

DELEGATED

Report to Planning Committee
10 June 2026

Report of Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth

25/2162/OUT

Land North of Sandy Lane West, Billingham,

Expiry Date: 12 January 2026

Extension of Time Date:

Summary

Outline planning permission is sought, with all matters reserved except access, for the development of up to 179 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), together with a community building (Use Classes E/F2), and associated access, highways infrastructure, open space and landscaping.

The site lies outside the defined limits to development; however, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. The proposal has therefore been assessed having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with the decision hinging on the overall planning balance.

The application has generated a significant level of public interest, with 282 letters of objection received. The principal concerns relate to highway safety and congestion, conflict with the Development Plan, and the potential impact on the separation between Billingham and Wolviston. These matters have been fully considered within the assessment. Technical consultees, including National Highways and the Council's Highway Authority, raise no objection, and the submitted evidence demonstrates that impacts can be appropriately mitigated.

The proposal would deliver up to 179 dwellings, including policy-compliant affordable housing, making a significant contribution towards addressing the identified shortfall in housing land supply. This benefit is afforded substantial weight. The site is considered to represent a sustainable location on the edge of Billingham, with acceptable access to services, facilities and public transport. Other impacts, including landscape effects, loss of agricultural land, ecology, trees, drainage, heritage and residential amenity, have been assessed and are not considered to give rise to unacceptable harm.

Taking all matters into account, the adverse impacts identified are limited and do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal when assessed in the overall planning balance. The development is therefore considered to represent a sustainable form of development.

The application is recommended for approval, subject to conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure the necessary planning obligations

Recommendation(s)

That planning application 25/2162/OUT be approved subject to the following conditions and informatives and subject to applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement in accordance with the Heads of Terms below;

Reserved Matters - Time Period for submission

01 Application for the approval of reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: By virtue of the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Period for Commencement

02 The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, or before the expiration of 2 years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved, whichever is the latest.

Reason: By virtue of the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Reserved Matters – Details

03 Notwithstanding the submitted plans, approval of the details of the Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale of the development known as the ‘Reserved Matters’ shall be obtained in writing from the Local Planning Authority before the development is commenced. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans

Reason: To reserve the rights of the Local Planning Authority with regard to these matters

Approved Plans

04 The development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the following approved plan(s);

Plan Reference Number	Date Received
SK-00.10	19 March 2026
25-100/SK02 rev C	19 February 2026

Reason: To define the consent.

Quantum of Development

05 The development permitted shall include no more than 179 dwellings unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To define the consent.

Design Code

06 Prior to or as part of the reserved matters application, a Design Code informed by the Local Design guide SPD, shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter the development phases shall be implemented in general conformity with the approved design guide.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to satisfactorily control the development in the interest of place making and a development that is cohesive across all phases.

Phasing Plan

07 No development shall commence until a phasing plan for the application site has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved phasing plan unless otherwise approved in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the development takes place in accordance with the conditions attached hereto, in so far as those conditions relate to each phase of development and to ensure no plot is developed in isolation.

Existing and Proposed Site levels

08 Notwithstanding the information submitted as part of the application, for each phase of the development, details of the existing and proposed site levels and finished floor levels shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. Work shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To define the consent and to ensure that the development does not adversely impact on the visual amenities of the area.

Accessible and adaptable homes

09 Notwithstanding the submitted plans a minimum of 50% of the proposed dwellings shall meet Building Regulation M4(2) and a minimum of 8% of the proposed dwellings shall meet Building Regulation M4(3).

Reason: In the interests of promoting accessible and adaptable homes in accordance with Policy H4 of the local plan.

Amenity Greenspace

10 Within each phase, no Development shall be commenced until the Local Planning Authority has approved in writing the details of arrangements for the setting out of Amenity Greenspace by the developer in accordance with the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Supplementary Planning Document as part of the development, and such arrangements shall address and contain the following matters:

- The delineation and siting of the proposed Amenity Greenspace
- The arrangements the developer shall make to ensure that the Amenity Greenspace is laid out and completed during the course of the development
- The arrangements the developer shall make for the future maintenance of the Amenity Greenspace
- The Amenity Greenspace shall be completed in accordance with the approved scheme and phasing arrangements as agreed by the local planning authority.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to satisfactorily control the development

Ecology and Biodiversity

11 Works shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the avoidance mitigation and compensation recommendations as detailed in Section 6 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (dated October 2025) prepared by OS Ecology.

Reason: To conserve protected species and their habitat where necessary

Ecology Survey (post two years)

- 12 If work does not commence on each phase within 2 years from the date of the submitted (or subsequent) ecology survey for that area of the site, a maximum of three months before works commencing on site a suitably qualified ecologist shall undertake a checking survey to ensure that no protected species or their habitat is present on site. The results of the survey shall be submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority and identify any additional or revised mitigation measures required.

Reason: To conserve protected species and their habitat where necessary

Construction Environmental Management Plan (Ecology)

- 13 Prior to the commencement of development a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), shall be submitted and approved by the local authority, and will include as a minimum:
- Checking surveys for badger.
 - Method Statements for protected species (badger, breeding birds, bats and amphibians).
 - Appropriate working methods and detail on habitat management and creation
 - Appropriate surveys work will be undertaken should plans change and works to trees are proposed where bat roosts could be present. If required, works will not be undertaken until a Natural England licence is in place.

Reason: To conserve protected species and their habitat where necessary

Habitat and wildlife

- 14 As detailed in BS 3998:2010, prior to work commencing, the trees and their surroundings should be assessed for the presence of protected species, some of which are subject to season-specific legislation. Any works should be planned so as to limit their potential adverse impact on wildlife generally. The timing of works should take account of the seasonal cycles of the species of fauna and flora concerned (including the nesting habits of birds and the egg-laying habits of insects).

Reason: In compliance with the Habitat Regulations and Countryside and Wildlife Act

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 15 No development shall commence until a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. A Biodiversity Gain Plan, must be submitted to and approved by the planning authority before the development can begin; and thereafter a Biodiversity Gain Plan for each reserved matter in relation to layout must be submitted to and approved by the planning authority before the development of that phase can begin and ensure that there is a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity within a 30 year period as a result of the development

Reason: In the interests of ensuring measurable net gains to biodiversity and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NPPF (2023)

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

- 16 No development shall commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) has been prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The HMMP shall cover the following elements:
- (a) creation/enhancement of medium or higher distinctiveness habitats;

- (b) habitat of low distinctiveness which create a large number of biodiversity units relative to the biodiversity value of the site before development;
- (c) habitat creation or enhancement where distinctiveness is increased relative to the distinctiveness of the habitat before development;
- (d) areas of habitat creation or enhancement which are significant in area relative to the size of the development;
- (e) enhancement to habitat condition; and,
- (f) all proposed 'off-site' gains.

Monitoring reports will be submitted to the Council during years 2,5, 7, 10, 20 and 30 from commencement of development unless otherwise stated in the Biodiversity Management Plan, demonstrating how the BNG is progressing towards achieving its objectives, evidence of arrangements and any rectifying measures needed.

Reason: To ensure the proposed habitat creation and/or enhancements are suitably managed and monitored to ensure development delivers a biodiversity net gain in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Tree Retention

- 17 Notwithstanding the submitted information, unless shown for removal in the submitted Arboricultural Report (Ref: ARB/AE/3734), all trees and hedges to the boundaries of the application site shall be retained and protected in accordance with tree protection measures outlined in the submitted Arboricultural Report. Protection measures shall be installed prior to commencement of works being undertaken and shall remain in place for the duration of the construction period.

No tree, shrub or hedge shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, topped or lopped other than in accordance with any approved plans submitted as part of a reserved matters application. Any tree, shrub or hedge or any tree, shrub or hedge that dies or is removed, uprooted or destroyed or becomes seriously damaged or defective must be replaced by another of the same size and species unless directed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the existing trees/shrubs and hedges on site that the Local Planning Authority consider to be an important visual amenity in the locality and should be appropriately maintained.

Noise Mitigation Strategy

- 18 Prior to the commencement of development above ground level, a detailed Noise Mitigation Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be informed by the submitted Apex Acoustics Noise Impact Assessment and shall include:
- The location, height, and specification of acoustic barriers to protect external amenity areas, particularly those closest to the A19.
 - Façade treatments and glazing specifications for plots identified as requiring enhanced acoustic protection to meet internal noise standards in accordance with BS8233:2014.
 - Details of ventilation and overheating mitigation strategies that ensure compliance with internal noise criteria, particularly for plots adjacent to the A19 and Sandy Lane.

- Confirmation that openable windows are feasible on the majority of plots, and identification of any plots requiring restricted window openings or alternative acoustic design measures.
- A plan demonstrating compliance with internal and external noise criteria, including garden areas not exceeding 55dB LAeq,16hr.

The approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to the occupation of the affected dwellings and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the development hereby permitted is not detrimental to the amenity of the future residents by reason of undue external noise

Noise from School

19 Prior to, or as part of the reserved matters application, a Noise Impact Assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning. The assessment shall be prepared by a suitably qualified noise consultant and shall assess the impact of noise arising from the sports playing pitch and MUGA, both individually and cumulatively, when in use. The assessment shall consider noise from sporting activity, including raised voices, whistles and ball impact noise (including perimeter fencing, rebound boards and goal backboards). The assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with the WHO Guidelines for Community Noise and Sport England guidance “Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) Acoustics” and shall demonstrate that noise levels do not exceed 50 dB LAeq (1 hour) measured at 1 metre from the façade of nearby residential properties or within private external amenity areas.

An assessment shall also be undertaken to determine the change in noise level attributable to the proposed MUGA compared with existing baseline noise levels at nearby noise-sensitive receptors. A minimum 72-hour baseline noise survey shall be undertaken at representative nearby receptors. Measurements and assessment shall be based on LAeq,1h periods, with change in noise level evaluated on an hourly basis across all proposed operating periods (weekday evenings and weekends).

Where mitigation is identified as necessary, a scheme of noise control measures shall be submitted for approval and implemented prior to occupation of the affected dwellings. Such measures may include, where justified, acoustic fencing or screening, and/or enhanced glazing and mechanical ventilation to affected habitable rooms. A post-installation verification report shall also be submitted to confirm compliance with the approved noise levels. All approved mitigation shall thereafter be retained for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To protect the amenity of existing and future residents from noise arising from adjacent sports facilities, in accordance with the agent of change principle and relevant national guidance.

Light pollution from School

20 No dwellings hereby approved shall be occupied until a desk-based Lighting Impact Assessment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall consider the impact of existing and/or approved lighting associated with the adjacent sports pitch, including floodlighting, on the proposed dwellings and shall include:

- a) Lighting modelling of light spill, glare and vertical illuminance at dwelling façades and private amenity areas under worst-case operating conditions;

- b) Assessment against the relevant Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance on the Reduction of Obtrusive Light;
- c) Identification of any mitigation required within the residential development site to protect future occupiers.

A post-installation verification of lighting levels shall be undertaken prior to occupation of affected dwellings to demonstrate compliance with the approved assessment. Any approved mitigation shall be implemented prior to occupation of the affected dwellings and retained thereafter.

Reason: To protect future residents from light intrusion arising from the adjacent sports facilities, in accordance with the agent of change principle and paragraph 200 of the NPPF.

Construction Management Plan (including construction hours)

- 21 Within each phase of development, including individual plot construction, no development shall commence until a Construction Management Plan (CMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved CMP shall be implemented in full throughout the construction period.

The Construction Management Plan shall include details of:

- i. Construction site access arrangements;
- ii. Parking facilities for site operatives and visitors;
- iii. Loading and unloading of plant and materials, including any restrictions on delivery times;
- iv. Storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- v. The erection, maintenance and management of security hoarding, including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing where appropriate;
- vi. Measures, including wheel washing facilities and the use of mechanical road sweepers as necessary, to prevent the deposition of mud, grit and debris on the public highway;
- vii. Measures to control, monitor and mitigate dust, dirt and other emissions arising from construction works;
- viii. A Site Waste Management Plan;
- ix. Details of HGV routing and management measures to minimise impacts on the highway network and other road users;
- x. Measures to protect existing footpaths, verges and highway infrastructure; and
- xi. A strategy for communication with local residents, including contact arrangements for the duration of construction.

Construction hours shall restrict all construction activity to the following times only unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority:

- 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday;
- 0900 to 1300 on Saturdays; and
- No construction works whatsoever (including demolition, deliveries, the external running of plant and equipment, or internal works whether audible or not beyond the site boundary) shall take place on Sundays, Public or Bank Holidays.

For the purposes of this condition, construction works shall include any building, civil engineering or engineering operations involving the use of plant, machinery or hand tools.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to safeguard the amenities of nearby occupiers.

Contaminated Land Risk Assessment

22 No development approved by this permission shall commence (or at such other stage as may be agreed in writing with the local planning authority) until a scheme to assess and address risks associated with land contamination, including ground gases arising from the nearby landfill site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and competent person and shall include the following components:

a) Risk Assessment and Site Investigation

A comprehensive risk assessment informed by the Desk Top Study (25 July 2025, Ref: 25062-01), identifying previous site uses, potential contaminants (including landfill gas), and a conceptual site model identifying sources, pathways and receptors. This shall be supported by a site investigation to provide sufficient information for a detailed assessment of the risks to all receptors, including those off-site.

Ground gas monitoring shall be undertaken where appropriate, with a minimum of two sets of readings taken during low and falling atmospheric pressure, and at least six monitoring rounds over a three-month period.

b) Remediation Strategy and Gas Protection Measures

The results of the site investigation and risk assessment, together with an options appraisal and a detailed remediation strategy specifying the remediation measures required and how they are to be implemented. Where gas protection measures are required, these shall be designed and installed in accordance with BS 8485:2015 +A1:2019 and fully detailed within the strategy.

c) Verification and Validation

A verification plan detailing the measures that will be undertaken to demonstrate that remediation works (including any gas protection measures) have been completed in accordance with the approved remediation strategy. Where required, the installation of gas protection measures shall be independently verified and approved by the relevant Building Control body, with confirmation submitted to the local planning authority. Details of any necessary long-term monitoring, maintenance and contingency measures shall also be included.

All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and shall comply with the Environment Agency's *Land Contamination Risk Management Guidance (2023)* and CIRIA C665: *Assessing Risks Posed by Hazardous Ground Gases to Buildings*. Any subsequent amendments to the approved scheme shall require the prior written approval of the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination and landfill gas are adequately assessed and mitigated, in order to protect human health, property and the wider environment, in accordance with paragraphs 109 and 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Unexpected Land Contamination

- 23 In the event that unexpected contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken, in accordance with best practice guidance, the details of which are to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in advance. Where remediation is shown to be necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing in advance.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future uses of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out without unacceptable risk to receptors

Culverted Watercourse

- 24 Prior to the submission or approval of any reserved matters relating to site layout, the applicant must undertake a full and detailed investigation to identify the presence, alignment and depth of any culverted watercourse that may pass through the development site. The findings of this investigation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any site layout being agreed.

Reason: To ensure the site is developed in a manner that will not increase the risk of surface water flooding to site or surrounding area, in accordance with the Local Plan Policies SD5 & ENV4 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Discharge of Surface Water

- 25 The development hereby approved shall not be commenced on site, until a scheme for 'the implementation, maintenance and management of a Sustainable Surface Water Drainage Scheme has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details, the scheme shall include but not be restricted to providing the following details;
- I. Detailed design of the surface water management system; (for each phase of the development).
 - II. A build programme and timetable for the provision of the critical surface water drainage infrastructure;
 - III. A management plan detailing how surface water runoff from the site will be managed during the construction phase;
 - IV. Details of adoption responsibilities

Reason: To ensure the site is developed in a manner that will not increase the risk of surface water flooding to site or surrounding area, in accordance with the Local Plan Policies SD5 & ENV4 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Discharge of Surface Water

- 26 The development permitted by this planning permission shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) & Drainage Strategy Rev D dated 27/03/26 and the mitigation measures detailed within the FRA

The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to the occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the

scheme, or within any period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

Reason: To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of / disposal of surface water from the site and to reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants.

Discharge of Surface Water

- 27 The buildings hereby approved shall not be brought into use until:-
- I. Requisite elements of the approved surface water management scheme for the development, or any phase of the development are in place and fully operational to serve said building
 - II. The drawings of all Suds features have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the drawings should highlight all site levels, including the 30year and 100year+cc flood levels and confirmation of storage capacity
 - III. A Management and maintenance plan of the approved Surface Water Drainage scheme has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, this should include the funding arrangements and cover the lifetime of the development

Reason: To reduce flood risk and ensure satisfactory long term maintenance are in place for the lifetime of the development.

Open Access

- 28 Open access ducting to facilitate fibre and internet connectivity shall be provided from the homes to the public highway.

Reason: To ensure that infrastructure is provided to facilitate fibre connections to all new development in accordance with Policy TI3 of the Stockton on Tees Local Plan

Bins/refuse

- 29 Prior to the occupation of the dwellings hereby approved each plot should be provided with the appropriate means of waste and recycling provision in accordance with the applicable Council standards

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policy SD8

Archaeological Evaluation Report

- 30 The archaeological post-excavation assessment, for the evaluation fieldwork undertaken in March 2026, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority no later than 3 months from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that archaeology is considered and recorded in accordance with policy HE2 of the local plan

Recording of a heritage asset through a programme of archaeological works

- 31 (A) No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:
1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
 2. The programme for post investigation assessment

3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.
7. The timetable for completion of all site investigation and post-investigation works

B) No demolition/development shall take place until the site investigation has been carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A).

C) The development shall not be brought into use until the Local Planning Authority has confirmed in writing that the requirements of the the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) have been fulfilled or alternative timescales agreed, and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: To ensure that archaeology is considered and recorded in accordance with policy HE2 of the local plan

Travel Plan

- 32 Prior to the development being brought into use, an updated Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. This shall include:
- (i) the appointment of a travel co-ordinator with roles, responsibilities, timescales to be in place (minimum 5 years) and contact details
 - (ii) Modal split targets and measures to achieve these targets, which must be SMART: Specific Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound;
 - (iii) Details of when the Travel Plan is to be monitored and reviewed including timescales for when travel surveys are to be carried out.
 - (iv) measures to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport other than the private car by persons associated with the site
 - (v) provision of up-to-date details of public transport services
 - (vi) continual appraisal of travel patterns and measures provided through the travel plan
 - (vii) improved safety for vulnerable road users
 - (viii) a reduction in all vehicle trips and mileage
 - (ix) a programme for the implementation of such measures and any proposed physical works
 - (x) procedures for monitoring the uptake of such modes of transport and for providing evidence of compliance.

The approved Travel Plan shall be implemented, and the development shall thereafter be carried out and operated in accordance with the approved Travel Plan.

Reason: To establish measures to encourage more sustainable

Informatives

Informative: Working Practices

The Local Planning Authority has worked in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems arising in dealing with the planning application by gaining additional information required to assess the scheme and by the identification and imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

Informative: Reserved matters

When submitting the application(s) for reserved matters; the reserved matters should include the following details

"layout" means the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development;

"appearance" means the aspects of a building or place within the development which determines the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture;

"scale" means the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surroundings;

"landscaping", in relation to a site or any part of a site for which outline planning permission has been granted or, as the case may be, in respect of which an application for such permission has been made, means the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes—

- (a) screening by fences, walls or other means;
- (b) the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass;
- (c) the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks;
- (d) the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art; and
- (e) the provision of other amenity features;

Informative National Standards for SuDS

The new standards are intended for application in the design of the surface water drainage systems for new development. The FRA/DS should review the principles and standards and demonstrate how the surface water drainage design complies with the 7 standards proportionate to the size and scale of the development. The 7 standards are complementary, and the delivery of each standard should support delivery of the other standards. A surface water drainage system design that delivers multiple benefits will include a range of features and each of these should contribute to the delivery of several, if not all, of the standards. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-for-sustainable-drainage-systems/national-standards-for-sustainable-drainage-systems-suds>

Informative: Drainage Condition

The applicant should develop their surface water drainage solution by working through the Hierarchy of Preference contained within Revised Part H of the Building Regulations 2010. Namely Soakaway; Watercourse, and finally Sewer.

Heads of Terms

The applicant shall enter into a Section 106 to secure the following obligations;

- Provision of access arrangements
- Affordable Housing – 20%
- Education contributions in accordance with the Standard Formula

- Open Space Contributions in accordance with the SPD
- NHS Contributions
- Traffic Regulation Order in relation to site access works

Background

1. There is no relevant planning history associated with the site.

Site and Surroundings

2. The application site extends to approximately 10.76 hectares and comprises undeveloped agricultural land positioned on the western edge of Billingham. It is situated at a crossroad junction formed by Thames Road, Sandy Lane West and Wolviston Mill Lane.
3. The site is bound to the north by agricultural land, with Wynyard Road and Wolviston village beyond. Wolviston Mill Lane forms the eastern boundary, beyond which are St Paul's Catholic Primary School and Northfield School & Sports College. To the south lies the western edge of the Wolviston Court residential estate, with the A19 trunk road running along the western boundary.
4. The site comprises agricultural land divided into two fields characterised by mature vegetation and trees.
5. There are no public rights of way or informal footpaths within the site. The nearest public footpath or bridleway is located to the north of Wolviston village. Footways are provided on both sides of Thames Road and along the southern side of Sandy Lane West. Wolviston Mill Lane, which forms the eastern site boundary, is a well-used pedestrian route providing access to Wolviston village and St Paul's Catholic Primary School. A section of this lane, approximately 160 metres in length, is closed to through vehicular traffic.
6. The site contains no designated or non-designated heritage assets. The nearest heritage asset is Wolviston village Conservation Area, located approximately 300 metres from the northern boundary of the site. The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore of low risk for flooding. There are no landscape features of special value within the site, with the exception of some trees along the eastern boundary adjacent to Wolviston Mill Lane that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Vegetation along the remaining site boundaries is also recognised as contributing positively to the local green infrastructure.

Proposal

7. Outline planning permission is sought, with all matters reserved except access, for the development of up to 179 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), a community building (Use Class E/F2), and associated highways infrastructure, open space and landscaping.

Consultations

Consultees were notified and the following comments were received.

8. Councillor David Reynard & Councillor Marcus Vickers
25/2162/OUT Outline application, with all matters reserved except for access, for the erection of up to 179no residential dwellings (Use Class C3), 1no community building (Use Class E/F2) and associated road infrastructure, open spaces and landscaping.

We are contacting to object the proposed development which falls outside the council's local plan and is land not designated for development. Of which Stockton Borough Council as the local authority must ensure all applications should concur with the local plan, and this is subsequently departure from it.

The location for the development utilises prime agricultural land, and to allow this development would again be a departure and contradiction to Stockton Councils local plan and its associated policies that deter the building upon agricultural and environmental land.

The location for the development despite the developers claims it will not, will see Wolviston Court & Village coalesce. Again, this is also a direct contradiction and violation to SBC's own plans and policies. With other developments proposed, either this development or others proposed/pending will be the precedent and starting gun for a domino effect of coalescing of communities in direct breach of SBC policies (Policy ENV6 & SD5)

We have been campaigning to ensure appropriate infrastructure within our communities prior to this application being dropped upon us, with our only success being achieved in partnership with Wolviston Parish Council, whilst we face further neglect and obstacles with Stockton Borough Council. There will be a significant and detrimental impact to traffic; congestion; children's safety and resident wellbeing should the development go ahead without the appropriate traffic infrastructure in place including finishing off previous plans for Thames Road (which will be scuppered given the access point) as well as reviewing suitable options with Residents along Whitehouse Road, and further including onto Warkworth Road, Rievaulx Avenue, Wolviston Road and more. Again, with consideration of other proposed/pending developments this issue becomes much worse.

The harmful impact on traffic on Thames Road, Whitehouse Road and through Wolviston Village will significantly impact all residents living within our community and further, with no consideration being given to mitigate this impact.

We are proud of our brilliant local schools, and we have established good relationships to help improve parking issues, ASB if appropriate, and to embed our schools further into our community. Without the appropriate increased school places locally, this raises further concerns on the practicality of this, and again infrastructure requirements needed to accommodate school run parking which we have been working on.

The proposal for a community centre with limited number of parking spaces raises questions as to the impact this will have regarding parking on Mill Lane and Thames Road, as well as its usage. We are proud of the local community centres we have at Wolviston Court on Clifton Avenue, Monkseaton, & Wolviston Village, along with the currently vacant building within Billingham Beck and St Mary Magdalen Church (which must remain a community asset if no longer a place of worship) Wed have been working with many local community groups to find them a suitable and affordable home. We would appreciate further clarification on this, and the opportunity to improve our current

facilities and provide community groups an affordable place to be positioned to achieve an even greater positive impact in our local community.

Upon review we can see there will be a biodiversity net loss, which is disappointing, and we believe further analysis and detail is required upon this given the development will back on to such a significant green space and beck, with many forms of wildlife living nearby that could be harmed and impacted.

We have seen the proposed benefits sold by the developer and would take these "with a pinch of salt" in that the material benefits will not be felt by the local community, if anything significant harm will instead be felt by the local community. The supreme court has ruled benefits offered by developers that are not directly linked to the development are not material.

We also note the application does not provide detailed specifications of homes and further details, for example number of bedrooms, house design/material therefore we cannot be reassured either that the development is in-keeping with the area aesthetically.

We also note how the developer has proposed an acoustic strategy be developed at a later stage, this alarming to see an issue be acknowledged and potentially brushed aside to resolve later, but relevant planning permission could be granted without the reassurances.

As the number of objections demonstrate, the feeling amongst residents is very much against such development for reasons mentioned above and more. Therefore, we would implore the council to reject this application and prioritise the wellbeing and safety of our residents and green spaces above council tax receipts for the authority.

9. Wolviston Parish Council

The Parish Council formally objects to the proposed development on land north of Sandy Lane.

The objection is on the grounds that the proposal conflicts with key Local Plan policies and would cause significant harm to the landscape character, environmental quality and infrastructure capacity of the surrounding area. Approval of this application would therefore represent a clear departure from adopted planning policy.

The proposed development lies within a green wedge between Billingham and Wolviston. Therefore, approval would destroy an important green buffer that currently defines the distinct rural character of Wolviston and its separation from Billingham.

The additional dwellings would add substantial traffic to Sandy Lane and connecting routes towards both Billingham and Wolviston. These roads already experience congestion and limited capacity, particularly at peak times. The Parish Council is particularly concerned that this development will increase through traffic and commuter parking within the village undermining road safety.

In addition, approval would establish an undesirable precedent, particularly in relation to adjacent land to the east of Wolviston Road. Such developments would increase traffic through the village, place additional pressure on amenities, and critically undermine the retained and protected green wedge separating Wolviston and Billingham, as recognised in previous refusal notices.

We understand from the Planning Committee meeting of 05th November 2025 that Stockton Borough Council has achieved its house construction quota and therefore this development is not required towards the quota.

For these reasons, the Parish Council respectfully requests that the Planning Committee refuse application Ref. 25/2162/OUT in its entirety.

10. Lead Local Flood Authority

The applicant has provided sufficient information to satisfy the Local Lead Flood Authority that a surface water runoff solution can be achieved without increasing existing flood risk to the site or the surrounding area. However, the applicant has not provided a detailed design for the management of surface water runoff from the proposed development, and this information should be secured by conditions.

The Flood Risk Assessment submitted to support the application identified a potential culverted watercourse that may pass through the South East corner of the site. As the site layout is not being agreed at this stage, The Lead Local Flood Authority request that a separate condition is applied to secure a full investigation to confirm the presence and alignment of the culverted watercourse prior to finalising the site layout – if the culvert is found to pass through the site an easement would need to be maintained, the extent of which will be determined by the diameter and depth of the culvert.

11. Billingham Town Council

Made no comments

12. SBC Environmental Health

No objections in principle subject to conditions relating to the following:

- Noise mitigation strategy
- Construction/demolition noise
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Contaminated Land Risk Assessment
- Possible contamination from old landfill site

13. Strategic Housing

We note the lack of affordable housing statement included in the application. Strategic Housing requires that all planning applications send an affordable housing statement at the point of application. We agree with the proposed delivery of 20% affordable housing, which would equate to 36 affordable housing dwellings, based on the 179 dwellings estimated. We would accept a maximum of a 70:30 tenure split, with 70% of dwellings being affordable or socially rented and 30% being intermediate properties. Strategic Housing would also like to reinforce that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council does not accept new Discount for Market Sale or First Homes properties. Intermediate tenure properties will have to be Shared Ownership/Equity or Rent to Buy only.

From the planning statement, it is not clear what the bedroom mix of the proposed properties would be. However, it is expected that the affordable housing mix reflects the proportionality of the bedroom mix i.e. if there are four-bedroom properties on the site, some four-bedroom properties should be allocated for affordable housing. Policy H4 of the Local Plan states that developers will be required "to provide a mix and balance of good quality housing of appropriate sizes, types, and tenures which reflects local needs and demand". There is currently a need for four-bedroom affordable housing.

Strategic Housing would like to see affordable dwellings dispersed throughout the overall development site with affordable housing concentrations in a single location not exceeding six dwellings.

Further, confirmation of any service charge liabilities for the affordable dwellings (e.g. to maintain open space or the proposed SuDs basins) must be confirmed as this could impact on the overall affordability of the scheme.

14. Environment, Leisure & Green Infrastructure Manager

The drawings provided do not provide a clear indication of house numbers, so the following calculation has been based on an assumption that 10% of the development will be 2 bedroom houses, 50% 3 bedroom, 25% 4 bedroom and 15% five bedroom. The following figures are therefore only a guideline and can be amended once there is clear information regarding the proposed population of the development and how greenspace typologies are being provided within the development. The estimated population for the development (based on the estimates above) would be 619 residents. This would mean that 0.86 hectares of amenity greenspace is required as part of the development (note that the presence of a SUDS scheme is not considered amenity greenspace). In lieu of the provision of amenity greenspace and other types of open/green space typologies the off-site contribution for off-site developments and improvements would be £953,159 (please note this figure has had the appropriate uplift applied from those detailed in the Open Space, Recreation and Landscaping SPD, 2014 Update to Appendix 1: Charges for Open Space and Recreation Provision). Should an acceptable area of amenity greenspace be provided on site the off-site contributions would be reduced accordingly to £479,976.

15. Place Development

No comments to outline application, however advice provided in relation to reserved matters.

16. Natural England

We can confirm that developments discharging to either Billingham or Seaton Carew are not required to provide mitigation for wastewater discharge. For applications that fall within the EIA threshold, for example, housing developments of 150 units or more, then we would expect mitigation for surface water runoff, even where discharge is to Billingham or Seaton Carew.

In this instance, I have reviewed the budget calculator and can confirm that, due to the land use change from cereals to residential urban, there is a reduction in surface water runoff. As a result, the applicant is not required to provide any nutrient mitigation.

17. Tees Archaeology

We note the submission of an interim report on the archaeological trial trenching. This has identified a ditch of Iron Age/Roman date in Trench 7 and two undated gullies in Trench 6, along with more modern features in other trenches. We recommend that the features in Trenches 6 and 7 are subject to further mitigation, in the form of an archaeological strip, map, and record, prior to development of the site. This work, as well as the completion of the evaluation report for the trial trenching, can be secured by condition on the development.

18. National Highways

No objection subject to condition

19. Cleveland Police

No objection subject to the applicant engaging with the Police with respect to incorporating Secure by Design objectives. Advice relating to the detailed design has also been provided.

20. Chief Fire Officer (Cleveland Fire Brigade)

Cleveland Fire Brigade offers the following representations regarding the development as proposed.

Currently on the Proposed site plan Rev D dated the 13th of October 2025, we note that no plots are identified with a plot number, making it difficult for us to give specific reference to the requirements below. However, we do note from the Proposed site plan Rev D, that several of the unidentified plots do exceed the requirements below.

Access and Water Supplies should meet the requirements as set out in:

Approved Document B, Volume 1:2019, Section B5 for Dwellings.

Several rows of plots have 'private drive' access that exceed the dead-end road condition as described in ADB V1 Para 13.4.

The farthest dwellings do not appear to meet the 45m rule (ADB V1 Para 13.1), it is inevitable that appliances will access these areas to ensure that essential firefighting resources required at an incident are as close as reasonably practicable to ensure speed of response for any required rescues or firefighting measures.

It should be noted that Cleveland Fire Brigade now utilise a Magirus Multistar Combined Aerial Rescue Pump (CARP) which has a vehicle weight of 18 tonnes. This is greater than the specified weight in AD B Vol 1 Section B5 Table 13.1.

Cleveland Fire Brigade also utilise Emergency Fire Appliances measuring 3.5m from wing mirror to wing mirror. This is greater than the minimum width of gateways specified in AD B Vol 1 Section B5 Table 13.1.

Cleveland Fire Brigade is fully committed to the installation of Automatic Fire Suppression Systems (AFSS) in all premises where their inclusion will support fire safety, we therefore recommend that as part of the submission the client consider the installation of sprinklers or a suitable alternative AFS system.

Further comments may be made through the building regulation consultation process as required.

21. NHS

Local surgeries are part of ICB wide plans to improve GP access and would be the likely beneficiaries of any S106 funds secured.

Local GP Practices are keen to maintain/improve their access, and an increase in patient numbers may require adjustments to existing premises/access methods. Please be advised that we would be unable to guarantee to provide sustainable health services in these areas in future, should contributions not be upheld by developers.

In calculating developer contributions, we use the Premises Maxima guidance which is available publicly. This assumes a population growth rate of 2.3 people per new dwelling and we link this increase to the nearest practice to the development, for ease of calculation.

We use the NHS Property Service build cost rate of £3,500 per square metre to calculate the total financial requirement.

This reflects the current position based on information known at the time of responding. The NHS reserves the right however to review this if factors change before a final application is approved.

Total Proposed Contribution required £100,867

22. Durham County Badger Group
No comments
23. Sport England
Following further consultation and imposition of conditions in relation to light and noise pollution from adjacent sport pitches and MUGA, Sport England raise no objections to the development.

(previous objection withdrawn)
24. Teesside Airport
The airport safeguarding team has assessed the proposal in accordance with the UK Reg (EU) No 139/2014 (the UK Aerodromes Regulation) and it does not conflict with the safeguarding criteria for the airport. Accordingly, we have no aerodrome safeguarding objection to the proposal based on the information provided.
25. Sabic UK Petrochemicals Ltd
No objection
26. PADHI Health & Safety Executive
No objection – Do not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission in this case
27. Northern Gas Networks
No objection
28. Northern Powergrid
No objection
29. National Grid
No objection
30. Northumbrian Water Limited
No objection subject to condition
31. Highways Comments
The applicant has submitted a Transport Assessment (TA) and drawings showing an indicative 'Proposed Site Plan' and the 'Proposed Site Access Arrangement'.

The proposed site access, as shown on drawing 25-100/SK05 Rev B, is indicated to be a ghost island protected right turn which is considered to be an acceptable form of access for the scale of the proposed development.

Should the application be approved the site access arrangements will be delivered through a s278 Agreement and will, at this stage, be subject to a detailed design check and road safety audit.

The impact of the proposals on the local highway network, as set out in the Transport Assessment (TA), has also been reviewed and it has been demonstrated that the

residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would not be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

Therefore, subject to a construction traffic management plan being secured by condition there are no highways objections to the proposals.

Publicity

32. Neighbours were notified by individual letters, and wider publicity has been given via press advert and site notice. A total of 282 letters of objection has been received, and 2 letters of support have been received.

Comments have been summarised below:

Objections

- Conflict with the adopted Development Plan
- The development would lead to the coalescence of Billingham and Wolviston
- Development would impact on the rural landscape and would adversely alter the character of the local area
- Loss of agricultural land
- Scale, massing, and density concerns
- Traffic congestion and highway related safety issues
- Lack of access for emergency vehicles
- Pedestrian and road user safety
- Impact on recreational use of Mill Lane
- Pressure on existing local infrastructure
- Loss of green space, landscape, wildlife & biodiversity
- Inclusion of unnecessary community facility
- Privacy impact
- Consultation & procedural concerns
- Cumulative overdevelopment in local area
- Development is not in the public interest
- Flooding and drainage concerns
- Increase in anti-social behaviour from additional population
- Disturbance to local residents during construction phase
- Concerns around odours/fumes
- Loss of value of surrounding properties
- Further development pressure
- Part of the land belongs to the Parish Council

Support

- Additional affordable housing is needed
- The site is a good location on the edge of an existing residential area

Planning Policy Considerations

33. Where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permissions shall be determined in accordance with the Development

Plan(s) for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant Development Plan is the Stockton on Tees Borough Council Local Plan 2019.

34. Section 143 of the Localism Act came into force on the 15 January 2012 and requires the Local Planning Authority to take local finance considerations into account, this section s70(2) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended requires in dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application and c) any other material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework

35. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are economic social and environmental objectives.
36. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11) which for decision making means;
- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 8 Achieving sustainable development means pursuing three overarching objectives: supporting a strong economy, delivering social needs (including housing and community facilities), and protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Paragraph 11 The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-making, this means approving proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. Where relevant policies are absent or out-of-date, permission should be granted unless there are clear reasons for refusal under protected policies or where the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.

Paragraph 48 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

Paragraph 61 To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land is brought forward in appropriate locations.

Paragraph 109 Transport considerations should be embedded early in plan-making and development through a vision-led approach that supports sustainable, well-designed places. This includes integrating movement and design, promoting active and public transport, assessing impacts on networks, and minimising environmental effects while seeking opportunities for improvement.

Paragraph 116 Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

Paragraph 130 Highlights that design tools such as character assessments, design guides and masterplans should be used to ensure development reflects local landscape character while making efficient use of land, with density expectations tailored to the accessibility and context of different areas.

Paragraph 170 Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk through application of the sequential approach.

Paragraph 187 Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance the natural and local environment by conserving valued landscapes, biodiversity, and the intrinsic character of the countryside, while recognising the wider benefits of natural capital and ecosystem services, including the importance of the best and most versatile agricultural land. They should also minimise pollution and environmental risks, secure net gains for biodiversity, and support the improvement, restoration, and remediation of degraded or contaminated land where appropriate.

Paragraph 198 Planning policies and decisions should ensure development is suitable for its location by considering pollution impacts (including cumulative effects) on health, amenity and the environment. They should minimise adverse noise impacts, protect tranquil areas, and limit light pollution affecting amenity, dark landscapes and nature conservation.

Paragraph 212 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to its conservation irrespective of the level of harm.

Local Planning Policy

37. The following planning policies are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application.

Strategic Development Strategy Policy 1 (SD1) - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

(1). In accordance with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), when the Council considers development proposals it will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals for

sustainable development can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

2. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or, Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Strategic Development Strategy Policy 3 (SD3) - Housing Strategy

1. The housing requirement of the Borough will be met through the provision of sufficient deliverable sites to ensure the maintenance of a rolling five year supply of deliverable housing land. Should it become apparent that a five year supply of deliverable housing land cannot be identified at any point within the plan period, or delivery is consistently falling below the housing requirement, the Council will work with landowners, the development industry and relevant stakeholders and take appropriate action in seeking to address any shortfall.

2. The following are priorities for the Council:

a. Delivering a range and type of housing appropriate to needs and addressing shortfalls in provision; this includes the provision of housing to meet the needs of the ageing population and those with specific needs.

b. Providing accommodation that is affordable.

c. Providing opportunities for custom, self-build and small and medium sized house builders.

3. The approach to housing distribution has been developed to promote development in the most sustainable way. This will be achieved through:

b. Supporting residential development on sites within the conurbation as defined by the limits to development which comprises the main settlements of Stockton, Billingham, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick, Eaglescliffe and Yarm.

4. New dwellings within the countryside will not be supported unless they:

a. Are essential for farming, forestry or the operation of a rural based enterprise; or

b. Represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset; or

c. Would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting; or

d. Are of an exceptional quality or innovative nature of design. Such a design should:

i. be truly outstanding or innovative, helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas;

ii. reflect the highest standards in architecture;

iii. significantly enhance its immediate setting; and

iv. be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Strategic Development Strategy Policy 5 (SD5) - Natural, Built and Historic Environment

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the environment alongside meeting the challenge of climate change the Council will:

1. Conserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environment through a variety of methods including:

a) Ensuring that development proposals adhere to the sustainable design principles identified within Policy SD8.

- b) Protecting and enhancing designated sites (including the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast Special Protection Area and Ramsar) and other existing resources alongside the provision of new resources.
 - c) Protecting and enhancing green infrastructure networks and assets, alongside the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species.
 - d) Enhancing woodlands and supporting the increase of tree cover where appropriate.
 - e) Supporting development of an appropriate scale within the countryside where it does not harm its character and appearance, and provides for sport and recreation or development identified within Policies SD3 and SD4.
 - f) Ensuring any new development within the countryside retains the physical identity and character of individual settlements.
 - j) Ensuring development proposals are responsive to the landscape, mitigating their visual impact where necessary. Developments will not be permitted where they would lead to unacceptable impacts on the character and distinctiveness of the Borough's landscape unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh any harm. Wherever possible, developments should include measures to enhance, restore and create special features of the landscape.
 - l) Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of ground, air, water, light or noise pollution or land instability. Wherever possible proposals should seek to improve ground, air and water quality.
2. Meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change through a variety of methods including:
- a. Directing development in accordance with Policies SD3 and SD4.
 - c. Supporting sustainable water management within development proposals.
 - d. Directing new development towards areas of low flood risk (Flood Zone 1), ensuring flood risk is not increased elsewhere, and working with developers and partners to reduce flood risk.
3. Conserve and enhance the historic environment through a variety of methods including:
- a. Celebrating, promoting and enabling access, where appropriate, to the historic environment.
 - b. Ensuring monitoring of the historic environment is regularly undertaken.
 - c. Intervening to enhance the historic environment especially where heritage assets are identified as being at risk.
 - d. Supporting proposals which positively respond to and enhance heritage assets.
 - e. Recognising the area's industrial heritage, including early history, railway and engineering heritage and the area's World War II contribution.

Strategic Development Strategy Policy 8 (SD8) - Sustainable Design Principles

1. The Council will seek new development to be designed to the highest possible standard, taking into consideration the context of the surrounding area and the need to respond positively to the:
- a. Quality, character and sensitivity of the surrounding public realm, heritage assets, and nearby buildings, in particular at prominent junctions, main roads and town centre gateways;
 - b. Landscape character of the area, including the contribution made by existing trees and landscaping;
 - c. Need to protect and enhance ecological and green infrastructure networks and assets;
 - d. Need to ensure that new development is appropriately laid out to ensure adequate separation between buildings and an attractive environment;
 - e. Privacy and amenity of all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
 - f. Existing transport network and the need to provide safe and satisfactory access and parking for all modes of transport;

- g. Need to reinforce local distinctiveness and provide high quality and inclusive design solutions, and
 - h. Need for all development to be designed inclusively to ensure that buildings and spaces are accessible for all, including people with disabilities.
2. New development should contribute positively to making places better for people. They should be inclusive and establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit.
 3. All proposals will be designed with public safety and the desire to reduce crime in mind, incorporating, where appropriate, advice from the Health and Safety Executive, Secured by Design, or any other appropriate design standards.
 4. New development will seek provision of adequate waste recycling, storage and collection facilities, which are appropriately sited and designed.

Natural, Built and Historic Environment Policy 1 (ENV1) - Energy Efficiency

1. The Council will encourage all development to minimise the effects of climate change through meeting the highest possible environmental standards during construction and occupation.

Natural, Built and Historic Environment Policy 4 (ENV4) - Reducing and Mitigating Flood Risk

1. All new development will be directed towards areas of the lowest flood risk to minimise the risk of flooding from all sources, and will mitigate any such risk through design and implementing sustainable drainage (SuDS) principles.
3. Site specific flood risk assessments will be required in accordance with national policy.
4. All development proposals will be designed to ensure that:
 - a. Opportunities are taken to mitigate the risk of flooding elsewhere;
 - b. Foul and surface water flows are separated;
 - c. Appropriate surface water drainage mitigation measures are incorporated and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are prioritised; and
 - d. SuDS have regard to Tees Valley Authorities Local Standards for Sustainable Drainage (2015) or successor document.
5. Surface water run-off should be managed at source wherever possible and disposed of in the following hierarchy of preference sequence:
 - a. To an infiltration or soak away system; then,
 - b. To a watercourse open or closed; then,
 - c. To a sewer.
6. Disposal to combined sewers should be the last resort once all other methods have been explored.
9. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be provided on major development (residential development comprising 10 dwellings or more and other equivalent commercial development) unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. The incorporation of SuDS should be integral to the design process and be integrated with green infrastructure. Where SuDS are provided, arrangements must be put in place for their whole life management and maintenance.

Natural, Built and Historic Environment Policy 5 (ENV) - Preserve, Protect and Enhance Ecological Networks, Biodiversity and Geodiversity

1. The Council will protect and enhance the biodiversity and geological resources within the Borough. Development proposals will be supported where they enhance nature conservation and management, preserve the character of the natural environment and maximise opportunities for biodiversity and geological conservation particularly in or adjacent to Biodiversity Opportunity Areas in the River Tees Corridor, Teesmouth and Central Farmland Landscape Areas.

3. Ecological networks and wildlife corridors will be protected, enhanced and extended. A principal aim will be to link sites of biodiversity importance by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats.

5. Development proposals should seek to achieve net gains in biodiversity wherever possible. It will be important for biodiversity and geodiversity to be considered at an early stage in the design process so that harm can be avoided and wherever possible enhancement achieved (this will be of particular importance in the redevelopment of previously developed land where areas of biodiversity should be retained and recreated alongside any remediation of any identified contamination). Detrimental impacts of development on biodiversity and geodiversity, whether individual or cumulative should be avoided. Where this is not possible, mitigation and lastly compensation, must be provided as appropriate. The Council will consider the potential for a strategic approach to biodiversity offsetting in conjunction with the Tees Valley Local Nature Partnership and in line with the above hierarchy.

7. Existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows which are important to the character and appearance of the local area or are of nature conservation value will be protected wherever possible. Where loss is unavoidable, replacement of appropriate scale and species will be sought on site, where practicable.

Natural, Built and Historic Environment Policy 6 (ENV6) - Green Infrastructure, Open Space, Green Wedges and Agricultural Land

2. Where appropriate, development proposals will be required to make contributions towards green infrastructure having regard to standards and guidance provided within the Open Space, Recreation and Landscaping SPD or any successor. Green infrastructure should be integrated, where practicable, into new developments. This includes new hard and soft landscaping, and other types of green infrastructure. Proposals should illustrate how the proposed development will be satisfactorily integrated into the surrounding area in a manner appropriate to the surrounding townscape and landscape setting and enhances the wider green infrastructure network.

5. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they avoid the 'best and most versatile' agricultural land unless the benefits of the proposal outweigh the need to protect such land for agricultural purposes. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they have sought to use areas of lower quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.

Natural, Built and Historic Environment Policy 7 (ENV7) - Ground, Air, Water, Noise and Light Pollution

1. All development proposals that may cause groundwater, surface water, air (including odour), noise or light pollution either individually or cumulatively will be required to incorporate measures as appropriate to prevent or reduce their pollution so as not to cause unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of all existing and potential future occupants of land and buildings, the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the environment.

3. Where development has the potential to lead to significant pollution either individually or cumulatively, proposals should be accompanied by a full and detailed assessment of the likely impacts. Development will not be permitted when it is considered that unacceptable effects will be imposed on human health, or the environment, taking into account the cumulative effects of other proposed or existing sources of pollution in the vicinity. Development will only be approved where suitable mitigation can be achieved that would bring pollution within acceptable levels.

4. Where future users or occupiers of a development would be affected by contamination or stability issues, or where contamination may present a risk to the water environment, proposals must demonstrate via site investigation/assessment that:

- a. Any issues will be satisfactorily addressed by appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use, and does not result in unacceptable risks which would adversely impact upon human health and the environment; and
- b. Demonstrate that development will not cause the site or the surrounding environment to become contaminated and/or unstable.

Housing Policy 4 (H4) - Meeting Housing Needs

1. Sustainable residential communities will be created by requiring developers to provide a mix and balance of good quality housing of appropriate sizes, types and tenures which reflects local needs and demand, having regard to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, its successor documents or appropriate supporting documents.
3. The Council require 20% of new homes to be affordable on schemes of more than 10 dwellings or with a combined gross floorspace of above 1000sqm.
5. Affordable housing will normally be provided on-site as part of, and integrated within housing development to help deliver balanced communities. This provision should be distributed across sites in small clusters of dwellings. Off-site affordable housing or a commuted sum will only be acceptable where:
 - a. All options for securing on-site provision of affordable housing have been explored and exhausted; or
 - b. The proposal is for exclusively executive housing, where off-site provision would have wider sustainability benefits and contribute towards the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities; or
 - c. The proposal involves a conversion of a building which is not able to accommodate units of the size and type required; or
 - d. Any other circumstances where off-site provision is more appropriate than on-site provision.
6. Where off-site affordable housing or a commuted sum is considered acceptable, the amount will be equivalent in value to that which would have been viable if the provision was made onsite and calculated with regard to the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 8 or any successor.
9. To ensure that homes provide quality living environments for residents both now and in the future and to help deliver sustainable communities, from the 1st April 2019 the following Optional Standards will apply, subject to consideration of site suitability, the feasibility of meeting the standards (taking into account the size, location and type of dwellings proposed) and site viability:
 - a. 50% of new homes to meet Building Regulation M4 (2) "Category 2 - accessible and adaptable dwellings".
 - b. 8% of new dwellings to meet Building Regulation M4(3) "Category 3 - Wheelchair User Dwellings". Where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling, homes should meet building regulation M4 (3) (2) (b). When providing for wheelchair user housing, early discussion with the Council is required to obtain the most up-to-date information on specific need in the local area.

Material Planning Considerations

38. The key considerations of this application are:
 - Principle of Development
 - Five-Year Housing Supply
 - Locational Sustainability
 - Economic and Social Benefits
 - Loss of Agricultural Land
 - Landscape, Visual Impact and Settlement Separation

- Impact on Trees
- Heritage and Archaeology
- Proposed Development/Layout
- Impact on Amenity
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Highway Safety and Transport Impacts
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Ecology/Biodiversity Net Gain
- Residual Matters
- Planning Balance

Principle of Development

39. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's overarching objectives for the planning system, with a central aim of achieving sustainable development. This is defined through three interdependent objectives: economic, social, and environmental. The Framework also emphasises the importance of identifying and meeting housing needs, together with responding positively to opportunities for growth. In this regard, paragraph 61 highlights the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing.
40. In relation to the adopted local planning policy context, the application site is not subject to any specific land use designations; however, it is located outside the defined limits to development and is therefore considered to be within the open countryside. Policy SD3 seeks to strictly control development in such locations, permitting proposals only where they meet defined policy criteria.
41. Notwithstanding this policy position, the site's location beyond the settlement boundary is not, in itself, determinative of the application. The acceptability of the proposed development must therefore be assessed having regard to all relevant material planning considerations, with the overall planning balance set out below.
42. It is acknowledged that the site was not allocated for development within the Local Plan. However, it was previously assessed through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2017) and identified as being potentially suitable for residential development, although it was not progressed for allocation at that time.

Five Year Housing Supply

43. As Members have previously been advised, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. The application must therefore be determined in accordance with paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, this requires granting permission unless the application of policies protecting areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusal, or the adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.
44. Paragraph 232 of the NPPF confirms that existing development plan policies should not be considered out-of-date solely by virtue of pre-dating the Framework. Instead, due weight should be afforded to such policies according to their degree of consistency with national policy. In this regard, policies aimed at safeguarding the countryside remain

relevant and continue to carry weight, as they are broadly consistent with the objectives of the NPPF.

45. Notwithstanding this, Policy SD3, which seeks to restrict development beyond settlement boundaries, is more restrictive than the approach advocated within the NPPF. The Framework places significant emphasis on the planning balance, with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as a central consideration. Accordingly, the proposal must be assessed against the 'tilted balance' set out in paragraph 11, whereby planning permission should only be refused if the identified harms would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development.

Locational Sustainability

46. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies, as a core planning principle, the need to actively manage patterns of growth by directing development to sustainable locations and maximising opportunities for travel by public transport, walking and cycling.
47. The application site is situated on the western edge of Billingham and benefits from close proximity to a range of services and facilities. These include St Paul's Primary School and Northfield School & Sports College, together with Priors Mill CofE Primary School, all of which are within walking distance. A local parade of shops on Clifton Avenue, incorporating a Sainsbury's convenience store, as well as a public house, barbers, hairdressers and takeaway outlets, is located approximately 0.8 kilometres from the site and is readily accessible on foot.
48. The nearby village of Wolviston is also accessible via Wolviston Mill Lane and provides an additional range of services and community facilities, including a primary school, shop and post office, café/bakery, hair and beauty premises, a public house, church and community centre.
49. The site is also well served by public transport. A bus stop is located in close proximity, to the south of St Paul's Catholic Primary School, with services operating at approximately 30-minute intervals and providing connections to Billingham Town Centre and beyond.
50. The proposed development includes provision for a community building, falling within Use Class F2 (Local Community Use) or Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service), which would be capable of serving both future residents and the wider community. A number of objections have been received in relation to this element of the scheme, raising concerns on the basis of an assumed use as a community centre, of which objectors deem is not considered necessary in the area. However, the precise nature and end use of the facility is not fixed at this stage and would be subject to further consideration at the reserved matters stage, allowing flexibility for the building to respond to and meet identified local needs, including the potential provision of additional or alternative services and facilities for the community.
51. Having regard to the site's proximity to a range of services, facilities and public transport options, it is considered to be in a sustainable location capable of supporting new development, where future occupiers would not be wholly reliant on the private car.
52. It is noted that concerns have been raised regarding the impact of the scheme on local infrastructure, notably schools, doctors and dentists. However, notwithstanding the lack

of objection from these bodies, or substantive evidence to suggest that their capacity is limited, no evidence has been put forward to state the services cannot cope with the development and no objections have been raised from the bodies responsible for these services, therefore it is considered that this in itself would not warrant refusal of the application.

Economic and Social Benefits

53. The proposed development would deliver clear social and economic benefits. In particular, it would contribute towards addressing the Council's identified shortfall in its five-year housing land supply, thereby assisting in meeting local housing needs in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF. The scheme would also provide an element of affordable housing, contributing towards the delivery of mixed and inclusive communities, which represents a significant social benefit.
54. In addition, the development would generate economic benefits during the construction phase through the creation of jobs within the construction sector and associated supply chains. There would also be indirect benefits arising from increased local expenditure supporting existing businesses and services. These economic contributions are consistent with the NPPF's overarching objective of supporting sustainable economic growth.
55. Taken together, the provision of new homes, including affordable housing, alongside the generation of employment and economic activity, weigh positively in favour of the proposal when considered against the economic and social objectives of sustainable development

Loss of Agricultural Land

56. Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), together with Policy ENV6 of the Local Plan, seeks to protect the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) agricultural land, advising that such land should be avoided for development unless it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the need to safeguard it for agricultural use.
57. BMV agricultural land is defined by Natural England as land within Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system, reflecting its capacity to support a wide range of crops and consistently high yields. Concerns have been raised that the proposal would result in the loss of agricultural land and the potential erosion of this finite resource.
58. In this regard, an Agricultural Land Classification Assessment has been submitted and considered as part of the application. The assessment involved both desk-based analysis and on-site survey work and considered the site against the criteria for Grades 3a and 3b land. The findings indicate that the land is not capable of supporting a wide variety of crops and is constrained in terms of agricultural versatility. In particular, the site is considered unsuitable for horticultural production and is more appropriately suited to lower value uses such as cereal cropping, oilseed rape, and grass production. The report further notes that practical constraints, including site configuration, boundary treatments and access to water supply, would limit its suitability for grazing, with any grass production likely to be for silage rather than pasture.

59. Taking account of these factors, the assessment concludes that the land is classified overall as Grade 3b. Whilst some limited characteristics associated with Grade 3a may be present in parts of the site, these are not sufficient to influence the overall findings of the report or alter its final classification. Accordingly, the site does not fall within the definition of best and most versatile agricultural land, and the proposed development would not result in the loss of land afforded the highest level of protection under national and local planning policy.
60. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would not conflict with the objectives of the NPPF or Policy ENV6 in respect of safeguarding high-quality agricultural land, and this matter does not weigh against the development in the overall planning balance.

Landscape, Visual Impact and Settlement Separation

61. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to protect and enhance valued landscapes while ensuring development is sympathetic to local character and the intrinsic beauty of the countryside (Paragraphs 187 and 130). It also recognises the importance of maintaining settlement identity and avoiding coalescence. This approach is reflected in Policies SD1, SD8 and ENV1 of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan, which promote high quality design, landscape protection, and settlement separation.
62. Objections have been raised that the proposed development would harm the rural landscape and the character and appearance of the area, with particular concern regarding the erosion of the gap between Billingham and Wolviston and the potential for coalescence. These matters have been carefully assessed having regard to the submitted Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) and accompanying Supplementary Information.
63. The LVA has been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) and provides a structured assessment of effects on landscape character and visual amenity, including consideration of baseline conditions, sensitivity, magnitude of change and significance of effect. The methodology is considered robust and provides an appropriate basis for assessment.
64. The site lies within National Character Area (NCA) 23: Tees Lowlands, where no significant effects are identified at the national scale. At local level, it falls within the 'Wynyard' Landscape Character Area, characterised by woodland, arable farmland and urban fringe influences. The site is assessed as having medium landscape sensitivity and capacity for change, reflecting its limited intrinsic value, absence of designation, and the influence of surrounding development and infrastructure.
65. In landscape terms, the development would result in the loss of agricultural land and a change from open farmland to built form. The LVA identifies effects as moderate to moderate/minor adverse at the site level, reducing to minor adverse at the wider landscape scale. The retention of boundary vegetation and the introduction of structural landscaping, including a northern landscape belt and green infrastructure, would assist in integrating the development and reducing effects over time.
66. In visual terms, effects would be limited to the surrounding area and mainly experienced at close range. Most views of the development would occur within approximately 1 km, with the greatest change typically within 150–250 metres. Effects are assessed as ranging from negligible to moderate/minor adverse and are not considered significant.

Over time, new planting would filter and soften views, assisting in assimilating the development into the surrounding landscape.

67. The issue of settlement coalescence has been examined in detail within the supplementary LVA. The scheme has been designed to minimise encroachment into the gap between Billingham and Wolviston, with development aligned broadly with the existing urban edge, including the adjacent school complex, so that it reads as a logical extension of the settlement.
68. A substantial northern landscape buffer comprising woodland planting, wetland features and open space would reinforce this approach, creating a clear and defensible settlement edge and providing visual containment of development.
69. The evidence demonstrates that a meaningful physical gap of approximately 260 metres would be retained between Billingham and Wolviston, comprising the proposed landscape buffer and retained agricultural land, thereby preventing physical coalescence.
70. In visual terms, there is currently limited intervisibility between the settlements in public views, and this would remain the case. Where views are available, a clear visual gap is maintained and no perceptual coalescence arises. Any limited winter visibility would be filtered and would reduce further as planting matures. The development would therefore be perceived as a contained extension to the edge of Billingham, rather than encroachment towards Wolviston, and the separate identity of both settlements would be maintained.
71. Overall, whilst the proposal would result in localised landscape change, this is typical of development on a greenfield urban edge site. The identified adverse effects are limited, not significant, and would be reduced through mitigation, including structural landscaping and detailed design at reserved matters stage.
72. In terms of settlement separation, both physical and visual distinction between Billingham and Wolviston would be maintained, with no physical or perceptual coalescence arising.
73. Taking all matters into consideration, the landscape and visual effects of the development are considered acceptable in planning terms. The proposal would be appropriately contained and integrated and would not result in unacceptable harm to landscape character, visual amenity or settlement identity. The development is therefore considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and Local Plan policies.

Impact on Trees

74. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that trees make an important contribution to the character, environmental quality and biodiversity of an area. Paragraph 187 seeks to protect and enhance valued landscapes and ecological networks, including trees and hedgerows, whilst safeguarding irreplaceable habitats. Policy ENV5 of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan reflects this approach.
75. Objections have been raised regarding the potential loss of trees and hedgerows and the consequent effects on landscape character and biodiversity.

76. The site comprises predominantly open agricultural land, with trees and hedgerows largely confined to the boundaries, including along Sandy Lane West, the A19 corridor and Wolviston Mill Lane. The interior of the site is largely devoid of tree cover.
77. The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), prepared in accordance with BS 5837:2012, categorises trees as predominantly Category B and C, with some Category U specimens due to condition. No Category A trees are present.
78. It is noted that some trees featured along the eastern boundary are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Whilst this designation is not explicitly referenced within the submitted AIA, the absence of this reference does not undermine the overall conclusions of the assessment.
79. Tree removal is limited to a small number of low-value specimens, sections of hedgerow required for access, and poor-quality or diseased growth. This is not considered to materially affect the wider tree resource.
80. Importantly, the majority of boundary trees and hedgerows are to be retained and protected. The proposals have been informed by arboricultural constraints, and the AIA includes a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement setting out appropriate protective measures. These include the establishment of root protection areas (RPAs), construction exclusion zones and protective fencing, ensuring that retained trees can be safeguarded throughout the construction process in accordance with BS 5837:2012.
81. Potential impacts during construction can be effectively mitigated through the implementation of standard arboricultural practices secured by condition. Subject to these measures, retained trees would not be subject to unacceptable risk.
82. It is acknowledged that the application is in outline form and detailed layout, levels and landscaping will be considered at reserved matters stage. This will allow for further refinement to ensure appropriate separation from root protection areas and to reinforce boundary planting where necessary. Conditions have been imposed to secure full compliance with the Arboricultural Method Statement and to ensure appropriate protection of retained trees in accordance with statutory requirements.
83. Overall, whilst a limited number of low-value trees and hedgerow sections would be removed, the impact on trees and rural character is considered to be minor and not unacceptable. The retention and protection of boundary vegetation, together with opportunities for enhancement, ensures that the development accords with national and local policy objectives relating to landscape and arboricultural protection.

Heritage and Archaeology

84. Paragraphs 205–208 of the NPPF require development to conserve designated heritage assets in a manner proportionate to their significance, with any harm requiring clear justification. Paragraph 209 further requires that the potential for archaeological remains is appropriately assessed and, where necessary, mitigated. These requirements are reflected locally in Policy HE2 of the Stockton Local Plan, which seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings.
85. The northern boundary of the application site lies approximately 300 metres from the Wolviston Village Conservation Area. This separation is reinforced by intervening

agricultural land and existing residential development, which limit any intervisibility and prevent any direct physical or visual relationship between the site and the designated area. There are no listed buildings or other designated heritage assets within or adjoining the site.

86. In this context, the proposed development would not affect the significance or setting of the Wolviston Village Conservation Area. The absence of intervisibility, combined with the degree of separation and intervening development, ensures that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would not give rise to harm to any designated heritage asset.
87. Having regard to the above, the proposal is considered to accord with Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy HE2 of the Stockton Local Plan, both of which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
88. In respect of archaeology, concerns have been raised regarding the potential for previously unidentified remains within the site. The application is supported by a Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment, and the scheme has been subject to consultation with Tees Archaeology.
89. The submitted assessment identified the potential for archaeological remains and recommended further investigation, reflecting the greenfield nature and scale of the site. This has been undertaken through a programme of geophysical survey and trial trenching, the results of which have been provided in an interim evaluation report.
90. The trial trenching identified limited archaeological features, including a ditch of Iron Age/Roman date and two undated gullies, alongside a number of later, non-significant features. These findings indicate the presence of archaeological remains of localised interest but do not represent constraints to development, subject to appropriate mitigation.
91. Tees Archaeology advises that the identified features can be satisfactorily addressed through a programme of archaeological strip, map and record, together with post-excavation assessment and reporting. This approach is considered proportionate to the significance of the remains and can be secured by planning condition.
92. Taking all matters into account, the proposal would not result in harm to designated heritage assets, and any archaeological interest can be appropriately mitigated. The development is therefore considered acceptable in heritage terms and compliant with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and Local Plan.

Proposed Development / Layout

93. The proposed development is supported by a Design Brief, which sets out an ambition to deliver a sustainable, inclusive and high-quality residential environment that responds positively to its context and contributes to the local community and economy.
94. Indicative plans have been provided, which detail 179 residential plots, providing a mix of housing types, densities and tenures. The layout demonstrates a coherent and functional arrangement, incorporating primary and secondary roads, pedestrian routes, open space and landscaping.

95. A significant number of representations have raised concerns regarding the scale, massing and overall density of the proposed development. These concerns are acknowledged; however, it is important to note that the submitted plans are indicative only and do not seek approval for the detailed layout, appearance or scale of individual dwellings. As the application is submitted in outline, with all matters other than access reserved for future consideration, further technical work and detailed design assessments will be undertaken prior to the submission of reserved matters applications.
96. The indicative quantum of up to 179 dwellings therefore represents a maximum development parameter rather than a fixed or finalised scheme. It is recognised that the eventual number of dwellings may be lower once detailed matters such as layout, housing mix, design quality, landscaping, tree retention, drainage and residential amenity are fully assessed. These matters will be subject to detailed scrutiny at the reserved matters stage to ensure that the development achieves an appropriate scale and form, responds suitably to its context, and complies with relevant development plan policies. On this basis, it is considered appropriate to establish the principle of development at this stage, with detailed concerns relating to scale, massing and density addressed through the reserved matters process.
97. Policy ENV1 of the Stockton Local Plan requires developments of ten dwellings or more to be supported by an Energy Statement demonstrating how predicted energy consumption and associated carbon emissions will be reduced in accordance with the energy hierarchy. This includes achieving a minimum 10% reduction in CO₂ emissions over and above Building Regulations, or where this cannot be achieved, providing at least 10% of the predicted energy demand from renewable sources, either on site or within the locality. Given the outline nature of the application, it is considered appropriate to secure this requirement by condition as part of the Reserved Matters stage.
98. Provision for open space will be made in accordance with the relevant Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), with either on-site provision or an off-site financial contribution secured as appropriate.
99. Local Plan Policy H4 requires the provision of 20% affordable housing on schemes of more than 10 dwellings or where the gross floor space exceeds 1,000 square metres, with affordable homes provided on-site. The applicant has confirmed that 20% affordable housing will be delivered as part of the proposal and the scheme is therefore compliant with this requirement.
100. Policy H4 also requires a proportion of new dwellings to meet Building Regulations M4(2) and M4(3) standards. The applicant has indicated that these requirements will be met, with details to be provided at the reserved matters stage. This has been secured by condition.
101. Comments from the Place Development Team, Cleveland Fire Brigade and Cleveland Police are noted and have been forwarded to the applicant for information and consideration during the preparation of the reserved matters submissions.

Impact on Amenity

102. Paragraphs 135 and 198 of the NPPF require development to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and to ensure that proposals do not result in, or

expose occupants to, unacceptable levels of pollution. These principles are reflected locally in Policy SD8 of the Local Plan, which seeks to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring and future occupiers.

103. Concerns have been raised by local residents regarding the potential effects of the development on residential amenity, including impacts arising from construction activity, potential disturbance, and effects on privacy and outlook. These matters have been fully considered in the assessment of the proposal.
104. The site adjoins existing residential development at the edge of the settlement. It is acknowledged that construction activities would give rise to temporary impacts, including noise, dust and increased vehicle movements, with associated implications for local air quality. However, such impacts are typical of development of this scale and are temporary in nature. Subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions, these impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated and managed.
105. In respect of the completed development, this application is in outline with matters of layout, scale and appearance reserved for subsequent approval. As such, the detailed relationship between the proposed development and existing properties is not fixed at this stage. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the site is of sufficient size to accommodate development that would achieve appropriate separation distances and safeguard levels of privacy, outlook and residential amenity. These matters can be appropriately addressed at the reserved matters stage, at which point the Local Planning Authority will retain control to ensure that the detailed design responds appropriately to surrounding properties.
106. Potential impacts arising from nearby noise sources have been identified. Appropriate planning conditions are recommended to ensure that suitable mitigation measures are secured and that an acceptable living environment for future occupiers is achieved.
107. Taking the above into account, it is concluded that, subject to the recommended conditions and the careful consideration of detailed design at reserved matters stage, the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of existing or future occupants. This includes consideration of noise, disturbance and air quality impacts. The development is therefore considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan in respect of residential amenity.

Anti-Social Behaviour

108. Paragraph 96 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that planning decisions promote safe and accessible environments, with a high quality of design that discourages crime and anti-social behaviour and promotes social cohesion. This is supported by wider design and amenity objectives within the Framework. At the local level, these aims are reflected in Policy SD8 of the Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that development provides a safe and secure environment and safeguards the amenity of existing and future occupiers.
109. Concerns have been raised regarding the potential for anti-social behaviour associated with the proposed development. These concerns are acknowledged; however, there is no substantive or site-specific evidence to indicate that the development would result in increased levels of crime, disorder or anti-social behaviour. Cleveland Police have been consulted and raise no objection to the proposal. They have, however, advised

that the applicant engages with them at the detailed design stage to incorporate appropriate Secured by Design measures.

110. In accordance with the duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, due regard has been given to community safety considerations. The detailed design of the development, including layout, natural surveillance, access arrangements and the treatment of public spaces, can be secured and refined at the reserved matters stage. This will ensure the scheme incorporates Secured by Design principles and promotes a safe, secure and well-overlooked environment.
111. Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to unacceptable impacts in respect of crime or anti-social behaviour. Subject to appropriate design at subsequent stages, the development would contribute to a safe and inclusive environment and is therefore compliant with the relevant provisions of the NPPF and Policy SD8 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety and Transport Impacts

112. Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe following mitigation. At the local level, Policy SD8 of the Local Plan requires development to be of a high design standard, responding appropriately to its context and the existing transport network, and to provide safe, suitable access and adequate parking for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
113. The majority of objections raise concerns that the proposed development would exacerbate existing traffic congestion along Thames Road/Sandy Lane West and within the surrounding residential area, adversely affect highway and pedestrian safety, impede access for emergency vehicles, and diminish the recreational function of Wolviston Mill Lane. These matters have been carefully considered, taking into account the submitted technical evidence and the requirements of relevant national and local planning policy.
114. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (TA) and Framework Travel Plan, which assess the likely transport impacts of the development. The TA includes an appraisal of the local and strategic highway network, traffic generation, capacity impacts and accessibility. The principal vehicular access is proposed via a ghost island right-turn arrangement from Sandy Lane West, which is considered capable of safely accommodating the predicted traffic flows associated with the development.
115. National Highways has reviewed the submitted TA and is satisfied that the development would not result in a material impact on the operation or safety of the Strategic Road Network. Accordingly, no objection has been raised.
116. The Council's Highways, Transport and Design Manager (HTDM) has undertaken a detailed review of the TA, including the trip generation assumptions, distribution, and junction capacity assessments. The assessment concludes that the local highway network is capable of accommodating the additional traffic generated by the development, subject to appropriate mitigation and detailed design.

117. During the assessment process, the HTDM identified concerns regarding an initially proposed secondary vehicular access to the community building from Wolviston Mill Lane, having regard to the function and amenity value of the lane. The scheme has since been amended to remove this access, with all vehicular movements accommodated internally within the site. Amendments have also been secured to the proposed site access, including geometry, visibility splays, carriageway widths and pedestrian infrastructure, to ensure compliance with adoptable standards. The HTDM has confirmed that these matters have been satisfactorily addressed.
118. Detailed proposals for internal road layouts, parking provision and plot-level access are reserved for future consideration. These matters will be assessed at the reserved matters stage to ensure compliance with the Council's Car Parking Supplementary Planning Document and relevant highway design standards, and to ensure safe and convenient movement for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists.
119. Whilst the concerns raised by local residents are acknowledged, the assessment of highway impacts must be based on robust technical evidence. Having reviewed the Transport Assessment and taking account of the proposed mitigation measures, the HTDM advises that the residual cumulative impacts of the development would not be considered severe. This is consistent with paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that development should only be refused on highways grounds where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
120. Taking all matters into account and having regard to the advice of National Highways and the Council's highway officers, it is concluded that the proposed development would not give rise to an unacceptable impact on highway safety, pedestrian safety or the operation of the surrounding road network. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the transport objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant Local Plan policies, and there are no highway or transport grounds which would justify refusal of the application

Flood Risk and Drainage

121. Paragraph 170 of the NPPF requires development to be directed away from areas of highest flood risk and to be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. In this context, Stockton Local Plan Policy ENV4 emphasises the importance of reducing and managing flood risk, particularly in light of climate change. All sources of flooding (fluvial, surface water, sewer and groundwater) should be taken into account, with appropriate mitigation measures incorporated.
122. The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered appropriate for residential development in accordance with national policy. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) confirms that the site is at low risk of flooding from all sources, including fluvial, surface water, groundwater and sewer flooding.
123. Objections have been received from neighbouring residents regarding flood risk and drainage capacity. These concerns have been carefully considered in light of the submitted FRA. The assessment identifies that the majority of the site is at very low risk of surface water flooding, with some localised areas of higher risk associated with existing low-lying topography. These areas can be appropriately addressed through site layout and drainage design and do not represent a constraint to development.

124. The FRA sets out a sustainable surface water drainage strategy based on the principles of the drainage hierarchy. Given the site's ground conditions, infiltration is not considered feasible. Instead, a combination of sustainable drainage measures is proposed, including permeable paving, swales, detention basins and flow control devices. These measures will attenuate surface water runoff and restrict discharge to Qbar greenfield runoff rates.
125. Surface water from the site would be discharged via two routes reflecting the natural topography. The northern part of the site would discharge to Cowbridge Beck, whilst the southern part would discharge to the existing surface water sewer at the south-eastern corner of the site. Both discharge routes have been assessed within the FRA and are considered appropriate and deliverable solutions.
126. The drainage strategy has been designed to accommodate up to and including the 1 in 100 year storm event with a 45% allowance for climate change. Hydraulic modelling demonstrates that the system provides appropriate attenuation, with exceedance flows managed within the site through designed storage and overland flow routes.
127. In respect of foul drainage, the FRA confirms that foul flows can be discharged to the existing combined sewer network. This can be achieved in accordance with the requirements of the statutory undertaker and is not considered to constrain the development.
128. The Lead Local Flood Authority raises no objection to the proposal and is satisfied that an acceptable drainage solution can be achieved, subject to a number of planning conditions to secure the detailed design, implementation and long-term management of the system; Northumbrian Water also raises no objection subject to adherence to the submitted drainage strategy, and the Environment Agency has been consulted but has not provided a response at the time of writing
129. Taking all matters into account, it is considered that flood risk and drainage can be satisfactorily managed through the recommended conditions. Accordingly, the proposal would not increase flood risk on site or elsewhere and is therefore compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policies.

Ecology/Biodiversity Net Gain

130. Paragraphs 187 and 192 of the NPPF require development to protect and enhance biodiversity and deliver measurable net gains. These objectives are reflected locally in Policies SD8 and ENV5, which seek to safeguard ecological interests and secure biodiversity net gain.
131. Objections have been raised regarding the potential impact of the proposed development on wildlife and protected species, including the loss of habitats associated with trees and hedgerows. These matters have been assessed having regard to the submitted ecological information.
132. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) accompanies the application. The site comprises predominantly arable land with boundary hedgerows and limited areas of grassland and is considered to be of no more than local ecological value. Ecological interest is largely confined to boundary features, including hedgerows (identified as Priority Habitat) and trees, particularly along the eastern boundary. These features provide limited opportunities for bats and support breeding birds typical of an arable

landscape. Overall, the site is considered to be of no more than local significance for ecological receptors.

133. No evidence of badger setts has been identified, and the site is of low value for this species, with limited foraging potential. The potential for reptiles and great crested newts is similarly low, and whilst species such as hedgehog, brown hare and common toad may be present, no notable species have been recorded.
134. The PEA identifies that development may result in the loss of habitats of local value and disturbance to species, particularly during construction. However, these impacts can be appropriately mitigated through standard ecological measures, including the retention and protection of trees and hedgerows, provision of buffer zones, timing of vegetation clearance to avoid the bird nesting season, and the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan. Further bat survey work would only be required where impacts to boundary trees are proposed and can be secured by condition.
135. The scheme also provides opportunities for ecological enhancement, including additional planting, habitat creation and provision of bat and bird boxes, which would support biodiversity and maintain ecological connectivity.
136. In respect of biodiversity net gain, a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been submitted which demonstrates that the development can achieve the required minimum 10% gain in biodiversity units, when compared with the baseline position. This is proposed to be delivered primarily through on-site measures, with off-site provision (including the purchase of units) available if required.
137. Given the outline nature of the application, detailed mitigation, enhancement and management measures will be secured by planning condition, including the submission of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan. Subject to these measures, the proposal would not result in unacceptable ecological harm and would accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy ENV5 of the Local Plan

Residual Matters

138. With regard to Nutrient Neutrality, a Nutrient Neutrality Assessment has been submitted in support of the application, which identifies that the site lies within the Tees catchment and could, in principle, give rise to additional nitrogen loading. However, the Council has reviewed the drainage arrangements for the site and confirms that foul flows would be directed to Billingham Wastewater Treatment Works, which discharges directly to the North Sea rather than into the River Tees catchment affecting the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA. On this basis, the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the development would not result in increased nutrient loading to the designated site and therefore considers that nutrient neutrality mitigation is not required in this instance.
139. Ground conditions have been assessed through a Phase 1 Geoenvironmental Appraisal, which indicates that risks from contamination, ground gas and mining legacy are low and unlikely to constrain development. Subject to the undertaking of further site investigation works and, where necessary, the implementation of appropriate remediation and foundation design measures secured by condition, the site is considered suitable for the proposed development.

140. Sport England initially raised an objection on the basis that insufficient information had been provided to demonstrate that the amenity of future occupiers would not be adversely affected by noise and light from the adjacent school sports pitches and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). This matter has subsequently been considered in consultation with the Council's Environmental Health Unit, which confirmed that potential impacts can be appropriately mitigated through the imposition of planning conditions relating to noise and lighting. Subject to these conditions, Sport England has formally withdrawn its objection.
141. Concerns have been raised regarding the adequacy of public consultation undertaken as part of the application process. The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the application has been publicised in accordance with statutory requirements, including neighbour notification and site publicity where required. All representations received have been duly considered in the assessment of the application and are reflected within this report.
142. It has also been suggested that part of the application site is within the ownership of the Parish Council. The applicant has confirmed that this is not the case. Certificate B has been correctly completed and served in respect of land ownership interests relating to the adopted highway. The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the correct ownership procedures have been followed in accordance with relevant legislation.
143. Concerns relating to the potential impact of the development on local property values have been raised. However, it is well established that such matters do not constitute material planning considerations and therefore cannot be afforded weight in the determination of the application. Similarly, concerns regarding precedent and/or future development pressures are of limited relevance, as each planning application must be determined on its own merits having regard to the Development Plan and other material considerations. These matters do not therefore weigh against the proposal.

Planning Balance

144. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. As such, the application must be assessed in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
145. The development would deliver up to 179 dwellings, including policy-compliant affordable housing provision, and would therefore make a significant and meaningful contribution towards addressing the identified shortfall in housing supply. This is a substantial benefit which is afforded significant weight. In addition, the scheme would generate economic benefits during the construction phase and contribute to local expenditure, thereafter, supporting the local economy in accordance with the economic objectives of the NPPF.
146. The site is considered to be in a sustainable location on the edge of Billingham, with access to services, facilities and public transport. Subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions, the proposal is capable of delivering a well-designed residential environment with supporting infrastructure, including green space and a

community facility. No objections have been raised by statutory consultees in respect of highways, drainage or other technical matters, and the identified impacts are considered to be acceptable and capable of mitigation.

147. In environmental terms, the development would result in the loss of greenfield agricultural land and a change in the character of the site. However, the land is classified as Grade 3b and is not considered to be best and most versatile. Landscape and visual impacts have been assessed as localised and not significant, with effective mitigation achievable through structural planting and detailed design at reserved matters stage. Impacts on trees, ecology (including the delivery of biodiversity net gain), heritage, flood risk and residential amenity have been carefully assessed and are not considered to give rise to unacceptable harm.
148. Matters raised through representations, including concerns regarding traffic, infrastructure capacity, consultation, and other non-material considerations such as property values, have been fully considered. However, these do not outweigh the conclusions of the technical assessments, nor do they individually or cumulatively demonstrate harm of such magnitude as to justify refusal of the application.
149. Having regard to the above, it is concluded that the adverse impacts identified are limited in extent and do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole. Accordingly, the proposal represents sustainable development and the presumption in favour of development applies.
150. On this basis, and subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure planning obligations, the application is recommended for approval

Conclusion

151. In view of the considerations set out within this report, the application is recommended for Approval subject to Conditions.

Financial Implications

The proposed application will not result in direct financial implications on the Council, unless the application requires consideration at appeal. In the event the application is approved, financial contributions are required in line with the stated Heads of Terms.

Environmental Implications

As detailed in the report

Legal Implications

None

Community Safety Implications

The provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Human Rights Implications

The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Ward and War Councillors

Ward	Billingham West & Wolviston
Ward Councillor	Councillor David Reynard
Ward Councillor	Councillor Marcus Vickers

Background Papers

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance
Stockton on Tees Local Plan Adopted 2019

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