



PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee South

BY: Head of Development and Building Control

DATE: 4th November 2025

DEVELOPMENT: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 152 dwellings, all-weather sport pitch, sports pavilion and allotments; with associated access, landscaping, open space and infrastructure.

SITE: Land Parcel at 512270 115959, Park Lane, Ashington, West Sussex

WARD: West Chiltington, Thakeham and Ashington

APPLICATION: DC/23/0406

APPLICANT: **Name:** Bellway Homes (South London) Ltd. **Address:** C/O 244-246 High Street Guildford GU1 3JF

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: More than eight persons in different households have made written representations within the consultation period raising material planning considerations that are inconsistent with the recommendation of the Head of Development and Building Control.

RECOMMENDATION: To approve outline planning permission subject to appropriate conditions and subject to the completion of the necessary section 106 agreement within four months of the decision of this Committee, or such longer period as is agreed by the Director of Place acting reasonably and properly, with authority delegated to the Head of Development and Building Control to remove and/or replace any the conditions which become unnecessary as a result of the potential incoming position change on Water Neutrality.

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

1.2 This application is made in full and seeks a comprehensive development of land to the west of Ashington, including the demolition of two barns and the formation of vehicular access off Church Lane. The application has been amended since being first submitted, seeking to address a number of areas which had been subject to comments from officers and consultees. These amendments have included a reduction in the number of dwellings from 180 as originally submitted to 152 now, and have included revisions to the sports facilities and open space offer. The latest revision was received in June 2025.

Housing and Design:

- 1.3 The proposal seeks to deliver 152 dwellings, comprising detached, semi-detached, and terraced houses, and an apartment block. The housing mix would deliver 99 dwellings as open market (65%), and 10 dwellings as shared ownership and 37 as affordable rented (35% affordable). The following table sets out the housing split across the site:

Tenure:	Open Market	Shared Ownership	Affordable Rent
House type:			
1-bed apartment	0	0	11
2-bed apartment	0	0	9
2-bed house	22	7	6
3-bed house	41	8	9
4-bed house	36	1	2
Total:	99	16	37

- 1.4 Within the housing mix, 2 x ground-floor apartments would be adapted for wheelchair users to M4(3) standards of the Building Regulations. All other dwellings would comply with M2(2) adaptable and accessible standards.
- 1.5 A limited palette of materials are proposed including the use of slate roof-tiles, flint, tones of red brick and black weather-boarding. Architectural detailing would extend to brick quoin details around the windows to the flint-fronted dwellings, chimneys, dormers, porch roof canopies, dentil courses and fish-scale hanging tiles.

Layout:

- 1.6 The proposed development would focus the residential development within the central two fields, retaining the existing field divisions. The southern-most parcel south of the existing access lane would be retained as public open space. The western-most field parcel would provide the location for the allotments, sports pavilion, a full-size all-weather sports pitch (64m x 100m), and associated parking. Two playgrounds would form part of the development; a LAP (Local Area of Play) in the eastern area, around 100sq.m, and a larger LEAP (Local Equipped Area of Play @ 663sq.m) adjacent to the sports pavilion. The surface water attenuation pond would be located along the northern side of the development adjacent to retained buffer planting which lies outside of the development site boundary.
- 1.7 The development layout has been designed to avoid residential garden boundaries abutting the edges of the site, to create a landscaped edge.
- 1.8 Bins and cycle storage areas are to be provided within the rear gardens or garages where present, except in the case of the flatted units, where bin and cycle stores are to be provided on the ground floor of the block.

Access:

- 1.9 The proposal would be accessed via an existing farm track which is to be widened to form a two-lane road along the southern side of St Peter and St Pauls Church, with the junction onto Church Lane provided with new enhanced visibility splays. Two existing agricultural steel barns would be demolished to make way for the new estate road, but the existing pond in the southern part of the site access would be retained. A new pedestrian pavement would be provided into the site from Church Lane, with a speed table at the crossing point of the PRoW_2611.
- 1.10 The proposed layout is predominantly linear with the main internal site road running from the SE where the site joins Church Lane to the NW edge of the site and the community facilities.

There is the potential to create future connectivity in some form through to the spur of land to the north of the current site, which is included within the neighbourhood plan allocation, but this is not within the purview of the current application. All vehicular traffic would access and exit the development and facilities alongside St Peter and St Pauls Church.

- 1.11 Secondary 'state roads forming cul-de-sacs would lead off the main roadway through the site. Pedestrian connectivity would be provided by way link through from the NE part of the site to PRow_2607. It is also proposed to provide an access from the site to the Ashington Primary School, indicatively shown at the southern side of the school's boundary. Furthermore, an area of land has been excluded from the development site's boundary along the eastern side which abuts the Primary School site, which would enable that parcel to come forward separately for a potential future school expansion, if needed. A walking route from the school to an area of land used as a forest school within the western part of the application site (Furzefield Copse) would be provided, reached by way of pavements and paths within the site.
- 1.12 Parking capacity within the site would provide at least 2 x off-street spaces per dwelling, plus garaging for most units. The 22 flats would be provided with a parking court accommodating some 22 spaces, and a further 42 visitor / unallocated spaces would be dotted around the site. The pavilion would be served by 47 spaces, and a further 11 spaces are shown north of the allotments.

Community Infrastructure:

- 1.13 The proposal includes a sports pavilion which has been designed to accommodate 4 x changing rooms and showers, WC's, 2 x officials changing room and shower, an equipment store, club / committee room with kitchen and store, parish office, club store room, mechanical plant room, office, WCs, and lobbied entrances. The pavilion building is designed with a view of creating a flexible community space that could offer ad hoc meeting rooms for hire.
- 1.14 In addition to the all-weather sports pitch, which is to be full-sized, a separate pavilion storage building (11.8m x 5.4m) would be provided to the north of the pitch.
- 1.15 The application site includes the land identified as the school's forest school (Furzefield Copse), which is to be retained for its current use, and is not subject to any of the development proposals.

Amendments since the application was submitted.

- 1.16 Since the application was first submitted, the following amendments have been secured:
- Reduction in housing numbers from 180 to 152
 - Removal of the grass pitch from the southern parcel
 - Increased size of the all-weather / 3G pitch to full-size
 - Increased size of sports pavilion and additional parking
 - Relocation of the attenuation pond, LEAP and pavilion store

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.17 The overall application site comprises an area of land some 14.95ha in size, located on the western side of Ashington. The site currently comprises 2 agricultural fields, 3 woodland parcels, a scrubland belt, 3 barns, a pond and an access corridor where the land can be accessed via a single-width farm track that runs alongside St Peter and St Pauls Church, off Church Lane.

- 1.18 The development site adjoins The Ashington Primary School, and a block of land that is set aside for potential future school expansion, as well as including a woodland parcel which is used by the school as a 'forest school'.
- 1.19 There are currently no identified ancient / veteran trees on the site, and the woodland blocks within the site are not covered by any TPO designations. There are no Ancient Woodland designations within or directly adjacent to the site, although it is noted that the Spring Copse ancient woodland lies some 100m off the southernmost site boundary.
- 1.20 The land south of the current access track, including the pond and barns, is defined as an 'Archaeological Notification Area (ANA)'. Within this ANA there is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Roman Villa) directly off the south-western corner of the application site, although the site boundary is clear of this designated asset. St Peter and St Pauls Church is a Grade II* listed building, whilst Church House Farm, which lies south of the access track, is a Grade II listed building.
- 1.21 There is a local network of PRow that run close to and partially through the development site:
- Footpath_2607 runs close to the site's NE boundary
 - Footpath_2611 runs partway along the access track south of St Peter and St Pauls Church and then continues onwards to the south
 - Footpath_2060 runs north-south through the recreation ground
 - Footpath_2486 terminates some 300m west of the site
 - Bridleway_2612 is some 288m south of the site's boundary
- 1.22 The latest EA flood risk mapping (March 2025) details that the main part of the site falls within Flood Zone 1, however the site access west of St Peters Church is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The Flood Risk mapping also shows that this same area is subject to a medium and high risk surface water flow path which extends along the site's eastern and northern perimeter, and partially into the site from its northern boundary. The same EA flood risk mapping indicates this extent of flood risk to marginally increase in the 2040-2060 period factoring in climate change
- 1.23 In terms of land classifications, although the site currently represents an agricultural field used for crops, the Natural England Land Classification considers the land to the west of Ashington to fall into the 'poor' quality zone (Grade 4).
- 1.24 Following adoption of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan, the majority of the site now lies within the BUAB of Ashington, which is defined under HDPF policy 3 as a 'Medium Village' with moderate level of services and facilities but which relies on larger settlements to provide for a number of requirements. It is noted that the NW parcels of land within the application site continues to lie in the rural area.
- 1.25 Policy ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) covers the application site, which allocates the site for approximately 150 dwellings and community facilities. **The full wording of Policy ASH11, including the accompanying Principles Map, is attached at Appendix A.** Appendix A also cross-references where discussion of each of its 28 requirements can be found in the report below.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The following Policies are considered to be relevant to the assessment of this application:

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015)

Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking
Policy 42 - Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities
Policy 43 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (June 2021)

Policy ASH1: Overall Spatial Strategy for Ashington
Policy ASH2: Increasing Walking in Ashington
Policy ASH3: Parking Provision
Policy ASH5: Landscaping and Countryside Access
Policy ASH8: Ashington Community Cluster
Policy ASH11: Land West of Ashington School

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19)

Policy 1: Sustainable Development
Policy 2: Development Hierarchy
Policy 3: Settlement Expansion
Policy 6: Climate Change
Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction
Policy 9: Water Neutrality
Policy 10: Flooding
Policy 11: Environmental Protection
Policy 12: Air Quality
Policy 13: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 14: Countryside Protection
Policy 15: Settlement Coalescence
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision
Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 27: Inclusive Communities, Health and Wellbeing
Policy 28: Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation

Policy 29: New Employment
Policy 37: Housing Provision
Policy 38: Meeting Local Housing Needs
Policy 39: Affordable Housing
Policy 40: Improving Housing Standards in the District

West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018) (Partial Review March 2021)

Policy M9 - Safeguarding Minerals

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (2017)
WSCC Parking Guidance (2003 as amended Sep 2020)
Open Space, Sport & Recreation Review (June 2021)

Planning Advice Notes:

Shaping Development in Horsham (Sept 2025)
Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (Oct 2022)

3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Where consultation responses have been **summarised**, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

3.2 **HDC Landscape Architect: No Objection**
[summary dated 11th August 2023] The proposals are acceptable in principle given the policy context of the site. The following is recommended:

- Emphasis should be given to provide a strong buffer surrounding the parcels located within AS1 LLCA to reduce the potential visual impact from Footpath 2611 and from the wider landscape of the South Downs National Park (SDNP). As per the LCA 'Planning and Landscape Management Guidelines', we advise that additional tree planting and wider hedgerow planting is proposed along the western boundary of the sport pitch and residential area to further mitigate the visual impacts of the proposal.
- The submitted Tree Protection Plan (TPP) provides details of the proposed protection measures for each of the retained trees in context of the proposals. Whilst we support the retention of the landscape framework and boundaries within and surrounding the Site, we would however request that the submitted plan is amended to include the root protection areas (RPA) to limit development within these areas. For example, a road is proposed in close proximity to the visually significant T19 English Oak, although the submitted plan does not demonstrate whether this road crosses into the RPA. We would also advise that no-dig solutions are proposed in any other scenarios where paths or roads are proposed within the RPAs.
- A Retention Basin is proposed towards the west of the Site, which occupies most of the available open space within this area, in combination with the sports pitch. We therefore recommend that other SuDS features, such as swales, are incorporated into the Site to act as additional flood mitigation, in accordance with the flood mitigation measures within Policy ASH11.
- Street trees have been well incorporated throughout the Site and as feature elements within the gateway entrance. We do however recommend that there are additional opportunities to enhance the existing hedgerows and site perimeters in accordance with the recommendations within the LCA and these should be incorporated as part of the proposal.

- We would expect that areas of parking are broken up with appropriate landscape features (i.e., tree, shrub, hedgerow, herbaceous planting) to help soften the space and improve the quality of the public realm.
- A predominance of one species or variety should be avoided in order to minimise the risk of widespread biotic threats to the urban forest and to increase species diversity. Preference should be given to native trees and shrubs, though the use of naturalised trees and shrubs and native cultivars, that are appropriate to the site conditions and would add landscape and arboricultural value could be used where appropriate and justified.
- Every effort should be made to minimise the urbanising influences (i.e., kerbing, widening, domestic paraphernalia) to ensure that the proposal is sympathetic to the rural surroundings. The proposed surfacing should also be considered carefully and opportunities for block paving across the development would help to create a characterful approach from the public highway
- We would expect all residential plots to have appropriate private outdoor space and therefore should be accounted for when designing the layout and plot arrangement:
 - Apartments should have private communal garden spaces or private amenity spaces such as terrace/balconies; and
 - Private outdoor space should be as far as possible usable rectangular garden shapes.
- The aesthetic appeal of the SuDS features play an important role in ensuring they integrate within the green open spaces and provides multifunctionality. The ground contouring, planting and inlet and outlet design should be carefully considered to maximise the amenity value. A standard approach of precast concrete and galvanised handrail for inlets/outlets should be avoided. To improve biodiversity, the attenuation areas should be combined with a range of vegetation types such as wildflowers and other nectar rich plants, trees and shrubs, grasses of various heights, drought tolerant species as well as marginal aquatics and wet grassland.

3.3 **HDC Environmental Health:** Comment

[summary dated 7th July 2024] No Further Comments to make on the re-consultation

[summary dated 25th October 2024]

Noise - Noise Assessment received and reviewed. Objection on the grounds of insufficient detail in relation to noise associated with the sport facility: noise, lighting and hours of use.

[summary dated 7th August 2023]

Air Quality – Following additional details being received, the air quality mitigation measures can be secured by way of a condition.

[summary dated 13th June 2023]

MUGA – Not clear if the MUGA and sports pitch will be all-weather. Potential impact from proposed facilities currently insufficiently detailed and should include an assessment on the impact on residential amenity, taking account of likely extended use into the evening.

Contaminated Land – Phase 1 and 2 preliminary assessment undertaken, further assessment of ground gassing required, but can be requested by condition.

Water Harvesting / Grey Water Recycling – the LPA will require more details on the proposed GWH system to understand the risks associated with treatment, maintenance, to ensure water sourced from the system does not present a risk to human health.

Air Quality - unable to find the results for Ashington C of E First School assessment. The school is also missing as an existing receptor in the submitted details. The school should be included in the model due to its proximity to the development and to its sensitivity to emissions, otherwise please add a paragraph in the report explaining why the school was not included in the assessment. Monitoring suggested and damage cost mitigation measures to be included.

CEMP condition to be added.

3.4 **HDC Housing:** Support

[3rd comments, dated 1st April 2025] The revised AH tenure and mix would enable an RP to deliver the site, as some sites are struggling to attract RPs. The proposed change to 1 and 2-bed units would have little effect on the housing register as these currently have the shortest waiting lists.

[2nd comments, dated 14th March 2025]

Ashington currently has 146 households waiting for housing of which is broken down to 35 households (24%) in need of a 1-bedroom unit, 31 households (21%) in need of a 2-bedroom unit, 57 households (40%) in need of a 3-bedroom unit and 23 households (15%) in need of 4 or more bedrooms. Households with a 3- or 4-bedroom need are currently the longest waiting on our housing register waiting on average 3 times longer than households with a 1- or 2-bedroom need. Housing Officers would need the affordable housing delivery to be in line with local demand before we would be able to support this site.

3.5 **HDC Arboriculture:** Objection

[4th response, dated 26th March 2025] The revised Tree related information clarifies that the proposed layout is not landscape led and fails to conform with the ethos of ensuring greenfield development is undertaken in accordance with modern design standards for conserving trees and other natural landscape features of merit.

The loss of mature oak trees that could reasonably be retained by design alterations does not seem an appropriate approach to reasonable greenfield development planning.

Many of the key remaining mature trees have engineering proposed within their minimum recommended root protection areas where it is recognised within the relevant design standard (BS5837: 2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations) that the tree and soil structure should take priority. There is no overriding justification for this design failure.

The design simply does not appropriately take account of the minimum rooting constraints posed by the mature trees of landscape value.

The somewhat confusing technical note in respect of the access road engineering actually clarifies that it requires significant excavation within the minimum recommended root protection area of the dominant off-site oak tree in the churchyard. It does not therefore comply with the relevant design standard. It is not a permeable no-dig road, nor does it meet the recognised design specifications for above ground engineering in this respect.

3.6 **HDC Archaeology:** Advice

[4th response, dated 2nd July 2024] The amendments do not alter the previous archaeological advice given by Essex Place Services dated 11 September 2023 that a programme of archaeological investigations secured by a planning condition are required. Conditions advised

[3rd response, dated 11th September 2023]

The revised scheme omits the proposed sports pitch to the southern portion of the site, leaving this area as open space which is acceptable. The archaeological potential for the remainder of the site is as yet largely unknown, although is considered unlikely that archaeological remains associated with the Roman Villa, and considered to be of equivalent significance extend into this area. However, the proposed development will have a severe below-ground impact on any archaeology that might be present and it is evident that the site has high potential for archaeological remains dating from the Roman and medieval periods. Conditions advised.

3.7 **HDC Heritage:** No Objections

[4th response, dated 25th January 2024] Potential harm (debris build up alongside listed Church wall) over time would be outweighed by the benefits of delivering the scheme.

[3rd response, dated 28th September 2023] Raising ground levels to form a no-dig roadway and raised pavement would lead to a physical impact on the church wall, which is part of the listed building, creating a potential safety issue as people might stumble on the wall and fall into the churchyard. This will need to be re-assessed and an alternative solution found

[2nd response, dated 6th September 2023] The additional information provided by the applicant's consultant is sufficient to reduce the concerns regarding the concern regarding the harmful impact on the setting of the designated assets. The level of harm to the setting of St Peter and Pail is at the lower end of the scale of less than substantial. And to the setting of Church Farm House at the lowermost end of the scale of less than substantial. Any harm to the designated heritage assets should be weighed against the public benefits generated by the proposals with regard to para 202 f the NPPF (2023). With regard to the impact to Ashington village, this was in terms of design rather than heritage. The applicant should be explicit in describing how they are meeting the principles of the ten characteristics as described in the National Design Guide.

3.8 **HDC Green Spaces and Sustainability:** More Information

[Summary dated 27th March 2025] Unfortunate that sports pitches and pavilion are located to the west and not the east where they could be connected with the existing village sports provision / hub – a request to provide a land budget analysis which demonstrates the quantity and type of open space required against that which is being provided.

Local football leagues should be consulted to ensure the facilities are relevant to local needs and complements existing facilities – currently equivalent to two youth pitches (U15/ U16).

Drainage construction and design important to the sports pitches as the sub-soil is clay – significant demand in the District for all-weather pitches due to prolonged periods of rain and heavy clay soils causing many cancelled games

Play areas should be at least 400sqm and at least 20m from nearest dwelling boundary. Plans should demonstrate compliance with HDC Open Space Sport and Recreation Review – provisions should differ from existing provision in the area. Other points to note:

- Provision for dog waste collection
- No Youth provision made within development – contributions suggested towards nearby youth areas in Community Centre (within 1000m of development)
- Cycle racks should be provided at the pavilion
- Pitches should have vehicular access for maintenance yet ensure no unauthorised access
- 3m overrun should be provided to each pitch – 6m total between two pitches
- Detailed plans of the allotments to demonstrate compliance with HDC Open Space Sport and Recreation Review
- Pathways shown on plan as 'mown' should be limestone / similar to ensure year-round use
- Good amount of parking available around pavilion

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

3.9 **WSCC Highways:** No Objection

[7th response, dated 14th July 2025] No changes to the advice offered in April 2025

[6th response, dated 2nd April 2025] Latest Transport Statement Addendum (TSA) dated 6th March 2025, has been reviewed, reduced proposal to 152 dwellings. Conditions advised:

- **Access-** Some changes are proposed to the site access arrangements by moving it as far south as possible to avoid an existing oak tree. However, these alterations do not impact the proposed vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access arrangements

previously agreed with the LHA. In addition, the TSA includes revised swept path diagrams that demonstrate the access road is still workable for a large refuse collection vehicle and fire tender, this includes the emergency access from Church Close.

- **Capacity-** The reduction in the number of dwellings is unlikely to result in any adverse highway impact taking into account our comments for the 180-house scheme.
- **Parking-** The parking revisions have been revised to take into account the change in unit numbers. The TSA confirms that the parking provision on-site will be 347 spaces in accordance with the LHA's parameters. An additional 27 visitor parking spaces have been provided. Cycle parking will be provided in accordance with LHA parameters.
- Additional 30 car parking spaces have been provided for the two sports pitches and pavilion (to suit PC) . The allotments will be provided with 18 car parking spaces as per the previous submission.

[5th response, dated 26th March 2025] Updated Transport Statement Addendum awaited. Unlikely that reduction in dwelling numbers would result in adverse highway impact but LHA would seek to review any changes to the access road

[4th response, dated 26th July 2024] Further response provided to the 3 points of clarification:

- 1) Swept path diagram showing a car and refuse tender negotiating Church Lane-T - *The LHA has assessed drawing 2109010-TK08 which demonstrates a refuse tender entering and exiting the site. Given the likely frequency of refuse visits (1/2 tenders per week on average) The LHA would be satisfied that this solution is workable.*
- 2) The Design Team confirmed that the tactile paving crossing Church Close will be re-purposed as a result of the application - *This has been provided on drawing 2109010-06 and can be completed as part of the Section 278 Works.*
- 3) Tactile paving to be provided at the new access point connecting to the existing footway network-*This has been provided on drawing 2109010-06 and can be completed as part of the Section 278 Works*

[3rd response, dated 11th July 2024] Since the previous consultation responses were offered by the LHA, and a 'No Objections' response was offered, the layout has been revised to locate both sports pitches in the north-western extent of the site along with sports pavilion and associated parking. A revised turning head at the north-western extent has been included and revised swept path diagrams, which are accepted. In addition to the above the LHA have had some dialogue with the Design Team since the previous two consultations in 2023, seeking three other areas of information/clarity these were:

- Swept path diagram showing a car and refuse tender negotiating Church Lane
- The Design Team confirmed that the tactile paving crossing Church Close will be re-purposed as a result of the application.
- Tactile paving to be provided at the new access point connecting to the existing footway network.

[2nd response, dated 5th September 2023] Clarification from the Safety Auditor on the three points previously identified, has been received, and addressed within the Designers Response. All other comments are documented the response dated 27th April 2023 stand, and no other issues have been raised. Conditions advised.

[1st response, dated 27th April 2023] The proposals are supported by way of a Transport Assessment (TA), including a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA), Capacity Testing and a Travel Plan (TP). Pre-application advice has been provided by the LHA in July 2021 and May 2022, and the site is allocated in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan. Visibility splays, swept paths, access for emergency vehicles and pedestrian access have all been demonstrated. Car parking and bin carry distances are in line with the WSCC Residential Car Parking Demand Calculator, and the MfS, The site is accessible by pedestrian and cycle links, and is close to a bus stop and an hourly bus service (No.23) connecting to other villages and a train station. The modelling assessment undertaken on the nearby junctions to the

proposed development demonstrate no severe impact will result to the surrounding highway network.

Three matters have been raised within the RSA:

- Problem 2.1 agreed by the Design Team with no further action required
- Problem 2.4 - request for passing places required along the access route but potentially overcome by swept path analysis
- Problem 2.5 – request that provision made for cyclists to join existing footway network outside of the site, but the slow speeds along Church Land and existing arrangements considered to suffice and overcome this problem.

3.10 WSCC Rights of Way: No Objections

[2nd response, dated 13th Sept 2023] Further to correspondence on the PRoW_2611, there is no need to apply for an application to divert the PRoW at this time. However, the previous requests s106 improvements remain

- an agreement to be obtained from the landowner to allow an upgrade of Footpath 2611 that confers permissive cycle use, and
- a contribution towards the cost of the physical works to enable such cycle use.

3.11 WSCC Local Lead Flood Authority: No Objections

[5th response, dated 7th Oct 2025] Conditions advised

3.12 Environment Agency: No Objections

[response dated 20th Oct 2025]

3.13 WSCC Education: Advice

[2nd response, dated 2nd April 2025] Present Primary schools within the catchment would not have spare capacity to accommodate children generated by the assumed potential residential development, which would lead to financial contributions being requested. 0.1 Ha / 1,000 sqm of land required to mitigate the proposed development in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan with a further 0.44 Ha / 4,400 sqm of land safeguarded to ensure optimum education provision and to secure the future of the school

3.14 WSCC Minerals & Waste: No Objection

[Summary dated 13th February 2025]

The submitted Mineral Resource Assessment (MRA) provides a comprehensive breakdown of the potential viability of the prior extraction of the underlying mineral resource at the site. The MWPA is broadly satisfied with the conclusions of the MRA and it is accepted that Weald Brick clay is abundant within the wider area. Given the limited extractable size/depth of the site for clay extraction, when accounting for environmental factors, the sites locality on the edge of the built-up-area, and acknowledging that some part of the site may constitute previously developed land, the safeguarding of the brick clay resource in this particular instance is considered a low priority.

3.15 Ecology Consultant: No Objection

[4th response, dated 13.05.2025] The further ecological Technical Note 01 (Aspect Ecology, March 2025) and revised Landscape Masterplan Rev P03 (Allen Pyke, March 2025) relating to the likely impacts of the revised development on European Protected Species (bats and Dormouse) and identification of appropriate mitigation measures have been reviewed. Conditions advised.

[3rd response, dated 6th August 2024 in relation to Great Crested Newts only] PEA confirms that detailed presence/likely absence surveys were undertaken. Details are satisfactory and a GCN licence is not necessary. Precautionary mitigation measures should be secured by a condition of any consent to cover the construction period to avoid impacts on protected and Priority species e.g. Hedgehog, Common Toad / mobile species.

3.16 **WSSC Fire and Rescue:** Comment
Fire hydrant condition advised

3.17 **Sport England:** No Objections

[4th response, dated 12th August 2025] Sport England have consulted with Sussex Football Association / The Football Foundation: Conditions advised to ensure pitch accords with 'FA Guide to Football', and management plan, and to encourage engagement with Sussex FA. Size of pavilion is considered excessive to support a single 3G pitch with only 2 team changing rooms presenting a more sustainable model for this facility. Guidance on layout is provided at www.footballfoundations.org.uk. Design of kitchen with external serving hatch is welcome and can be a positive feature to improve user experience (and support income generation to help sustain the site)

[3rd response, dated 27th June 2024] Revisions follow previous Sport England Advice to bring both pitches together adjacent to the pavilion. Although the land for the pitches is constrained, it will allow pitches to be laid out in a number of different configurations depending on need at the time. Conditions advised.

[2nd response, dated 6th September 2023] Previous comments have been taken into account with the revised pavilion working better for sport and the local community. The creation of the playing field next to the pavilion can be laid out in a number of different combinations as required by local teams. By providing new pitch(es) and pavilion that could help address established playing pitch deficiencies, the proposal would meet objective 3, and therefore Sport England supports this application in principle. Conditions advised to ensure playing fields are constructed correctly.

[1st response, dated 19th July 2023] The development will generate demand for sporting provision. The existing provision within an area may not be able to accommodate this increased demand without exacerbating existing and/or predicted future deficiencies. It is not acceptable to separate the pitches out from the pavilion which provides changing and toilet provision. This can lead to safeguarding issues.

3.18 **Southern Water:** No Objection

[4th response, dated 17th December 2024] Adequate capacity available

3.19 **Natural England (Water Neutrality):** More Details required to determine the significance of impacts on designated sites.

3.20 **Historic England:** No Objection

[2nd response, dated 18th September 2023] Following earlier advice provided on 23rd May 2023, amendments have been received to omit the sports pitch in heritage-sensitive south-eastern section of the site, which is now proposed for public open space. The new approach is welcomed as it ensures the protection of below-ground archaeology and safeguard of the Schedules Monument's setting while also sustaining the appreciation of the wider unitary archaeological site.

No 3D views provided. Notwithstanding this, we it is considered that overall, the harm to significance caused by the proposals through change of the listed buildings' rural setting would fall within the less-than-substantial spectrum, although the exact level within that range would be difficult to establish at this stage. Historic England are happy to leave further considerations on this point with the LPA, when additional information is provided, and for the Council to weigh any public benefits generated by the proposals against harm in accordance with para 202 of the NPPF (2023). Less than substantial harm to significance is considered to be caused to the proposal.

3.21 **Sussex Police: Joint Commercial Planning Manager Sussex and Surrey Police**

[Summary 6th February 2025] – Objection

This development will place permanent, on-going demands on Sussex Police which cannot be fully shouldered by direct taxation – site currently has negligible impact on policing. The Police require investment into Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) infrastructure in this location, calculated capital 'cost' of policing new growth as a result of this major planning application equates to £23,000. In the absence of developer contributions towards the provision of essential policing infrastructure, Sussex Police would raise **objection**, as the additional strain placed on our resources would have a negative impact on policing of both the development and force-wide policing implications within the district.

3.22 **Sussex Police: Local Policing Service Improvement & Engagement Department**

[Summary 17th March 2025] – Comment

Reference is made to a number of documents including Secured by Design Residential Guide for 2025, and the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, SBD Construction Site Security Guide 2021, lighting recommendations within BS5489-1:2020, Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. The developer is also advised to make contact with the local Neighbourhood Police Team (NPT) to establish good relations whilst the development is in the construction phase. The developer should also inform the Responsible Person(s), Fire and Rescue Service and Building Control of any bicycle storage facilities and/or other areas that may require the charging and storage of Lithium-ion powered vehicles or devices, within buildings or the wider site footprint, to ensure that the necessary fire suppression measures for the charging and storage of lithium-ion powered vehicles have been considered and specified.

3.23 **NHS Sussex: Objection**

[Summary 27th March 2023] Current Estate is at capacity with overall infrastructure levels below recommendations and pressures on all services. Predictions that new residents would register at Storrington (with 2+ GP practices serving catchment area). A contributions of £273,158 is sought towards funding, likely towards supporting the Storrington GP site. Without associated infrastructure, NHS Sussex would be unable to sustain sufficient and safe services provided in the area, leading to an **objection**.

3.24 **Ashington Parish Council: Objection**

[Summary 15th July 2025] The amendments still do not address a principal concern of the parish council, highlighted to the developers from the very first discussions, as set out in our 12th July 2024 response and as raised again, with supporting diagrams and photographs, in our 4th April 2025 consultee response. This issue is the most important concern raised in the majority of the 100s of resident responses to the application to date. We are disappointed that WSCC Highways do not acknowledge the wider impact of this development on the community unlike other statutory consultees such as Sussex Police. A significant community concern remains regarding the proposed site access. Bellway Homes gave verbal undertakings at a public meeting to review these and conduct further swept path analyses of the road junction to alleviate concerns, but these have not been provided. It also remains unclear how the impact on Church Lane and the surrounding areas will be mitigated. The parish council noted in May 2022 that with the inclusion of a small piece of parish council land, it would be possible to create a safer site access route and welcomed further discussions regarding this – no discussion has ever been requested by the developers, regarding this land.

Revised Transport Assessment does not address inaccuracies and concerns previously highlighted by the Parish Council: swept path analysis appears to indicate a refuse vehicle unable to turn in the vicinity of the pumping station without mounting kerbs and turning area likely to become overspill parking without further mitigations.

Site Layout Amendments - welcome the amendments proposed such as the full sized MUGA with a north-south orientation and increased distance between residential development; the relocated and larger external store for pitch equipment and improved external social area.

The increased size of the Sports Pavilion is an improvement, and many suggestions have been incorporated in the revised design. However, We would note however review still required in terms of layout and appropriateness of size such as the Club/Committee room. The “upgrade” from mown grass paths to hard standing near the sport amenities and playground are welcomed and would expect this on all paths leaving the development, as previously discussed.

Parking Provision - Amendments noted, and the increase in parking spaces at the Sports Pavilion from 30 to 40 is welcomed. However, concerns remain over parking given the current lived experience of parking issues associated with the existing pitch provision in the village and again highlight the circa 80 spaces near the existing facilities, that are frequently at capacity, with overspill creating tensions with residents.

Reduction in Quantum of Development and land coverage – although reduction in housing numbers to a figure closer to that in the neighbourhood plan is welcomed, the “removal” of those additional 30 units was requested to enable the developers to provide the community amenities as voted for at referendum by the residents. To this end, the developers are still unable to deliver certain aspects of the plan such as 2 full sized pitches highlighted in the provision of community facilities.

[Summary dated 4th April 2025] **Objection**

Revised Application Description & Reduction in Quantum of Development - the reduction in quantum of housing proposed to a figure closer to that in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) is welcomed, butt rather than reduce the land used for housing across the site to “provide *the necessary land to deliver the community assets appropriately*”, the housing mix has been amended and still covers the same amount of land. This is still at the detriment of deliverance of “*the associated community assets ... at a scale appropriate to the community need*” – we were clear in our assertion that the housing units needed to cover less land. The original landowner’s masterplan (that was used to help formulate the ANP) was designed to provide approx. 100 units on this site (Site 6) and together with another landowner, 50 units on the lower section, that is now designated as green space due to underground archaeology of importance (Site 5). This means that the developer is already trying to accommodate more houses on a site originally designated for a number even lower than 150. We do however accept the figure of 152 units, but request that consideration be given to all following issues raised and amendments requested by HDC as necessary to address outstanding issues.

Other issues:

Housing mix relates to HDC housing register with no consideration of those new to the market, e.g. first-time buyers, down-sizers

Amendments to Proposed layout - the expectation of the facilities (as requested in the ANP - 2 x pitches, Sports Pavilion, allotments) to be located on the land previously allocated to the extra units in the application has not been met, therefore the community facilities remain condensed into the northwest corner. The loss of smaller sized housing units on the development and no benefit to the quantum of housing numbers being reduced with regards to more land being made available for better and appropriate provision of the community facilities.

Parking at Amenities – insufficient

Allotments – consideration to relocate allotments to a more favourable location (as originally proposed in the landowner masterplan and as shown on the developer’s 2023 “Sports Provision Comparison Plan (Bellway Homes 062009-BEL-SL-SPCP – Sports Provision Comparison Plan, 14th August 2023) as this would allow more parking to be provided at the pavilion site and reduce undoubted local parking issues.

Parking across the development – pleased to see off-street parking but disappointed to see the removal of some on-street parking, particularly given the high reliance on the car given lack of public transport in Ashington. Although WSCC parking guidance is acknowledged, the reality of parking requires a higher number than that prescribed by a simple formula e.g. back-to-back parking spaces leading to on-street parking for practical reasons. Even through

housing numbers have dropped, the development still covers same land area, so would expect same number of laybys to be included across the whole site.

Trees – refer to HDC Arboriculturist comments of 5th Feb 2025 who recommend “*refusal on grounds of the loss of and detriment to mature trees....*”

Access Arrangements at Church Close - It should be noted that the parish council's response in July 2024 was regarding the configuration of the proposed site access in conjunction with the nearby Church Lane / Foster Lane junction. This has still not been addressed. As previously highlighted, it should be noted that the existing junction of Church Lane and Foster Lane already causes significant issues with the junction being of insufficient size to adequately allow a car from Foster Lane to turn into Church Lane without crossing into the other carriageway, and similarly from Church Close into Church Lane. The developers own swept path analysis for a refuse vehicle highlights the difficulty in navigating this junction and the fact that a large vehicle will by necessity be on the wrong side of the road. This a main walking route to the school and other amenities, and the paths are already less wide in many places on Church Lane than modern planning regulations would dictate, therefore the potential for injury to pedestrians from vehicles swinging across or mounting pavements is considerable. We cannot highlight enough the challenging nature of this junction and as per the photos below, no desk top study or computer modelling will acknowledge the difficulty in physically being able to position a vehicle safely through this junction. The aerial photo highlights that the natural flow of the current configuration would encourage drivers to take a sweeping route across the 2 junctions rather than to stop at the exit from the site if the junction configuration was as per the landowners own Transport Assessment (TA)10. The landowners of Sites 5 and 6 jointly commissioned this in 2019 regarding access to the site. The independent Road Safety Audit (RSA) in that TA highlighted “*that proposed junction configuration could lead to an increased risk of vehicles crossing the central white line markings, which could in turn increase the risk of collisions. To address this concern, it was suggested that the new access could be moved so that the distance between the two junction is maximised.*” The designer agreed and provided an amended access drawing. This document has been on the parish council website since 2020.

Noise - mitigation measures (in relation to the impact of the 2 sports pitches located close to housing) involve closed windows, and alternative ventilation, which would not seem a realistic expectation that residents do not open windows. ... the quantum of housing still covering this area of land, hence the lack of separation between housing and amenities.

Employment Opportunities (including management of Pavilion) - The parish council are willing to enter into discussions regarding future management and maintenance of the community assets. Strongly dispute that the “*pavilion allows for employment space in the form of offices and functional rooms which can be hired for ad hoc meeting space outside the time it is used for sport*”. The parish council have not requested an office in the Sports Pavilion.

Sports Pavilion – a number of internal layout and design concerns are raised – not currently fit-for-purpose

Mown Grass footways – should be a suitably surfaced footpath

Management of Forest School Land – how will this be delivered and guaranteed for future use by the school

Equipment and maintenance storage – not adequately sized to accommodate most sizes of goals and machinery required.

Football pitches – lack of clarity as to what is being provided with pitches deemed on a smaller side of ‘full-sized’

Safeguarded land for school expansion not in site plan

Land around Church Farm House as per the original masterplan not included in south-eastern corner

Pedestrian link through north-west to Rectory Lane - shown as ‘vehicular link’

Flood mitigation work to Mill Lane not included – proposed as a new culvert and stream diversion within Church Farm House land – contributing factor in the selection of this land for allocation in the ANP

Footpath links – proposed pedestrian connection goes right past existing parish-owned pond, which is currently muddy and unmade – require safety considerations and environmental / wildlife – PC not been approached regarding this access point

Impact on local infrastructure and highways

[summary dated 12th July 2024] **Objection**

Quantum of development – proposed for 180 homes when site was allocated for 150 homes in Ashington Neighbourhood Plan is a significant contributing factor in not being able to deliver the associated community assets as a scale appropriate to the community need.

Traffic and Access - Bellway Homes gave verbal undertakings at a public meeting to review these and conduct further swept path analyses of the road junction to alleviate concerns, but these have not been provided. It also remains unclear how the impact on Church

Lane and the surrounding areas will be mitigated. The parish council noted in May 2022 that with the inclusion of a small piece of parish council land, it would be possible to create a safer site access route and welcomed further discussions regarding this – no discussion has ever been requested by the developers, regarding this land. The revised Transport Assessment does not address the inaccuracies and concerns previously highlighted by the parish council. The swept path analysis at Annex B of the amended Transport Assessment appears to indicate a refuse vehicle is unable to turn in the vicinity of the pumping station without mounting the kerbs. The proposed turning area is also highly likely to become overspill parking and therefore highly likely to be obstructed without further mitigations in place.

Site Layout Amendments - pleased that parish concerns of the pitch location has been considered and co-location of these now in the vicinity to parking and pavilion, but pitch dimensions now are as for U15/U16 youth games and not meeting requirements of policies ASH8 and ASH11 to provide 'full-sized' pitches.

Alterations to the Pavilion - pleased that the pavilion has been reconsidered but still not currently considered to be fit-for-purpose as design does not accord with Sport England design guidance note: Village and Community Halls) which sets out smallest community space should be 10m x 10m (proposal is 4m x 10m) and not suitable to deliver the objectives set out under policies ASH8 and ASH11

Parking Provision – increase in parking spaces is welcomed, but still concerned over current lived experience of parking issues associated with the existing pitch provision in the village.

Landscape, biodiversity and Trees and heritage – clarity sought over exact use of area to the south and proposed planting

[summary dated 18th September 2023]: **Objection**

As the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) has not been reviewed since it was adopted by Horsham District Council (HDC) in June 2021, we consider that the information, objectives, strategies and policies contained within it should be considered current and therefore be adhered to by the developers.

The parish council are very disappointed to see that the revised information provided is "conspicuous by its absence" with regards to responses to many issues raised previously by the council.

The parish council are also disappointed that the developers have chosen to seek out village organisations to effectively "negotiate" with them to try to modify the provision of amenities that they are required to provide within the scope of the ANP.

The organisations they have singled out do not represent the views of the parish council, therefore they have entered discussions with Bellway Homes purely for their own reasons, whether it be for financial investment or enhanced assets. This approach undermines the integrity of the ANP.

- No reduction in housing numbers
- No explanation given on why land has been excluded from the application over the land designated in the ANP
- Allotments not in location as per ANP

- Safeguarded land for school expansion still outside development boundary and developers challenging WSCC Education request that safeguarded land increase by 20% in line with 20% increase in housing number proposed
- Limited area for commercial use included in pavilion (4m x 6m) not commercially viable and compromised by the need of those using the facility for sports. Internal layout concerns to pavilion – inadequate for proposed use and not in keeping with ANP, no wardens office, no parish council office no meeting rooms etc
- No flood mitigation works included but large attenuation pond still indicated on proposed plans – this has nothing to do with the proposed flood relief scheme addressed in the ANP.
- Removal of grass pitch and instead proposed funds to go to improving existing ACCT facilities – insufficient for village needs
- Provision of open space in south-east corner is significantly smaller than original masterplan for ANP so cannot be regarded as a significant benefit
- No amendments to the previously proposed junction of mention of highways issues – conflict with Bellways own traffic survey
- There should be no access from Rectory Lane as this would cause significant traffic issues in the village with potentially 5 developments using the same minor road
- No amendments to parking proposed – see earlier concerns
- No response to how Forest school route to primary school would be maintained and land for Forest School use protected in the long term
- No response on how lighting for the MUGA would be designed and managed to ensure no harm to bats and wildlife
- Some, not all, comments raised by Sport England have been addressed in revision to Pavillion. More amenities squeezed into smaller space, storage building obstructs views to the pitch
- No provision of seating at the grass pitch or MUGA
- No amendment or rationale provided to why the attenuation is located next to play area and pavilion – interferes with ability to co-locate both pitches
- No response on how BNG would be provided in perpetuity
- Clarification needed on proposed new footpath link to FP2607 – would this be to standards?
- No response on how local bus services would be improved
- Discrepancies in Water Neutrality Statement, car wash facility never existed
- No change to house and garden designs – houses lacking front gardens and irregular shaped back gardens

[summary dated 17th April 2023]: **Objection**

- Many of the requirements detailed in policy ASH 11 and elsewhere in the ANP are not met by the current submission – hugely disappointing that the application deviates so significantly from what was agreed and voted on
- Poor design and not presented as per the landowners and agents during the ANP / cannot support quantum of housing on this site with the commissioned Housing Needs Assessment recommending 123-200 homes to be appropriate for Ashington. The upper figure was agreed with an uplift of 15-20% to allow for government changes during ANP process – resulting housing density across a smaller portion of the land
- Exclusion of land within allocation plan from application:
 - Open space / sustainable transport link north to Rectory Lane
 - Barns at Church farm
 - Land around Church Farm House
 - Large corner of Forest School land (Furzefield Copse) is also excluded
- Provision of allotments not in accordance with the ANP and location interferes with the pitch configuration – separation of the two pitches makes no practical sense with the proposed grass pitch in the southern portion of the site not provided with parking, WCs and on land with significant archaeological constraints is likely to render the pitch

- almost useless – SE area of the site designated as open space for residents / dog walking in order to protect underground heritage
- Lack of clarity in the documents over the safeguarded land for school expansion – land outside of the red line
- No commercial floorspace provided
- No floor mitigation works included – main recommendation for a new culvert and stream diversion within Church Farm House land was a main contributing factor in the allocation of this land in the ANP
- Highways Access off Church Lane included suggestions that the access be moved to increase the distance between the two junctions, agreed as part of the RSA Stage 1 but not carried through to proposed application – local concern of accidents unless the distance between junctions is increased and which will need a small piece of parish council land which it is open to entering negotiations with the developer to acquire – busy local roads with well-attended church, 210 pupils at school and main village community halls
- NW corner of the site shows a proposed vehicular access – the ANP specified this to be a sustainable access link only and with all vehicular access off Church Close
- A number of other queries have been raised within the response, and inconsistencies identified within the submitted documents

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- 3.25 [summary - dated 9th April, 2025] **The Ashington Community Centre Trust:**
 Concern that there is no reference to allocate / commit to funds for the enhancement and support of the main Community Cluster (section of the ANP). Existing facilities need to be maintained to accommodate growth of the population of Ashington. Breakdown of costs provided in detail for upgrading and maintaining facilities listed in the Infrastructure facilities of the Ashington Community Cluster: improved and expanded play provision, improvements / upgrading to existing MUGA, drainage to existing grass pitches, new community building to provide for a range of needs, upkeep of existing sports pavilion, and refurbishment of youth club and car parks.
 This proposal is going to put substantial strain on the existing facilities, so it is essential that enhancements are considered to help shape a community. Proposed facilities will require considerable ongoing maintenance and support so funds need to be set and provided for the future
- 3.26 [summary – dated 17th April 2025] **The Ashington Football Club:**
 Concern over the football pitches and sports pavilion as pitch will lack investment, quality or size to permit adult-sized 4G pitch with lighting to be built. FA standards state pitch should be 100m x 64m and require a 5m run-off to each side. Sufficient space to accommodate spectators and coaching at the side-lines. Pavillion parking for at least 50 cars and requires public toilets, secured access, separate showers for male / female, adults / children needed (i.e. for 2 x pitches, 2 x sets of changing rooms and for match officials). A MUGA is not a football pitch – it is a courted multi-use sports area and not a substitute for football suited for training purposes and needs to be floodlit.
- At least one pitch needs to be full-sized (to FA standards), floodlit and 4G
- 3.27 The third public consultation following revision (dated 1st July 2025) resulted in the receipt of representation letters, all of which raise **Objections:**
- Church Lane inadequate / unsuited / too narrow for 2-way traffic – will become too busy and put lives at risk – used as a principal walking access to the school
 - Little visitor parking – proposed off-street parking is inadequate and impractically designed in most cases

- London Road already used as a cut through to the A24 / racetrack – no parking for shops
- Rectory Lane not suited for heavy vehicles, vans etc – narrow lane used by walkers, cyclists, horses
- Ashington does not have the infrastructure for another 152 houses in addition to other developments already in progress / need infrastructure
- Housing numbers have been reduced in line with NP but density increased and concentrated in a smaller area – proposal therefore not in line with community needs but rather needs of developer and government being put before local needs
- Noise and traffic involved in building work for many months
- Building on the Green Belt
- Deprive school children an essential part of nature that's used for outdoor learning
- Water Neutrality where no more new-builds have been decreed
- Why does the village need another massive new football pitch when there is already a football pitch and community centre that's hardly used – probably won't be used for 80% of the village – new pavilion should instead be built by the existing pitch
- Full-sized MUGA will be advantageous but comes at the expense of a second grass pitch
- Light pollution
- Traffic impact during 'home' football matches given increased pressures for 'away' side parking
- Why is there a need for double the changing rooms if there is no second pitch – apparent design not with end user in mind
- No need for substandard small houses – more houses would diminish existing tight-knit community
- Who needs allotments
- School struggling for spaces – where are children going to go to school
- Impact on listed church from traffic
- Drainage concerns – drains backing up regularly during rainfall
- Ecology loss (Martin's Swallows and Swifts)
- Ashington should stay as it is – needs public facilities and green spaces

3.28 The second round of public consultations (dated 13th March 2025) resulted in the receipt of some 32 representation letters, all of which raise **Objections:**

- Parking and traffic implications – to Church Lane and Rectory Lane – no safe way in to site only a single track road – unsuitable / narrow roads leading to site – narrow / blocked pavements along Church Road with pedestrians having to move into road
- Existing staggered T-junction is treacherous for pedestrians at peak hours (school drop off / sports events / church meetings) – addition of 100's of cars using it would compound this (*beneficial to have a second access onto Rectory Lane*)
- Unadopted road section at Fairfield Road / Mill Lane with poor surface/ potholes – increased traffic will worsen this – needs to be surfaced
- Better site on west of A24
- Amendments = minimal alterations
- Proposal does not sit within neighbourhood plan and is overdevelopment
- If 75% affordable then scale of development could be justified
- Use of sports pitches by non-village residents adding to traffic
- Disruption and safety of construction activities / School drop-offs and pick-ups
- Impact on peace of the Church
- Lack of existing infrastructure within village – existing shop gets very busy – power cuts / demand on existing network
- Perhaps more shops, GPs rather than another football pitch
- Limited parking at sports pitch
- Small club-house / no need for another sports pavilion / no attention paid to Sports England guidance / unsatisfactory facilities

- Loss of use of land for Forest School
- School at capacity (31 children in this year's Reception class)
- Is the brook going to be diverted?
- Southern Water have confirmed max number of houses is 50 within capacity – need significant improvements to sewerage system
- Land must be reserved to allow the school to increase to a 2 form entry
- Access must be retained for the school to access forest school area and school
- Vehicles should be restricted during development within school opening / closing times
- School allotments area to be retained and fenced off for safeguarding – rear of school site to be fenced with at least 2m fence for safeguarding during construction (with adequate access gates)
- Concern over impact to Roman ruins and spring nearby

3.29 The initial round of public consultations (dated 27th March 2023) resulted in the receipt of 192 letters of representation from 127 separate address points, three of which are based outside of the district, but which are stated to have local links / ties. All of which raise **Objections:**

NP / Policy:

- Neighbourhood Plan process took over 5 years to be prepared and suit local wishes - proposal conflicts with locally agreed policies – why has this increased, what are the impacts?
- More houses / overdevelopment – over and above 'fair share' of development for village to accommodate (increased of 27.5%) – no local benefit for the extra houses – no more houses needed
- Neighbourhood Plan allocated site for 150 only, along with 75 dwellings in Chanctonbury Nurseries the limit was set at 200 / 225 – no benefit of +30 houses
- Conflict with local ability for council's to consider less housing in their areas
- Little concern for social housing
- Layout different from that agreed as part of NP (because of more houses) – no safe direct route from school to forest school without having to cross over roads – reducing housing to 150 would allow layout to change to accommodate school route
- Flooding in Mill Lane / surrounding roads is getting worse – no consideration of fixing this given – no flood mitigation proposed and contrary to Neighbourhood Plan
- Unnecessary sports provision / already underused existing grass pitch in the village – need more Dr's / Dentist / shops / take-aways
- Plans would change post-approval and more homes added – not in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan
- Site is unnecessary under the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan if other brownfield sites are developed first
- No proposals for commercial use (B1) as identified in Neighbourhood Plan

Access / Traffic matters:

- Parking provision based on minimum provision not actual ownership of the village which has poor public transport - Bus service not convenient to those wishing to use public transport (trains) so have to use a car to travel to nearest train stations
- Insufficient parking (how can you restrict 1 and 2-bed properties from having more than 1 car per household?) - All houses should have 2 or 3 parking spaces to reduce impact of in-road parking
- Insufficient parking for match days - Apparent provision of 10/12 space for allotments and sports facilities - No parking allocation for one of the sports pitches
- Expectation of staggered crossroads as set out in Neighbourhood Plan - Access at Church different to plans of the highways department of WS

- Developer plan in conflict with highways plan, as developer plan shows roadway hard up alongside church wall not set away from the church wall (as per Neighbourhood Plan)
- Proposal doesn't address hazards of the proposed access at Church Lane –drivers likely to cut the corner, mounting the pavement and leading to disaster / conflict with pedestrians
- Entire development cannot be accessed using only one new road
- Access for emergency services restricted – what happens if access is blocked
- Traffic along Rectory Lane and London Road already dire (especially in peak hours) – dangerously parked cars and abandoned cars
- Increased traffic along Church Lane is dangerous and to add a further 360 - 1000 movements per day will have extreme impact on village and residents – daily school route with children and elderly trying to negotiate narrow paths
- Hazardous traffic along Church Lane to access village hub – already impassable for pedestrians / buggies / those with poor sight
- Church Lane will need speed enforcement measures
- Proposed access to site in totally the wrong place (Church Lane) – no access to the site whatsoever
- Access along lanes not housing estate roads
- Hillcrest Drive will become a rat-run
- Doubtful accuracy of TRICS data – doubt that anyone has actually sat at the top of the road at peak hours and counted traffic
- Potholes on existing roads – bad condition
- Gridlock Ashington
- Opposed to access adjacent to Mousedell Close
- Long noisy and busy construction duration
- PRow 2611 should be improved to bridleway and cycle way

School:

- Loss of 2 jobs for the existing forest school teachers at the school - Loss of the forest school site /no more green spaces for children - Loss of a school facility (forest school)
- Forest school site will need 2m high fences all around to ensure student safety and ensure no public access – won't be a safe space if public / dog walkers can use it
- Danger to school children walking to school
- Noise and dust pollution impact on school play times and outside teaching – safeguarding not addressed
- Residents in new development more likely to be allocated a school place compared to an existing house a little further away - No places at local school so have to attend a nearby school – 20 mins drive instead of a 10 min walk - Not enough school places in the village
- Can education provision in the area cope with increased demand
- School loses ability to provide forest school as sharing the area with dog walkers and the public is unsatisfactory – no provision of forest school during development – not a fair trade off for gaining an extra sports pitch and pavilion – forest school seems to be too far from the school
- Not enough / no land set aside for school expansion - Unclear on whether proposal includes school expansion - Development will prevent allocated expansion land for the school from coming forward
- Expectation that school route between school and Forest School site was direct without any roads to cross
- Parking already an issue at the school

- Development on fields which are used by school children weekly / year round

Environment:

- Endangering wildlife / Wildlife habitat loss - Canada Geese migrate to the site most years – what will happen?
- Loss of green space in last 25 years - Loss of trees, concreting over fields and disturbing ecosystem to build more houses – how can this be green? No trees should be cut down
- Why not build on brown field land (The Old Yard)
- Loss of green space - Loss of countryside - Loss of a field producing crops without a carbon footprint
- Light pollution - Pollution
- Natural water levels at this side of village increase flood risk
- Oak trees will become unstable - Loss of a large number of trees which currently mitigate against flooding in the area
- Current sewerage network unable to cope – increased pressures
- Damage to an archaeological site
- Unnecessary development – damage to local biodiversity
- Increased sewerage discharges likely to deal with additional housing
- No solar panels indicated – why? Will these houses have Air / Ground Source Heat Pumps
- All roofs must incorporate solar panels to avoid need for renewables to be built on farmland

Water Neutrality:

- Flaws in WNS: no car wash on site, reference to South-West Water (should be Southern water) and rainfall data for south-west applied
- Refusal of tea rooms proposal in the village on water grounds – yet this site for 180 houses proposed

Other matters:

- Not enough jobs - Lack of employment opportunities – leading to more commuters
- Need more shops and takeaways in the village – not enough parking in the village for existing shops, post office and chemist
- Existing infrastructure under pressure / cannot cope - Unsustainable development given lack of amenities in the village (DRs, dentist, shops) - Village cant sustain this level of development
- Other areas of the village need investment – don't need cheap houses
- Development brings nothing to the village
- Replace flats with family homes to create a more suitable development to village environment - Ashington is a village and should remain a village - Destroy village and quality of life for residents – significant impact on peaceful village
- Better to develop land on east side of A24 / BP garage - Other areas to develop houses away from Ashington
- Loss of tranquillity to the church and less weddings and special occasions and services
- Harm to listed church by building a road alongside it - Disgraceful to build a busy road next to a graveyard
- Heritage England site must be preserved at all costs
- Existing underused sport pitch
- Sports facilities not located in a way that makes their usage viable
- By FC (prior to amendment): support further pitches but should be full-sized 3G football pitch, full-sized grass pitch and pavilion - Concern over placement of pitches; only 20

parking spaces, no equipment storage, grass pitch within a flood area, not accessible to welfare needs (WCs), showers, changing rooms and WC's not up to standards

- By FC (revised scheme): pitches are not full-sized so cannot accommodate adult football – restrict potential for usage by all age groups. No provision for floodlights which will restrict times and use of pitch for games and training
- Great to have new pitches for Ashington Rovers FC provided they cost for using them isn't too high and other village groups are allowed to use them
- Comments made on the football pitch are not relevant as have not been made by a local sports organisation
- Reducing the number of houses would negate the need to build a duplicate sports pitch and duplicate pavilion and enable a smaller build site, less houses and protect more of the surrounding countryside, woodland and trees
- Instead of sports facilities, there should be a requirement for a new church hall and car park next to the church

4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

- 4.1 The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.
- 4.2 The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

- 5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

The Principle of the Development

- 6.1 The Statutory basis for decision taking in planning is Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the Development Plan comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (2021).
- 6.2 Following the adoption of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) in 2021, most of the application site falls within the defined Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB) to Ashington, with the exception of a parcel of land proposed in the ANP for use as public open space in the south, and a parcel of land where the ANP locates the sports and community facilities in the north-west. Policy ASH1 acknowledges that the ANP provides for a **minimum** of 225 dwellings to be built in the period of 2019 – 2031, identifying two sites for residential development: Chanctonbury Nurseries (approx. 75 dwellings) and Land West of Ashington (approx. 150 dwellings). Any other development in addition to these two identified sites would be

considered as 'windfall' development. A consented scheme for 74 dwellings is currently being implemented on the Chanctonbury Nurseries site (approved Sept 2023 - DC/22/0372). The ANP at para 2.35 acknowledges that in the future, housing allocations within the parish may need to increase, following review of the HDPF, likely triggering a review of the ANP.

- 6.3 Despite the strong feeling of local opposition expressed in the public representations received, officers acknowledge that the starting position for the planning assessment is that the site is subject to an accepted neighbourhood plan allocation for residential development under Policy ASH11: Land West of Ashington School. The policy anticipates the delivery of approximately 150 dwellings, seeking to restrict development to the eastern side of the site, so that there is no encroachment of development into the existing wooded areas to the west, or the open countryside to the south, with these areas retained for public open space. In addition to the publicly accessible green open space, the policy seeks the delivery of other community benefits including allotments, the retention of the primary school allotments, and the provision, either on site or by way of financial contributions, of improved community facilities, which are set out in policy ASH 8 of the ANP.
- 6.4 The accompanying plan in the ANP defines broad areas which are to be allocated for allotments (green), open space / sports facilities (purple), residential and possible community and commercial facilities (brown), forest school (blue) and safeguarded land for the school expansion (hatched orange).
- 6.5 The development proposals, which have been revised to 152 dwellings (originally submitted for 180 dwellings), would therefore be supported in principle as this would accord with the expectations of policy ASH11. The policy is appended to this report and all 28 sub-points will be referred to throughout this report in more detail in turn.
- 6.6 Therefore, given that this site has been allocated for housing in a made neighbourhood plan, the principle of the proposed development for residential and community facilities is considered to be in accordance with Policies 2 and 4 of the HDPF (Settlement Expansion), subject to consideration of all other planning matters. Officers note that the proposed site layout broadly accords with the principles shown on the allocation plan (policy ASH11, figure 8.2), although it is noted that not all land included within the allocation has come forward as part of the current proposal, notably land within the south-east section around Church Farm House, the 'safeguarded' land to secure potential future Ashington Primary School expansion, and the spur of land up to Rectory Lane envisioned to provide for open space within the ANP (this is discussed at paragraphs 6.18, 6.47 and 6.113 below).

Housing Need and Mix

- 6.7 HDPF Policy 16 states that development should provide a mix of housing sizes, types, and tenures to meet the needs of the district's communities as evidenced in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Iceni, November 2019), as set out in the table below. Policy ASH11(i) requires that the development should *'provide a mix of dwelling sizes in accordance with the relevant policies in the development plan'*.
- 6.8 Whilst the proposed mix is not an exact match sought by the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMAA, Nov 2019), it is considered that it responds more positively to the current local housing requirements as monitored regularly by the Council's Housing team, and reflects the site's location, and the current need for larger affordable 'family-sized' dwellings. Therefore, the proposal would provide a mix of dwellings that aligns with the expectations of ASH11(i) and HDPF Policy 16 with the following affordable housing mix (at the required 70/30 tenure split between affordable rent and intermediate housing) compared to the recommended mix set out in the Council's current Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, 2019):

Affordable Rented	SHMA 2019 (37 units)	Proposal (37 units)	Over / under supply
1-bed	35% (12.95 dwellings)	11 dwellings	-2
2-bed	30% (11.1 dwellings)	15 dwellings	+4
3-bed	25% (9.25 dwellings)	9 dwellings	-
4+ bed	10% (3.7 dwellings)	2 dwellings	-2

6.9 For Shared Ownership, the following split is indicated, compared to the current SHMA:

Shared Ownership	SHMA 2019 (16 units)	Proposal (16 units)	Over / under supply
1-bed	25% (4 dwellings)	0 dwellings	-4
2-bed	40% (4 dwellings)	7 dwellings	+3
3-bed	25% (6.4 dwellings)	8 dwellings	+1
4+ bed	10% (1 dwellings)	1 dwellings	-

6.10 Insofar as the affordable mix and tenure is concerned, the Council's housing officer accepts the latest housing numbers within the shared ownership and affordable rented tenures, with the mix having been revised to ensure the proposal appeals to Registered Providers (RP), and ensuring the apartment block is not mixed tenure, as this can create management issues.

6.11 In terms of market housing, the proposal is for up to 99 market units, set in the following mix of unit sizes compared to the recommended open market housing mix set out in the Council's current Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, 2019):

Open Market	SHMA 2019 (99 units)	Proposal (99 units)	Over / under supply
1-bed	5% (4.95 dwellings)	0 dwellings	-5
2-bed	30% (29.7 dwellings)	22 dwellings	-8
3-bed	40% (39.6 dwellings)	41 dwellings	+1
4+ bed	25% (24.75 dwellings)	36 dwellings	+11

6.12 Within the proposed development 2 x dwellings (1%) would be provided to M4(3) standard (wheelchair users) whilst the remaining dwellings would meet the M4(2) standard (accessible and adaptable) as per Buildings Regulations, thus meeting the expectations of ASH11(ii), which seeks that '*at least 25% of the dwellings are designed to meet the needs of older people with an appropriate split of the provision based on the mix of market and affordable properties*'. The policy does not expand on how this provision is to be met, e.g., bungalows / step-free dwellings, therefore the provision of Part M4(2) dwellings across the site is considered appropriate to ensure that the homes are adaptable for the future needs of older persons.

6.13 As per the requirements of policy ASH11(iii) and HDPF policy 16, the number of affordable units, and the relevant tenure split, would be satisfactory, with 35% of the dwellings provided on site as affordable (shared ownership / affordable rent). The unit sizes are acceptable to the Council's Housing team, and the overall numbers accord with policy expectations and local housing need.

6.14 The Applicants have not yet secured an Affordable Housing Provider however it is advised that further discussions are taking place. A Section 106 legal agreement would be required to secure the on-site affordable provision and tenure, and the registered provider who would take on the units. In conclusion, therefore, the proposals are considered compliant with HDPF Policy 16 and Policy ASH11(i)-(iv).

Employment and Community Infrastructure Provision

Employment:

- 6.15 Policy AHS11(xii- xix) sets out the employment and community infrastructure requirements for this development. These requirements have come out of the background evidence associated with the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- 6.16 Policy ASH 11(xii) expects the development to include a *'provision of commercial floorspace (Use Class B1) on flexible terms, subject to meeting the requirements of Policy ASH9 (Small Scale and 'Move on' Employment Development) – this could be as part of a multi-user community facility at the Ashington Community Cluster'*. The lack of commercial floorspace within the application site has been noted within the Parish Council representations, as well as neighbour representations, and by officers.
- 6.17 Policy ASH9(A) sets out that development proposals which *'provide small-scale office / workspace and meeting rooms for private hire on flexible terms that support the creation of employment opportunities are encouraged'*, and that such provision should be focussed in the allocation site, existing employment areas and the community cluster. The policy does go on to expand that where such provisions are not possible in the stated location, other locations may be encouraged (B). This requirement is also derived from policy ASH8(C), which encourages new community facilities to provide *'flexible office workspace, and/or meeting rooms for private hire'*.
- 6.18 The application does not provide a dedicated employment site, instead relying on the provision of space within the sports pavilion which is envisaged to be occupied as a multi-user community facility / meeting area that can be hired out, in accordance with the expectations of policy ASH8(C). The pavilion plans also show a dedicated Parish Office, which, if not needed by the Parish Council, could be another flexible work space for hire, thus contributing to the flexible space envisaged under ASH11(xii).
- 6.19 Policy ASH11 does not set out a minimum quantum of floorspace or any precise requirements beyond a general reference to B1 (now Class E(g)) space on flexible terms. In light of this, officers consider that the space within the sports pavilion contributes towards this 'flexible / multi-user' space, albeit weakly, such that Policy ASH11(xii) can be said to be complied with. To ensure this space is made suitably available, a management plan condition is included so that details can be secured of how this 'multi-user community facility' would operate.

Sports facilities:

- 6.20 Policy AHS11 (xiii-xv), in combination with Policy ASH8 and its accompanying Table 7.1, requires the provision of the following sports facilities:
- the provision of a full-sized (11-a-side) grass football pitch for community use;
 - land and contributions towards the provision of a full-sized (11-a-side) floodlit Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) primarily for football use; and
 - land and contributions towards the provision of a sports pavilion, changing rooms and equipment storage facility.

The accompanying policy plan looks to locate the open space and sport pitches within the north-western area of the site, including the spur of land up to Rectory Lane, and the south-eastern area of the site alongside Church Farm House (lilac areas on the plan). Importantly, it should be noted that Policy ASH8 seeks this application site to provide the land for the all-weather pitch and pavilion, with contributions (direct or via CIL) for the delivery of these facilities to collectively come from this site, the other allocated site in the neighbourhood plan (Chanctonbury Nurseries- Policy ASH10) and any other sites that come forward. It is therefore not the case that this site alone must contribute 100% of cost of building these facilities.

- 6.21 These requirements have been derived from Chapter 7 (Community and Economy) of the ANP which identifies opportunities for improving and adding to the community facilities in Ashington, anticipating the growing needs of an increasing population. It is noted that the Ashington Cougars Football Club currently lack training facilities and storage space for their equipment, with changing facilities in the current community buildings regarded as poor (para 7.5 of the ANP). Developing a floodlit MUGA would therefore provide for a winter training facility, modern changing rooms and storage space. However, this football club also seeks more grass pitches to play home matches locally (para 7.6 of the ANP), hence the anticipated land being allocated under policy AHS11.
- 6.22 As initially proposed, the grass and all-weather (MUGA) pitches were to be split by location across the site with the grass pitch to the southeast part of the site and the all-weather pitch to the north west part of the site, per the policy map. However, given the grass pitch would be remote from changing rooms and toilets etc, it was agreed that this pitch should be co-located with the all-weather pitch and sports pavilion in the northwestern part of the site. Given the field boundary constraints, however, it was not possible to provide the grass pitch as a full 11-a-side pitch. Following further discussions, the latest, final, revision seeks to provide one full-sized football / FA approved all-weather pitch located alongside the sports pavilion, allotments and LEAP in the northwestern part of the site. No grass pitch is now proposed.
- 6.23 The absence of a full-size grass pitch is dictated by the lack of available space to accommodate both the pitch and the full-size artificial pitch in the northwest part of the site. Whilst the proposal would therefore breach Policy ASH11(xiii) and ASH8 by not providing the land for the grass pitch, it should be noted that the applicants are proposing to direct deliver the artificial pitch rather than simply provide the contributions sought by these policies. This direct delivery is to be secured in the s106 agreement. Furthermore, the development would yield CIL contributions for the Parish Council which could be used to deliver improvements to the existing grass pitches in the village, which are known to have drainage issues.
- 6.24 In accepting this approach Officers have consulted with Sport England in detail over the provision of pitches on this site. The most recent consultation response from Sport England (August 2025) states that the provision of a full-sized FA-appropriate 3G playing pitch would *'offer sufficient benefit to overall capacity to outweigh the reduced quantity'* (in reference to the absence of a grass pitch), further noting that *'the Horsham Local Football Facility Plan identified a current shortfall of five x 3G pitches, with future additional demand for 4 x 3G pitches based on both participation and population growth over the next five years. With the ongoing housing development in the Ashington area this site is welcome for a new 3G pitch. Ashington FC, a one-star England Football Accredited club have affiliated 16 teams, nine are mixed youth, two adult male and five female youth teams, leaving them just one team from two-star accreditation and we anticipate demand within the club and local area will continue to rise.'*
- 6.25 Therefore, Officers advise that a full-sized all-weather pitch, suitable for year-round football use and training, along with the club house and flood-lighting, are considered to better contribute towards an improved sporting facility at the site, noting that the village has a series of grass pitches for junior use within the community cluster, and with the aforementioned CIL contributions available to the local community for drainage improvements to these pitches.
- 6.26 The Council's Parks Team have stated a preference for these pitches being located to the eastern side of the site where they could interact with the existing sports facilities within the village. Whilst this preference is noted, the allocation policy (ASH11) expressly requires that the sports facilities are located within the north-western area of the site where they can create a buffer between the rural edge and the more developed core of the site.

- 6.27 The Sports Pavilion, through discussions with Officers has been expanded in size to provide for 2 x officials changing rooms and showers, and 4 separate changing rooms, showers and WC facilities, each accommodating up to 20 people, to meet with current Sport England expectations. A further pavilion store provides some 39sq.m of storage for equipment. The Parish Council acknowledge that the pavilion has been improved in size and now incorporates many of the suggested changes, although there is still some concern over the layout and appropriateness of the club / committee room. In assessing this application, Officers are satisfied that the overall pavilion is of a size and location to appropriately serve the sports facilities being delivered on site, and as per the expectations of ASH11(xv), and to provide a flexible internal arrangement to serve the local community, both in terms of sporting needs, as well as community functions and small business needs.
- 6.28 Importantly, it should be noted that the applicants are committed to the direct delivery of the Sports Pavilion to shell and core. This is over and above the requirement of Policies ASH8 and ASH11(xv) for land and contributions (noting that the contributions were to come from other sites also) only and further helps to offset the absence of the full-size grass pitch.
- 6.29 Overall, Officers advise that the direct delivery of the enlarged sports pavilion to shell and core along with the direct delivery of the full-size artificial pitch sports provisions, all to Sport England standard, exceeds the expectations of Policies ASH8 and ASH11 such that they mitigate for the absence of a full-size grass playing pitch. It is advised that planning conditions be included to ensure the pitch is constructed to the appropriate standards, including adequate drainage provision, and maintenance, along with details to secure details of the floodlights.

Other Community Facilities:

- 6.30 Policy ASH11(xvi) requires the provision allotments on the site as well as retaining the allotment facilities immediately adjacent to the Ashington Primary School. On-site allotments (11 full-size plots) are being delivered by way of the amended proposal with the allotments located to the north-west of the sports facilities where the land is most suited to this provision, and not subject to flooding or significant scrub clearance. The final specification and delivery of these allotments is to be secured in the s106 agreement.
- 6.31 Whilst the development site red line boundary excludes the current allotment land used by the Ashington Primary School, this is not considered to raise a conflict with ASH11(xvi) as the land will remain available to the school. Officers understand that the current landowner would be a party to the s106 agreement, which would secure the transfer of this land.
- 6.32 Policy ASH11(xvii) seeks that contributions are provided towards the delivery of other community infrastructure identified within policy ASH8, where this is not delivered on site. Policy ASH8 sets out that financial contributions would be secured towards:
- Improved and expanded play provision for the needs of children of all ages;
 - Improvements to the existing MUGA within the village;
 - Improvements to the drainage to the existing village grass pitches; and
 - A community building that provides a hall and meeting facilities to serve the needs of scouts, local youth club and other local community groups, and a parish council office.
- 6.33 Officers note these works fall within the wider Parish Council's identified infrastructure works and improvements (as per the 2018 Ashington Infrastructure Delivery Plan), which could be delivered by way of apportioned CIL funds from the proposed development. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the sports pavilion includes a club/committee room with kitchen and a dedicated space capable of use as a parish office (albeit it has been indicated by the Parish Council that this space is not needed here). These spaces show

sufficient flexibility to accommodate a variety of community functions to accord with the aspirations of the ANP.

- 6.34 Officers therefore consider that the proposed sports pavilion facilities, which include a flexible community / committee / club room and parish office / business space, would meet and indeed arguably exceed the above policy expectations of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Education:

- 6.35 Policy AHS11(xviii and xix) require:

- Contributions towards education as well as the allocation of 0.1ha of land adjoining the Ashington Primary School to accommodate future expansion the school; and
- A further safeguarding of 0.44ha of land adjoining the school site for any further expansion of the school in the future

This combined area is hatched orange on the policy plan and makes for an overall area of 0.54ha. The policy plan does not delineate where the 0.1ha and 0.44ha parcels of land are within this hatched area.

- 6.36 The most recent consultation response from WSCC Education (April 2025) identifies that the primary schools within the catchment are currently at capacity, and therefore land would be required to facilitate the envisioned school expansion. The capacity of the school is noted to have fluctuated during the time this application has been under consideration, with earlier discussions with WSCC Education alluding to the school having capacity at that time (2024).
- 6.37 It is noted that the full 0.54ha of land falls outside of the current red line development site boundary. In the case of the 0.44ha of land to be 'safeguarded', this is considered acceptable as Policy ASH11 would continue to apply to any future development proposals on this land such that the land remains reserved for school expansion. In respect of the 0.1ha of land to be 'allocated', at the current time this area of land is outside the development side boundary.
- 6.38 The applicants have subsequently advised that the land is under the same ownership as part of the development site, and that as a party to the s106 legal agreement this landowner is happy to be obligated to identify this land (to the agreement of the WSCC Education team) and transfer it to WSCC for a nominal sum at the appropriate juncture. Officers consider this to be an acceptable approach in this instance, with the Council's legal team confirming that the landowner has the necessary control of the land to deliver this obligation.
- 6.39 The financial contributions referred to in Policy ASH11 would be secured for local early years, primary and secondary education by way of CIL. Nevertheless, the WSCC Education team have requested a bespoke financial contribution from the development of £2,480,000 towards the provision of a new 0.5 form entry to Ashington Primary School (calculated pro-rata on the number of proposed dwellings- based on 180 dwellings). This request arises from the wording of policy ASH11(xviii) which requires '*contributions for education as well as the allocation of 0.1ha of land adjoining the Ashington Primary School*'. The need for contributions has been derived from the need to address the forecast housing growth in the village based on the two allocated sites (being the application site and Chanctonbury Nurseries). However, a requirement for a contribution was not included in the Chanctonbury Nurseries policy (ASH10), leading the applicants to query the fairness, reasonableness, necessity and being directly related of the development of this requested contribution from WSCC Education (per Reg 122 of the Community and Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010).
- 6.40 Following further discussions between the Officers and the WSCC Education team (during 2024), it is important to note that the preparation for the ANP was carried out at a time where site-specific financial contributions were sought under s106 agreements as CIL had not at that time been implemented in Horsham. The origins of this funding request within the ANP

therefore appears to pre-date the CIL regime. Officers have clarified that the required funding towards any increased school expansion is now to be derived from CIL monies allocated in accordance with CIL governance and the Council's published Infrastructure Delivery Plan. As a consequence, Officers advise that it would be unreasonable to require a bespoke contribution towards the expansion of the primary school given such matters are to be funded via CIL. Therefore, officers are satisfied that the criteria set out under ASH11 (xviii and xix) are met.

Layout and Design

- 6.41 Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves, and enhances the landscape and townscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account townscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional, and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.

Residential Layout and Design

- 6.42 The residential element of the development would be located entirely within the identified area which is designated for the 'residential and possible community and commercial facilities' (brown shaded area) within the schematic layout plan (Figure 8.2) which supports Policy ASH11.
- 6.43 The overall site layout provides a main central avenue, lined by trees with residential 'blocks' created to the sides and accessed by way of cul-de-sacs and secondary roadways. These 'blocks' would include interest on all four sides with corner dwellings designed to include active elevations on all street-facing sides. Although designed to create straight alignment of houses along each side of the estate roads, the layout retains the existing vegetated field boundaries and drainage ditches within the wider site, seeking to set the residential development within the existing framework of vegetation, and creating smaller 'parcels' within the site. To soften the rural to suburban transition, the built development has been moved away from the sensitive landscaped edges of the site, thus avoiding instances where hard garden boundaries abut the rural edge of the site. Instead, the rural edge would exhibit a softer transition with landscape opportunities carried through into the site past the retained vegetated field boundaries.
- 6.44 To further define and acknowledge the rural edge of village character of the proposed development site, the two large blocks of open space, set aside for community use and recreation as per the expectation of policy ASH11, would limit the spread of development southwards and westwards, providing an open buffer, and retention of the archaeologically sensitive area (southern part adjacent to the scheduled ancient monument). The site layout also retains the area of woodland which is currently used by the Ashington Primary School as part of their 'Forest School' teaching, including this within the red line and ensuring this area is free of any public access and development as per the expectations of ANP policy ASH11(xi). A management plan for this area is subject to an advised condition, with this area secured for use by the school by way of the associated s106 agreement.
- 6.45 The design of the proposed development has taken account of the local materials, roof forms and architectural details found in the vicinity in Ashington to arrive at an architectural palette reflective of the wider local character, as required by ASH11(iv). Officers consider that the resulting proposal would form its own distinctive character that is cohesive yet complementary to the locality. Officers note that the majority of the development to the north-east dates from the post-war era, which for the most part, offers pleasantly proportioned dwellings and family-sized plots, amid red-brick and brown-brick houses. Church Close to the south-east is a well-designed enclave of rural-inspired dwellings, and the approach along

Church Road exhibits a mixed character of bungalows, chalets and two-storey houses, of varying styles and ages. It is clear that each development establishes its own character typical of architectural styles and preferences at the time of construction. The proposal would therefore build upon this cohesive, yet varied character, reflective of current housing expectations.

Open spaces and sports pitches

- 6.46 The spatial plan at Figure 8.2 incorporates two blocks of land indicated to be areas of open space / sports pitches: one at the southern end of the site, and the other at the north-western part of the site (purple areas on Figure 8.2). The layout achieves an open area for public use in the southern part of the site (initially proposed as the grass playing pitch, which was relocated to the north-western corner of the site). As explained above, following discussions between the applicant and the Parish Council, the grass pitch has since been dropped from the proposals altogether with a view of providing a full-sized all-weather multi-use pitch instead, and larger pavilion, along with a play space and allotments in the northwestern part of the site. The layout therefore aligns with ASH11(vi), insofar that that open spaces and sports facilities are located as per Figure 8.2. Conditions are suggested to ensure suitable management plans can be secured of these public areas and community facilities, with the delivery of these areas be secured by way of trigger points in the associated s106 legal agreement.
- 6.47 Officers note that the spur of land from the main part of the site up to Rectory Lane is not included within the current application site boundary, with the plans indicating a 'vehicular connectivity route through to adjoining land parcel'. This would not preclude this strip of land coming forward separately as part of additional 'open space' envisioned under the ANP policy ASH11, with relevant access therefore provided, as envisioned, by this policy.

Allotments

- 6.48 Figure 8.2 indicates that the allotments should be provided along the northern site boundary. However, the updated EA long-term surface water flood maps indicate this site is subject to a high surface water flood risk. This area is therefore not considered to present the most optimal area within the site for allotments as they would be subject to flooding or waterlogging throughout the year along with having potentially poorer ground for allotment holders to manage. The relocation of the 12x proposed allotments adjacent to the sports facilities makes for a more viable option allowing for existing drainage ditches and wildlife corridors to be maintained, and a new attenuation basin to be located in this northern buffer zone where it can interact with the existing drainage ditch and northern surface water flow route. The loss of the scrubland in this northern buffer zone was considered to be acceptable within the Figure 8.2 plan within the ANP, therefore its use as part of the surface water attenuation is considered to present a more viable land-use, and in the spirit with the overall ANP policy.

Play areas

- 6.49 The revised plans now provide for a 663sq.m of LEAP play space (Local Equipped Area for Play) close to the sports pavilion and football pitch, and a smaller LAP (Local Area of Play) close to the eastern boundary of the site where a potential future link through to the parish pond and PRoW_2607 is envisioned, subject to permissions with the land-holder. The LAP is also located close to the Ashington Primary School and is therefore well-located within the site to facilitate post-school recreation.

Conclusion on design and layout matters

- 6.50 The proposed layout as now revised, is considered to accord with the overarching expectations of the neighbourhood plan policy and therefore satisfies the local principles of this allocated site, whilst satisfying the criteria of HDPF policies 25, 32 and 33, which seek

to ensure development protects and maintains the District's landscape and townscape characters and create locally distinctive developments.

Landscape and Tree Impacts

- 6.51 The HDC Landscape Character Assessment (2003) identifies that the site lies within character area J2 (Broadford Bridge to Ashington Farmlands), noted to be a generally flat to undulating landscape with scattered woods and copses and a strong network of hedgerows. Although large scale residential development has been identified as a key sensitivity of this area, it is acknowledged that the application site has been allocated for development in the ANP.
- 6.52 The more recent Landscape Capacity Study (2021) considers the relevant landscape character areas AS1 and AS2 to apply to the site, which considers a low-no and low-moderate capacity for large-scale residential development. Again, the allocation within the ANP for the site to accommodate residential development is a material consideration which reflects the need for appropriate settlement growth within rural edge of village locations
- 6.53 The ANP allocation policy requires that the provision of appropriate landscape buffers (under ASH11(xxv)). This is further expanded by policy ASH5(A), which sets out that development abutting open countryside must not create a hard edge along with the inclusion of the aforementioned landscape buffer, and how the visual impact of buildings within the site have been minimised through layout, heights and landscaping, retention of trees and vegetation to soften the impact and to retain the rural village feel of Ashington.
- 6.54 As part of the current scheme, it is noted that the general layout of the site seeks to secure the peripheral vegetated boundaries to the site, as well as incorporating many of the established hedgerows within the site to maintain wildlife corridors, screening, shading and continuing to reflect the existing field margins. As such, the overall layout is considered to be in compliance with the expectations set out under policy ASH11(xxv) in that the proposal would deliver an appropriate landscape buffer which leads to an enhancement to the setting of the SDNP some 1.4km south at the closest point.
- 6.55 The Landscape Architect does not disagree with the overall findings of the submitted LVIA but suggested that additional planting occur in a number of areas, which can be secured through an appropriate landscape condition. Furthermore, it is advised that the design of SUDs features within the site are appropriately contoured and designed to avoid the use of pre-cast concrete inlets and handrails, and planted with a mix of vegetation types and species to improve biodiversity. This again can be secured by condition.
- 6.56 As part of the current scheme, a number of sizable and mature trees are set to be retained within the layout, along with the retention of field boundaries, ditch-lines and vegetated blocks of trees to the north and SW of the site, as noted by the Council's Tree Officer.
- 6.57 However, it is also noted that a number of trees remain likely to be impacted by associated engineering works, such as necessary trenching to accommodate service runs (drainage / lighting etc), as well as wider SUDs works and proposed swales, and the revised attenuation basin located in the northern scrubland. Officers acknowledge that the Council's Tree Officer has requested additional details to ensure no adverse transgression into the sensitive RPAs of the retained trees, such as the dominating Oak tree that lies close to the proposed upgraded access route into the site. Revised / additional sections have been provided to show the no-dig construction, but further road specification details appear to still be missing, including details to identify drainage runs within this sensitive location south of the church. Whilst details on service connections is currently absent, it would be logical to assume all services to the site would be routed along / under the new vehicular access into the site from Church Lane. A utilities layout plan, to show coordination with other elements such as SUDs and landscape plans would be required by condition.

- 6.58 Having reviewed the amendments to the layout and the additional information submitted in March 2025, the Council's Tree Officer retains a number of concerns, primarily focussed on the provision of an access road within the RPA of an A-grade mature Oak tree within the church yard, and the construction details thereof; the proximity of hard-standing within the rooting environments of two retained A-grade Oak trees (along the western side and in the north-western corner of the site); and a lack of clarity over the proximity between the linking path from the development parcel to the sports field, and retained trees.
- 6.59 There remains a significant concern of the Council's Arboricultural Officer, that the submitted information fails to secure a 'landscape-led' layout, noting that many of the retained trees (mainly along the site access) have engineering features within their minimum recommended RPAs. The resulting proposal therefore is considered by the Arboricultural Officer to have failed to take appropriate account of the minimum rooting constraints posed by the mature trees which have landscape value, and therefore goes against the *'ethos of ensuring greenfield development in undertaken in accordance with modern design standards for conserving trees and other natural landscape features'*. The long-term implication is therefore that the direct impact on the health and vigour of these trees cannot be ascertained, and compliance with policy ASH 11(xxiv) cannot be assured without further clarification.
- 6.60 These conflicts are acknowledged, alongside the proposed means of ensuring the trees are retained and protected by way of the works, as set out in the most recent Tree Protection Plan and Impact Statement:
- The access road alongside the church and in the area of the RPA would involve minimal excavations of around 100mm from existing levels and the new roadway surface laid **above** this
 - Location of below-ground infrastructure / utility trenching to be located outside of the rooting environment
 - The use of 'no-dig' construction of hard-surfacing within the PRAs
- 6.61 The Council's Arboricultural Officer has, however, recommended a number of planning conditions, in the event that permission is recommended for approval with a view of seeking additional clarifications, location of service installations, a finalised tree protection plan and method statement, and accountable arboricultural site monitoring. Officers consider these conditions to be necessary and important, and sufficient to ensure these trees are suitably protected.
- 6.62 Overall, it is therefore considered that the revised scheme for 152 dwellings proposes a development that would lead to minimal impact on visual receptors, leading to a limited degree of harm on the wider landscape quality. Whilst some incursion to the RPAs of retained trees is acknowledged, the overall site layout does seek to retain many of the original landscape features and trees, particularly where these are of great amenity value. A number of conditions are advised to ensure that compensatory and mitigation planting can be secured, whilst additional technical details are requested to ascertain and clarify tree-related concerns. Officers have acknowledged the concerns expressed in relation to the mature Oak tree situated within the church yard, and the proximity to the proposed site access route, with this sole vehicular access route into the development site stipulated within the site's allocation policy ASH11(vii). Again, technical details will be secured through condition to ensure no-dig roadway construction and routing details of all utilities and services to the site.
- 6.63 Overall, the proposed development is considered to achieve an appropriate layout within the site and acknowledges the requirements of policies 25 and 33 of the HDPF, as well as policies ASH5 and ASH11 (xxiv and xxv).

Heritage Impacts:

- 6.64 The built development is set away from the Grade II* listed St Peter and St Pauls Church, and the Grade II listed Church Farm House. Suitable intervening distance and screening would be retained, assisting in ensuring the edge of village setting of these two heritage assets is respected and retained. However, the associated infrastructure by way of the new formalised and widened access road into the site would run directly alongside both of these heritage assets, resulting in an inevitable change in their setting, noting that the alignment of the roadway would necessitate the removal of some boundary vegetation to Church Farm House, which is currently fortified by dense vegetation along this property's northern boundary. The southern boundary to the church grounds is defined by a low flint wall, also listed, overlooking the church yard, re-affirming the quasi-pastoral setting of the church. There are currently no footways along the existing track, no street-lighting, signs or utilities / telecoms structures.
- 6.65 As a result of the proposed development, the width required to form the necessary two-lane access roadway would result in a re-alignment of the northern boundary to Church Farm House, and at the same time, would result in a more formalised and urbanised impact on the setting of the church. Whilst the proposal would maintain a grass verge between the church wall and the pavement alongside the roadway, the submitted section through the roadway, specified as 'no-dig' in order to minimise the impact on the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of the trees alongside the access route, shows a ground level above that of the current levels alongside the southern face of the listed church wall – approximately 0.45m. The width, paved nature and other associated elements such as signage and kerbs, would inevitably erode the current pastoral setting. Therefore, conditions are recommended so that these elements, along with the detailed specification on materials, can be properly considered and agreed prior to their installation.
- 6.66 In reviewing the current plans, officers have had regard to previously raised concerns from the Parish Council in relation to the raised speed table and rumble strip, and potential impact on the nearby listed structure by way of vibrations from vehicles crossing the rumble strip. The rumble strip is located only at the point of the PRoW crossing the roadway with the rest of the entrance section to be block paved to retain the semi-rural character of the site entrance, matching the block paved roadway into the adjacent Church Close development. Furthermore, the proposed plans submitted by the applicants include a grassed verge between the new footpath into the site and the retained church wall. Accordingly officers are of the view that any impacts from vehicles crossing the rumble strip will be unlikely.
- 6.67 Historic England's original concerns over the impact of the proposed access on the setting of church have been satisfied by way of the additional details submitted, although officers note that the requested verified views have not been produced. Nevertheless, Historic England are satisfied that the overall harm to the rural setting of the listed buildings would be 'less than substantial', although the exact level within that range is difficult to establish at the current time. Notwithstanding this, Historic England are satisfied to leave this to the Planning Authority to determine, weighing any public benefits arising by way of the proposals against the harm, in line with paragraphs 210 and 215 of the NPPF (2024).
- 6.68 The Council's Heritage Officer has reviewed the latest iterations of the plans and details, and in particular the access details. Whilst there is some concern over the accumulation of leaves and debris alongside the wall, officers are satisfied that this could be addressed by way of the ongoing landscape management plan which would be secured by way of a planning condition. The Council's Heritage Officer is satisfied that any long-term harm would be outweighed by the public benefits arising from delivering this scheme when applying the requirements of paragraph 215 of the NPPF.
- 6.69 Officers have considered the advice from Historic England and the Council's Heritage Officer and are also satisfied that the additional information received is sufficient to reduce the

harmful impact to the setting of these designated assets to the lower end of 'less than substantial'. The public benefits of the proposal, namely the provision of 152 market and affordable homes and the provision of the allotments, open space and sports facilities, are considered to significantly outweigh this harm.

- 6.70 In respect of the available views to and from St Peter and St Pauls Church and Church House Farm, officers are satisfied that these would not be unduly diminished, save for the aforementioned intensification of the new widened and formalised access road into the site, as required by policy ASH11 (xxiii), which could be satisfactorily mitigated by appropriate screening and planting along the access lane, as required by a landscape condition. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the provisions of policy ASH11(xxi) and paragraph 215 of the NPPF.
- 6.71 In terms of archaeological impacts, the archaeological area defined on the map at figure 8.2 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan does not extend as far north as the Archaeological Notification Area layer on the Council's mapping data, which extends up to the existing farm track (site access). Whilst the proposed layout accords with the map in the Neighbourhood Plan, officers are concerned that the southern portion of housing would in fact, encroach into an archaeologically sensitive part of the site.
- 6.72 The Council's Archaeological consultant initially raised concerns about the implications of the land levelling works associated not only with the formation of a grassed pitch to the southern area of the site to obtain a sufficiently level playing surface, but also in relation to the resulting ground disturbance necessary for the new housing. In order to address this concern, revised plans and sections have been received, along with geophysical surveys of the adjacent scheduled monument (Roman Villa) site and adjacent area.
- 6.73 The grass playing pitch was subsequently removed from this southern area, thus retaining this portion of the site in its current state without the need for any invasive ground works. In addressing the likely implications of the development associated with the housing set south of the existing farm track, it is advised that an appropriate archaeological programme of works condition be added, involving geophysical surveys and trial trenching prior to any development being carried out. This would provide the required assessment on whether any below-ground archaeological remains associated with the adjacent scheduled monument (Roman Villa) or later medieval period extend into the development site, as the below-ground archaeological potential for the site remain largely unknown. Subject to this condition the revised proposal now accords with policy ASH11(xxii) in respect of the scheduled ancient monument and archaeological interest.
- 6.74 The removal of the grass playing pitch in the southern area of the site has also addressed Historic England's concern over the use of this land, having recommended that this be retained for public open space use to ensure the protection of the buried heritage, and to retain a physical and conceptual link with the scheduled monument (Roman Villa) site.

Amenities of nearby and future residents

- 6.75 Policy 32 and 33 of the HDPF states that development should, amongst other things, provide an attractive, functional, accessible safe and adaptable environment that should complement locally distinctive characters and heritage of the district, and should integrate with their surroundings, and the historic landscape in which they sit. Development should respect amenities of neighbouring properties and the locality.
- 6.76 It is noted that Church Farm House lies directly to the south of the proposed access to serve the new development and community facilities, and is likely to be the most affected by the proposals on account of all traffic serving the development passing along the shared vehicular access, and the modifications to the access and boundary vegetation.

- 6.77 Furthermore, three other residential properties (No's 19, 20 and 21 Church Close) front onto the proposed site access off Church Lane, with Westwares also located on the corner at the proposed junction into the site. These properties are also considered to be directly impacted by the proposals by way of their proximity to the site access and the increased traffic flows at the junction. However, it is noted that the Neighbourhood Plan has allocated this site for a large residential development, thus having accepted the likely localised impact arising from such a development, with the Neighbourhood Plan having passed through public consultation process. No existing residential properties would be affected by way of overlooking or loss of light by way of the proposed development on account of distances of separation involved between the existing and new dwellings.
- 6.78 Within the site itself, the dwellings are largely provided with gardens that are at least 10m in depth, providing a back-to-back separation between the houses of around 20m. The layout and inter-relationship between dwellings is therefore comparable to that typically found on new development sites.
- 6.79 As noted by the Council's landscape officer, it is expected that each of the properties have access to an appropriate amount of private open space or communal gardens. Within this context, it is noted that the 20x flats at Units 34-53 (Wayland Court) would not be provided with private amenity space.
- 6.80 The overall site layout would afford close proximity to areas of public open space which can be utilised and enjoyed by the residents of the apartments. It is also noted that the apartments in Wayland Court (units 34-53) are provided with Juliet balconies at first and second floors, or French windows at ground floor, allowing an increased connection to the outside.
- 6.81 Overall, subject to the inclusion of appropriate conditions, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby occupiers/users of land, or prospective occupants, such as to amount to conflict with HDPF policy 33 in amenity terms, and para 135(f) of the NPPF which seeks to ensure that development is safe, inclusive, accessible and which achieves a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Highway Impact, Access and Parking

- 6.82 Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework states that transport access and ease of movement is a key factor in the performance of the local economy. The need for sustainable transport and safe access is vital to improve development across the district. Policy 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework states that development that involved the loss of existing parking spaces will only be allowed if suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere. Adequate parking facilities must be provided within the developments to meet the needs of the anticipated users.
- 6.83 Chapter 9 of the NPPF sets out the Government's aspirations for the promotion of sustainable transport, and details how the transport and highways implications arising from the development proposals should be considered in planning terms. Paragraphs 115 to 117 of the NPPF are particularly relevant when assessing the appropriateness of a proposal in highway terms. Paragraph 115 requires that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes should be *prioritised*, and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users. In addition, it requires that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion) or on highway safety can be effectively mitigated.
- 6.84 The requirement to consult Active Travel England (ATE) on development proposals involving more than 150 units came into force on 1st June 2023, after the submission of this application in March 2023. Notwithstanding this, active travel considerations have been considered,

including the requirement at paragraph 117a of the NPPF to '*give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use*'.

- 6.85 The application has been supported by a Travel Plan, Transport Assessment, Transport Assessment Addendum and swept path diagrams, with revisions submitted following information requests by officers and consultants. The WSCC Local Highways Authority (LHA) also provided pre-application advice to the applicants in July 2021 and May 2022 on proposed schemes of 150 and 180 dwellings, with further comments provided by the LHA in December 2022. Issues relating to access strategy and capacity impact on the network has therefore been discussed prior to the current application being submitted.

Vehicular access:

- 6.86 Policy ASH11(vii) requires that the allocated site be served by way of '*appropriate vehicular access from Church Close*', which leads alongside St Peter and St Pauls Church and serves the farmlands, barns and Church Farm House, although the latter is also provided with a self-contained vehicular access which runs south of and parallel to the existing access track, albeit apparently not used as such.
- 6.87 Church Close connects to Church Lane and a series of village roads connecting residential streets to the west side of London Road, as well as the existing Community Cluster, St Peter and St Pauls Church, and the primary school.
- 6.88 The proposal sets out that a new formal access junction, of a width suitable to accommodate two lane traffic and a footpath, along with the retention of the listed church wall, would be taken from this identified access point to serve the site and proposed development in accordance with the stated expectations of Policy ASH11(vii). The details of the site allocation, including its access, were subject to public consultation as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- 6.89 The widened and formalised junction and roadway has been designed in accordance with WSCC Highway requirements, and includes visibility splays which accord with the Manual for Streets (MfS), and informed by pre-application discussions between the applicant and the LHA.
- 6.90 The alignment of the existing single-width farm track into Church Farm and the wider farmlands beyond, would be widened and modified to retain the church wall along the northern side, and accommodate a separating grassed verge to a new pedestrian footpath, and to ensure the resulting roadway is suited to two-way traffic. Further details have been provided by the applicant in response to queries raised by the Local Highways Authority, which demonstrate that adequate turning for all vehicles can be achieved at the access point and along the new access road. New 2m wide footways are to be provided throughout the site, along with carriageways measuring 5.5m, with a 6m wide junction radii, which the swept path analysis shows can accommodate a fire appliance accessing the site, turning and existing in forward gear.

Highway capacity and safety:

- 6.91 In relation to the potential capacity of the existing highway network to accommodate the increased traffic, it is acknowledged that the submitted TRICS data reveals a likely increase in 77 traffic movements in the AM peak and 72 movements in the PM peak, leading to an increase in some 517 vehicles over a typical weekday period (based on the initial 180 dwelling proposal). This has been assessed the Local Highways Authority as not leading to a severe impact on the surrounding highway network. The revised quantum of development

of 152 units would see lower traffic movements than have previously been assessed as being acceptable to the highways network.

- 6.92 The Parish Council have raised concerns regarding the ongoing safety concerns likely to arise as a result of the proposed access arrangements at the junction with Church Lane / Church Close, referencing the earlier Transport Reports and an access plan which had been undertaken and prepared as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process. These documents anticipated a slightly modified access off Church Close necessitating the use of additional land on the southern side of the access, currently the second access to Church Farm House. The proposed access is in near accordance with the plan prepared for the Technical Note undertaken as part of the Neighbourhood Plan site assessment work, but, unlike the indicative plan prepared for the Neighbourhood Plan, the proposed access incorporates a beneficial landscape strip between the footpath and the listed church wall, and demonstrates that the required visibility splays and geometry can still be achieved at the junction. Furthermore, the current access proposals have been reviewed and assessed by the LHA with the principle of the proposed geometry accepted without the need for further land take at this junction, as referenced in the Parish Councils objection letter. The LHA officer is known to have visited this junction during the application process.
- 6.93 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be compliant with Paragraph 116 of the NPPF, and there are therefore no transport / movement grounds to resist the proposal. Highways conditions have been recommended in the event that permission is granted. The proposal is therefore also considered to satisfy HDPF policy 40 in terms of highway access and safety.

Pedestrian / cycle access:

- 6.94 As referenced above, Active Travel England were consulted but made no comments as their statutory remit applies only to applications received after 1st June 2023. However, officers have sought to apply the principles of Active Travel, recognising the ambitions to increase walking, wheeling and cycling which are now embedded into the NPPF (Dec 2024).
- 6.95 The proposed site boundary extends up to but does not encompass, the line of PRoW_2607 to the NE of the site. The proposal includes a new walking link from the site onto this PRoW, sited just to the north of the existing parish pond, with the precise nature of the alignment to be agreed on site, and as part of a planning condition. A further link has now been included as part of the proposals, as shown on ASH2 (Increasing Walking in Ashington), south of the parish pond, which meets the expectations of policy ASH11(viii) to provide '*appropriate pedestrian access which provides direct and safe linkages into the Walkway Routes identified in Policy ASH2*'. Agreement will be required with the Parish Council as landowners of the parish pond, but this is to be secured under an appropriate s106 agreement. These improved and new pedestrian and cycle connections would also accord with the 'Active Travel' principles.
- 6.96 Insofar as the expectation set out under policy ASH11(ix) to achieve upgrading and lighting along PRoW_2607, where it is within or adjacent to the site, so that this is capable of all year-round use, this would be achieved by way of an appropriate s106 agreement. Officers acknowledge that a s106 agreement is place relating to approved development at the Chanctonbury Nurseries site (ASH10 – approved under DC/22/0372) which secures the expected upgrading of this PRoW. This development has now commenced on site by way of site clearance works.
- 6.97 The proposal incorporates a pedestrian footway alongside the new access road into the site, as well as a maintained footpath link to PRoW_2611. Clarification has been provided in relation to the definitive line of PRoW_2611 where it crosses the access road into the site, as the line of the PRoW on the ground does not accord with the legal line of the path as held by WSCC, making it evident that the definitive line of the PRoW_2611 has been diverted at some point in the past by land owners without the relevant consent having been obtained

from WSCC. The current application makes it clear that that this travelled path on the ground is not being redirected as a consequence of the current proposal. Following receipt of additional information, the WSCC PRow officer has withdrawn their holding objections and the need to formally divert the footpath under a s257 order at this time. As part of the scheme, there is an expectation that PRow_2611 would be upgraded to bridlepath status, allowing cyclists and horses to use the path, in accordance with the expectations set out under ASH11(x). This is an ambition shared with WSCC but would depend on agreement with relevant landowners. As part of the application, the proposal incorporates the intention to include these works by way of appropriate funding secured through an appropriate s106 agreement.

- 6.98 The proposal provides for a good level of pedestrian permeability throughout the site and to the surrounding PRow network and village centre, aligning with the requirements of policy ASH2 and policy ASH5(C), which seek to maximise opportunities for sustainable movement and create footpath access to existing PRow. The policy-compliant PRow upgrades would be secured through the s106 mechanism.
- 6.99 Finally, the proposed scheme includes the retention of the 'safe route' for walking between the primary school and the forest school located to the west of the development site, as per the expectations of ASH11(xi). A planning condition to secure details on how this route is to be maintained during the construction works is recommended below. A number of paths within the site were also shown as being 'mown' strips, but these would not afford year-round access for users. The revised proposals indicate these to now be a surfaced path, details of which can be secured by condition, surfaced to suitable specifications.

Sustainable Access:

- 6.100 Ashington is identified as a 'medium village' within the HDPF policy 3 settlement hierarchy. Medium villages are classified as those with *'a moderate level of services and facilities and community networks, together with some access to public transport. These settlements provide some day to day needs for residents, but rely on small market towns and larger settlements to meet a number of their requirements.'* The facilities within Ashington include a pharmacy, a Coop, food take-away (some 600m as-the-crow-flies), and a BP / M&S petrol station (around 1km as-the-crow-flies). The village 'community cluster' comprising sports fields, play spaces, skate park, Primary School, church and scout hut and village halls are all much closer (less than 250m). The Village does not have access to a doctors surgery, instead relying on larger settlements, such as Storrington, Henfield and Cowfold and Steyning.
- 6.101 As set out above, the proposal would include a number of pedestrian and cycle-friendly linkages from the site to these village services. These include improvements and upgrading of PRow 2607 and 2611 to bridleways to facilitate year-round use (subject to land-owner agreement where relevant). Accordingly, the proposal is considered to provide suitable walking, wheeling and cycling links to the services within Ashington, enabling the prioritisation of these modes over the use of the private car, in accordance with Paragraph 117 of the NPPF and Policy ASH11(vii-xi).

Parking:

- 6.102 Reference is made to policy ASH3 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan which requires all residential development to meet the **maximum** number of car parking spaces in accordance with the WSCC parking calculator, unless an alternative site-specific approach can be satisfactorily demonstrated.
- 6.103 The WSCC parking guidance would anticipate an overall expectation of 323 spaces to serve the residential part of the development, based on the proposed dwelling size / numbers and the parking behaviour zone for this site (based on 100% allocated). The LHA has reviewed

the revised Transport Statement Addendum (6th March 2025), which refers to a total 347 spaces to be provided to serve the residential part of the development (calculating garages at 0.5 of a space), with an additional 27 visitor spaces, and an additional 23 unallocated residential parking spaces, throughout the site. Officers have counted the spaces marked on the most recent plans (dated June 2025), and arrive at a total of 344.5 residential spaces (including garages at 0.5/space), 27 visitor spaces and 20 unallocated residential parking spaces. This still shows a modest increase over and above the WSCC Parking Guidance.

- 6.104 The LHA has not raised any issues with the use of tandem parking spaces and this format is often implemented at new developments to accommodate the required parking levels without unduly compromising the street frontage or resulting in a car-dominated street-scene.
- 6.105 Based on the number of spaces shown on the plans Officers consider that the technical over-provision of parking would not create for a visually car-dominated development and is generally acceptable. Whilst this is contrary to the expectations set out under para 5.10 (ASH3) of the ANP, this modest overprovision across the residential part of the site is considered acceptable noting paragraph 5.9 of the ANP recognises that '*garages, whilst commonly provided, are commonly not used for parking*'.
- 6.106 The development would provide for cycle parking provision within rear gardens, garages or dedicated cycle storage areas, as per the WSCC cycle parking standards.
- 6.107 Within the community facilities, a total of 58 parking spaces are also to be provided: 40 spaces at the sports pavilion and 18 spaces for the allotments. This has been increased by 10 spaces to reflect the Parish Council's concern that there would be insufficient parking to adequately serve the sports pitch / pavilion. It is noted that the LHA was satisfied with the previous level of provision, given the likelihood that some trips would be made on foot with a number of the local team living within walking distance of the pitch. Officers are satisfied that the number of spaces is appropriate given the various uses at this part of the site.

Conclusion on Transport, Access and Parking

- 6.108 In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to NPPF (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal. Officers see no reason to disagree with this assessment and consider that the proposed development would also accord with the requirements of HDPF policies 40 and 41, and ASH policies ASH3, ASH5 and ASH11(vii-xi), subject to conditions to secure the provision of the vehicular access and a construction management plan.

Flood Risk, Drainage and Contamination

- 6.109 At the time the application was submitted in early 2023, the flood risk maps published by the EA identified low risks of surface water flooding in the areas around the existing barns, and the farm access track, and low and medium risks of surface water flooding to the very north-eastern quadrant. The highest areas at risk were along the existing field drainage ditches and the existing adjoining ponds to the site. The site itself was all within fluvial Flood Zone 1 (least probability of flooding) with the nearest area subject to recognised fluvial flooding (rivers and streams) some 235m to the SE of the site's boundary (Flood Zone 3).
- 6.110 During the course of the application, the Environment Agency (EA) have updated their flood maps to include climate change predictions and show more detailed flood risk information (March 2025). The updated flood maps now show a fluvial Flood Zone 2 and 3 (medium and high risk) area extending north-south across the site entrance where the existing barns and farm track are located, with climate change modelling predicting an increased area at low and medium flood risk, focussed within the same location. The EA maps indicate the medium

risk / Flood Zone 2 area has a flood depth of around 30cm, with the high risk / Flood Zone 3 area having a flood depth of around 20cm. Officers note from the site visit and the topographical survey that this area of the site includes a culvert / ditch running from the southern pond towards the north.

- 6.111 In terms of surface water across the site, the updated EA maps now show extended areas around the north and north-east of the site (around the parish pond, drainage ditches and scrubland) being at risk of surface water flooding, ranging from a low depth of 20cm to a depth of 90cm (within the pond). The area around the existing barns and farm access track remains at high and medium risk of surface water flooding, concentrated again to the ponds and drainage ditches, as per the fluvial flood risk, and responding to the natural dip in land levels in this location. Officers note from the site visit that the site includes a number of functional land drainage ditches, with existing land levels being higher in the southern area dropping gradually towards the northern site boundary (scrubland). Historic mapping data available also shows a spring located to the south-west of Church Farm House which flows northwards around the eastern site boundary and up to Rectory Lane, where the flow joins with Lancing Brook.
- 6.112 The applicants submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) with the application, but in response to the updated flood maps and comments received from the WSCC Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA), have submitted an Addendum (Sept 2025). The site -specific FRA and drainage strategy involves a number of mitigation works, including swales, an attenuation pond to the northern side of the site, re-profiling the ground along the entrance road and upsizing the existing culvert under the access road, seeking to demonstrate that the proposed development would not lead to post-development flooding, nor lead to a detrimental impact on third party land, accounting for climate change predictions. It is noted that the road level will be above the peak flood levels.
- 6.113 The submitted documents have been reviewed by the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Environment Agency (EA), with no objections raised to the proposals, and a series of planning conditions advised. The EA advice on Emergency Plans is noted, but in this case this not considered to be necessary as the mitigation measures have been designed to address the site-specific flood risk, including the re-profiling of the access road to ensure it is above the peak modelled flood water. Based on the mitigation set out in the FRA and Drainage Strategy, therefore, the site access road would not be subject to any post-development flood risk.
- 6.114 Paragraphs 173 to 175 require that a sequential risk-based approach should be taken to individual applications in areas known to be at risk now or in future from any form of flooding, the aim being to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Paragraph 174 states that development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding. Paragraph 175 clarifies that the sequential test should development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in full accordance with the water neutrality strategy d be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding, except in situations where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes, land raising or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future (having regard to potential changes in flood risk).
- 6.115 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has recently (September 2025) been updated to advise that the sequential test should not be applied in situations where the proposed layout, design and mitigation measures would ensure occupants are safe from surface water flood risk. As this site is though subject to fluvial flood risk that extends across the site access road, Paragraph 175 requires that a sequential test is undertaken to establish if there are any reasonably available sequentially preferable sites subject to lesser flood risk that can accommodate the development proposals.

- 6.116 In this instance, the application is not supported by a Sequential Test document. Nevertheless, officers have considered whether, in applying the relevant guidance on undertaking a sequential test at paragraph 028 of the PPG, it is likely that there are any such sequentially preferable sites. In this regard the PPG is clear that the '*sequential test should be applied proportionately, focusing on realistic alternatives in areas of lower flood risk that could meet the same development need*'.
- 6.117 As a starting point, the purpose of this development (and neighbourhood plan allocation) is to meet the housing need of the neighbourhood plan area and provide for accompanying infrastructure including sports facilities and school expansion land. Given these requirements, it is reasonable in this case that only alternative sites within the neighbourhood plan area should be considered. Whilst there are potential sites to the north and south that would have the scale to accommodate the development proposals (applying some degree of flexibility), these are also subject to areas of medium or high surface water flood risk or fluvial flood risk. Further, they are not located as sustainably to the village as the current application site and are unable to provide the required school land extension given they do not abut the primary school.
- 6.118 It is also recognised that during the course of the neighbourhood plan preparation and site allocation, regard was had to the flood risk data available at the time, the 2010 West Sussex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and was furthermore subject to the findings of a detailed Flood Study Report (April 2016). Furthermore, whilst the site access is shown across an area of identified surface water flooding, this corresponds with the existing culvert under the access track and existing field drainage ditches in this location, which are to be retained and incorporated into the site-wide drainage strategy. On this basis it is not considered that the presence of this existing drainage ditch and culvert at the access point, which is to be retained, creates a flood risk that will impact on future residents.
- 6.119 Overall, and having regard to the fact that the site was allocated in knowledge of the surface water flood risk (now extended to fluvial flood risk in the same location) across the site access, Officers advise that there are no known sequentially preferable sites in the area that can accommodate the development proposals and are at a lower risk of flooding. In such circumstances, Paragraphs 177 and 178 require an Exceptions Test to be met. To pass such a Test, Paragraph 178 requires that the development both provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk, and will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.
- 6.120 The site provides clear sustainability benefits in the form of the sports and recreation facilities and the school expansion land. The submitted FRA also demonstrates that the development will be made safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere. In this regard, therefore, the proposal satisfy the Exceptions Test enabling permission to be granted.

Mill Lane

- 6.121 Policy ASH11(xx) seeks flood mitigation works to address flooding issues at Mill Lane, which the Parish Council have picked up on as not having been addressed as part of the proposed development. This forms part of their ongoing objection to the proposal.
- 6.122 In order to understand the expectations of policy ASH11(xx), officers have referred to the Flood Study Report for Mill Lane (available in the background documents as part of the Neighbourhood Plan), which seeks to review and identify the key reasons for the persistent flooding experienced along Mill Lane and proposes solutions to alleviate the problems. Within the report, the available data appears to show that the key issues of Mill Lane arise by way of the west flowing culvert which originates from the springs to the west of the village (Spring Copse). The north-flowing culvert around the application site originates from what

appears to be a functionally separate water source / spring located to the south-east of Church Farm House to that which contributes to the recurring issues at Mill Lane.

- 6.123 As set out under policy ASH7, the Flood Study Report for Mill Lane refers to the provision of a couple of solutions which are stated would be funded by WSCC, either by way of increasing the capacity of the culverted watercourse (around Mill Lane) or by diverting the exceedance flows northwards around the application site (and west of Church Farm House), recognising that the latter solution would require a link to be made through to the northern part of the site. The pre-ambles to ASH7 sets out that the delivery of the site would be expected to deliver appropriate mitigation measures but that further feasibility work will be required to identify a more specific costed scheme.
- 6.124 Although the current application boundary excludes an area of land to the south-east of Church Farm House, the proposed development would not prejudice future flood mitigation works from taking place to the south or south-east of Church Farm House, in the event that future studies reveal a likely solution to the persistent flooding at Mill Lane. However, insofar as the current application is concerned, it proposes to address all surface water attenuation arising by way of the development within the site's boundary and augment the north-flowing drainage culvert as per the proposed FRA measures, which would have a neutral impact on the east-flowing stream and culvert towards Mill Lane, and therefore not leading to a worsened situation as a direct consequence. The LLFA would consider it unreasonable for the proposed development to fund flood mitigation works outside of and not directly related to the development at hand.
- 6.125 The proposal, therefore, is considered to comply with the requirements of HDPF policy 38, NPPF paragraphs 170 - 182 as well as delivering the site-specific flood mitigation measures anticipated by way of policy ASH7. Although the proposal does not include remediation measures which address off-site flooding at Mill Lane, some 340m to the south-east of the application site, officers at the District Council and within the County Council's LLFA consider that requirements for this proposed development to mitigate historic flooding issues which occur beyond the site boundary would be unreasonable.

Biodiversity and Ecology and Protected Species

- 6.126 In addition to the Ecological Appraisal (Aspect Ecology, Feb 2023), the Council's Ecologist has reviewed other submitted documents including Lighting Strategy Rev.R0 (MMA Lighting Consultancy Ltd, March 2023) and the Design and Access Statement (Feb 2023), as well as the amended Ecological Addendum Technical Note 01 (Aspect Ecology, June 2024). These relate to the likely impacts of the development on protected and priority habitats and any proposed mitigations.
- 6.127 The Council's Ecologist initially advised (3rd May 2023) only that a copy of a Hazel Dormouse European Protected Species Licence (EPS) would be needed prior to implementation of any eventual development on this site given the presence of Hazel Dormouse within some of the boundary hedgerows as identified in the submitted site surveys. Whilst the location of the attenuation ponds in the northern area of the site require the removal of a large amount of vegetation, revised plans now show the retention of two Oak trees which is welcomed by the Council's Ecologist, securing the retention of trees with bat roosting potential within the site.
- 6.128 Having reviewed the additional Ecological Technical Note 01 (Aspect Ecology, March 2025) and revised Landscape Masterplan Rev P03 (Allen Pyke, March 2025), The Council's Ecologist is satisfied with the details provided and the certainty offered on the likely impacts. A number of panning conditions are therefore advised, including wildlife sensitive lighting, and to secure a copy of the EPS Dormouse licence.
- 6.129 In relation to potential Great Crested Newt habitat, officers acknowledge a number of ponds within the 500m consultation zone of the site, and that the north-eastern quadrant lies within

a red zone / most suitable habitat for great crested newts. There are two green / low risk areas to the very north-west and south-west corners of the site, whilst an amber zone / suitable habitat covers the middle section of the site.

- 6.130 The submitted Ecological surveys took account of the potential habitat for Great Crested Newts with surveys having been carried out of a number of ponds in and around the site, with the exception of 2 off-site ponds, and assessed as being 'reasonably likely to be absent from the site'. The Council's Ecologist has advised that the surveys carried out meet the requirements and include a high coverage of survey effort to enable an accurate assessment of the likely absence of Great Crested Newts from the application site. No further conditions or a GCN license would therefore be required, although a planning condition is advised to secure appropriate timing of the works.
- 6.131 A number of recommendations are made within the submitted Ecological reports and assessments including the use of native planting, wildflower planting, wetland creation, the use of bird and bat boxes, hedgehog nest domes, habitat piles and bee bricks, which would be secured by way of an ecological enhancement condition.
- 6.132 The proposed development is anticipated to deliver site-specific biodiversity net gains and habitat improvements. Subject to appropriate conditions securing appropriate mitigation and an ecological enhancement strategy it is considered that the proposal would satisfy the requirements on HDPF policies 25 and 31 in respect of its effects upon local biodiversity and protected species, and regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 6.133 It is noted that the submission date of the application predates the now mandatory requirement for a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain being delivered.

Climate Change / Air Quality Impact

- 6.134 HDPF Policies 35, 36 and 37 require that development mitigates the impacts of climate change through measures including improved energy efficiency, reducing flood risk, reducing water consumption, improving biodiversity and promoting sustainable transport modes. These policies reflect the requirements of Chapter 14 of the NPPF that local plans and decisions seek to reduce the impact of development on climate change.
- 6.135 As part of the proposal, the use of PV panels has been set out, along with efficiency measures achieved by using a 'fabric-first' approach to increased insulation and the use of Air Source Heat pumps to the larger dwellings. Furthermore each dwelling is to be provided with one EV charge point, whilst the flatted units would include charge points within the unallocated parking court.
- 6.136 As part of the wider desire to improve overall air quality, the increased take-up of EV vehicles is seen as a beneficial contributor, and so the provision of EV charge points to each dwelling is welcomed in accordance with policy expectations and Part S of the Building Regulations. However, Part S also expects remaining parking spaces to be provided with cabling to anticipate future EV points, which have not been shown.
- 6.137 The submitted Air Quality Assessment calculates a damage cost of £21,050, based on Sussex Air guidance (2021) and DEFRA Damage Cost guidance, arising from increased vehicular movements associated with the scheme. Possible mitigations have been suggested, including, but not limited to the provision of electric bikes, car club vouchers, car-shares, and/or subsidised public transport. A final scheme is to be provided by way of a planning condition.

Water Neutrality

- 6.138 The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England which draws its water supply from groundwater abstraction at Hardham. Natural England has issued a Position Statement for applications within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone which states that it cannot be concluded with the required degree of certainty that new development in this zone would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites. Natural England advises that plans and projects affecting sites where an existing adverse effect is known will be required to demonstrate, with sufficient certainty, that they will not contribute further to an existing adverse effect. The received advice note advises that the matter of water neutrality should be addressed in assessments to agree and ensure that water use is offset for all new developments within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.
- 6.139 Natural England therefore require that the proposal demonstrates water neutrality or that it should be delayed awaiting an area-wide strategic water neutrality solution. Since the application was first submitted, a number of revisions to the water neutrality statement have been undertaken with the applicant looking to arrive at a suitable off-setting scheme. Based on officer calculations of the standard occupancy data which HDC use in terms of assessing likely water demand (derived from Census data), the revised development quantum of 152 homes would generate an average occupancy of 352 persons across the site. The WNS states that each dwelling would incorporate water efficiency measures to establish an average water use of some 85 litres per person per day, equivalent to some 29,923 litres per day across the residential development.
- 6.140 There would be further water demand arising by way of the allotment use, although stand-pipes serving allotments are usually only operational during part of the year, and the sports pavilion. This has been estimated to lead to an averaged use of some 18.56 litres per day (per person), with the use of water efficient fittings within the pavilion, which, based on a potential capacity of 118 people, would lead to a demand of some 2,190 litres / day within the pavilion. The use of a 3G ports pitch would not require water for irrigation or playability.
- 6.141 During the time of the application, the applicants have sought to try and address water neutrality by way of various mechanisms, with testing for a potential borehole discovering the site would not provide a suitable yield. However, as the site meets the recently published criteria to access the emerging Sussex North Water Certification Scheme (SNWCS), no further reliance on such schemes necessary as the development is eligible to offset its water demand via SNWCS. A 'Grampian' style condition is therefore recommended, restricting the commencement of development until the required payment into SNWCS to achieve water neutrality has been evidenced.
- 6.142 It is therefore concluded that subject to this condition the proposed development would accord with Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and would not result in an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 193, or the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Potential withdrawal of Natural England's Position Statement

- 6.140 On the 8th October 2025, the Government issued a press release setting out that 'a landmark agreement' has been reached between government, regulators and the water industry to resolve the water supply issues in the Arun Valley, enabling building work to 'begin from 1 November'. In essence this press release foresees that water neutrality will no longer be a material planning consideration from 1 November as a strategic-level solution has been

agreed to ensure adverse impacts on the Arun Valley habitat sites, as identified in the Natural England Position Statement of September 2021, will be avoided.

6.141 The press release states that 'Under the agreement by Defra, Natural England, the Environment Agency and Southern Water, the water company will change its water abstraction permits to limit the amount of water taken from local rivers and wetlands, as well as provide funding to restore habitats.' The press release goes on to state that 'New homes will also be built to higher water efficiency standards in line with the building regulation guidance for water scarce areas, reducing daily water use and easing pressure on local watercourses.'

6.142 At the time of writing this report, however, the Natural England Position Statement of September 2021 still officially remains in place and until such time that it is formally withdrawn, and the Council agrees that the evidence supports its withdrawal, all developments will continue to need to demonstrate water neutrality.

6.143 It is though recognised that the Position Statement is likely to be withdrawn by the end of October, and this may mean that water neutrality is no longer a constraint on development. The withdrawal of the Position Statement, and the potential removal of water neutrality as a constraint, will not impact on the balance of material considerations for this development, however it will impact on the list of recommended conditions. For the avoidance of doubt, this means the removal of Conditions 3 and 18 and the addition of the following condition:

Regulatory Condition: *The dwelling(s) hereby permitted shall meet the optional requirement of building regulation G2 to limit the water usage of each dwelling to no more than 110 litres per person per day. The subsequently installed water limiting measures shall thereafter be retained.*

Reason: *To limit water use in order to improve the sustainability of the development in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*

S106 Agreement and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

6.143 Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017. This development constitutes CIL liable development.

6.144 As noted in the preceding paragraphs, the contribution to education provision referred to in Policy ASH11 is to come forward via CIL (subject to the CIL governance). Similarly, the requested NHS Sussex infrastructure contribution would be capable of being delivered by way of CIL contributions, which can be brought together with other CIL contributions to deliver strategically delivered infrastructure provisions within the wider area.

6.145 A s106 legal agreement is nevertheless required to secure the obligations necessary to make this application acceptable in planning terms, and is currently being drafted. The Heads of Terms include the following:

- 35% Affordable Housing (53 units with a 70/30 split to Affordable Rented and Shared Occupancy)
- Allocation of land for school expansion (0.1ha)
- Commitment to engage with Ashington Parish Council to secure pedestrian / cycle access over Parish Council land from north-east of the site to PRoW (FP 2607)
- Formation of pedestrian access from the site to PRoW (FP 2607) to the north
- Agreement to be obtained from the landowner to allow an upgrade of Footpath 2611 that confers permissive cycle use - financial contribution towards the cost of the physical works to enable such cycle use (Footpath 2611)
- Travel Plan Monitoring

- Provision of public open space and play space (LEAP)
- On-site delivery of allotments (to be transferred to the Council or our nominee)
- On-site delivery of 3G sports pitch, equipment store and sports pavilion (to be delivered as a shell and core and transferred to the Council or our nominee)

Conclusion and planning balance

- 6.146 The Horsham District Planning Framework is now over 5 years old, and the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply with current supply calculated as being only 1 year. The failure to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply triggers the presumption in favour of development at paragraph 11d of the NPPF in the determination of this application. This requires that planning permission be approved unless:
- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a **strong** reason for refusing the development proposed (such as impact on a designated habitats site, heritage asset, areas at risk of flooding...); or*
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable location, making effective use of land, scouring well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.*
- 6.147 The Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (March 2021) includes the allocation of strategic housing sites, with the application site allocated for approximately 150 dwellings within Policy ASH11. The principle of housing development on this site is therefore in accordance with the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) and Policy 4 of the HDPF.
- 6.148 Policy ASH11 is also subject to a number of specific criteria and policy 'aims'. The proposal, as revised, sets out a quantum of 152 dwellings on this site, in a layout which accords with the envisaged built development parcels set out on the associated policy map at table 8.2 of the ANP.
- 6.149 Officers consider that the proposal meets the policy criteria set out under ASH11 with the exception of part xii (provision of commercial floorspace under use Class B1), part xiii (provision of a full-sized grass football pitch), and part xx (Mill Lane flooding). To address the lack of dedicated commercial floorspace being provided as part of the proposed development (as per part xii), the applicants have sought to ensure that the sports pavilion can accommodate a flexible use, such as business / meeting hire space. This on-site provision would accord, albeit in a limited way, with the options for small-scale employment development envisioned under Policy AHS7 for the application site.
- 6.150 It is acknowledged that the proposal does not deliver a full-sized grass football pitch, however it instead offers the direct delivery on site of a full-sized 3G all-weather pitch for football which officers consider to be a betterment. The proposal has been revised to address parish council comments and concerns over the delivery and location of the sports pitches from the initial submission, to the current revised proposal for one 3G pitch. Officers consider that the final proposal, for 1 x full-size 3G sports pitch, would better contribute a facility to the local community that would be more beneficial and of greater use, and one which accords to Sport England guidance and preferences towards the advancement of sports. The Ashington Infrastructure Delivery Program looks to improve drainage to existing grass pitches by way of CIL funding, of which some £650,000 (estimated) would be generated by this development for the Parish to use to improve infrastructure in the village.
- 6.151 The proposed development provides site-specific flood mitigation and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to ensure that the development addresses and mitigates existing flood risk at the site, and would not lead to, nor exacerbate flooding adjacent to the site as a result. The apparent issues at Mill Lane appears to be linked to the southern catchment area

originating to the west, and not the northern catchment area which feeds into the development site. Therefore, it would be unreasonable to require flood mitigation works to Mill Lane to be delivered by way of this proposal (under part xx).

- 6.152 The development is considered to be of a scale, design, character and layout which would enable a cohesive and planned for extension to Ashington and which would reflect the adjacent scale and nature of residential developments. Associated landscape-led enhancements within and alongside the site edges, such as the upgrading and improvements to the PRow would ensure a good overall environmental quality of the development and connectivity to the wider village. The proposal would deliver a policy-compliant level of affordable housing as required by HDPF policy 16 with additional CIL moneys secured to contribute towards the Community Infrastructure projects identified in the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan (policy ASH8). The proposal would also secure the delivery of the sports facilities, allotments, open space, play space and school expansion land as required by Policy ASH11.
- 6.153 Overall, therefore, the proposals are therefore considered to be in accordance with HDPF policies 4, 25, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36 and 37, as well as policies ASH1, ASH5, ASH8, ASH9 and ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan, and is recommended for approval subject to the conditions below, and subject to the completion of the necessary s106 legal agreement to secure the affordable housing and other infrastructure as set out in the above Heads of Terms.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

Horsham District Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which took effect on 1st October 2017.

It is considered that this development constitutes CIL liable development.

Use Description	Proposed	Existing	Net Gain
Residential	17,814.4 (exact figure tbc)	0	17,814.4
	Total Gain		17,814.4
	Total Demolition		0.00

Please note that the above figures will be reviewed by the CIL Team prior to issuing a CIL Liability Notice and may therefore change.

Exemptions and/or reliefs may be applied for up until the commencement of a chargeable development.

In the event that planning permission is granted, a CIL Liability Notice will be issued thereafter. CIL payments are payable on commencement of development.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 7.1 To approve full planning permission subject to appropriate conditions and subject to the completion of the necessary section 106 agreement within four months of the decision of this Committee, or such longer period as is agreed by the Director of Place acting reasonably and properly, with authority delegated to the Head of Development and Building Control to remove and/or replace any the conditions which become unnecessary as a result of the potential incoming position change on Water Neutrality.

Conditions:

1 Approved Plans

2 Regulatory (Time) Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3 Pre-Commencement Condition: The development hereby approved shall not commence until either:

i) Details have been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority confirming that the necessary credits to achieve water neutrality have been secured via the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme;

or

ii) A site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme shall include full details of the means of any and all onsite and offsite mitigation and any necessary agreements pursuant to S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to deliver and secure the approved mitigation; and

iii) The development shall not be first occupied until evidence has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority confirming that the approved site-specific water neutrality mitigation scheme pursuant to part ii) has been fully implemented. The approved mitigation shall thereafter be retained, maintained and operated to the same or better water performance standard.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SAC/SPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Local Plan, Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to enable the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

4 Pre-Commencement Condition: The development hereby approved shall not commence until a detailed Phasing Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details (unless superseded by a subsequent strategy approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority). The strategy shall include the phasing of open space and infrastructure (including all roads, pedestrian and cycle routes and the protected Forest School route) and illustrate how these would be delivered in conjunction with the development zones.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in such a way that provides safe and suitable access throughout the development process, taking account of the ongoing requirement to access adjacent land by the School, and to works are carried out cohesively across the site, in compliance Policies 32, 38 and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and paragraph 115 of the NPPF (2024).

5 Pre-Commencement Condition:

1 No development or preliminary groundworks can commence until a programme of geophysical survey and archaeological trial trenching has been secured and undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the planning authority prior to reserved matters applications being submitted.

- 2 A mitigation strategy detailing the excavation/preservation strategy shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval following the completion of this work.
- 3 No development or preliminary groundworks can commence on those areas containing archaeological deposits until the satisfactory completion of fieldwork, as detailed in the mitigation strategy, and which has been signed off by the local planning authority through its historic environment advisors.
- 4 The applicant will submit to the local planning authority a post-excavation assessment (to be submitted within three months of the completion of fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Planning Authority). This will result in the completion of post-excavation analysis, preparation of a full site archive and report ready for deposition at the local museum, and submission of a publication report.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental as the site is of archaeological significance and it is important that it is recorded by excavation before it is destroyed by development in accordance with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 6 Pre-Commencement Condition:** No development, which has the potential to impact on the breeding / resting place of Hazel Dormouse, shall commence until the Local Planning Authority has been provided with either:
- a) A licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorizing the specified activity/development to go ahead; or
 - b) A statement in writing from the Natural England to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/development will require a licence.

Reason: To conserve protected species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998, and in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 7 Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby approved shall not commence until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following;
- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
 - b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
 - d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - e) Containment, control and removal of any Invasive non-native species present on site in particular New Zealand Pygmyweed in Pond P1
 - f) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
 - g) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
 - h) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
 - i) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.
- The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority

Reason: To conserve protected species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife &

Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998, and in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 8 Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby approved shall not commence until the following components of a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination, (including asbestos contamination), of the site has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority:

- (a) A preliminary risk assessment which has identified:
- all previous uses
 - potential contaminants associated with those uses
 - a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways and receptors
 - Potentially unacceptable risks arising from contamination at the site.

The following aspects (b) – (d) shall be dependent on the outcome of the above preliminary risk assessment (a) and may not necessarily be required.

- (b) An intrusive site investigation scheme, based on (a) to provide information for a detailed risk assessment to the degree and nature of the risk posed by any contamination to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.
- (c) Full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken based on the results of the intrusive site investigation (b) and an options appraisal.
- (d) A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in (c) are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action where required.

The scheme shall be implemented as approved. Any changes to these components require the consent of the local planning authority.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure that no unacceptable risks are caused to humans, controlled waters or the wider environment during and following the development works and to ensure that any pollution is dealt with in accordance with Policies 24 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 9 Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby approved shall not commence until the following demolition and construction details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall be limited to the following measures:

- (a) Details of site management contact details and responsibilities;
- (b) A plan detailing the site logistics arrangements on a phase-by-phase basis (as applicable), including:
- i. location of site compound,
 - ii. location for the loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials (including any stripped topsoil),
 - iii. site offices (including location, height, size and appearance),
 - iv. location of site access points for construction vehicles,
 - v. location of on-site parking,
 - vi. locations and details for the provision of wheel washing facilities and dust suppression facilities
 - vii. the provision of wheel washing facilities and other works required to mitigate the impact of construction upon the public highway (including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders)
 - viii. the prevention of deliveries at the site during school drop-off and pick-up time (generally 0800-0900 and 1430-1530)
 - ix. Access arrangements from the public highway, including temporary accesses and alterations to existing accesses.
- (c) The arrangements for public consultation and liaison prior to and during the demolition and construction works – newsletters, fliers etc, to include site management contact details for residents;

- (d) Details of any floodlighting, including location, height, type and direction of light sources, hours of operation and intensity of illumination

All demolition and construction activities shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the details and measures approved

Reason: As this matter is fundamental in order to consider the potential impacts on the amenity of nearby occupiers and highway safety during construction and in accordance with Policies 33 and 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 10 Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby approved shall not commence until construction drawings of the sustainable surface water drainage network, associated sustainable drainage components and flow control mechanisms and a construction method statement have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall then be constructed as per the agreed drawings, method statement and Flood Risk Assessment by Ardent, 11/06/2024, revision D and Flood Risk Assessment – Addendum by Ardent, revision B, 01/09/2025, and remain in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No alteration to the agreed drainage scheme shall occur without prior written approval from the Local Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and to comply with paragraph 181 of the NPPF (2024) and Policies 35 and 38 Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy ASH 7 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 11 Pre-Commencement Condition:** Notwithstanding the submitted Tree Protection Plan [1780-KC-XX-YTREE-TPP01 Rev G], or the Arboricultural Method Statement { 1780-KC-XX-YTREE Rev D], the development hereby approved shall not commence, including demolition pursuant to the permission granted, ground clearance, or bringing equipment, machinery or materials onto the site, until an updated and Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan detailing all trees/hedgerows on site and adjacent to the site to be retained during construction works, and measures to provide for their protection throughout all construction works in accordance with BS 5837 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations' (2012), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented and thereafter carried out at all times strictly in accordance with the agreed details.
Any trees or hedges on the site which die or become damaged during the construction process shall be replaced with trees or hedging plants of a type, size and in positions agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH5 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 12 Pre-Commencement Condition:** With the exception of demolition works, no development hereby approved shall commence until a pre-commencement site meeting has been held on-site involving the applicant, the main contractor, and the Project Arboriculturist, with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) Tree Officer invited to attend. The Project Arboriculturist, to be appointed by the applicant, will conduct a pre-commencement site visit and submit a report to the LPA confirming the satisfactory installation and approval of the approved tree protection measures as detailed in the Arboricultural Method Statement to be submitted under Condition 11. The appointed Project Arboriculturist shall provide the LPA with regular arboricultural site supervision reports throughout the construction phase, documenting compliance with the agreed Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement. Should any unforeseen incidents occur which may adversely affect any retained tree, the site manager must inform the Project Arboriculturist immediately. The Project Arboriculturist will then notify the LPA Tree Officer, providing details of the incident and any proposed remedial works for approval. A detailed record of such incidents and any

subsequent measures taken will be maintained by the Project Arboriculturist and provided to the LPA upon request

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to ensure the successful and satisfactory protection of important trees and hedgerows on the site in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH5 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 13 Pre-Commencement Condition:** The development hereby approved shall not commence until details of all underground trenching requirements for services, including the positions of soakaways, service ducts, foul, grey and storm water systems and all other underground service facilities (such as those required for street lights, utilities and EV charge points), and required ground excavations therefor, have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall coordinate with the tree protection measures and landscape scheme pursuant to conditions 11 and 23 respectively. All such underground services shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: As the matter is fundamental to protect roots of important existing trees and hedgerows on the site and future trees identified in the approved landscaping strategy in accordance with Policies 25, 32, 33 & 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH5(B) of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 14 Pre-Commencement Condition:** No relevant development of the all-weather sports field shall take place unless and until details of the design and layout of artificial grass pitch, including sports lighting and the infill containment for the have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority [after consultation with Sport England]. The artificial grass pitch shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the approved details. The works will be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme within a time scale to be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority after consultation with Sport England.

Reason: To ensure the provision of a fit-for-purpose and sustainable playing field in accordance with Policy 43 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH8 and ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 15 Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a Biodiversity Compensation and Enhancement Strategy for protected and Priority species shall be prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist based on recommendations EE1 – E8 in Ecological Appraisal (Aspect Ecology, Feb 2023) and submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
- b) Detailed designs to achieve stated objectives;
- c) Locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans;
- d) Persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;
- e) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).
- f) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To conserve protected species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998, and in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 16 Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** No development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a schedule of materials and finishes and colours to be used for external walls, windows and roofs of the approved buildings has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing and all materials and details used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall conform to those approved.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity by endeavouring to achieve a building of visual quality in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 17 Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition:** Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a layout of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, showing the location and tenure of the dwellinghouses which are to comply with Building Regulations Part M4(2) and M4(3) in a more proportionate split amongst open market and affordable dwellings. Once agreed, the specified units shall be provided and retained permanently thereafter

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to in order to improve the sustainability of the development and to ensure homes are fit for all ages in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 18 Pre-Occupation Condition:** The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in full accordance with the water neutrality strategy (prepared by Quantum CE, Water Neutrality Report V7, received 09/03/2023). No dwelling hereby permitted shall be first occupied until evidence has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that the approved water neutrality strategy for that dwelling has been implemented in full. The evidence shall include the specification of fittings and appliances used, evidence of their installation, and completion of the as built Part G water calculator or equivalent. The installed measures shall be retained as such thereafter, or to a similar or improved water performance.

Reason: To ensure the development is water neutral to avoid an adverse impact on the Arun Valley SACSPA and Ramsar sites in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and to enable the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

- 19 Pre-Occupation Condition:** The development hereby approved shall not be first occupied until details of the maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity. The Local Planning Authority shall be granted access to inspect the sustainable drainage scheme for the lifetime of the development. The details of the scheme to be submitted for approval shall include:
- 1) A timetable for its implementation,
 - 2) Details of SuDS features and connecting drainage structures and maintenance requirement for each aspect,
 - 3) A management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed for each new dwelling and not increased in accordance with para 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), Policy 38 in HDPF and policy ASH7 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 20 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Upon completion of the surface water drainage system, including any SuDS features, and prior to the first occupation of the development; a survey and report from an independent surveyor shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The survey and report shall demonstrate that the surface water drainage system has been constructed in accordance with the details approved pursuant to condition 10. Where necessary, details of corrective works to be carried out along with a timetable for their completion, shall be included for approval in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any corrective works required shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timetable and subsequently re-surveyed with the findings submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure a SuDS drainage system has been provided to an acceptable standard to the reduce risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, improve habitat and amenity, and ensure future maintenance in accordance with para 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), Policies 35 and 38 in HDPF and policy ASH7 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 21 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be first occupied until full details of all hard and soft landscaping works shall have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include plans and measures addressing the following:

- (a) Details of all existing trees and planting to be removed and retained (showing accordance with the Tree Protection Plan required under Condition 11)
- (b) Details of all proposed trees and planting, including schedules specifying species, planting size, densities and plant numbers and tree pit details, details to include written specifications of cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment (showing accordance with the submitted Ecological Appraisal by Aspect Ecology, Feb 2023)
- (c) Details of all hard surfacing materials and finishes, to include finished levels and contours of all earthworks and mounding where appropriate
- (d) Details of all boundary treatments, including protective fencing and structures to ponds, drainage ditches, swales and attenuation ponds as appropriate, means of enclosures to pumping stations and the allotments
- (e) Details of any bridge structures to culverts / drainage ditches
- (f) Surfacing specification of the circulation paths around the site to facilitate year-round use (shown on plans to be 'mown')
- (g) Details of all fixed structures or minor artefacts, such as bins, dog waste bins, benches, signs, noticeboards, lighting columns or bollards

The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within the first planting season following the first occupation of any part of the development. Unless otherwise agreed as part of the approved landscaping, no trees or hedges on the site shall be wilfully damaged or uprooted, felled/removed, topped or lopped without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority until 5 years after completion of the development. Any proposed or retained planting, which within a period of 5 years, dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH5 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 22 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied, or brought into first use, until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority prior to commencement of the development. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:
- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
 - b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
 - c) Aims and objectives of management.
 - d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
 - e) Prescriptions for management actions.
 - f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
 - g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
 - h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve protected species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998, and in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 23 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied, or brought into first use, until a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, a description of landscape components, management prescriptions, maintenance schedules and accompanying plan delineating areas of responsibility) for all communal landscape areas, including woodland, attenuation ponds, Drainage ditches, swales, Public Open Spaces, play areas, and the retained Forest School area and safeguarded access route, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, alongside a timetable for the implementation of the Landscape Management Plan. The Management Plan shall include details of the arrangements for its implementation and shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, supporting documents / reports, surveys, and timetable(s) unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent for any variation. The landscape areas shall thereafter be provided, managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development and in the interests of visual amenity and nature conservation in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 24 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied, or brought into first use, until an updated Lighting Design Strategy for areas to be lit, based on applying recommendation MM6 of the Ecological Appraisal (Aspect Ecology, Feb 2023), and in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall:
- a) Identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and Hazel Dormouse that are likely to be disturbed in or around their breeding sites and resting

- places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
- b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed, including the sports pitch (through provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: To conserve protected species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998, and in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 25 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied, or brought into first use, until the vehicular access serving the development has been constructed in accordance with the details shown on the drawing titled 'Proposed Access Arrangement and Visibility Splays' and numbered 2109010-02 rev E (contained within the Transport Assessment (March 2023)).

Reason: In the interests of road safety and in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and in accordance with policy ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 26 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to bringing the sports pavilion and/or all-weather sports pitch, into first use, a Management and Maintenance scheme / community use agreement for the facilities, including management responsibilities, parish council functions and community use, a maintenance schedule, pricing policy and a mechanism for review shall be prepared in consultation with Sport England and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall also include, hours of operation, management responsibilities during all operating hours, measures to control noise from any amplified music (and public address systems), including use of the external outside terrace and car park, and minimising the effects of patrons coming and going from site and demonstrating how customers leaving the building will be prevented from causing nuisance for people in the area. The measures set out in the approved scheme shall be complied with in full, with effect from commencement of the use of the sports facility hereby consented.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers, and to ensure that the new community facilities are capable of being appropriately managed and maintained to ensure sufficient benefit of the provision of community facilities and the development of sport, as required by policies 33 and 43 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and policies ASH8, ASH9 and ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 27 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Within 6 months of completion of the all-weather sports pitch, a Management and Maintenance scheme for the facility, including management responsibilities, a maintenance schedule, and mechanism for review, shall be prepared in consultation with Sport England and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include measures to ensure the replacement of the artificial grass pitch within the manufacturers specified. It should also include the required testing to comply with FIFA quality certification. The measures set out the approved scheme shall be complied with in full with effect from commencement of use of the all-weather sports pitch.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers, and to ensure that the new community facilities are capable of being appropriately managed and maintained to ensure sufficient benefit of the provision of community facilities and the development of sport, as required by policies 33 and 43 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), and policies ASH8, ASH9 and ASH11 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 28 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied, or brought into first use, until a Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan once approved shall thereafter be implemented as specified within the approved document. The Travel Plan shall be completed in accordance with the latest guidance and good practice documentation as published by the Department for Transport or as advised by the Highway Authority.

Reason: To encourage and promote sustainable transport and in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 29 Pre-Occupation Condition** Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a scheme of air quality mitigation shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall have regard to the Council's latest Air Quality & Emissions Reduction Guidance document, and shall be implemented in full accordance with the agreed timetable.

Reason: To mitigate the impact of the development on air quality within the District and to sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants in accordance with Policies 24 & 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 30 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of any part of the flatted development, or use of the allotments, sports pavilion and artificial sports pitch hereby permitted, a scheme to show active EV charge spaces within the communal parking areas, and passive ducting to provide for future EV charge points / upgrading for that area/use, with a timeline for the implementation of such works, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To mitigate the impact of the development on air quality within the District and to sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants in accordance with Policies 24 & 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 31 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to the first occupation of any part of the residential development hereby permitted, details of air source heat pumps, including their location, design, size, specification and noise levels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The air source heat pumps shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development and in the interests of neighbour amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- 32 Pre-Occupation Condition:** Prior to bringing the allotments, sports pavilion and/or all-weather sports pitch into first use, the vehicle parking, covered and secure cycle parking and bin stores for that facility shall be constructed and made available for its use in accordance with approved drawing numbers [062009-BC01 REV B - Bin and Cycle Store, received 18.06.2025, and 062009-BEL-SL-02-G - Supporting Planning Layout, received 18.06.2025]. The parking, cycle parking and bin store shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details and thereafter be retained as such for their designated use at all times.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for the parking of cycles as an alternative travel option to the use of the car in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 33 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until the car parking spaces (including garages and car ports where applicable) necessary for that dwelling, or flats, have been constructed and made available for use in accordance with approved drawing numbers [062009-BEL-SL-02-G - Supporting Planning Layout, received 18.06.2025]. The car parking spaces, garages and car-ports permitted shall thereafter be retained as such for their designated use and used only as private domestic garages and car ports for the parking of vehicles incidental to the use of the properties as dwellings and for no other purposes.

Reason: To provide adequate and satisfactory car-parking provisions is made for the parking of vehicles clear of all carriageways in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and policy ASH3 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 34 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No dwelling or flat hereby permitted shall be occupied until the cycle parking facilities serving it have been provided within the garage, or side or rear garden for that dwelling, or within the dedicated cycle storage in accordance with approved drawing numbers [062009-BC01-A]. The cycle parking facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for the parking of cycles in accordance with Policy 40 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 35 Pre-Occupation Condition:** No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until provision for the storage of refuse and recycling has been provided within the garage, car port, side or rear garden for that dwelling, or within the dedicated refuse storage facilities serving the flats. The facilities shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.

Reason: To ensure the adequate provision of refuse and recycling facilities in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 36 Pre-Occupation Condition:** The sports pavilion and dwellings hereby permitted shall not be occupied, or brought into first use, until the necessary in-building physical infrastructure and external site-wide infrastructure to enable superfast broadband speeds of a minimum 30 megabits per second through full fibre broadband connection has been provided to the sports pavilion or that dwelling.

Reason: To ensure a sustainable development that meets the needs of future occupiers in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 37 Regulatory Condition:** All mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 7 of the Ecological Appraisal (Aspect Ecology, Feb 2023) already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW,) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework.

- 38 Regulatory Condition:** All development shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted and approved Flood Risk Assessment (dated 11th June 2024), this includes all new residential dwellings to have a finished floor level raised a minimum of 300 mm above the surrounding proposed ground level unless otherwise first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed and not increased in accordance with para 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), Policies 35 and 38 in HDPF and policy ASH7 of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 39 Regulatory Condition:** All dwellings hereby permitted shall be constructed to Building Regulations Part M4(2) or M4(3) standards in accordance with the approved layout plan [Tenure Layout, 062009-BEL-SL-04 Rev G, received 18.06.2025].

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to in order to improve the sustainability of the development and to ensure homes are fit for all ages in accordance with Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy ASH10(ii) of the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 40 Regulatory Condition:** No works for the implementation of the development hereby approved shall take place outside of 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of adjacent occupiers in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 41 Regulatory Condition:** If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development shall be carried out until a remediation strategy has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: To ensure that no unacceptable risks are caused to humans, controlled waters or the wider environment during and following the development works and to ensure that any pollution is dealt with in accordance with Policies 24 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

- 42 Regulatory Condition:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (and/or any Order revoking and/or re-enacting that Order no development falling within Classes A, AA, B and E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the order shall be erected, constructed or placed within the curtilage(s) of the development hereby permitted without express planning consent from the Local Planning Authority first being obtained.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and due to the countryside location of the development in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).