

LOCATION: Threapwood , 36 The Maultway, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 1PS

PROPOSAL: Redevelopment of site to provide a housing development (Class C3) comprising a mix of houses and flats (24 residential units), with associated landscaping, car & cycle parking

TYPE: Full Planning Application

APPLICANT: Aquinna Homes Plc

OFFICER: Navil Rahman

This application has been reported to the Planning Applications Committee because it is a major development (a development of ten dwellings or over).

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application relates to the redevelopment of a site comprising a single dwelling, for the construction of 24 units made up of 9 no.1-bedroom flats and 15-dwellings (7x 2-bedroom units and 8 x 3-bedroom units).
- 1.2 The proposed redevelopment of the site would be acceptable in principle. However, in respect of its layout, design, scale, and landscaping it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Furthermore, by reason of the access, the development would be harmful to highway users safety and has failed to demonstrate that it would sufficiently support the use of sustainable modes of transport. There would also be harm to the residential amenities of the neighbouring occupier of no. 24 Martel Close by way of loss of outlook and daylight/sunlight. Furthermore, it has not been demonstrated that future occupiers would be provided sufficient mitigation against noise insulation and ventilation.
- 1.3 Insufficient detail has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposal would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation and an acceptable mix of affordable housing delivery. Neither has it been demonstrated that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the Black Hill and White Hill Site of Nature Conservation Importance, upon protected species and that there would be no unacceptable habitat loss on site. The proposal also fails to demonstrate an acceptable drainage scheme could be adopted. In the absence of a legal agreement to secure SAMM monies the proposal would also conflict with the Thames Basin Heath SPA.
- 1.4 The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site comprises a detached, two-storey dwellinghouse and detached garage situated on an irregular shaped plot measuring approximately 0.49 hectares in size. The site is situated and accessed off the western side of the Maultway, close to the overpass of the M3 Motorway, located to the south west of the site. The land has become overgrown with shrubs whilst several mature trees are situated towards each of the boundaries with an established group of trees to the southern boundary helping screen the site from the motorway.
- 2.2 Residential development is located to the north and west of the site, with the properties to the north, off the Maultway characterised by detached properties on irregular shaped plots, with generous garden spaces set behind vegetative screens whilst the properties to the west having a more regimented urbanised layout with rows of terraces on rectangular plots. To the opposite side of the Maultway is the Countryside Beyond the Green Belt and Site of Nature Conservation Importance.
- 2.3 The site is within the Contemporary Paved Estates Character Area as defined in the Western Urban Area Character Appraisal 2012 (WUAC) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is characterised by residential development interspersed with significant areas of amenity green space. Plot shapes are irregular and vary, comprising of two-storey dwellings built in the 80's and 90's.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 No relevant planning history.

4.0 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and the construction of twenty-four residential units, in the form of 9 no. 1-bedroom flats, 7 no. 2-bedroom dwellings and 8 no. 3-bedroom dwellings together with ancillary parking, landscaping, means of access and ancillary cycle and refuse facilities.
- 4.2 The proposed access would be moved 4.8m south from the existing point of access to increase the separation with the neighbouring access road, whilst having an additional 2.5m width.
- 4.3 Plots 10-14 and 21-24 would be two rows of terraced dwellings, whilst plots 15/16, 17/18 and 19/20 would be semi-detached plots. Each dwelling's plot would be rectangular, benefitting from a front garden space and long rear gardens ranging between 11.4m to 16.3m in length. Each property would benefit from dedicated cycle store to their rear gardens.
- 4.4 The layout would result in the semi-detached plots 19/20, the end of terrace plot 24, and the flatted block having facing elevations onto the Maultway. These properties, including plots 21-23 would have a two and a half storey height with accommodation in the roof space (with a ridge height of 9.95m), whilst the flatted block would have a three-storey height (with a ridge height of 11.35m). The remaining properties on the site would be to the rear of the site and would be two-storey in height (with a ridge height of 8.8-9m).

- 4.5 The proposed flatted block would have an 'L' shaped form, situated towards the north eastern corner of the site with its own dedicated external cycle and refuse stores. Each flat would benefit from private amenity space in the form of a patio area at ground floor level and balconies to the flats on the floors above. There would be a communal amenity space comprising 111sq.m to the rear of the site.
- 4.6 The proposed material palette seeks a traditional aesthetic with a mix of red brick work and red/brown tiles to the dwellings and a buff brick with grey tiles to the flatted block.
- 4.7 A total of 39 car parking spaces are to be provided, with two spaces per dwelling and one space per flat.
- 4.8 The proposal would result in the loss of 1 group of category B trees (moderate quality), 12 groups of category C trees (low quality), 11 individual category C trees and 6 category C hedges.
- 4.9 Units 1-9 (the flats) would all be affordable units (or 39% of the net development), with two units being 'First Homes' and the remaining seven units being shared ownership units. The housing mix is given below:

Unit Type	Number of Units	Unit Percentage
1-bedroom	9 (all flats)	37.5%
2-bedroom	7 (all dwellings)	29.2%
3-bedroom	8 (all dwellings)	33.3%

- 4.10 The application has been supported by the following documents:

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 The following external consultees were consulted, and their comments are summarised in the table below:

External Consultation	Comments received
County Highways Authority	Recommend refusal due to the proposal failing to demonstrate that it would have a safe vehicle and pedestrian access off the Maultway, and failing to demonstrate that it would provide future residents with suitable, safe, and convenient means of access to sustainable modes of transport. See Annex A for a copy of their response.
Joint Waste Solution	Raise no objection.
Natural England	Raise no objection subject to appropriate assessment being carried out and mitigation measures in respect of the SPA are applied.
Surrey County Council Archaeology	Raise no objection.
Surrey Fire and Rescue	Raise no objection, however, insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate compliance with parts B1-B4 of the Building Regulations. Recommend the use of a sprinkler system.

	Officer response: Building Control would ensure the development is compliant with all relevant parts of the Building Regulations. No objection has been raised to the principle of the development. This would be subject to a separate application process.
Local Lead Flood Authority	Raise objection. Proposed drainage scheme fails to meet the requirements set out in the NPPF.
Surrey Wildlife Trust	<p>The application has failed to demonstrate that the development would not have a likely adverse impact on Black Hill and White Hill Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SINC) due to increased recreational pressure.</p> <p>In addition, insufficient information to demonstrate how no net loss can be secured.</p> <p>Further information prior to determination is also required in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hazel dormouse presence/absence survey - Reptile receptor information <p>Other ecology matters to be secured by planning condition.</p>
Thames Water	Raise no objection.

5.2 The following internal consultees were consulted, and their comments are summarised in the table below:

Internal Consultation	Comments received
Arboricultural Officer	Raise objection. Proposal fails to offset the impact of the development in respect of loss of tree loss, screening, shelter and long-term effect to the landscape and wider landscape.
Urban Design Consultant (UDC)	<p>Raises concerns in respect of the proposed scale, heights, building form, layout, and lack of placemaking.</p> <p>See Annex B for a copy of the response.</p>
Environmental Health officer	<p>The dwellings would not meet Part O of the Building Regulations in respect of recommended levels for noise. Further information required to demonstrate whether the scheme would provide sufficient noise insulation and ventilation for future occupiers.</p> <p>Raise no objection in respect of air quality and recommend conditions in respect of land contamination, external lighting, and a Construction Environmental management Plan.</p>
Housing Manager	Raises no objection to the tenure proposed, however, prefer the intermediate units to deliver a mixture of property sizes.

6.0 REPRESENTATION

6.1 A total of twelve letters of consultation were sent on the 14 December 2023 to neighbouring residents, together with a site notice dated 14 December 2023 and press notice issued on the 27 December 2023. Twenty letters of objection were received from eighteen households as part of the public notification exercise. The concerns are summarised and responded to below.

Material Reason for Objection	Officer Response
<u>Design</u>	
Overdevelopment of the site with too many homes. Proposed layout, lack of open space, lack of driveways, single access, and lack of bin storage highlights this.	The proposed layout and design of the development is considered unacceptable in line with the objectives of high-quality design. This is discussed further in section 7.4 of the report.
Provision of flats not in keeping	The surrounding area typically consists of single-family dwellings. The introduction of flatted development whilst not typical, would add to the variety of the housing stock on offer and would be acceptable in principle.
The existing property is setback and unassuming. Proposed development would be prominent in the street scene.	The proposed design and position of the development would result in an out of character and harmful addition to the street scene. This is discussed further in section 7.4 of the report.
Insufficient details in respect of cycle storage.	The position of the cycle stores is considered acceptable in principle and full details of the design can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of permission.
Removal of trees resulting in loss of amenity value.	The proposed loss of trees on site and inadequate replacement planting would be considered unacceptable. This is discussed further in section 7.4 of the report.
<u>Amenity Impact</u>	
Loss of natural noise barrier from the M3 through the removal of trees.	The natural noise barrier of the M3 is situated outside of the red line boundary of the site. Whilst the loss of trees would result in the loss of additional noise screening, the trees are not protected by tree preservation order and their loss, could be considered acceptable in principle.
Loss of privacy, in particular from the upper floor flats.	The proposed flatted block owing to its proximity to relative neighbouring occupiers, would not be considered to result in any privacy harm. This is discussed further in section 7.5 of the report.
Loss of light to 24 Martel Close. Breach of 45-degree rule.	Plot 10 would sit 3.3m from this property whilst projecting 7.8m forward and subsequently unduly harm the amenity of these occupiers. This is discussed further in section 7.5 of the report.
Lack of topographical and site section plans to ascertain the full impact of the development on the neighbouring properties.	An assessment has been carried out based on the submitted information and the site visit. The proposed development would not result in any significant harm to neighbouring occupiers aside from those at No.24 Martel Close by way of loss of outlook and daylight/sunlight. This is discussed further in section 7.5 of the report.
<u>Highway Impact</u>	

Increased highway congestion resulting in harm to the highway network.	The highway network is considered able to take on the additional capacity without any significant harm.
Construction vehicle impact on neighbours.	Construction impacts would be mitigated by way of a Construction Management Plan which would be secured by planning condition in the event of a grant of approval.
Cycle path created through Martel Close unacceptable. No link should be proposed.	No link between the site and Martel Close is proposed.
Proximity of access to neighbouring access, together with the intensification raises highway safety concerns.	The proposed access raises highway safety concerns and the County Highways Authority object. This is discussed further in section 7.6 of the report.
Lack of suitable visitor parking provision.	Visitor parking is not considered a requirement for residential development, whilst no evidence has been demonstrated that there is any adverse impact to the surrounding area arising from parking overspill.
<u>Other</u>	
Loss of ecology and biodiversity. Development does not follow the recommendations of the submitted ecological report which seeks to retain the trees along the boundary with the Wellington Park estate.	The proposed development results in significant loss of habitats and trees which is considered unacceptable in the absence of any mitigation. This is discussed further in section 7.9 of the report.
Harm to air quality	This has not been substantiated and there is no evidence to support this.
Inclusion of affordable housing would put a strain on existing community facilities. Impact on infrastructure, and local services and amenities including drainage.	CIL payments would be collected if the development were to be approved and commenced, which would go towards support local infrastructure.
No provisions to cater for any future extensions to the properties.	Any grant of permission would be subject to a restriction on permitted development rights owing to the limited size of the plot, the scale of the existing dwellings and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

6.2 The following non material reasons for objection have also been raised.

Non-Material reason for objection	Officer Response
Concerns regarding potential subsidence.	This is not a material planning consideration and is a building control matter.
No soil survey carried out.	The need for a soil survey is unclear.
Double boundary line not shown on the plans as per the SHBC boundary maps.	This matter has not been expanded upon. The red line curtilage of the application site is considered correct.

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 In considering this development regard is given to Policies CP1, CP2, CP3, CP5, CP6, CP11, CP12, CP13, CP14, DM7, DM9, DM10, DM11, DM16 and DM17 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 (CSDMP); Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan 2009 (as saved) (SEP); and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); as well as advice within the Surrey Heath Residential Design Guide 2017 (RDG); Western Urban Area Character Appraisal (2012) (WUAC); Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy SPD 2019 (AAS); Development Contributions SPD (2011); the Infrastructure Delivery SPD (2014); the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG); the Written Ministerial Statement 24.05.21 (WMS); the Council's First Homes Policy Guidance Note 2021 (FHP); the National Design Guide; and the Surrey County Council Vehicular Cycle and Electric Vehicle Parking Guidance for New Development 2023.

7.2 The key issues to be considered within this application are:

- Principle of the development
- Housing mix and affordable housing provision
- Impact on the character, appearance, and trees of the surrounding area.
- Impact on residential amenity.
- Impact on highway safety and parking capacity.
- Impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.
- Impact on biodiversity and ecology.
- Other matters

7.3 Principle of the Development

7.3.1 The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development whilst Policy CP1 of the CSDMP supports the redevelopment of previously developed land in the west of the borough. There are no policy designations restricting residential development on the site, and the proposal would better optimise the site for the delivery of housing and making more efficient use of land in accordance with the NPPF. It would therefore be considered acceptable in principle.

7.4 Housing mix and affordable housing provision

7.4.1 Policy CP5 of the CSDMP requires the provision of 40% (net) of the proposed housing to be affordable, split between socially rented and intermediate (shared ownership) together with the requirement for First Homes. Policy CP6 refers to the need for this housing to be in accordance with the Strategic Housing Market Assessment or other subsequent assessments.

7.4.2 The proposed development would provide seven shared ownership units and two first home units which would equate to 39% affordable on the net development (23 units). Of these 23 units, a 40% policy requirement would equate to 9.2 units and the Council's Interim Procedural Guidance recommends a round down approach in this instance which would make the development acceptable in meeting the 40% requirements.

7.4.3 The proposed tenure on offer would be contrary to the split sought in Policy CP5. The applicant has highlighted the difficulties in securing a registered provider to take on what would be a limited number of affordable rented units on this site. However, no evidence has been submitted either through a viability assessment or any other evidence, to demonstrate that the scheme could not provide any other form of affordable housing product such as social or affordable rent.

7.4.4 The proposed shared ownership units would be limited to solely 1-bedroom units. The application has not submitted a viability assessment or any other evidence to

demonstrate why a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units cannot be provided. This is contrary to Policy CP5, which outlines that affordable housing provision will be assessed on viability including an assessment of the overall mix of unit size and Policy CP6 which outlines that the affordable housing provision mix should be based on the needs assessment. The Council's latest Housing Needs Assessment sets out that the greatest need for shared ownership units is with 2- and 3-bedroom properties with only 10-15% recommended for 1-bedroom units. This type of tenure should be "explicitly focused on delivery smaller family housing for younger households". The Council can demonstrate a 7.4-year housing supply and therefore the contribution the development makes to the Council's housing supply is neutral whereas the contribution of an acceptable affordable housing provision, with the right housing mix, would represent a benefit.

- 7.4.5 The application has not demonstrated through a viability assessment or any other evidence that there is any greater need for shared ownership one-bedroom units than other sizes, such that it would warrant a deviation from Policy CP6 and the Council's latest evidence base. The proposed development would therefore not provide an appropriate level of affordable housing mix having regard to the requirements of the CSDMP. It would therefore be contrary to Policy CP6 of the CSDMP and the NPPF.

7.5 Impact on the character, appearance, and trees of the surrounding area

- 7.5.1 Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (CSDMP) 2012 promotes high quality design. The site falls within the Contemporary Paved Estates Character Area which is defined by 2 storey residential development interspersed with significant areas of amenity green space. Principle 6.2 of the RDG requires residential developments to use trees, vegetation, gardens, and open spaces to create a strong, soft green character to streets.

Layout & Context

- 7.5.2 The application site fronts the Maultway and development on this road is typically characterised by less developed frontages with modest properties set behind mature trees and planting which contribute towards a verdant street scene.
- 7.5.3 The proposal would impact this positive characteristic in part due to the lack of setback. Plots 19, 20 and 24 have from the Maultway. Owing to the short setback and the subsequent lack of mature trees or other planting screening the development, the proposal would fail to maintain or enhance the distinctive verdant character of the street scene. Although No.30 Oaken Copse has a similar short setback, the dwelling is of a more modest proportions, whilst the site retains several mature trees which help screen the development from the street and subsequently maintains the verdancy on the Maultway. Similarly, at the recent redevelopment at No.28 the Maultway the built form is set behind a natural hedge boundary and mature trees.
- 7.5.4 The proposed layout also results in the approach and views into the site from the Maultway to be dominated by views of the car parking, which in combination with the above, contributes to the deterioration of the positive verdant character of the street scene. The Urban Design and Conservation (UDC) officer also raises concerns and states that the layout and view from the access point fails to provide any interesting views of buildings.
- 7.5.5 The pedestrian footpath within the site is minimal, and poorly designed. It is sited in front of the car parking rather than behind, whilst it does not continue towards the south of the site where most of the parking is found. Given the number of units proposed, the

number of parking spaces, and the position of the spaces which are largely away from the units they serve, there is likely to be conflict between vehicle, pedestrian and even cycle users resulting from the poor layout. This is contrary to Principle 6.2 of the RDG which sets out that layouts should make walking more attractive, facilitate interaction and be safe places for all users.

- 7.5.6 There are a small number of birch trees (7 in total) and shrubs proposed to the front gardens. However, overall, the proposed landscaping as shown on the Landscaping Plan (Ref.AQ24178-11) rather than the proposed site plan which illustrates a greener layout, is minimal and highlights the poor quality of the layout. Insufficient space has been provided between areas of car parking, and around the areas of parking to sufficiently break up the level of hardstanding that is proposed. This results in a relatively harsh and unattractive layout within the development site, encapsulated by the car parking area to the south east of the site, which is dominated by the car parking, a lack of pedestrian footpath and subsequently a lack of sense of place. The UDC supports this view, setting out that the scheme requires further interspersed landscaping to create a more verdant character along the street scene.
- 7.5.7 The layout also results in poor relationship between the proposed dwellings owing to their position, relative orientation, and the views they look out onto. The UDC considers the layout, position, and distribution of the buildings to result in a fragmented layout. These factors all contribute to the poor placemaking.
- 7.5.8 The proposal does not illustrate the position of any bin stores for the dwellings. The properties would have very limited space to allow for stores to be positioned to the front of the properties whilst for Units 13 and 14, bin would likely be placed on the shared surface during collection day. This further points to the poor layout and design.
- 7.5.9 The proposal would therefore be contrary to principle 6.2, 6.3, 6.7 and 6.9 of the RDG which relates to layout, streetscapes, and design of car parking.

Scale, Bulk and Massing

- 7.5.10 Guiding Principle CP1(d) of the WUAC sets out that new development should consist of principally two-storey buildings. However, the proposed development would introduce a three-storey element and two, two and a half storey buildings to front the Maultway. As identified earlier the verdant character of the Maultway is considered a positive feature that is expected to be maintained and enhanced. The combination of these taller buildings and their prominence within the street scene, is considered harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene and surrounding area. This harm is exacerbated by the lack of green infrastructure to screen views of them. The UDC supports this view stating that the increased massing has an urbanising effect that is out of character with the modest scale and green context of the Maultway and contrary to principle 7.3 of the RDG. Plot 24 is also considered top heavy and large in scale, owing to its footprint and design which contributes to a tall appearance.
- 7.5.11 The proposed depth of the buildings in combination with their footprint results in a relatively shallow roofscapes which in turn result in the dwellings appearing top heavy and out of proportion. The depth, in combination with their position within the site, result in long spans of blank brickwork viewed from the shared spaces, which coupled with the absence of sufficient landscaping, results in a poor level of visual amenity and lack of views of interest. The UDC raises concerns setting out that the combination of the depth of the buildings and the lack of intervening greening, results in the scheme appearing too dense.
- 7.5.12 The flatted block (Block D) owing to its block like design, three-storey height, and lack of variation and detailing, results in a relatively bulky and imposing building that would, in combination with its proximity to the Maultway and lack of greening, make its overall scale and bulk unacceptable in its current form.

- 7.5.13 The proposed roofscape and design of Plots 21-24 would fail to adequately address the land level change, with the proposed roof form, eaves heights, fenestration, and use of the gable feature resulting in an unattractive appearance that would also fail to reduce the bulk and span of development. The UDC also raises additional concerns in respect of the lack of setbacks between the different built segments.
- 7.5.14 Similarly for Plots 10-13, the proportions of the dwellings when viewed from the front elevation appear out of balance, whilst the roofscape, which differs from that found to the rest of the development, appears cluttered. The depth and width of the properties has not been broken up by the design, and as a result they appear bulky.

Detailing and Materials

- 7.5.15 No objections are raised to the general architectural approach with the use of soldier coursing, brick detailing, and contrasting materials between levels considered appropriate contributing to good quality design. However, as identified earlier in the report, the proposal's fenestration and detailing has failed to adequately break up the mass and bulk of the buildings, with long spans of blank brickwork and concerns in respect of the rooflines, and the lack of interesting views. This is contrary to Principle 7.8 and 7.9 of the RDG.

Landscaping & Trees

- 7.5.16 The application site benefits from several mature trees and vegetation albeit none of which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The proposal would result in the loss of 1 group of category B trees, 12 groups of category C trees, 11 individual category C trees and 6 category C hedges.
- 7.5.17 The loss of trees would be largely limited to the trees of lower quality where removal, subject to appropriate replacement, is typically accepted. However, these losses predominantly relate to trees situated to the boundaries, where they provide multiple benefit in screening the site, having visual amenity value contributing to the character of the area. The proposed layout of the scheme as considered above, is considered of a poor design, and fails to allow sufficient replacement planting on site.
- 7.5.18 The proposed landscaping scheme seeks to replace the lost trees largely through low level and hedge planting. Where 6 trees of a girth 18-20cm are proposed this is within the site, to the areas of car parking. The level of loss of trees on site has not been demonstrated as appropriate nor necessary, and the proposed landscaping scheme fails to adequately secure planting on site that would replace the amenity and other benefit value lost. The Council's Arboricultural Officer concurs with the above, setting out that the proposed landscaping has failed to offset the impact of the development and should be recommended for refusal. The proposed landscaping scheme including the loss of trees is therefore contrary to the verdant character of the area contrary to Policy DM9, Principle 6.2 of the RDG and Principle CP1 (e) and (f) of the WUAC.

Summary

7.5.19 The proposed development raises significant concerns in respect of its layout, scale, and landscaping. The application has failed to design a scheme that positively responds and reinforces the verdant character of the Maultway and the local distinctiveness in respect of the building design and form. The proposal would result in significant harm to the character and visual amenities of the surrounding area contrary to the objectives of Policies CP2 and DM9 of the CSDMP, whilst failing to accord with principles 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 6.7, 6.9, 7.3, 7.8 and 7.9 of the RDG and CP1(d), (e) and (f) of the WUAC and the NPPF.

7.6 Impact on residential amenity

7.6.1 Policy DM9 of the CSDMP indicates that development will be acceptable where it respects the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and uses.

7.6.2 Plot 10 would sit adjacent to No.24 Martel Close, and on higher land. It would have a 3.3m separation from the neighbouring flank elevation whilst sitting 7.8m forward of the neighbouring property. Owing to this projection forward, the proposed dwelling would breach the 45-degree light rule when taken from the nearest habitable room window of the neighbouring property. Considering the land level differences, the projection forward, the proximity and the sun orientation, the proposed dwelling would result in adverse harm to the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers, prejudicing their current level of outlook and daylight/sunlight enjoyed from the front elevation windows. As such, the proposed development is considered unacceptable in respect of No.24.

7.6.3 The properties north at Oaken Copse would be sited side on to the development and owing to this relationship together with the separation distance, sun orientation and relative position, there would be no significant harm to the occupiers of these properties. The properties to the west at Curtis Close would have a separation of 20m relative to the rear elevation of the proposed development. Whilst it is recognised that these properties sit on lower lying land, it is considered there would be no significant amenity harm owing to the separation distance.

7.6.4 All units would exceed the minimum nationally described space standards for new dwellings. However, the technical space standards are only the starting point in assessing the standard of accommodation and matters of privacy, outlook, natural light, and circulation space are also fundamental matters to assess. In this instance the general internal layouts are well conceived, ensuring acceptable levels of outlook, privacy, and natural light for all units.

7.6.5 In respect of the private amenity provision, all the dwellings are provided with acceptable private rear gardens, whilst the flatted units would benefit from patio gardens at ground floor level and balconies to the upper floors. These would meet the garden size requirements set out in 8.4-8.6 of the RDG which requires 55sqm for 2/3-bedroom properties and flatted development to have communal space and balconies with a minimum depth 1.5m. Amendments to the soft landscaping would be required to ensure that each of the windows and garden spaces at ground floor level have some defensible space given their semi-public setting.

7.6.6 The submitted Noise Assessment raises concerns as to whether the dwellings and the flatted block, would be able to meet Part O of the Building Regulations in respect of internal noise levels. Further information is required to demonstrate that the a) internal noise levels can be achieved and what measures would be required to achieve this; and b) whether adequate ventilation measures would be installed to ensure future residents do not suffer from overheating as a result of closed openings due to noise pollution. The submitted measures as shown fails to demonstrate that the recommended internal noise levels would be achieved, and in the absence of this information, it cannot be determined that the future occupiers of the site would benefit from an acceptable standard of accommodation in accordance with Policy DM9 of the CSDMP and the NPPF.

Summary

7.6.7 The proposed development would largely provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupiers however it has not been demonstrated conclusively that the development would allow for internal noise levels as recommended can be met. Furthermore, there are concerns in respect of the impact upon the neighbouring occupier at No.24 Martel Close. The proposed development would therefore fail to satisfy the objectives of Policy DM9 of the CSDMP and the principles of the RDG.

7.7 Impact on highway safety and parking capacity

7.7.1 Policy DM11 relates to the impact on the highway network, including matters of highway safety, access, and parking. The “Vehicular Cycle and Electric Vehicle Parking Guidance for New Development” supplementary planning document provides guidance in respect of vehicle and cycle parking levels.

7.7.2 The application site is situated within the settlement boundaries, with the No.11 bus stop 1-minute from the site, which provides a route into Camberley town centre. The application site is considered sustainably located for this scale of residential development.

7.7.3 The proposed development would provide a total thirty-nine parking spaces, with each property benefitting from an EV charging point. This would meet the requirements set out in the SCC Vehicle Guidance SPD.

7.7.4 The SPD outlines that whilst visitor parking is encouraged where appropriate, it is not considered always necessary. This is reflected in the absence of any requirement for residential development to provide visitor parking. It is recognised that residents have raised concerns in respect of parking overspill, however, there is no substantive data to demonstrate an on-street parking demand issues in the wider area, nor that the proposal would result in unacceptable on-street parking. The applicant’s Transport Assessment sets out that based on car ownership per bedroom, there would be a total need for 29 total spaces. No objections have been raised by the SCC Highways on this matter and the proposed development would appear to provide satisfactory parking provision.

7.7.5 With respect to cycle parking, each unit would be provided a store within the curtilage of the dwelling, or otherwise a communal store for the flatted units. The proposed vehicle and cycle parking provision sufficiently meets the requirements set out the SCC Highways parking guidance.

7.7.6 The proposed development seeks to move the existing access 4.8m south away from the neighbouring access road. The Maultway carries a significant amount of traffic, currently having a 50mph speed limit. Vehicular users therefore have little time to react when exiting the site. Due to the high speed of the road and the current proximity of the access with that of the neighbouring site Oaken Close, there is also potential for inadvertent entry into this neighbouring close as you turn off the Maultway. Oaken Copse is of a single car width, with limited space for passing or turning the car with ease. Consequently, there is an existing risk of conflict between users of the Maultway and Oaken Copse entering and exiting the site.

7.7.7 The proposal would significantly increase the number of future occupiers and therefore similarly increase the number of associated vehicular movements. To avoid the potential for conflict, the relocation of the access point needs to be of a sufficient

distance away. This concern is supported by SCC Highways who recommend a reason for refusal on this basis, commenting that the access should be relocated a minimum 25m away from Oaken Copse whilst any relocation would need to be supported by a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. The proposal is therefore considered to provide an unsafe and unsuitable access.

7.7.8 In addition, SCC Highways would require bus stop and cross facility improvements on the Maultway and on the junction with the A30 and the A325 as this would be a key route for future residents to several schools as well as other amenities. In the absence of these improvements the proposal fails to demonstrate that it would provide a suitable, safe, and convenient means for future residents to use sustainable modes of transport to access these facilities.

7.7.9 As such, the proposal would be unacceptable owing to its poorly located access and failure to provide appropriate improvements to encourage use of sustainable modes of transport to key routes to local amenities. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy CP11 and DM11 of the CSDMP.

7.8 Impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

7.8.1 Policy CP14B of the CSDMP is relevant. All new (net) residential development within five kilometres of the SPA is required to provide appropriate measures in accordance with the AAP. This includes contributions towards SAMM measures with SANG requirements provided through CIL.

7.8.2 The Council has sufficient capacity of SANG for the development in the event of a grant of permission. The applicant has confirmed that the SAMM contribution would be secured through a legal agreement prior to the determination of this application. Subject to the signing of the legal agreement the proposal satisfies the objectives of Policy CP14 of the CSDMP, Policy NRM6 of the SEP, the NPPF and advice in the AAP.

7.9 Impact on biodiversity and ecology

7.9.1 Policy CP14 of the CSDMP indicates that development which would result in harm to or loss of features of interest for biodiversity will not be permitted whilst biodiversity gain is recommended.

7.9.2 The application is supported by a preliminary ecological assessment (PEA) which has been assessed by SWT. They have raised concerns that the application has failed to provide an evidence-based assessment that it would not have an unacceptable impact on the Black Hill and White Hill SINC. In addition, the proposal has failed to undertake a hazel dormouse survey (a protected species), as recommended by the PEA, and failed to provide sufficient detail regarding how reptile mitigation would be achieved. The proposal has therefore failed to demonstrate it would be acceptable in respect of ecology.

7.9.3 In addition, the proposal results in a 58.45% loss of habitat units on the site. Whilst there is no adopted legislative requirement for biodiversity net gain to be provided, the NPPF sets out that development is expected to not result in harm to existing ecology and biodiversity. The applicant sets out that owing to the size constraints of the site, they would not be able to provide any offset measures on site and would engage with an off-site bank which would be secured by legal agreement.

7.9.4 It is recognised that some loss of habitat would inevitably occur on site owing to the limited size, and proposed density which is considered acceptable in principle. However, as raised earlier in the report, the application fails to provide sufficient soft landscaping on site, and a revised scheme could secure a lesser loss of habitat units

on site. In the first instance, gains should be provided on site, and the proposal has failed to sufficiently justify the need for the significant loss of habitat units which is considered a result of the poor layout and design.

7.9.5 The applicant has also failed to demonstrate with sufficient detail how an off-site contribution would work in practice. Therefore, there is no indication that the proposal would achieve no biodiversity loss. Due to the loss of biodiversity shown and the absence of a guaranteed method to secure a contribution to offset the harm, and the absence of any other evidence, the proposed development would be unacceptable in respect of the loss of biodiversity.

7.9.6 The proposal is therefore contrary to the objectives of Policy CP14 of the CSDMP and the NPPF.

7.10 Other matters

7.10.1 Policy CP2 of the CSDMP indicates that development will be required to provide measures to improve energy efficiencies and sustainability. The energy statement provided to support the application includes measures to include a fabric first approach, within the building fabric, insulation and double glazing, high-efficiency heating systems and low energy lighting. In addition, photovoltaic panels would be provided to the flatted development. An expected reduction of 7.34% reduction in emissions which is equivalent to Level 4 Code for Sustainable Homes.

7.10.2 Policy DM10 of the CSDMP seeks development to be risk neutral in respect of flooding. The application site lies in a Zone 1 (low risk) flood area. However, because it is a major development a site-specific flood risk assessment and drainage strategy has been submitted. The Lead Local Flood Authority considers this insufficient in demonstrating that the development would reduce the volume and rate of surface water run-off. Further information was not sought from the applicant as the proposal was considered unacceptable on other grounds, and in the absence of a policy compliant drainage scheme the development subsequently fails to accord with Policy DM10 of the CSDMP and the NPPF.

7.10.3 Policy DM16 of the CSDMP requires residential development to provide or contribute towards open space, equipped play spaces or outdoor sports facilities. The applicant states that an appropriate contribution could be provided via legal agreement which would be considered acceptable in the event of a grant of permission.

7.10.4 Policy DM17 of the CSDMP indicates that on sites of 0.4 hectares or over, a prior assessment of the potential archaeological significance of the site must be undertaken. In this case, a desk-based assessment has been provided which indicates that the site has a low archaeological potential.

7.10.5 The site involves the creation of twenty-four new dwellings and would therefore be CIL liable.

8.0 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

8.1 Under the Equalities Act 2010 the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, or victimisation of persons by reason of age, disability, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. This planning application has been processed and assessed with due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty. The proposal is not considered to conflict with this duty.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The principle of development is considered acceptable. However, the proposed layout, together with insufficient landscaping and the quantum of development, would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed access would also conflict with existing highway users whilst it would fail to appropriately support sustainable transport objectives. The proposal would be harmful to the residential amenities of no. 24 Martel Close and failed to demonstrate that there would be no adverse noise impacts for future occupiers of the development. The proposal has also failed to demonstrate that it would provide an acceptable mix of affordable housing delivery; would not result in a loss of biodiversity; and would deliver an acceptable drainage scheme. In the absence of SAMM payment the proposal would also fail to mitigate against harm to the SPA. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies within the CSDMP and the NPPF.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development fails to demonstrate through a viability assessment or any other evidence that it would provide an acceptable tenure and mix of affordable housing (2 and 3 bed housing) in line with the identified housing need and therefore fails to optimise the delivery of affordable housing. The application is therefore contrary to the aims and objectives of Policy CP5 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework, and advice within the Surrey Heath First Homes Policy Guidance Note 2021 and Written Ministerial Statement (24.05.21).
2. The proposed layout and position of the dwellings (including the insufficient setback of the buildings from the Maultway, insufficient interspersed greening, car parking arrangement and absence of a pedestrian footpath through the site) would result in an incongruous form of development that would fail to positively respond to the spacious and verdant character of the Maultway and the wider surrounding area, including the Contemporary Paved Estates Character Area. This would be contrary to the aims and objectives of Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework, Principles CP1(e) and (f) of the Western Urban Area Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012 and Principles 6.2, 6.3, 6.7, and 6.9 Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017.
3. The proposed dwellings and flatted block, by reason of their height, bulk and mass and roof-form, would result in a quantum of development that would form poor relationships with neighbouring buildings, be harmful to the street scene, and the character of the area including the Contemporary Paved Estates Character Area. This would be contrary to Policy DM9 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Guiding principles CP1(d) and CP2 of the Western Urban Area Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012 and 6.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, and 7.9 of the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017.
4. By reason of an inadequate sound insulation and abatement scheme, and ventilation scheme, the applicant has failed to demonstrate noise on site can be effectively reduced to guideline levels and that adequate ventilation can be provided for future residents. The proposed therefore fails to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupiers contrary to Policy DM9 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
5. The proposed development would lead to a significant intensification of an existing access onto The Maultway, a classified road with a 50mph speed limit. It has not yet been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the County Highway Authority, that safe

vehicular and pedestrian access would be provided as part of the proposed development. The development would therefore be prejudicial to highway safety contrary to Policy CP11 and DM11 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. The application has failed to demonstrate that it would provide a suitable, safe, and convenient means for future residents to use sustainable modes of transport to access schools, employment, and leisure facilities, contrary to sustainability objectives of Policy CP11 and DM11 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
7. Plot 10 by reason of its forward projection forward, together with its separation distance to the southwest boundary and orientation of the property, would result in adverse harm to the residential amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring property No.24 Martel Close, prejudicing their current level of outlook and daylight/sunlight enjoyed from the front elevation windows. This would be contrary to Policy DM9 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
8. The application has failed to provide an evidenced-based assessment to determine that it would not have an adverse impact on the Black Hill and White Hill Site of Nature Conservation Importance. Insufficient information has been provided by way of hazel dormouse survey and appropriate slow worm mitigation strategy to demonstrate that the development would not have unacceptable impact on protected species. In addition, the proposal results in unacceptable habitat loss on site without the appropriate mitigation. This would be contrary to Policy CP14 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
9. Insufficient information has been submitted by way of a drainage scheme to demonstrate that the proposed development would not result in adverse harm to the drainage and flood risk of the surrounding area, contrary to the objectives of Policy DM10 of the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012 and National Planning Policy Framework.
10. In the absence of a payment or a completed legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the applicant has failed to comply with Policy CP14B (vi) (European Sites) of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012 and Policy NRM6 (Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area) of the South East Plan in relation to the provision of contribution towards strategic access management and monitoring (SAMM) measures, in accordance with the requirements of the Surrey Heath Borough Council's Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (2019).

Informative(s)

1. This Decision Notice is a legal document and therefore should be kept in a safe place. A replacement copy can be obtained, however, there is a charge for this service.
2. The applicant is advised that the application has been considered on the basis of the following submissions:

Plans:

AQU24178-11, 7500-CMP-01, P1948.BLKD.08 Rev A, P1948.BLKD.06, P1948.BLKD.03, P1948.BLKD.04, P1948.BLKD.07 Rev A, P1948.BLKD.01, P1948.BLKD.05 Rev A, P1948.BLKD.02, P1948.04 Rev B, P1948.SS.01 Rev A, P1948.01 Rev B, P1948.06 Rev B, P1948.05 Rev B, P1948.02 Rev B, P1948.07 Rev B, P1948.CS.01, P1948.CB.01, P1948.03 Rev B, P1948.BS.01, P1948.08, P1948.CA.03 Rev A, P1948.CA.02 Rev A, P1948.CA.01 Rev A, P1948.C1.02 Rev A, P1948.C1.01 Rev A, P1948.C.01 Rev A, P1948.B.01 Rev A, P1948.A1.01 Rev A, P1948.A1.02 Rev A, P1948.A.04 Rev A, P1948.A.06, P1948.A.01 Rev A, P1948.A.03 Rev A, P1948.A.02 Rev A, P1948.A.07, P1948.A.05 Rev A, P1948.EX.01, P1948.EX.02, and P1948.EX.03 received 04 December 2023.

Documents:

Received 04 December 2023

Acoustic Assessment Report
Air Quality Assessment
Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Bat Survey Report
Biodiversity Metric Tool
Construction Environmental Management Plan & Delivery and Servicing Management Plan
Design & Access Statement
Drainage Strategy & Suds Statement
Ecological Impact Assessment
Energy Statement
Outdoor Lighting Report
Phase I Desk Study and Anticipated Ground Conditions
Planning Statement
Reptile Survey Report
Residential Travel Plan
Site Connectivity Plan
Soft Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan
Soft Landscape Specification
Transport Statement
Tree Protection Plan
Tree Survey (And Plan)
Utility Assessment
