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations present within or adjacent to the Site.
- 2.7.2 The protected species survey work has identified 2 small bat roosts (of low conservation importance), whilst Dormouse has been identified to use the boundary habitats. These are not overriding constraints, and can be dealt with via licensed mitigation, a strategy is set out within the accompanying Ecological Appraisal.

3. Planning History

3.1 The Site has a long Planning History relating to its former use as a Mushroom factory which comprised the growing, processing and distribution of mushrooms, together with the associated administration function and welfare facilities. The applications dating from 2000 are set out in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Summary of Application post 2000

Application Reference	Proposal	Decision
DC/24/0021 Appeal Reference: APP/Z3825/W/24/3350094	Demolition of existing buildings and the phased redevelopment of the site as a residential led development comprising 247 dwellings and flexible non-residential floorspace (Use Class E), with works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.	Application Refused 31st July 2024 Appeal Dismissed 13th June 2025
DC/19/0350	Alteration of an existing access, associated engineering operations and landscaping	Permitted June 2019
DC/15/2484	Application for Approval of Details Pursuant to a S106 Agreement- Details of Enabling Works (S106 in connection with DC/10/1314, DC/12/0841 and DC/15/1242)	Permitted November 2016
DC/15/2417	Erection of a pump house and associated covered water storage tank	Permitted November 2015
DC/13/1327	Extension of temporary change of use of 2 x agricultural offices to parish offices permitted under DC/08/1064 for a further period of 2 years	Permitted August 2013
DC/12/0841*	Demolition of existing growing rooms and surrounding ancillary buildings, removal of compost production on site. Erection of new growing rooms (farms) required for the cultivation of mushrooms, a replacement office building, staff cafeteria, pack house building, ancillary plant structures and provision of open space and landscaped areas (including re-directed footpaths). Refurbishment and extension of existing production and package buildings including alterations to entrance of the site.	Permitted April 2013
DC/12/1028	Change of use of building from Fuel Store Building (DC/10/0860) to Tray and Crate Storage and Filling involving external alterations to the building	Permitted January 2014

Application Reference	Proposal	Decision
DC/11/1236	Prior notification relating to the installation of solar panels onto the roofs of buildings on the Chesswood site	Refused July 2011
DC/10/1316	Erection of new bunkers (1,697 sq. metres) with aerated floors which will reduce odours, a replacement Gypsum and material store (2,800 sq. metres), pasteurising tunnels (1,840.5 sq. metres) and growing rooms (16,698.5 square metres) required for the cultivation of mushrooms, open space, and landscaped areas (Including footpaths)	Withdrawn August 2014
DC/10/0860	Fuel storage building	Permitted 31 Aug 2010
DC/08/1064	Temporary change of use of 2 x agricultural offices to Parish offices for a period of 5 years	Permitted July 2008
DC/07/1629	Use of building and adjacent land for coach storage and maintenance	Permitted January 2008

** Application Reference DC/12/0841 is intrinsically linked to application reference DC/10/1314 at Abingworth Nursery*

- 3.2 The redevelopment of Abingworth Nursery (another former Mushroom growing and processing Site on the east of Storrington Road) for a scheme of 146 dwellings was approved in April 2013. The development at Abingworth Nurseries provided an enabling investment of £3.75 million towards site wide improvements at the application Site which was then known as Thakeham Mushrooms. These improvements included the refurbishment and conversion of existing facilities. This enabling work formed part of the Section 106 Agreement of application reference DC/10/1314. Monaghan Mushrooms purchased Thakeham Mushrooms in 2012 before the signing of the S106 attached to application DC/10/1314.
- 3.3 In 2015, details of the enabling works were submitted to HDC under application reference DC/15/2484. The enabling investment was used to enhance the mushroom site to the west of Storrington Road between 2013-2015. The Mushroom site to the west of Storrington Road continued to operate, with the compost facilities closing in 2013 and mushroom production ending in 2018.

3.4 Previous Residential Application and Appeal

- 3.4.1 A Planning Application for the provision of 247 dwellings alongside flexible non-residential Class E space was submitted by Bellway Homes on 5th January 2024. The application incorporated a range of houses and flats alongside a small local centre providing a retail unit and / or a small number of varied units capable of accommodating a range of class E uses.
- 3.4.2 Throughout the determination period, the Applicant positively engaged with the appointed case officer and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highways. Meetings were held with the case officer on 6 March 2024 and 25 June 2024. A meeting with WSCC Highways was held on 3 July 2024. During the determination period, the Appellant agreed to several extension of time requests, with the final extension agreed until 2 August 2024.

The application was refused by Horsham District Council on 31st July 2024. The reasons for refusal are as follows:

1. *The application site is in an unsustainable location for the quantum of development proposed, which is not appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement of Thakeham (Abingworth) which is classed a 'Smaller Village' with limited facilities, accessibility and services. Active travel infrastructure to sustainably support the proposed quantum of development in this location is not achievable given the proposed routes for active travel to a range of key amenities are not suitable or attractive for general everyday use in terms of usability, safety and personal security, such that occupiers of the development will have an unacceptably high reliance on motorised vehicles even for short journeys. The proposed development is therefore contrary to the national policy requirement to promote sustainable patterns of development as set out in NPPF paragraphs 108, 109, 114, 115, 116 and 128, and Policies 2, 3, 4, 26 & 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*
2. *It has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Local Highway Authority, that the development would not result in severe residual cumulative impacts specifically at the junctions of A24/A272 Buck Barn Crossroads, the A24/A283 Washington Roundabout, and the A283 Washington Road/Water Lane/Sullington Lane crossroads. The proposed development is therefore in conflict with paragraph 115 of the NPPF and Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*
3. *The proposed development has not been accompanied by a completed s106 Legal Agreement, thereby does not secure the 35% of units required to be provided as affordable housing units or other obligations required to make the development acceptable. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies 16 and 39 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), as it has not been demonstrated how the infrastructure needs of the development would be met.*

3.4.3 An appeal was submitted by Bellway Homes, with a hearing undertaken on 25th, 26th March 2025 and 19th April 2025. The appeal was dismissed on the 13th June 2025.

3.4.4 The main issues in the appeal were identified as:

- **Scale and Location** - In particular whether the level of expansion proposed is appropriate to the scale and function of Thakeham.
- **Sustainability of the location** - Whether the proposal would be sustainably located to minimise the reliance upon private vehicles and whether realistic or attractive alternative travel choices could be provided.
- **Pluvial Flood Risk** - Environment Agency (EA) online flood risk maps indicate nominal levels of pluvial flooding originating from within and around the site. This risk is primarily due to the presence of existing buildings and hardstanding on the site, rather than any underlying geological factors. While the flood risk was acknowledged as nominal, National Policy Guidance at the time of the appeal submission required the preparation of a sequential assessment and a determination as to whether sequentially preferable alternative sites could be identified.

3.4.5 In dismissing the appeal the inspector considered the scheme would conflict with the spatial strategy of the Horsham Local Plan and Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan “*in relation to its nature, substantial scale and poor relationship to facilities and services, particularly by sustainable modes of travel. The proposed facilities within the scheme, improvements to various PROWs, bus service improvements and associated travel plan measures could not overcome the locational disadvantages of the site or materially reduce the reliance on private vehicles*”. They also considered there were sequentially preferable sites in flood risk terms.

- 3.4.6 The current scheme has been developed in consultation with HDC and Thakeham parish council to address the concerns identified. An assessment of how this is achieved follows within Section 8 of this Planning Statement.

4. The Proposal

4.1 This application description is described as follows:

Demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide 150 dwellings including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.

4.2 Full details of the proposals are included in the accompanying Design and Access Statement prepared by Fabric. Please also refer to the submitted application drawings.

4.3 This section of the Planning Statement provides a summary of the proposed scheme.

4.4 The Appeal Scheme

4.4.1 The Appeal Scheme proposed the development of 247 dwellings, with primary vehicular access taken from Storrington Road. The development area was contained within the footprint of the existing site's buildings and hardstanding resulting in a gross developable density of 28 dwellings per hectare (dph) and 29dph net residential density. The layout drew on the site's existing grid pattern, gradually softening towards the northern and western boundaries to create a more sensitive interface with the surrounding landscape. The homes were traditional in style, using appropriate materials, and building heights reached a maximum height of 3 storeys. In addition to residential development, the Appeal Scheme included flexible Use Class E floorspace, suitable for accommodating a local convenience store. Green infrastructure and public open space were integrated throughout the scheme, including the creation of a new park within the northern 'L-shaped' parcel of land, a community orchard, and several pocket parks.

4.4.2 Upgrades to the PRoW network were proposed within the Site boundary and outside with contributions towards the offsite upgrades. Multiple sustainable transport options were explored including a contribution towards increasing the public bus service (no. 74), a contribution towards an electric minibus, car club and travel plan.

4.5 Design Approach Since Appeal

4.5.1 Bellway has made significant and positive amendments that address the previous concerns, while maintaining the high-quality design principles of the Appeal Scheme including:

- Limiting development to the footprint of the existing site buildings and areas of hardstanding;
- Integrating Green Infrastructure throughout the scheme and retaining the parkland to the north.

4.6 A fundamental amendment relates to the reduction of 97 dwellings, which results in a lower density at an average of 25 dph (gross). The proposal removes all apartments and provides houses and maisonettes only. All buildings will be of 2 storeys and distributed on the area which currently comprise the buildings and hardstanding associated with the Mushroom Site.

4.7 The reduction of dwellings allows for a more open pattern of development reflecting that of Abingworth Meadows with large village greens forming integral opens spaces between the homes.

4.7.1 The Design and Access Statement describes the design of the proposal, the key design features and how the design has been formulated.

4.7.2 A summary of the key design strategy is provided below:

- **Removal of existing buildings:** The current unattractive derelict Mushroom factory buildings are subject to antisocial behaviour and a security issue. The proposal will

transform the existing aesthetics of the Site, providing an attractive extension to the existing village. The redevelopment will include the removal and remediation of high-risk buildings and land, thereby safeguarding the health and safety of the surrounding community and any future occupants

- **New integrated transport strategy:** Arup have been instructed by Bellway to advise on a bespoke sustainable transport solution for the Application Proposal. Significant engagement with WSCC and the Parish Council has been undertaken to understand the key transport sustainability issues in the area. In response, the Application includes a bespoke strategy for sustainable transport. Additionally, the Application Proposal incorporates a Mobility Hub. This provides a dedicated location for an electric bike hire scheme, delivery hub and car club.
- **New public open space:** The scheme is landscape led with the provision of high quality useable open space integrated and visible throughout the Site. This includes a range of open space typologies to meet the needs of the community and district. Importantly, the proposal includes 6.31 Ha of open space which is an over provision of 4.64 Ha against policy requirements.
- **Scheme design in keeping with the village:** The proposed design incorporates of traditional architectural styles and materials in a open-pattern layout that reflect the established character of the village.
- **Provision of dedicated land to the Community Land Trust:** To the immediate south of the access a plot of land will be provided to the Community Land Trust for the delivery of a use of their choosing. This could for example include community infrastructure or community housing and would be subject to securing a separate planning permission.

4.7.3 Layout

- 4.7.4 The proposed vehicular access point into the Site is from the B2138 (Storrington Road) at a similar location as the existing works access, on the eastern edge of the Site
- 4.7.5 To the north of the access, detached dwellings will be set back from Storrington Road sitting beyond an area of landscaping, trees and hedgerows. This landscaped buffer will link to a large area of open space which will provide a substantial and permanent green gap between the new dwellings and Thakeham (The Street).
- 4.7.6 The tree lined primary access road heads west towards a village green and Play Area (LEAP) with wider open countryside located beyond this.

4.7.7 Scale

- 4.7.8 The development will provide 150 high quality new homes. The homes will be well spaced and benefit from good sized private gardens.
- 4.7.9 The proposal will deliver a broad range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures which will assist in providing a balanced new community. The proposed dwelling mix is detailed in Table 4.1 below.
- 4.7.10 In terms of affordable housing the application proposes 35% of the new dwellings as affordable accommodation. This equates to 52 units which will be provided as 36 dwellings for affordable rent alongside 16 dwelling for affordable shared ownership. Further detail on the affordable housing provision is set out within section 6 of this Planning Statement.
- 4.7.11 All the proposed residential dwellings meet Nationally Described Space Standards.

Table 4.1: Proposed Residential Mix

Unit Type	Market	Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership	Total
1 bed house	0	6	0	6
2 bed house	21	15	6	42
3 bed house	49	13	8	70
4 bed house	16	2	2	20
5 bed house	12	0	0	12
Total	98	36	16	150

4.7.12 The heights of the proposed development have been carefully considered to respond sensitively to the surrounding building heights of the local area, and all the proposed dwellings will be 2 storeys.

4.7.13 Vehicular and Cycle Parking

4.7.14 The Guidance on Parking at New Developments document, published by WSCC sets out the following cycle requirements:

- 1 Bedroom Dwelling – 1.5 spaces per dwelling;
- 2 Bedroom Dwelling – 1.7 spaces per dwelling;
- 3 Bedroom Dwelling – 2.2 spaces per dwelling; and
- 4+ Bedroom Dwelling – 2.7 spaces per dwelling.

4.7.15 Residential parking will be accommodated in a mixture of visitor spaces, allocated resident spaces, garages and spaces within the curtilages of dwellings.

Table 4.2: Proposed Car Parking Plan

Space Type	Amount
Allocated	288
Garage	76 (38)
Visitor	30
Unallocated	4
Total	360

4.7.16 In terms of cycle parking provision, 252 cycle parking spaces for the site will be provided in accordance with the WSCC Parking at New Developments Guidance (2020).

4.7.17 Additional short-stay Sheffield stand spaces will be provided in areas of public realm as short-stay parking for visitors.

4.7.18 Street Hierarchy

- 4.7.19 The street layout has been designed with walking and cycling at its heart, with shared surfaces utilised within the minor streets to signal pedestrian priority. Streets will be legible and well defined, with the design of each street responding to its location and hierarchy within the Site and all will promote views towards either new parkland or the wider countryside.
- 4.7.20 Varied surfaces will be utilised across the Site appropriate to its position within the street hierarchy. All streets will incorporate street trees in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

4.7.21 Character Areas

- 4.7.22 The Proposal includes three character areas and eight landscape characters. These areas ensure continuity throughout the Site whilst allowing for definition and legibility. It ensures the development brings forward a sense of place whilst integrating with the surrounding area. Full details of the character areas are outlined in the Design and Access Statement.

4.7.23 Open Space and Landscape

- 4.7.24 The scheme is landscape led, and incorporates a wide range of open space spread across the Site. A total of 6.31 Ha of open space will be provided. This is set out within the accompanying landscape plan (Pegasus) and Design and Access Statement (Pegasus). A summary is provided below.

Table 4.3: Open Space Schedule (Pegasus)

Type	Provision (Ha per 1000 population)	Site Requirement (Ha)	Site Provision (Ha)
Parks & Gardens	1.37	0.49	1.96
Amenity Greenspace (excluding SUDS)	0.58	0.21	0.51
Natural & Semi Natural greenspace (excluding SUDS)	2.43	0.87	3.72
Provision for children and young people	Children	0.03	0.04
	Young People		
Orchard	0.18	0.06	0.08
Total	4.65	1.67	6.13

- 4.7.25 The developable Site area currently contains few trees, with those existing predominantly limited to along the Site edges. The proposal seeks a significant uplift in tree cover across the Site with a variety of species.
- 4.7.26 In terms of private amenity space, all houses will benefit from their own amenity space in the form of private rear gardens.

Healthy Design

4.7.27 The integration of healthy urban design features that facilitate and encourage physical activity and increased time spent outside would contribute to a reduction in mortality rates and minimise the growing gap between life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. Design integration measures to help residents lead a longer and healthier life, which have been incorporated within the proposed development include;

- Extensive green space, and easy access to nature;
- Strategic activity trails and play spaces (both formal and informal);
- Active travel measures;
- Provision of multi-functional and adaptable community space;

5. Planning Policy Context

5.1 The following section of the Planning Statement outlines the relevant Planning Policy context and material considerations that should be considered in the determination of this application.

5.2 National Planning policy Guidance

5.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

5.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024 sets out the national policy which guides Local Planning Authorities on plan making and decision taking.

5.2.3 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as the golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. Paragraph 11 states that, for decision making, this means:

“c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

“d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance⁷ provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination”.

5.2.4 Footnote 8 of Paragraph 11(d), confirms that where a local planning authority is not able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, the policies that are important in the determination of the application can be considered out of date. As such, planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies within the NPPF provide a strong reason for refusal or the adverse impact of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits

5.2.5 Paragraph 232 explains that existing development plan policies should not be considered out-of-date because they were adopted or made prior to the latest NPPF's publication and that due weight should be given to such policies, according to their consistency with the NPPF i.e the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

5.2.6 Paragraph 8 identifies three overarching objectives to sustainable development; economic, social, and environmental which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

“a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”.

- 5.2.7 The proposed development is entirely compliant with the thrust of the principles of the NPPF, the following paragraphs are noted with relevance to the proposed development.
- 5.2.8 Paragraph 40 encourages good quality pre-application discussion between applicants and local planning authorities.
- 5.2.9 Paragraph 60 details the importance of a sufficient amount and variety of land to come forward where it is needed to support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.
- 5.2.10 Section 9 relates to the promotion of sustainable transport. Paragraph 109 details transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. This includes “c) *understanding and addressing the potential impacts of development on transport networks*”; and “e) *identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use*”.
- 5.2.11 Paragraph 110 requires significant development to be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes, while recognising that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making (emphasis added).
- 5.2.12 Paragraph 115 is clear that In assessing sites subject to applications for development, sustainable transport modes should be prioritised, taking into account factors including;
- the vision for the site,
 - the type of development and;
 - its location;
- 5.2.13 Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network should be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.
- 5.2.14 Paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- 5.2.15 Section 11 relates to *Making effective use of land*. Paragraph 124 outlines that planning policies and decisions should “*promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*”.
- 5.2.16 Paragraph 125 details planning decisions should;

“a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;

d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively”.

- 5.2.17 Paragraph 129 requires planning decisions to support development that makes efficient use of land.
- 5.2.18 Section 12 (*Achieving well designed places*) sets out the great importance that the Government places on design of the built environment. Paragraph 131 incorporates good design as a key aspect of sustainable development in order to create successful places to live and work. Paragraph 135 details planning decisions should ensure developments are *“b. visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping”* and *“e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport network”*.
- 5.2.19 Paragraph 161 requires new development to incorporate measures and infrastructure to be resilient to the impact of climate change, and assist with the aspiration of achieving net zero by 2050. This includes physical protection measures; encouraging the reuse of existing resources and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- 5.2.20 Section 15 (*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*) requires decisions to protect and enhance valued landscapes, recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, provide net gains in biodiversity and prevent new development from having an adverse effect on quality of soil, air, water or noise.

5.2.21 Draft National Planning Policy Framework (2025)

- 5.3 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published a consultation on a draft revised NPPF on 16th December 2025 which runs until 10 March 2026. At present whilst this document currently carries limited weight It provides a clear direction of travel for the future of planning and national policy.
- 5.4 The objectives of Part 4 (*Achieving sustainable development*) are described as meeting *“development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including through maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlement”*.
- 5.5 This is achieved through applying the presumption in favour of development [National Decision Making Policy (NDMP) S3]. This means, for development outside settlements, Policy S5 should be applied; and in all locations, development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan and also the decision making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.
- 5.6 Policy S5 (*Principle of development outside settlements*) make clear only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements, this includes (but not limited to);
- *(d) The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential);*
 - *(j) Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:*

i. be well related to the existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability or infrastructure;

5.7 NDMP S5 part 1 make clear that “*These should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against the national decision making policies in the NPPF*”.

NDMP S5 part 2 details “*In applying this policy, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include, but are not restricted to situations where the development proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances*”.

5.8 NDMP S6 relates to Neighbourhood Plans and the presumption. It states that the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by the adverse effects only where:

5.9 “*a. the neighbourhood plan became plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and*

b. The neighbourhood plan contains allocations to meet its identified housing requirement”.

5.10 Part 6 (*Delivering a sufficient supply of homes*) aims to support the delivery of a substantial increase in the supply of homes, by ensuring that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where needed. This includes planning for an appropriate mix of accommodation for the local community.

5.11 NDMP 07 (*Meeting the need for homes*) states “*substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing accommodation that will contribute towards meeting the evidenced need of the local community, taking into account any up-to-date local housing need assessment, and other relevant evidence (including the extent to which there is a five year supply of deliverable housing, and performance against the Housing Delivery Test)*”.

5.12 Development Plan

5.12.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.12.2 The statutory Development Plan for the Horsham District Council comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) 2015, Policy Maps and any Made Neighbourhood Plans.

5.12.3 Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

5.12.4 The Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) (HDPF) is the current adopted Local Plan setting out the spatial strategy for the district until 2031.

5.12.5 As per the requirements of Paragraph 11d (and footnote 8) the absence of a five-year housing land supply within HDC alongside a Housing Delivery Test Performance of less than 75% (See Section 7) indicates that policies that affect that supply of housing may be considered out-of-date. This reduces the weight that may be afforded to such policies and engages the ‘tilted balance’ where there is an expectation that planning applications for housing should be approved.

5.12.6 As per Paragraph 232 of the NPPF due weight will still be given to local plan policies (excluding those relating to housing delivery targets, sites and location of development) where they remain consistent with the NPPF.

5.12.7 The following policies are considered relevant in the context of the proposed development.

- **SP1 Sustainable Development.** The Council will work proactively with those who favour sustainable development.
- **SP2 Strategic Development.** Horsham's spatial strategy includes the development of settlements at an appropriate scale, providing varied housing needs for the communities and conserving the district's-built heritage.
- **SP3 Development Hierarchy** identifies Thakeham as a smaller village.
- **SP4 Settlement Expansion.** Growth of settlements across Horsham is supported to meet local housing and community needs. Outside built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where;
 1. *The site is allocated in the Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan and adjoins an existing settlement edge.*
 2. *The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement type.*
 3. *The development is demonstrated to meet the identified local housing needs and/or employment needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services.*
 4. *The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long term development, in order not to conflict with the development strategy; and*
 5. *The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape and townscape character features are maintained and enhanced.*
- **SP9 Employment Development** requires redevelopment schemes of employment sites and premises outside Key Employment Areas, to demonstrate that the site/premises is no longer needed and/or viable for employment use.
- **SP10 Rural Economic Development** supports the delivery of varied employment opportunities within rural areas.
- **SP15 Housing Provision.** Provision is made for at least 1500 homes allocated through Neighbourhood Planning.
- **SP16 Meeting Local Housing Needs.** Development should provide a mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures. Sites providing 15 or more dwellings will require 35% of the dwellings to be affordable.
- **SP24 Environmental Protection.** Development is expected to reduce exposure and the emission of pollutants including noise, odour, air, and light pollution.
- **SP25 The Natural Environment and Landscape Character.** Development should aim to protect the natural landscape, landform, and development pattern.
- **SP26 Countryside Protection.** Protects the rural nature of the countryside from inappropriate development and requires development to protect and / or conserve and / or enhance the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area within which it is located.
- **P31 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity.** Development will be supported where the existing green infrastructure is enhanced or maintained. It is expected that development will contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity.

- **SP32 The Quality of New Development.** High quality and inclusive design are expected by the council and should demonstrate a clear understanding of the local and policy context.
- **P33 Development Principles.** Development should enhance the natural and built environment by adopting a high standard of design and making an efficient use of land.
- **P34 Cultural and Heritage Assets.** Development affecting heritage assets must embrace the special character of the area and maintain the setting of the assets.
- **SP35 Climate Change.** Development which contributes to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change will be supported by the council.
- **SP36 Appropriate Energy Use.** Requires development to contribute to clean, efficient energy provision.
- **SP37 Sustainable Construction.** Proposals should deliver sustainable design. New development requires satisfactory arrangements for the storage of refuse and recyclable materials.
- **SP38 Flooding.** Development proposals will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to development sites.
- **SP39 Infrastructure Provision.** Requires either sufficient capacity in existing local infrastructure or suitable mitigation measures for the improvement of infrastructure, services, and community facilities.
- **P40 Sustainable Transport.** Development should promote an improved and integrated transport network in favour of non-car modes of transport.
- **P41 Parking.** Adequate parking and facilities must be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.
- **SP42 Inclusive Communities.** Proposals should include measures to help create a socially inclusive and adaptable environment for a range of occupiers.

5.12.8 Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.12.9 Thakeham Parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Area on the 19th December 2013, with the Neighbourhood Plan to 2031 (NP) adopted in January 2017. The NP is over five years old, thus NPPF paragraph 14 is relevant and the presumption at NPPF paragraph 11d is applicable.
- 5.12.10 The Site forms part of NP Site Allocation Policy Thakeham 3: Storrington Road – Mushroom Site. This Policy seeks the retention of agricultural and horticultural uses upon the Site, with the following alternative uses also considered suitable;
- D2- Recreational use compatible with the countryside location;
 - Solar array
 - B1 light industrial / commercial
 - Tourism
- 5.12.11 The following policies are also considered relevant to the Application Site.
- **Thakeham 1:** A Spatial Plan for the Parish notes “Development plan policies for development in the countryside apply outside the built-up area boundaries”.
 - **Thakeham 6:** Design, requires development proposals to reflect architectural or historic characteristics of particular merit and the scale of the surrounding buildings in the wider area.

Development over 10 dwellings should include space for trees and soft landscaping, blend into the countryside and have a variation in types and sizes.

- **Thakeham 10:** Green Infrastructure & Valued Landscapes, requires development proposals to retain and where possible enhance valued landscape features of the parish including sunken lanes, public rights of way and hedgerows.

5.12.12 West Sussex County Council Joint Minerals Local Plan

5.12.13 The WSCC Joint Minerals Local Plan (JMLP) 2018 (review 2021) identifies that the Site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding area for Building Stone.

5.12.14 Policy M9 (b) (iii) (Safeguarding Minerals) details:

“proposals for non-mineral development within the Minerals Safeguarded Areas will not be permitted unless:

(iii) the overriding need for the development outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral and it has been demonstrated that prior extraction is not practicable or environmentally feasible.”

5.13 Other Material Considerations

5.13.1 Emerging Horsham Local Plan (EHLPL)

5.13.2 HDC has been in the process of preparing an updated Local Plan since 2018. A draft Local Plan was submitted for examination in July 2024 under the requirements of the 2023 version of the NPPF. Initial hearings took place 10–12 December 2024 but were paused by the Inspector on 16 December due to serious concerns over soundness, the Duty to Cooperate (DtC), water neutrality, and housing need proposals.

5.13.3 In April 2025, the Inspector deemed the Plan legally non-compliant due to failures in DtC and the Council’s water neutrality approach. Despite recommendations to withdraw, HDC sought to resolve the issues by providing additional DtC information. Following the ministerial correspondence with PINS advocating flexibility in examinations, the anticipated removal of DtC, and the lifting of water neutrality constraints, the Inspector wrote to HDC explain that the Local Plan process may be able to continue.

5.13.4 There are complexities that need consideration including that the current draft Plan does not meet identified housing need as it was previously limited by water neutrality. HDC has indicated an intent to allocate additional sites to accommodate more housing. As a previously developed site on the edge of an established settlement the application site provides a logical additional site to help deliver the aims of the Plan.

5.13.5 Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states:

“Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given).

b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and

c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)”

- 5.13.6 The weight the emerging policies have in decision making will change over time depending on the outcome of the consultation process and the examination of the Plan. On this basis, the emerging policies have limited weight for decision making at the time of writing.

5.13.7 Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

Horsham District Council has adopted several Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Guidance Documents. These include:

The Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD

- 5.13.8 The Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (September 2017) sets out HDC's approach to securing developer contributions and affordable housing. It explains the use of Section 106 agreements alongside the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), prioritising affordable housing delivery at 35% on developments of 5 dwellings. This SPD is considered further in the Affordable Housing Statement in Section 6 of this Planning Statement.

The Shaping Development in Horsham Planning Advice Note ("SDPAN");

- 5.13.9 The SDPAN supersedes the October 2022 Facilitating Appropriate Development ("FAD"). The document guides development within HDC and sets out the weight HDC consider can be afforded to Local Plan policies within the context of current legislation, national policy and guidance. The SDPAN is a material consideration in the decision making process.
- 5.13.10 The SDPAN details given HDC's position with an out-of-date Local Plan and a substantial housing need, HDC will take a proactive approach to support sustainable development that addresses identified needs within the district.
- 5.13.11 The SDPAN confirms HDPF policies 3 and 4 remain relevant in the determination of applications, seeking for development proposals to be located in sustainable locations albeit removing the requirement for development proposal to be allocated or within a built up area boundary (BUAB). An assessment against the SDPAN and the criteria set out within Policy 4 is detailed within Section 7 of the Planning Statement (Table 7.1).

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Planning Advice Note.

- 5.13.12 The Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Planning Advice Note (endorsed 19 October 2022) provides interim guidance for development proposals, aiming to integrate biodiversity and green infrastructure in line with national and local policy. It encourages achieving at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), applying the mitigation hierarchy, prioritising on-site enhancements, and ensuring long-term management. The provision of 10% BNG is now a statutory requirement.

5.13.13 Housing Position

- 5.13.14 The HDPF plans the delivery of 800 homes per annum until 2031. In December 2025, HDC published their Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2024/2025 and paragraph 3.23 sets out the Standard Method calculation as of December 2025 is 1,338 dwelling per annum.
- 5.14 Chapter 3 of the AMR confirms that HDC can only demonstrate a 1.7 year supply of housing. This coupled with a performance of 62% in the Housing Delivery Test published in December 2024, demonstrate the substantial housing need in the District. Both the housing land supply and the HDT result trigger the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6. Affordable Housing

6.1 Planning Policy Context

6.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework

6.1.2 The NPPF at paragraph 64, states that where a Local Planning Authority has identified that affordable housing is needed, it should set policies for meeting this need on-site, unless offsite provision or a financial contribution can be robustly justified.

6.1.3 Paragraph 66 requires major development proposals to provide a mix of affordable housing to meet the identified local needs including social rent and affordable rent and affordable home ownership tenures. Footnote 31 removes the requirement for 25% of homes to be delivered as first homes.

6.1.4 Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

6.1.5 Strategic Policy 16: Meeting Local Housing Needs, requires the provision of 35% of dwellings to be affordable on sites providing 15 or more dwellings.

6.2 Horsham Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (September 2017)

6.2.1 The Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (AHSPD) sets out Horsham District Council's approach to securing planning obligations and affordable housing from new development across Horsham District. The SDHD confirms that for development proposal of over 15 or more homes 35% affordable homes is required.

6.2.2 The AHSPD advises that developments should provide a mix of affordable housing sizes to meet the needs of the district's communities, as per the assessed requirements as outlined within the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (Paragraph 6.1.17). Housing mix will also need to reflect the requirements of affordable housing providers, which is generally focussed on provision of homes of up to three bedrooms. It is noted that there is an overall, increasing requirement for smaller homes.

6.2.3 Paragraph 6.1.18 details 70% of Affordable Housing is to be delivered as affordable/social rent and 30% for intermediate / shared home ownership. The SDHD confirms this tenure split.

6.3 The Proposed Affordable Housing Provision.

6.3.1 It is proposed that the development will provide 35% affordable housing (52 dwellings) which is compliant with HDPF Policy 16. The full proposed affordable housing mix is outlined within table 6.1.

6.3.2 The AHSPD also sets out a recommended affordable housing mix by bedroom size. The proposed dwelling size mix is broadly in line with the provisions set out above for 2 and 4 bed dwellings. The lower number of 1 bed dwellings reflects the loss of apartments from the previous scheme which are no longer considered an appropriate house type at the Site given the character of the proposal and existing village.

Table 6.1. Proposed affordable housing mix

Unit Type	Total no. Units	Shared Ownership	Affordable rent	% of Affordable	AHSPD Recommended Housing Mix
1 bed house	6		6	12	20%
2 bed house	21	6	15	40	45%
3 bed house	21	8	13	40	25%
4 bed house	4	2	2	8	10%
Total	52	16	36		
% of Affordable	100	30	70		

6.4 Summary

- 6.4.1 The development will be delivered tenure blind and 52 affordable dwellings of a variety of tenures will be disbursed across the scheme to provide a sustainable community.
- 6.4.2 The proposals offer a good balance between smaller dwellings and family housing to be suitable for the borough's need thus is in accordance with the AHSPD and HDPF Policy 16.

7. Principle of Development

- 7.1.1 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable whereby paragraph 11(d) explains that where the policies which are important for determining applications are out of date, the Local Planning Authority should grant permission unless the application of policies within the NPPF would result in a strong reason for refusal (particularly in regard to those assets listed at Footnote 7) or there are any adverse impacts arise from the proposal that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal.
- 7.1.2 In this case, HDC is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing rendering relevant policies within the HDPF out of date. This, as well as the HDT score, engages NPPF paragraph 11(d) in the determination of this application. Accordingly, HDC will need to consider development proposals for housing that are not allocated within the HDPF.
- 7.1.3 For this reason HDC has published the SDPAN to guide development in the district. The SDPAN notes the importance of the principle behind HDPF policies 3 and 4 but understands that proposals for development outside the BUAB are likely to come forward. Notably for this application is paragraph 5.12 of SDPAN which details HDC will positively consider applications that fall outside of the BUAB where they meet the following criteria, based upon the principles established by Policy 4 of the HDPF;
- *The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB;*
 - *The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to;*
 - *The proposal demonstrates that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services;*
 - *The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development; and*
 - *The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.*
- 7.1.4 This reflects the position set out in the previous iteration of the SDPAN (formerly referred to as the FAD document), which was relevant at the time of the Appeal Scheme. At that stage, the Inspector and HDC Officers concluded that the proposal for an additional 247 homes represented an inappropriate level of expansion for Thakeham, which is defined as a small village under HDPF Policy 3. In response, the Applicant has considered the Appeal decision and engaged with HDC Officers to revise the scheme, ensuring that the new proposal is of an appropriate scale whilst still providing the important benefits previously proposed. The other criteria within the SDPAN were not disputed with the Appeal Scheme; therefore, the current proposal for 150 dwellings remains compliant.
- 7.1.5 In summary, Table 7.1 below sets out how the application meets the requirements of paragraph 5.12 of the SDPAN and how the application differs from the Appeal Scheme.

Table 7.1: How the Proposal meets the SDPAN Criteria

SDPAN Criteria	How the Proposal meets the criteria.
The site adjoins the existing settlement edge as defined by the BUAB	The site is approximately 25m north of the BUAB separated by a stretch of trees and a footpath. Since the adopted Policy Maps were published, the development of Massey Close has been approved which falls adjacent to the application site. The emerging Local Plan Policy Maps indicate an extension to the BUAB which directly abuts the site. Officers confirmed within the Delegated Report for application reference DC/24/0021 that the Site adjoins the BUAB.
The level of expansion is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement the proposal relates to	<p>The scale of the Appeal Scheme, at 247 dwellings, was not considered appropriate in relation to the scale and function Thakeham by the Inspector and HDC Officers.</p> <p>This application is for 97 dwellings less than that previously proposed. This equates to a 39% decrease in unit numbers which is a significant reduction and considered more appropriate for the site and the existing size and function of Thakeham.</p>
The proposal demonstrates that it meets local housing needs or will assist the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services	The proposal seeks to provide 150 new homes. It is clear from HDC's housing position that there is a significant need for new homes across the entire district. The provision of new homes and new residents in the area will support the existing facilities within the village.
The impact of the development individually or cumulatively does not prejudice comprehensive long-term development	The proposed development will result in the comprehensive redevelopment of a site which includes extensive buildings and hardstanding; and which already benefits from a formal vehicular access point along Storrington Road. The proposed development would not prejudice long term development of other sites as it does not rely on third party land and is set in a well-defined site with defensible boundaries. The Site will contribute positively to the long-term growth and prosperity of the village, being accessible and conveniently located to all existing residents.
The development is contained within an existing defensible boundary and the landscape character features are maintained and enhanced.	<p>The proposed development will replace existing development which includes 26,205 sqm of existing built area and 26,387 sqm of hardstanding. The development is contained within this area other than the proposed open space to the north. The PROW provides a western boundary to the development. Storrington Road and the Green Gap (designated in the Neighbourhood Plan) binds the development to the east thus containing the site within the area previously used in mushroom growing and distribution.</p> <p>The Site is visually contained, and the proposed built form carefully located to avoid adverse impacts to the existing landscaping character and setting, particularly in longer views.</p>

SDPAN Criteria	How the Proposal meets the criteria.
	In the delegated report for application reference DC/24/0021 for 247 homes, officers agreed that the Site was contained within a defensible boundary.

7.1.6 In a recent appeal at Land to the South of Furze Common Road in Thakeham (ref: APP/Z3825/W/25/3365902), the Inspector stated:

“Thakeham does have a number of local facilities, and indeed the village seems to me to be relatively well provided in this regard, compared to many others of a similar size. Furthermore, some of these existing facilities, including the village hall, sports pavilion, shop/café and veterinary surgery, all appear to have been secured as a direct result of other recent housing developments. The current closure of the nursery appears to be due to a shortage of qualified staff, rather than any issues relating to its viability; there is no evidence to suggest that it will not reopen, or if necessary, that the brand new building that it occupies could not accommodate some other community-related use. A good range of facilities such as supermarkets, schools, doctors and pharmacies is available in nearby Storrington, and although such trips would be likely to be mainly by car, the distance is quite short.”

7.1.7 The Inspector of this appeal also refers to the Appeal Decision at the Former Thakeham Mushroom Site, explaining that the scale of the development differs to the land south of Furze Common Road. The Inspector considers that if a settlement is considered sustainable for 28 dwellings, it should be considered sustainable in all respects. Moreover, Thakeham has been subject to recent piecemeal applications that have been too small scale to make a significant contribution towards improving the sustainability of the settlement. Therefore, ignoring the cumulative impact of development. Thus, the proposed quantum proposed with this development is able to provide substantial benefits towards the delivery of homes, open space and meaningful sustainable transport enhancements that will benefit existing resident and all new development proposals. This should be given substantial weight within the decision making process.

7.2 Principle of redevelopment of the site for an alternative use

7.2.1 The site comprises a derelict Mushroom factory that was previously operated by Monaghan Mushrooms. The use of the Site to commercially grow mushrooms ceased in May 2022 as Monaghan Mushrooms was no longer able to run a viable business from the premises.

7.2.2 The operation of the mushroom factory, included growing rooms inside the buildings, packaging equipment, cold storage, waste disposal, administration offices, staff facilities and HVG parking and turning areas.

7.2.3 The Applicant remains of the view that the site meets the NPPF definition of brownfield land. This is on the basis that there is a significant amount of industrial type buildings and hardstanding present that are associated with the previous commercial operation for the mass production and distribution of mushrooms

7.2.4 This is a position supported in other planning applications for the redevelopment of similar mushroom growing and processing sites elsewhere, including by North Somerset Council in granting planning permission for an Outline scheme to redevelop the similar Monaghan Mushrooms plant at Langford, Somerset (23/P/0448/OUT).

- 7.2.5 In determining that the Site falls within the definition of previously developed land the Officers Report in this instance details:
- “The application site includes a number of buildings, growing houses (greenhouse style structures) and a large area of hardstanding used in connection with the existing mushroom farm business Monaghan Mushroom Farm. There is also an office/reception and canteen area which was approved in 2010. Some of the buildings are currently in use with the existing mushroom farm business and some are no longer in use. Previously manufacturing took place in the centre and north of the site on the hardstanding but this was relocated to West Sussex in 2005.*
- The existing business operation on the site consists of the growing and packaging of mushrooms, including canning and traying, for subsequent distribution by HGVs. It is considered that the site no longer comprises just agricultural uses. Indeed, the applicant points to the Council’s own committee report for the original planning permission 61474 which refers to some of the uses be of an industrial nature and not simply agriculture but “rural industry”. It is therefore considered that the site would fall within the definition of previously developed land”.*
- 7.2.6 On the basis of the above, the Applicant considers that substantial weight should be applied to the use of brownfield land in accordance with NPPF paragraph 125(c) in the overall planning balance.
- 7.2.7 As per the requirements of HDPF SP9, the applicant has undertaken marketing of the Site for a period of at least six months. This exercise undertaken by Strutt and Parker, which commenced in May 2023, involved the erection of boards on-site and advertising over the internet. It has demonstrated no viable interest for agricultural use or for a preferred employment use, as set out within the Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3.
- 7.2.8 In its consultation response to the previous planning application, HDC Economic Development considered the marketing of the site for commercial use to have been acceptable, and the officer’s report states: *“The marketing undertaken is considered thorough.”*
- 7.2.9 Since Monaghan Mushrooms ceased operations at the Site in May 2022 the Site has fallen into an increasing state of disrepair. Since purchasing the Site in April 2023 the applicant has maintained 24/7 site surveillance to discourage antisocial behaviour, despite this the state of the buildings within the Site has worsened and the Site has been the target of increased antisocial behaviour, including a fire in one of the mushroom growing rooms last summer. The Applicant cannot continue site security indefinitely and therefore it is important to secure planning permission for the development of the Site as soon as possible otherwise the condition, visual appearance and safety risks of the Site will continue to worsen.
- 7.2.10 The Officer’s report for the previous scheme also recognised the visual improvements redevelopment of the site will bring *“The scheme includes a significant visual benefit with the demolition of the existing buildings”* and *“this proposal provides opportunities to improve the visual quality of the site”*.
- 7.2.11 The principle of redeveloping the Site for a residential led scheme was not contested by HDC or formed part of a reason for refusal in respect of the previous planning application at the Site. The Officer’s report for the previous scheme recognises through the acceptable marketing undertaken, *“the site is not viable for policy compliant uses given its condition and location”*.
- 7.2.12 The key issue related to the quantum of residential development. The current application proposes a reduction of 97 homes (39% of the previously proposed provision) ensuring that the Site is redeveloped in a positive manner.
- 7.2.13 Residential use represents a less intensive activity than food growing, processing and distribution. The recommencement of the former use (or a similar comparable use) would for example include a significant number of HGV and car movements travelling through Thakeham. Residential use will

also significantly improve the environmental qualities of the site regarding design, outlook and nature.

7.3 Effective use of land

- 7.3.1 Chapter 11 of the NPPF promotes the effective use of land, particularly where land is underutilised. HDPF Policy 2 encourages the effective use of land and the re-use of land that has been previously developed.
- 7.3.2 The site is a derelict mushroom growing and processing site. There are 10 buildings on Site, some of which are large warehouse structures set within hard surfaced areas. The hardstanding is extensive and would have served heavy good vehicles (HGVs) for distribution of the produce, and movement within the site as part of the operation.
- 7.3.3 The proposed scheme will support the development of underutilised land and buildings in accordance with NPPF 124(d), making effective use of land to deliver 150 dwellings in an area of high housing demand, within an LPA that has a significant shortfall in housing land supply.

7.4 Deliverability

- 7.4.1 The SDHP explains that HDC is seeking deliverable sites that meet the NPPF definition.

“To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

a) sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).

b) where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.”

- 7.4.2 Specifically, there is a clear preference for applications to be submitted with full details to assist in the delivery of housing in the district and improve the housing land supply position. This application is submitted in full to ensure the effective mobilisation and delivery of the site.
- 7.4.3 Bellway Homes is a national housebuilder with a strong record bringing sites forward quickly. Should Planning Permission be approved in 2026, Bellway are in a position to discharge planning conditions and obligations to enable works to start as soon as possible and therefore would be able to deliver the first homes in early 2028. All dwellings will be delivered within 5 years ensuring a positive contribution to HDCs housing land supply position and affordable housing supply.
- 7.4.4 This benefit was acknowledged by the Appeal Inspector *“The site is owned by a developer already locally present that would seek to commence building homes without delay”* [68].
- 7.4.5 For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the principle of development is established, and the proposal represents sustainable development.

7.5 Addressing the Appeal Decision

- 7.5.1 This Application addresses the matters raised by the Inspector and HDC through the determination of the Appeal Scheme. The Inspector found that the Appeal Scheme was at conflict with the spatial strategy of the HDPF and TNP in respect of the substantial scale and poor relationship to services, particularly by sustainable modes of travel. The provision of services within the Appeal Scheme and sustainable transport enhancements were not sufficient enough to overcome the locational disadvantages and the reliance on private vehicles, in the Inspector view.
- 7.5.2 It is important to note that the Inspector acknowledged multiple benefits of the Appeal Scheme. This included the significant contribution towards the critical housing shortfall in the district which was attributed substantial weight alongside the provision of affordable homes. Additionally, the Inspector attached moderate weight to the broad range of open space typologies proposed and noted the advantages that the upgrades to the PROW network, footways and bus stop would provide future and existing residents. These benefits remain as part of the Application Proposal.
- 7.5.3 Table 7.2 sets out the key matters identified at Appeal and how these issued have been addressed by the Applicant through this application.

Table 7.2: Summary of key Appeal Matters and Applicants Response

Matters	Applicant's Response
Scale of the proposed development in relation to the settlements functionality	<p>The scheme has been substantially reduced by 97 dwellings to 150 dwellings, bringing it more closely into alignment with the settlement hierarchy and the existing form and scale of buildings on the application site. The application scheme comprises a low density layout which is more appropriate for a village context. The revised proposals also remove all flats, focusing instead on traditional housing forms that better reflect local character.</p> <p>The design now incorporates a greater proportion of open space, including larger private gardens, creating a more spacious and landscape-led layout. Overall, the updated approach results in a scheme that is more in keeping with the character and form of Abingworth and Abingworth Meadows in particular, responding positively to previous concerns.</p>
Location of the development in relation to the choice of sustainable transport modes	<p>As part of the development proposal, Bellway is considering a range of sustainable transport options that are achievable at the Site and will make a change to the transport modes people use to meet their needs. The options being considered and that were consulted on at the public consultation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integrated mobility hub include a car club and EV bike hire; • Demand Responsive Transport options; • Dial-a ride minibus; • Traffic calming to increase permeability; • Public Right of Way enhancements. <p>The sustainable transport strategy will be discussed with WSCC (Highways Authority).</p>

Matters	Applicant's Response
Lack of clarity on the delivery and viability of proposed sustainable transport methods	Once the preferred sustainable transport option has been considered by WSCC (Highways Authority), Bellway will provide details to ensure the sustainable transport modes are deliverable and viable.
Lack of clarity on the delivery and viability of the retail and commercial space	The proposal no longer seeks to provide commercial space. Should a need for commercial space be identified by the community, this can be provided directly by the Community Land Trust.
Whether there were sequentially preferable sites in respect of surface water flood risk	The Site is subject to a limited amount of existing surface water flooding caused by the existing built form. The proposal provides a bespoke drainage strategy which will discharge surface water at an equivalent greenfield rate. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy sets out how the proposal will remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development. As such a Sequential Test is not required.

7.6 There are no outstanding matters raised by the Appeal Scheme that this planning application has not resolved. As a result, HDC should not delay the positive determination of the planning application.

8. Planning Considerations

8.1.1 This section of the Planning Statement assesses the proposals against the national, regional, and local planning policy framework as set out above.

8.2 Design and Layout

8.2.1 The NPPF (Chapter 12) places great importance on the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is invisible from good planning. NPPF Paragraph 135 sets out a series of design requirements to ensure that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable places and buildings are created as noted as fundamental to achieve in NPPF paragraph 131.

8.2.2 Locally, HDPF Policy 32 and 33 sets out specific criteria which ultimately seek to achieve a high quality of development whilst conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment. Additionally, NP Policy Thakeham 6 provides further design principles that should be incorporated into developments.

8.2.3 HDC considered the previous design and layout of the Appeal Scheme to be appropriate and respect the existing mixed residential character of the surrounding area. Accordingly the Officers delegated report confirms that the previous proposal complied with HDPF policy 33 and TNP Policy 6. This was subsequently agreed in common ground between the Applicant and HDC as part of the Appeal. HDC also raised no objection to the demolition of the buildings which were noted to be of limited architecture merit. The Appeal Decision provide limited commentary on the design of the Appeal Scheme but did note that the Appeal Scheme would be well-designed and that there would be some aesthetic enhancements from the removal of the buildings and replacement with the Appeal Scheme.

8.2.4 The application proposal maintains the appearance and characteristics previously proposed in respect of house types. The quantum of development and density has been reduced to provide an open grain layout which maintains the character of the village and the previously proposal but expands the green infrastructure knitted through the developable area.

8.2.5 In relation to the criteria of HDPF Policy 32, the design and layout of the proposal meets the criteria in the following way:

- ***Provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe and adaptable environment.***

The proposal delivers high-quality new homes within an attractive and well-integrated landscape setting that supports community interaction, active travel, and recreation. Strong urban design principles are embedded throughout the scheme, including buildings arranged around open spaces, and clearly defined roles for the public realm. These elements work together to create safe, legible, and inclusive spaces for the community. The layout and design clearly distinguishes between private residential areas and the wider public realm, incorporating formal spaces, movement corridors for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, and more natural landscape areas.

- ***Complement locally distinctive characters and heritage of the district.***

The proposed built form has been contained to the area previously occupied by the Mushroom business. Open space has been retained to the north to protect the tranquillity of the Conservation Area and preserve the existing gap. The development also draws inspiration from the Abingworth scheme with a strong emphasis on green focal spaces within residential

parcels. Furthermore, the form, materials and height of the building are inspired by the local context.

- **Contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings and the historic landscape in which they sit.**

A landscape-led approach underpins the development, ensuring the protection and enhancement of the existing landscape and historic setting. Key design elements, including the street hierarchy, retention of trees, new planting, and well-designed arrival spaces, contribute to a strong sense of place which connects to and complements the wider village.

- **Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development and contribute to the support for suitable complementary facilities and uses.**

The design proposal seeks to redevelop and transform a redundant and unsafe industrial style into a new residential area. The design proposal optimised the Site's potential whilst taking into account the landscape and village character.

- **Help secure a framework of high quality open spaces which meets the identified needs of the community.**

Refer to section 8.3 of this Planning Statement.

8.2.6 Further criteria is set out in HDPF Policy 33. The proposal meets this criteria in the following way:

- **Make efficient use of land, and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist;**

The proposal utilises land that has previously been used for the production of mushrooms and includes extensive hardstanding and industrial buildings.

- **Ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development;**

Residents at Old House, Massey Close, Hard Barrow Woods, a few properties on the east of Storrington Road and properties to the north of the site are the closest neighbours to the site. The proposal seeks to ensure that their amenity will not be significantly affected. The properties to the north will be adjacent to the proposed open space. Sufficient distance will be retained between the properties on Massey Close and Hardbarrow Woods to ensure no loss of privacy or noise impact. The junction works to access the Site should not affect the properties to the east of Storrington Road.

- **Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views;**

The scale, massing and architectural appearance of the proposed development adopt a traditional design approach, drawing inspiration from the established character of the village and, in particular, the adjoining Abingworth Meadows development. A framework of character areas and landscaped spaces has been incorporated to ensure visual continuity across the scheme and to reflect the defining qualities of the existing settlement. This approach creates a

strong sense of place and identity, integrating the new homes sensitively within their local context. Full details of the character areas are set out within the Design and Access Statement.

- ***Are locally distinctive in character, respect the character of the surrounding area (including its overall setting, townscape features, views and green corridors) and, where available and applicable, take account of the recommendations/policies of the relevant Design Statements and Character Assessments.***

The proposal has been redesigned to better reflect the existing character of the village by utilising an organic layout with large areas of open space integrated throughout the residential development akin to Abingworth Meadows and the surround landscape context. The supporting Design and Access statement sets out how the proposed development has taken account of relevant design statements, character assessments and design guidelines to ensure a high-quality proposal is delivered.

- ***Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; and includes the provision of street furniture and public art where appropriate.***

The Design and Access Statement explains the design rationale behind the proposed detailed aesthetics of the proposal. These vary throughout the character areas to ensure legibility and distinction between areas of the Site whilst ensuring a coherent overall development. Additionally, landscaping areas are proposed which detail specific design objectives for the open space and space between buildings including street furniture, tree planting, open space typologies, SUDS design and more.

- ***Presume in favour of the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development.***

The development has sought to retain all local landscape features. There is limited removal of trees and hedges where required to facilitate the development or the trees are of poor quality. New planting is proposed and result in a significant net gain of trees and hedgerows.

- ***Ensure buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, unless this conflicts with the character of the surrounding townscape, landscape or topography where it is of good quality***

The proposal seeks to make the most effective use of land whilst creating a good quality living arrangement. This includes ensuring a each building, garden and the public realm benefits from daylight. Further information on the energy proposals for the scheme are set out within the supporting Energy Statement.

- ***Incorporate where appropriate convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles and cycles, and the storage of bins/recycling facilities without dominating the development or its surroundings***

Sufficient parking has been provided as set out in Parking Plan. Refuse storage and collection has been considered and the strategy is details in Refuse Strategy Plan.

- ***Incorporate measures to reduce any actual or perceived opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour on the site and in the surrounding area; and create visually attractive frontages where adjoining streets and public spaces, including appropriate***

windows and doors to assist in the informal surveillance of public areas by occupants of the site

The scheme applies good urban design principles to create a safe environment and reduce the potential for crime and antisocial behaviour. Active frontages and passive surveillance are achieved through dwellings overlooking streets and public areas.

- **Contribute to the removal of physical barriers;**

Not applicable.

- **Make a clear distinction between the public and private spaces within the site.**

There is clear distinction between public and private areas. This is created by using good urban design principles such as active frontages, materials as well as the creation of clear boundary treatment between public and private areas where necessary.

8.2.7 **Given the above and the detailed assessment within the DAS, it is considered that the proposal meets the criteria of NPPF Section 12 and relevant national design guidance, HDPF Policies 32 and 33, and NP Policy Thakeham 6, through the provision of a high quality and well considered layout.**

8.3 Open Space

8.3.1 Paragraph 98 of the NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to provide and plan positively for the provision of open space. Paragraph 103 details the benefits and opportunities for physical activity, nature and climate change the provision of spaces can bring.

8.3.2 HDPF Policy 32 sets out that new development will be expected to help secure a framework of high quality open space to meet the needs of the community. Paragraph 5.29 of the SDPAN explains that developments should accord with the open space standards set out in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Review 2021. Table 8.4.4 of the review sets out the recommended quantity standards. These are provide below in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: Open Space Standards and Provision

Type	Provision (Ha per 1000 population)	Site Requirement (Ha)	Site Provision (Ha)
Parks & Gardens	1.37	0.49	1.96
Amenity Greenspace (excluding SUDS)	0.58	0.21	0.51
Natural & Semi Natural greenspace (excluding SUDS)	2.43	0.87	3.72
Provision for children and young people	Children	0.03	0.04
	Young People		
Orchard	0.18	0.06	0.08
Total	4.65	1.67	6.13

- 8.3.3 Importantly, the proposal includes 6.31 Ha of open space which is an over provision of 4.64 Ha against policy requirements.
- 8.3.4 Table 8 in the Open Space, Sports & Recreation Review (June 2021) details that in the Thakeham Analysis Area it is anticipated that there will be a surplus of parks and children’s play but a deficit of natural/semi natural, amenity and multifunctional greenspace. Table 8.2 sets out a comparison to the future project of open space in Thakeham against the provision within this proposal.

Table 8.2: How the Proposal contributes towards the open space deficit

Open Space Type	Future projection of open space in Thakeham (Hectares)	Proposed Open Space (Hectares)	Remaining need in Thakeham following proposal
Parks	+0.06	1.96	2.02
Natural/Semi Natural Space	-5.98	3.72	-2.26
Amenity Greenspace	-0.27	0.51	3.45
Child’s Play	+0.06	0.04	0.01
Young People	-0.09		
Allotments/Orchard	-0.44	0.08	-0.36
Combined	-6.67	3.31	-3.36

- 8.3.5 The proposal meets the open space requirements set out within the Open Space, Sports & Recreation Review and reduces the deficit in required open space that has been identified in Thakeham by nearly 50%.
- 8.3.6 Accordingly, the application accords with the provisions of NPPF paragraphs 97 and 103 and HDPF Policy 32 and the provision of the open space is a substantial benefit of the scheme.

8.4 Transport and Access

- 8.4.1 NPPF paragraph 110 seeks to direct significant development to location which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. There is a key distinction within paragraph 110 which notes:

“opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”

- 8.4.2 Thakeham is a rural area thus opportunities to maximise sustainable transport mode will vary compared to more urban locations. In this regard the sustainable transport measures put forward should better existing service provision but the choice of modes will be more limited to those in an urban area. This is a key consideration which forms part of the assessment of the application proposals and the approach to maximising sustainable transport options. The proposal has sought to maximise and enhance the existing sustainable transport offer which will be a benefit for existing and future residents in the village. However, it is acknowledged that car trip will still be used and that journeys to the nearby town of Storrington are relatively short as acknowledged in appeal reference APP/Z3825/W/25/3365902 (Furze Common, Thakeham).

- 8.4.3 When considering planning applications, the NPPF provides further transport requirements, Paragraph 115, sets out specific requirements. These are set out below with details of how the Proposal accord provided following each bullet point:
- a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;**
- 8.4.4 The Proposal includes the delivery of a new bespoke Mobility Hub. Subject to further discussions with WSCC, this could include a demand responsive bus, a car club, electric cycle hire and servicing station. There will also be upgrades to the local PRow network enhancing connections to nearby settlements including West Chiltington Common and existing local facilities including primary school, village store, café and village hall.
- 8.4.5 The new mobility hub will assist the entire village by providing a greater choice of transport modes to existing and future residents, and are highly suitable for the rural location.
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;**
- 8.4.6 Vehicular access remains the same as proposed for the Appeal Scheme and is taken from Storrington Road broadly in line with the existing access point. The access was considered safe and suitable by WSCC for the Appeal Scheme. Additional pedestrian and cycle connection points are provided across the site by upgrading existing PRow and upgrading footpaths 2448 and 2405 to Bridleway.
- 8.4.7 Traffic calming measures have been proposed by Motion consultants on behalf of Thakeham Parish Council. The development can provide a fair and reasonable contribution towards these that reflect the scale of the development. These could include;
- An extension of the 30mph speed limit to the north of North Town Farm (for the length of the B2139 north of the former Mushroom Farm, i.e. the development site), maintaining the existing road markings. This would seek to improve pedestrian and road safety.
 - The provision of four Flat Top Road Humps through the village along with the provision of a 20mph speed limit within the village. This would seek to improve road safety while ensuring the DarkSky initiative can be maintained within the village.
- c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code**
- 8.4.8 The development has been designed to accord with the National Design Code and National Model Design Code as well as the Manual for Streets, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Local Transport Note Cycle Infrastructure Design and WSCC Local Design Guide.
- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.;**
- 8.4.9 A Transport Assessment accompanies the application and concludes that development would not have a severe impact on the transport network. Contributions towards improvements to the network can be secured via a S106 agreement.
- 8.4.10 Importantly, NPPF paragraph 116, sets out that development “*should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.*” It is clearly demonstrated within the Transport Assessment that the

proposed development would not lead to a unacceptable impact in terms of safety or the road network.

- 8.4.11 Policy 40 of the HDPF sets out HDC’s commitment to sustainable transport and sets out that development will be supported if it meets 10 specific criteria. Table 8.3 below, sets out how the proposal meets these criteria.

Table 8.3: How the Proposal accords with HDPF Policy 40

Policy 40 Criteria	Comment
1. Is appropriate and in scale to the existing transport infrastructure, including public transport	Thakeham has several services and facilities within the village which can support residents meet their essential needs within walking or cycling distance. Further services and facilities are available a short drive or bus journey from the village. The village is supported by a public bus service (albeit not regular) and an electric mini bus was provided as part of the Abingworth Meadows Development. The Proposal has provided sustainable transport options that will be discussed with WSCC. These include a Mobility Hub comprising demand response unit, car club hire and electric cycle hire. These measures are considered appropriate and deliverable for the rural village location and further detail on the deliverability can be provided following discussions with WSCC.
2. Maintains and improves the existing transport system (road, rail, cycle).	The Transport Assessment submitted with the application sets out that the development proposal will not impact the transport network and includes details of contributions to support improvements to junctions where required.
3. Is integrated with the wider network of routes, including public rights of way and cycle paths.	There is a network of PRoW in the village which the proposal will connect to. Some of these allow for cyclist as well as pedestrians.
4. Includes opportunities for sustainable transport which reduce the need for major infrastructure and cut carbon emissions.	As set out above, the proposal includes the delivery of a mobility hub and sustainable transport measures.
5. Is located in areas where there are, or will be a choice in the modes of transport available.	See answer to criterion 1.
6. Minimises the distance people need to travel and minimises conflicts between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.	The village provides for the essential needs of the residents. Given the rural location of the village it is acknowledged that wider needs will need to be accommodated in Storrington – a short journey away via cycle, car or demand response vehicle.
7. Delivers better local bus and rail services in partnership with operators and increasing opportunities for	The potential provision of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) service, with its flexible scheduling and routing, DRT has the potential to operate as a feeder service timed to connect into the fixed timetables, enabling smooth

Policy 40 Criteria	Comment
interchange between the public transport network and all other modes of transport.	interchanges between different modes of transport, positioning it as a mobility option for first and last mile connections. At Thakeham, this could include services to more frequent bus connections from Storrington centre, or rail services to London, Southampton, Portsmouth and other regional hubs from Pulborough station.
8. Develops innovative and adaptable approaches to public transport in the rural areas of the district.	As set out above, the proposal includes the delivery of a mobility hub and sustainable transport measures which are appropriate for the rural area.
9. Provides safe and suitable access for all vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, horses riders, public transport and the delivery of goods.	The development proposal retains the access previously proposed as part of the Appeal Scheme which was considered safe and suitable by WSCC.
10. Is accompanied by an agreed Green Travel Plan where it is necessary to minimise a potentially significant impact of the development on the wider area or as a result of needing to address an existing local traffic problem.	A Travel Plan is provided with this planning application.

8.4.12 Further details on the transport impacts measures are provided within the Transport Assessment.

8.4.13 Given the above assessment it is considered that the proposal meets the requirements of chapter 9 of the NPPF through maximising opportunities for walking, cycling and alternative sustainable modes of transport as well as meeting the provisions of the HDPF Policy 40. Notably, the sustainable transport solution should be appropriate for the Site rural location.

8.5 Flood Risk and Drainage

8.5.1 NPPF paragraph 170 directs development from the away from areas at the highest risk of flooding. Paragraph 175, set outs that a sequential test should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding. Paragraph 181 requires development to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere, and paragraph 182 requires the incorporation of sustainable drainage schemes (SUDS). Footnote 63 requires the completion of a flood risk assessment for sites within Flood Zone 1 over 1 hectare.

8.5.2 HDPF policy 38 required a Sequential Approach to be taken to ensure development is directed to the lowest risk areas, Proposal are expected to incorporate SUDS and utilise drainage techniques that mimic natural drainage patterns.

8.5.3 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been prepared to support the development proposal. The Site is situated within Flood Zone 1 with very low risk of fluvial or tidal flooding. There is a small area of surface water flooding where pooling of water occurs adjacent to the existing

buildings. The risk from surface water, groundwater, sewers and artificial sources are considered low.

- 8.5.4 Surface water drainage will be restricted to the equivalent of greenfield rates for all return period events up to and including the 1 in 100 year critical event. Primarily the surface water will be attenuated within basins. Additionally at-source SUDS will be provided.
- 8.5.5 Foul flows from the development will discharge into a Southern Water sewer adjacent to the site.
- 8.5.6 As the development include a small risk of surface water flooding, a Sequential Test may be required. However, the updated PPG guidance (published September 2025) states:
- 8.5.7 *“In applying paragraph 175 a proportionate approach should be taken. Where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates clearly that the proposed layout, design, and mitigation measures would ensure that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development (therefore addressing the risks identified e.g. by Environment Agency flood risk mapping), without increasing flood risk elsewhere, then the sequential test need not be applied.”*
- 8.5.8 In this case, the details within the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy clearly demonstrate occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development. As such a Sequential Test is not required.
- 8.5.9 The proposed development is considered appropriate in terms of national and local planning policy on flood risk, in particular with regard to the provisions of paragraphs 170, 181 and 182 of the NPPF, and HDPF Policy 38.

8.6 Ecology

- 8.6.1 Chapter 15 of the NPPF requires proposals contribute to and enhance the natural environment. Paragraph 193 is relevant in the determination of planning applications and explains that proposal that have a primary objective to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported and opportunities to improve biodiversity should be integrated in and around the development.
- 8.6.2 HDPF Policy 31 relates to Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity and sets out the following key points:
- Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure;
 - Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate.
- 8.6.3 The Council will support retention and enhancements nature conservation and development that makes a positive contribution to biodiversity through green infrastructure connections.
- 8.6.4 An Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment has been completed by Aspect ecology. This confirms that no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations are present within or adjacent to the site, and none of the designations within the surrounding area are likely to be adversely affected by the proposals.
- 8.6.5 The Phase 1 habitat survey has established that the site is dominated by habitats not considered to be of ecological importance, whilst the proposals have sought to retain those features identified to be of value.
- 8.6.6 Opportunities to enhance and improve biodiversity and create new habitats throughout the Site have been incorporated as an integral part of the green infrastructure. This includes ensuring connections

across the site and connecting to existing habitats beyond the red line. The Proposal provides a net gain in biodiversity and this will be managed for a period of at least 30 years.

8.7 Trees

- 8.7.1 Paragraph 136 of the NPPF details how trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. The provision of street trees is also mandated.
- 8.7.2 HDPF Policy 31 requires replacement plant where the felling of trees is necessary and Policy 33 explains that development should apply a presumption in favour of retaining existing important natural features including trees and hedges.
- 8.7.3 The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Tree Protection Plan prepared by Keen. The AIA sets out that 74 individual or groups of trees were surveyed. These are largely concentrated along and close to the boundaries, with significant groupings of Category B Trees close to the northern and western boundaries.
- 8.7.4 The proposal will remove an existing row of poplar trees what are prone to failure and the removal of an Ash tree which is suffering from ash dieback to facilities a foul water drain. Specialist measures will be required to install the drain through the root protection area. A short section of hedge will be removed to facilitate access to the site. A replacement hedge will be provided on the new alignment of the access junction. Substantial tree planting will be undertaken as part of the green infrastructure proposals. This includes the provision of tree-lined streets, orchard planting and woodland planting and result in a net gain in trees on the Site.
- 8.7.5 It is clear that, the proposals recognise the important contribution trees make to the character and quality of built environments, and the role they play to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- 8.7.6 The proposal has been designed in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF paragraph 136, HDPF Policies 31 and 33 through the provision of a substantial levels of new hedgerow and trees alongside the protection of existing Arboricultural features.

8.8 Landscape and Visual Impact

- 8.8.1 Paragraph 135 the NPPF requires development proposals to be sympathetic to its wider landscape setting. At a local level, HDPF policy 2 (6) seeks to manage development around the edges of settlements to protect the rural character and landscape. Policy 2(12) seeks to retain and enhance the natural environmental resources including landscapes and landscape character. Policy 4 (5) seeks the maintenance and enhancements to landscape and townscape character features. Policy 25 sets out that proposal should protect, conserve and enhance the landscape and townscape character.
- 8.8.2 The application includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) prepared by Fabrik.
- 8.8.3 The LVIA details that the proposed development is sensitively located within the existing developed extent of the mushroom farm, respecting local landscape character and existing tree cover while maintaining appropriate separation from nearby homes. It retains the west-side PRow and enhances its setting through the creation of a green corridor, protects and strengthens existing vegetation and mature boundary planting, and introduces substantial additional native trees, shrubs and hedgerows to reinforce green corridors and key landscape features. The scheme also allows for eastward views across a green backdrop and replaces the disused and deteriorating built form with new homes set within a well-treed landscape, limiting visual impact and preserving the openness and public accessibility of the northern fields.

- 8.8.4 The proposal will result in predominantly positive landscape and character effects. Visual effects will occur in proximity to the Site where there will be a change in character. The new green space, tree and hedgerow planning will bolster the landscape structure and provide positive effects as the landscape proposals mature.
- 8.8.5 As a result of the careful approach to the development proposed the LVIA concludes that overall the proposed provides an enhancement to the character of Thakeham's (High Bar Lane / Abingworth) northern rural fringe whilst maintaining visual and physical separation with Thakeham to the north. Thus the proposal is considered to accord with Paragraph 135 of the NPPF and Policies 2, 4 and 25 of the HDPF.

8.9 Heritage

- 8.9.1 Chapter 16 of the NPPF at paragraph 207 details applicants should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 8.9.2 Paragraph 208 sets out that the Local Planning Authority 'should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset). They should take this assessment into account when *considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal*'.
- 8.9.3 Paragraph 210 set out the framework for decision making in planning applications relating to heritage assets. This includes the '(a) desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, (b) positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities and (c) desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness'.
- 8.9.4 The application takes account these relevant considerations.

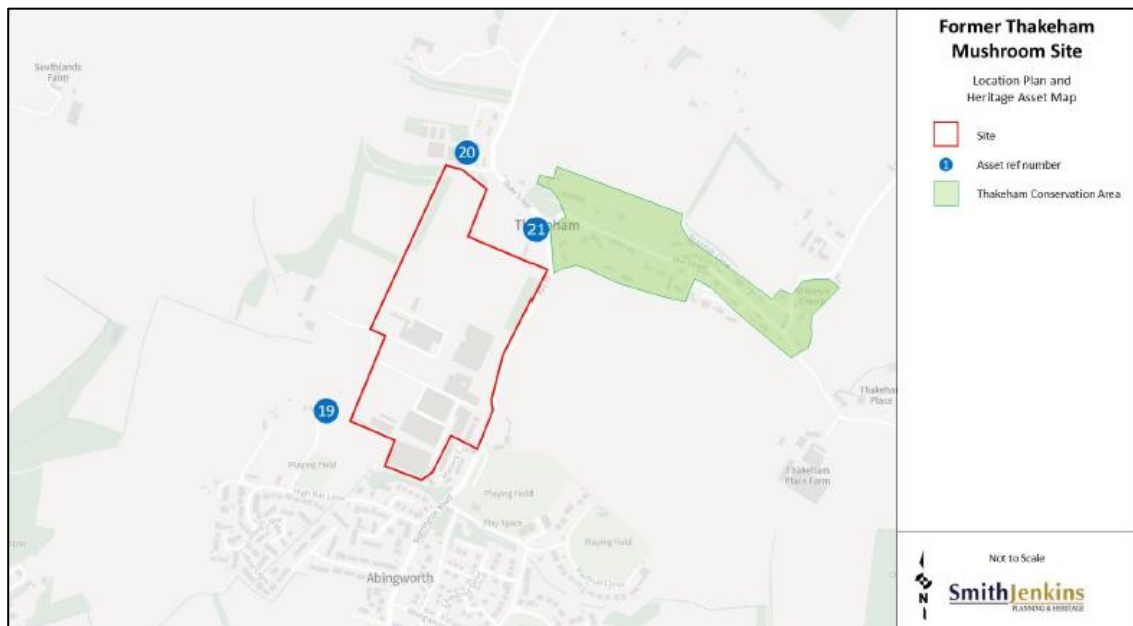
8.9.5 Archaeology

- 8.9.6 RPS Heritage have prepared an archaeological desk-based assessment in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 207 of the NPPF.
- 8.9.7 The Site is considered to hold a moderate to high potential for evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement activity and a low potential for all other periods. Archaeological evidence is likely to be limited to the Arachnological notification area within the northern part of the Site. This is away from the area of proposed built development and will be retained as open ground with a nature trail, and archaeological remains are unlikely to be impacted upon by the development.

8.9.8 Built Heritage

- 8.9.9 A Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Smith Jenkins in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 207 of the NPPF.
- 8.9.10 An assessment of all the buildings on-site establishes that these are modern and in a poor/dilapidated condition and are therefore not of any interest.
- 8.9.11 The Heritage Assessment provides an assessment of the application on the significance of the surrounding identified non heritage assets, including;
- Old House
 - Townhouse Farm
 - Yard to the South West of the Rectory

Figure 8.1: Heritage Asset Map



- 8.9.12 Listed buildings within the Thakeham Conservation Area including the Grade II “Mansion House” and Grade II “Martins” are included in an assessment of the significance of the Conservation Area.
- 8.9.13 The following Grade II listed buildings have been scoped out of the assessment due to the distance and intervening landscape preventing views.
- Southland Farmhouse (NHLE: 1354109)
 - Champion’s Farmhouse (NHLE: 1027204)
 - Green Dene Farmhouse (NHLE: 1027205)
- 8.9.14 Smith Jenkins consider the significance of the Thakeham Conservation Area to derive from its character and appearance which is experienced through the historic and architecturally interesting buildings situated along the enclosed linear central road and the area around the church. Its setting is considered to make a positive contribution to its significance through the surrounding agricultural fields defining it as a historic rural settlement
- 8.9.15 The existing long established built form on the Site means it is an established part of the wider setting of the conservation area.
- 8.9.16 The retention of open space to the north of the site and immediate south of the Conservation Area ensures that a notable buffer between the edge of the Site and the conservation area is provided, retaining the appearance of the open agricultural fields which enclose the village and contribute to its character and appearance. Due to the linear nature of the conservation area, the topography, sunken lanes, and dense surrounding vegetation there is no intervisibility between the Site and the Thakeham Conservation Area.
- 8.9.17 Smith Jenkins assess the proposal as preserving the significance of the non-designated heritage assets whose immediate domestic setting would remain unchanged and it would have no visual appreciation of the new development due to factors including dense boundary screening and retained buffers.

- 8.9.18 Given the above and the detailed assessment within the Built Heritage and Archaeology Assessments, it is considered that the proposal meets the provisions within chapter 16 of the NPPF and HDPF Policy 34, particularly via the incorporation of design measures ensuring the retention of a buffer to the Thakeham conservation area and non-designated assets to the north, while the proposed built form will remain separated visually from Old House to the south-west.

8.10 Air Quality

- 8.10.1 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF requires the identification of opportunities to improve and mitigate the impact of air quality.
- 8.10.2 An Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken by Cass Allen. The nearest Air Quality Management Area (Horsham No.1) is located 2.9km to the south west. Air quality in the vicinity is primarily influenced by vehicle emissions along the adjacent Storrington Road (B2139) and the local road network. Detailed modelling undertaken by Cass Allen establishes that pollutant concentrations at proposed sensitive receptors will be below the relevant Air Quality Objectives during the operational phase, with no requirement for additional mitigation.
- 8.10.3 No significant impacts on local air quality as a result of development-generated traffic are anticipated. Accordingly, Cass Allen conclude that the overall effect of the proposed development is considered 'not significant' regarding air quality.
- 8.10.4 The Site has been assessed and is considered suitable for residential use with no requirement for additional mitigation, in accordance with paragraph 199 of the NPPF and HDPF Policy 24.

8.11 Noise

- 8.11.1 Paragraph 198 of the NPPF requires planning decisions ensure new development is appropriate for its location including through mitigating and reducing to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development.
- 8.11.2 A Noise Assessment has been prepared by Cass Allen. Two noise surveys have been carried out at the Site to understand the existing noise environment. These surveys established that existing noise levels are dictated by road traffic noise from Storrington Road. It is common for residential properties to be situated near to roads and this is an acceptable scenario provided that the properties are acoustically upgraded where necessary to achieve acceptable noise levels in habitable areas.
- 8.11.3 The design of the development is considered to be acceptable subject to the adoption of standard thermal double glazing and ventilation. These mitigation measures can be secured via planning condition.
- 8.11.4 The proposal is in accordance with paragraph 199 of the NPPF, HDPF Policy 24 through the careful consideration of the noise risks and the incorporation of appropriate design mitigation measures.

8.12 Energy and Sustainability

- 8.12.1 Chapter 14 of the NPPF details how the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future, with paragraph 165 requiring a positive strategy for energy from renewable and low carbon sources.
- 8.12.2 The proposed development is in accordance with the provisions of chapter 14 of the NPPF and HDLP Policy 35.

8.13 Minerals

- 8.13.1 The safeguarded mineral resource across the Application Site is 'Building Stone' of the Hythe Formation. The area over which the safeguarded resource is present is approximately 1,775 m² which equates to approximately only 2% of the total area of the Application Site that falls within the MSA. Given a nominal thickness of 18 m, the potential volume of resource is estimated to be 31,950 m³ which is considered to be a small volume of safeguarded resource.
- 8.13.2 The proposed development will not result in the unacceptable sterilisation of mineral resources on the Application Site and is therefore considered consistent with JMPLP Policy M9.

8.14 Contamination

- 8.14.1 The NPPF (paragraph 180) supports and encourages the remediation and mitigation of degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate. Paragraph 189 requires decisions to ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. Paragraph 190 is clear that where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.
- 8.14.2 A phase.1 Geotechnical Investigation Report has been prepared by RSK Geosciences on behalf of the former operator of the Site - Monaghan Mushrooms, Bellway have permission to use the report for the purpose of the application.
- 8.14.3 The survey identified the some land contamination and geotechnical issues and details recommendations to investigate and address the uncertainties.

9. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 9.1 This planning application offers a major opportunity to transform a developed site that has fallen into disrepair and is now presenting growing safety concerns. Through the redevelopment of redundant and unsafe land and buildings, the proposal makes highly effective use of underutilised land. Crucially, it will deliver much-needed new homes in a district facing a significant housing shortage, turning a neglected area into a safe, sustainable and valuable community asset.
- 9.2 Bellway has reconsidered the development proposals in light of officer feedback and the Appeal decision relating to the earlier scheme for 247 homes. Consequently, a number of significant and positive revisions have been incorporated into the current proposal, including (but not limited to):
- A reduction of 97 homes (39%) and the removal of the flexible Use Class E floorspace;
 - Removal of large scale, 3 storey, apartment and local centre buildings;
 - Provision of land to the Community Land Trust to deliver affordable homes or community based uses / assets;
 - A revised design and layout that reflects Thakeham's established open-grain development pattern;
 - The provision of generous, well-distributed open spaces that enhance both the setting and the quality of the scheme;
 - A sustainable transport strategy, that could include a demand-responsive transport service and supporting infrastructure, alongside wider measures that promote accessible and sustainable travel for current and future residents.
- 9.3 Having outlined the substantial refinements made to the proposal, it is appropriate to consider the development within the context of national planning policy. The NPPF establishes a strong

presumption in favour of sustainable development, articulated through three overarching objectives that guide planning decisions across England. The following section sets out how the revised scheme aligns with these objectives and why, in the overall planning balance, the proposal clearly supports the grant of planning permission.

9.4 Economic Objective

- 9.4.1 The NPPF [8.a] highlights the need to make the efficient use of land, finding the ‘right land in the right places.’ The application Site utilises a large tract of redundant developed land within an area of high housing demand and a limited level of supply. Marketing of the Site demonstrated that there is no demand for the Site to be used for employment or agricultural purposes. Employment opportunities will be created through the construction of the homes and the long term maintenance of the development. The application is firmly aligned with the economic objective of sustainable development and will support economic growth in the district through the provision of new homes in a sustainable location on the settlement edge.
- 9.4.2 Economic benefits will also include the CIL and Section 106 contributions required to mitigate the impact of the development on existing infrastructure.
- 9.4.3 In accordance with this, the development supports the economic objective of sustainable development.

9.5 Social Objective

- 9.5.1 The NPPF [8.b] outlines the need to support communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes are available. The provision of 150 dwellings of a mix of tenures, sizes and types will provide much needed affordable and market housing that will meet local needs.
- 9.5.2 The NPPF [8.b] also states that policy and decisions should support a well-designed and safe built environment with accessible services and open spaces that reflect the health, social and cultural needs of the community. The proposed new pedestrian links and substantial provision of new public parkland will encourage walking and cycling by future occupiers. This not only provides environmental benefits, potentially reducing reliance on private cars, but also health and wellbeing benefits from a social sustainability perspective.
- 9.5.3 The provision of dedicated land to the Community Land Trust will ensure that the community can deliver development to meet their needs. This could be in the form of affordable new homes or a new community space.
- 9.5.4 In accordance with this, the development supports the social objective of sustainable development.

9.6 Environmental Objective

- 9.6.1 The NPPF [8.c] emphasises the need to protect and enhance the natural environment, mitigating climate change, contribute to a low carbon economy and make effective use of land.
- 9.6.2 The proposal enables a much more efficient use of land, while open amenity green space, habitat creation, street trees and boundary planting on site offers opportunity for net gain in biodiversity and carbon sequestration.
- 9.6.3 The proposed mobility hub provides a forward thinking positive response to ensuring range of sustainable transport options are easily accessible and available to all residents existing and proposed.

- 9.6.4 The proposed development will utilise modern, sustainable materials, ensuring that the new homes are as efficient as possible with regards to the use of natural resources.
- 9.6.5 The Energy and Sustainability Strategy for the development prepared details how sustainability lies at the heart of the proposed application and has been considered from the outset, including the provision of measures which maximise water and resource efficiency, provision of renewable and low carbon technology as part of the energy strategy, the use of recycled, responsibly sourced and sustainably manufactured building materials, provision of EV charging infrastructure and provision of SUDS focused drainage and flood risk strategy.
- 9.6.6 In accordance with this, the development supports the environmental objective of sustainable development

9.7 Planning Balance Assessment

- 9.7.1 As set out in section 5 of this Planning Statement, as HDC is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites. NPPF Paragraph 11d applies and so the titled balance for the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and the application should be approved unless the adverse impacts of do so significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development.

9.7.2 Harms

- 9.7.3 The Applicant acknowledges that the Site does not form part of the spatial strategy set out within the HDPF and is not allocated for development. Thus, there is a conflict with HDPF Policies 2, 3, 4 and 26. It is also note that Policy 3 of the TNP sets out specific uses for the Site should the production of mushroom use be discontinued and that residential use is not included within this. As such, there is a conflict with this policy also.
- 9.7.4 The weight that can be given to the conflict with the policies set out above is significantly reduced for the following reasons:
- HDC is not able to demonstrate a sufficient supply of housing land, consequently NPPF paragraph 11d is engaged and weight afforded to policy related to housing delivery is reduced;
 - HDC has prepared the SDPAN which seeks to guide development in light of the Council's housing position. The SDPAN expands HDPF Policy 4 to allow sites that are not allocated to come forward where they adjoin the BUAB. The development accords with the requirements of the SDPAN.
 - TNP was made over 5 years ago. Consequently NPPF paragraph 14 is applicable and paragraph 11d can be engaged. Thus polices that relate to housing delivery have reduced weight.
 - A marketing exercise was carried out and no suitable / viable offers were received in relation to the uses contained within TNP Policy 3. As such, the likelihood of these uses being deliver is minimal. Without intervention, the site will continue to fall into disrepair and become increasingly unsafe.
- 9.7.5 Taking the foregoing into account, the development proposal does result in any harms as a result of conflict with the adopted development plan.
- 9.7.6 It is notable that HDC considered the Appeal Scheme conflicted with HDPF policy 40 relating to Sustainable Transport in respect of the scale and quantum of the development relating to a small village. The new proposals, have significantly reduced the quantum of development and provided a

robust sustainable transport proposal that is appropriate for the rural location of the village in line with Paragraph 110 of the Framework.

- 9.7.7 As a result, of the reduced quantum of development and the sustainable transport enhancements the development proposal does not result in any significant harms or material consideration that should prohibit development. In accordance with NPPF paragraph 11(d), planning permission should be granted.

9.8 Planning Benefits

- 9.8.1 The benefits weighing in favour for the development are set out in Table 9.1 below:

Table 9.1: Planning Benefits

Benefit	Weight
<p>Housing Provision The Application makes effective use of land to provide 150 homes in an area of high housing demand, within a Local Planning Authority with a significant shortfall in housing land supply. Bellway has a strong track record for the delivery of housing nationally and can support Horsham’s housing shortfall within the immediate future.</p>	<p>Substantial</p>
<p>Affordable Housing Provision: The scheme will deliver 33 affordable rent homes and 16 shared ownership homes, which will ensure that residents such as key workers and first-time buyers will have the opportunity to get onto the housing ladder. Over the last five years the average number of new build affordable homes that have been delivered in the HDC is around 150 units per year. The scheme will help make a significant contribution to this supply and help families on the Council’s waiting list.</p>	<p>Substantial</p>
<p>Redevelopment of Mushroom Factory: The Application Proposal represents an efficient and sustainable use of a previously developed Site. Its redevelopment will significantly improve the visual quality of the area. The Site in its current condition is derelict, unsafe, and frequently associated with antisocial behaviour and criminal activity. Bringing the Site back into active use will address these longstanding issues, enhance public safety, and positively contribute to the character and appearance of the surrounding environment.</p>	<p>Substantial</p>
<p>Community Land Trust: Land will be set aside and transferred to the Community Land Trust to be used in a manner that delivers long-term benefit to the local community. This could include the provision of affordable housing, a community retail space or other community use.</p>	<p>Significant</p>
<p>New public open space: The Application will create a network of open spaces, providing a range of public open spaces to address an identified deficit locally and support a range of activities and overall improve wellbeing of residents. The proposal will result in an overprovision of 4.64 ha in open space and assist in reducing the identified open space deficit in Thakeham.</p>	<p>Substantial</p>

Benefit	Weight
Sustainable Transport Strategy: Provision will be made for, and contributions secured towards, the delivery of a range of sustainable transport improvements. This could include a Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) bus, alongside the creation of a Mobility Hub in a prominent location close to Storrington Road and the existing bus stop. The Mobility Hub will offer a range of sustainable transport facilities, including electric bike hire, a car-club parking space, delivery lockers and seating. In addition, a financial contribution is proposed towards traffic-calming measures within the village, which will enhance overall permeability and support safer, slower vehicle movements throughout the wider settlement.	Significant
Economic Benefit: Bellway will be making financial contributions to the local community in addition to the new housing, through the Community Infrastructure Levy and a Section 106 Legal Agreement, which will provide funding for local projects and support community infrastructure in Thakeham, Abingworth and the wider area.	Significant
Biodiversity Net Gain: The Application Proposal will achieve Biodiversity Net Gain and uplift in Trees across the Site.	Moderate
Energy Efficient Homes: Provision of Energy Efficient Housing supporting HDCs climate change goals.	Moderate
Contamination: The scheme addresses identified land contamination and geotechnical issues associated with the site in its present form.	Moderate

9.9 Conclusion

- 9.9.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Savills on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (Strategic Land), to accompany a planning application for the erection of 150 homes alongside open space, and landscaping.
- 9.9.2 The proposal incorporates significant amendments to the Appeal Scheme and has been developed to ensure that the Reasons for Refusal and concerns relating to Scale, Sustainability and Flood Risk are effectively addressed.
- **Scale:** The scheme has been substantially reduced from 247 dwellings to 150 dwellings this represents a significant reduction of 97 homes (39%). The homes are all proposed to be 2 storeys in keeping with the wider established character of the village. The proposal has removed all apartment and local centre blocks.
 - **Sustainability:** A range of sustainable transport options has been developed by Arup and were included as part of the public exhibition event. A mobility hub will be provided within an easily accessible location providing a range of sustainable transport options which could include the provision for demand responsive transport and electric bike storage. Land will be handed to the community land trust to enable development of a building to meet local community needs. This could include affordable housing, a community building, retail or commercial space.

- **Flood Risk:** The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy sets out how the proposal will remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development. As such a Sequential Test is not required.
- 9.9.3 The proposal will bring a significant range of benefits and improvements to Thakeham as detailed within Table 9.1 and including but not limited to the following
- Provision of new public open space;
 - Removal of existing derelict buildings;
 - Provision of dedicated flexible plot of land to the Community Land Trust
- 9.9.4 Extensive technical documents and reports have been prepared and these demonstrate the development of the site is generally compliant with the technical policies within the NPPF, HDPF and Thakeham NP.
- 9.9.5 The drawing package and supporting Design and Access Statement demonstrate that the development proposal will result in a high-quality residential-led development, which provides multiple social, environmental and economic benefits for the area.
- 9.9.6 HDC has published the SDPAN published in light of the district's limited housing land supply and recognises that the council are likely to receive applications on unallocated sites outside of defined settlement boundary. The SDPAN is a material consideration within the decision making process and outlines the key criteria to determine these applications, based upon the principles detailed within policy 4 of the HDPF. We have established that the proposal complies with this criteria.
- 9.9.7 The tilted balance of NPPF set out within paragraph 11 is engaged. The clear benefits of the scheme are detailed in paragraph above and demonstrate the large package of benefits that the proposal will deliver for HDC and the local community.
- 9.9.8 If approved, the development will commence as soon as practically possible (in accordance with any planning conditions) and will help meet the housing needs of the area and provide key community benefits in the immediate future. The proposal generally accords with the policies within the NPPF, HDPF and the Thakeham NP. There are no harms that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits associated with the development and there is not strong reason for refusal when considering the application against the areas within the NPPF (footnote 7). Thus, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11, the application should be approved.

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