

To: David Andrews (Chairman) Graham McAndrew
 Chris Kennedy (Vice Chairman) Gordon Nicholson
 John Bevan Paul Osborn
 David Gardner Mary Sartin
 Calvin Homer John Wyllie
 Denise Jones

A meeting of the **REGENERATION AND PLANNING COMMITTEE** (Quorum – 3)
will be held by remote access on:

THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 12.45

at which the following business will be transacted:

AGENDA

Part I

1 To receive apologies for absence.

2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members are asked to consider whether or not they have disclosable pecuniary, other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any item on this Agenda. Other pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests are a matter of judgement for each Member. (Declarations may also be made during the meeting if necessary.)

3 **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 January 2022 (copy herewith).

4 **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

To receive any representations from members of the public or representative of an organisation on an issue which is on the agenda of the meeting. Subject to the Chairman's discretion a total of 20 minutes will be allowed for public speaking and the presentation of petitions at each meeting.

5 PLANNING CONSULTATION BY EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Paper RP/59/22

Barnfield Riding Stables, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, E4 7RH.

Outline application (with all matters reserved except for means of access to, but not within, the site), for proposed mixed use development comprising residential (up to 106 dwellings) with community building (use class E(f), F1 or F2), open space and play area together with relocation of livery

Presented by the Head of Planning

- 6 Such other business as in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting is of sufficient urgency by reason of special circumstances to warrant consideration.**
- 7 Consider passing a resolution based on the principles of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, excluding the public and press from the meeting for the items of business listed on Part II of the Agenda, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in those sections of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act specified beneath each item.**

**AGENDA
Part II
(Exempt Items)**

- 8 Such other business as in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting is of sufficient urgency by reason of special circumstances to warrant consideration.**

16 February 2022

**Shaun Dawson
Chief Executive**

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**REGENERATION & PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
20 JANUARY 2022**

Members
In remote presence: David Andrews (Chairman) Denise Jones
Chris Kennedy (Vice Chairman) Graham McAndrew
John Bevan Gordon Nicholson
David Gardner Paul Osborn
Calvin Horner

Apologies Received From: Mary Sartin, John Wyllie

Officers Present: Claire Martin - Head of Planning
in remote presence: Beryl Foster - Deputy Chief Executive
Jon Carney - Corporate Director
Lindsey Johnson - Committee Services Officer

Part I

144 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name	Agenda Item No.	Nature of Interest	<i>Prejudicial</i> ✓
<i>Denise Jones</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Trustee for Trinity Buoy Wharf</i>	<i>Non-Prejudicial</i>

145 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

THAT the Minutes of the Regeneration & Planning Committee meeting held on 16 December 2021 be approved and signed.

The Chairman also thanked Chris Kennedy for Chairing the meeting of the 16 December at the last minute.

146 PUBLIC SPEAKING

No requests from the public to speak or present petitions had been received for this meeting.

Chris Kennedy left during the next item.

**147 LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS LEASIDE AREA Paper RP/58/22
ACTION PLAN REGULATION 18 AND TALL BUILDING
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT CONSULTATION**

The report was introduced by the Head of Planning, highlighting to Members the key points of the letter at Appendix A to Paper RP/58/22, which included:

- the importance of the Area Action Plan and Supplementary Planning Document in securing open space as part of development that provides for both people and wildlife, connecting open space and reducing the pressure on additional sites;

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- the importance of developments stepping down and back from waterways;
- ensuring sufficient space is included to create viable open spaces; and
- tackling barriers which impede movement.

The Chairman asked if there were tensions in the statements made between the two documents. The Head of Planning responded stating that she has commented on this to London Borough of Tower Hamlets and it is something that they have picked up on and is covered in the Supplementary Planning Document.

A Member commented that London Borough of Tower Hamlets, especially in the areas near to East India Dock Basin, are very dominated by roads, he welcomed changes in policy to mitigate this and suggested that we ask for more greening of roads.

A Member mentioned that the Lea River Path stops at the Lower Lee crossing and therefore does not connect to the Thames Path and suggested we ask for this connection to be made.

A Member stated that often when developers are creating open space, it is very neat, easy to maintain and sterile, therefore unattractive to biodiversity, something which planners should be ensuring doesn't happen.

A Member asked on page 12 of the letter under 'Tall Buildings', whether it would be clear to London Borough of Tower Hamlets what we meant by 'environment and character'. The Head of Planning responded stating that she would expand on this point, focusing on both the remaining historic fabric and wild nature of the landscape and that new developments should consider what is adjacent to their sites and how their designs should reflect that.

A Member pointed out a number of typing mistakes within the letter, which included:

- On page 9, 'boarders' should be 'borders'.
- On page 11, 'to' should be added to read 'it requires these paths to incorporate....'
- On page 12, 'the' should be removed to read 'focused on how tall buildings interact...'

On Page 10, under Housing, Employment, Tall Buildings, Waterfront Development, a Member suggested that we request London Borough of Tower Hamlets change the wording from 'may be required' to 'should be' or 'wish to see'.

Whilst not required to be included in the letter, the Chairman pointed out that we should keep an eye on future development on the other sides of waterways to ensure that they don't become canyons.

The Chairman commented that the Park could be able to help developers in creating biodiverse open spaces and asked if this is something we could do. The Head of Planning stated that she would be happy to speak with officers at London Borough of Tower Hamlets and that we could use East India Dock Basin and Bow Creek as case studies.

The Head of Planning informed Members that we are working well with officers from London Borough of Tower Hamlets, especially in regards to the work at East India Dock Basin, and they do take account of our comments. The developers of Orchard Wharf are still working

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with London Borough of Tower Hamlets on the wharf element of the planning application and she hopes to come back to Members with a report on this later in the year.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Planning for the excellent letter. He also thanked the contributions from Denise Jones and David Gardner as their local knowledge of Tower Hamlets is invaluable to this Committee.

- (1) **the comments as set out in Appendix A to this report as the Authority's formal response to consultations by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets on the Leaside Area Action Plan and the Tall Buildings Supplementary Planning Document with the following amendments were approved:**
- (a) **greening of roads to mitigate their impact;**
 - (b) **better connectivity, especially in regards to the Lea River Path, as this needs to connect to the Thames Path;**
 - (c) **open space should be made attractive for wildlife and planners should ensure that newly created open spaces are developed with wildlife in mind;**
 - (d) **new wording be added to Page 12, under 'Tall Buildings' to ensure that it is clear what is meant by 'environment and character';**
 - (e) **the following changes to text within the letter should be amended as follows:**
 - (i) **on page 9, 'boarders' should be 'borders';**
 - (ii) **on page 11, 'to' should be added to read 'It requires these paths to incorporate....'**
 - (iii) **on page 12, 'the' should be removed to read 'focused on how tall buildings interact...'**
 - (iv) **on page 10, under Housing, Employment, Tall Buildings, Waterfront Development, wording 'may be required' should be made stronger;**
 - (f) **changes to the letter to be approved by both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of this Committee before being sent to London Borough of Tower Hamlets.**

Chairman

Date

The meeting started at 11.45am and ended at 12.20pm.

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**PLANNING CONSULTATION BY
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**BARNFIELD RIDING STABLES, SEWARDSTONE ROAD,
WALTHAM ABBEY, E4 7RH**

**OUTLINE APPLICATION (WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT
FOR MEANS OF ACCESS TO, BUT NOT WITHIN, THE SITE), FOR
PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING RESIDENTIAL
(UP TO 106 DWELLINGS) WITH COMMUNITY BUILDING (USE CLASS E
[f], F1 OR F2), OPEN SPACE & PLAY AREA TOGETHER WITH
RELOCATION OF LIVERY**

Presented by Head of Planning

SUMMARY

This application seeks outline consent for a mixed use development comprising residential development (of up to 106 dwellings) with community building, open space and play area provision together with the relocation of the existing Barnfield Stables Equestrian Centre. All matters are reserved except access to, but not within, the site.

The whole site is within the Regional Park, adjacent to the entrance into Sewardstone Marsh and is designated as Green Belt. The residential component of the outline proposal is located on developed land currently part of the equestrian centre, and is positioned between existing residential areas to the north and south. The relocation of the Equestrian Centre includes the provision of new facility buildings placed further into the site. Concerns arise regarding the location of the community building, associated car parking and new access road, which are positioned within the more open area of the site and adjacent to the entrance into the Park, even though this is in part previously developed land. This results in the built elements of the relocated Equestrian Centre and the facilities buildings being placed further back into the open areas of the site, closer to Sewardstone Marsh and adjoining Park areas. The proposed layout therefore draws the built and urban character associated with Sewardstone Road well into the more open areas of the Park and the Green Belt.

Whilst no objections are raised to the principle of residential development and the

relocation of the Equestrian Centre the proposed site plan should be revised to incorporate the community building within the residential layout together with a revised parking provision. The new facilities buildings associated with the Equestrian Centre should be located away from the boundaries with Sewardstone Marsh and placed closer to the residential component. This would also reduce the length of the new road to be provided from Godwin Close. These changes would reduce the impact of the development on the open character of the Park and the Green Belt and providing appropriate conditions are attached, minimise disturbance to wildlife and habitats along the boundaries of the site and within the Park. Section 106 monies are sought for access and habitat enhancements in accordance with the Schedule at Appendix C to this report to mitigate for recreational impacts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members Approve:

- (1) that Epping Forest District Council be informed that whilst the Authority does not object to the principle of residential development on the eastern portion of the site and the relocation of the Barnfield Stables Equestrian Centre it does have concerns about the location of the community building and car parking as shown on the proposed site layout plan;
- (2) that should the Council be minded to approve the outline application then the Authority would wish to see the following conditions included to ensure that:
 - (a) the proposed site layout is revised so as to:
 - incorporate the community building within the residential component together with a reduced parking provision; and
 - reposition the facility buildings for the equestrian centre closer to the residential component, and away from the Park's boundaries to the west and south and thereby also reducing the length of the new road to be provided within the more open part of the site in order to minimise the impact on the open character of the Park and the enjoyment of its recreational and biodiverse spaces;
 - (b) the landscape design for the public open space makes provision for a range of recreational uses including dog walking/exercise and play, includes space for wildlife and incorporates wildlife friendly planting;
 - (c) existing boundary hedges, scrub and trees around the southern and western boundaries of the site are retained,

- protected and enhanced as wildlife corridors, and buffer habitat between the Park and activities on the development site, and that additional planting on the western boundary should avoid shading the existing ditch;
- (d) the semi-mature tree on the southern site boundary, adjacent to Godwin Close and the entrance to the Park, should be retained and the new access road layout reconfigured accordingly;
 - (e) the design of the new site access off from Godwin Close takes account of visitor access into the Park and the Authority's operational access requirements, giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists at this entrance point to the Park;
 - (f) a lighting strategy is provided and designed, in accordance with the 'Institution of Lighting Professionals (2018), Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK, Guidance Note 08/18', both for the construction period and once the sites are occupied to take account of the adjoining Park areas and designated species;
 - (g) the badger survey is updated taking account of areas outside the application site to ensure development, including the construction phase will not impact on this protected species;
 - (h) a biodiversity enhancement plan is provided demonstrating a 10% gain in biodiversity and the incorporation of biodiversity enhancements within the development, including integrated bat bricks, bird boxes and hedgehog access points;
 - (i) Section 106 monies and/or Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace contributions are allocated to the Regional Park area adjacent to the development for access and habitat enhancements to mitigate for recreational impacts as outlined in the attached Schedule at Appendix C to this report; and
- (3) that Epping Forest District Council be informed that the Authority would wish to be consulted on the above matters.

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION SITE AND CONTEXT

- 1** The application site is located within the Regional Park on the west side of Sewardstone Road and forms part of the Green Belt. It sits behind the existing residential properties fronting the road. It forms a boundary in the west with Sewardstone Marsh an area of open space and informal recreational use that links into Patty Pool Mead to the south and Knight Pits and the wider area of Gunpowder Park to the north. Immediately to the south is Godwin Close which serves an established residential area and to the north of the application site lies the residential area associated with Butlers Drive. Please refer to the Plan at Appendix A to this report.
- 2** The site comprises 5.36ha and currently operates as a commercial livery known as Barnfield Stables Equestrian Centre. The site consists of an assortment of buildings including timber stables and sheds, two prefabricated residential units, a two-storey brick structure and Barnfield House. Large areas of the site comprise bare ground, concrete or hardstanding providing access to the site, parking and yards between buildings. The majority of the buildings and areas of hardstanding are within the eastern half of the site, further west are fenced grazing paddocks and close to the western perimeter hedge more open grassed fields.
- 3** The boundaries of the site to the south, including with Godwin Close, and to the west with Sewardstone Marsh and along the northern edge of the open paddocks, are reasonably well vegetated with a mixture of bramble scrub and hedgerow species such as hawthorn and blackthorn. There are a number of scattered broadleaved trees across the site and some conifers, mainly in the northeast corner of the site. A small Thames Water sewage pumping station sits within the site, adjacent and approximately half way along the southern boundary.
- 4** Access into the site is from Sewardstone Road and currently serves the Equestrian Centre. A second private access point exists, also from Sewardstone Road and is included on the application plans. Evidently, this access once served Kingsfield Nurseries but this use is no longer present and the site of the former nurseries now forms part of the application site.
- 5** Godwin Close, which runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the application site for just over half its length, terminates at a locked gate and a 3 bay parking area. This marks a pedestrian/cycle entrance point into the Sewardstone Marsh area of the Park, located west of the application site. It also serves as an important vehicular access to the Regional Park for maintenance and other operational purposes only. The route of the London Outer Orbital Path also enters the Park along Godwin Close.
- 6** The Authority owns and manages Sewardstone Marsh, to the west of the application site, Patty Pool Mead to the south and Gunpowder Park to the north as publicly accessible open spaces and areas of nature conservation interest in accordance with their designation as Local Wildlife Sites. A number of surfaced paths are provided within Sewardstone Marsh connecting through to the Park areas to the north and south. One path runs alongside the western boundary of the application site. It is separated from the horse paddocks and their boundary hedge by a ditch and area of mixed scrub and tree cover. This continues along the entire edge of the western boundary of application site.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 7 In January 2020, Members considered a similar outline residential scheme for a Green Belt site within the Regional Park located to the north of the current application site. This site is known as the former Haulage Yard at Sewardstone Hall and is accessed from Sewardstone Road. Please refer to the area outlined in blue on the Plan at Appendix A to this report. The outline application – all matters reserved except access, sought consent for the demolition of existing building (excluding Sewardstone Hall) & erection of up to x40 no. dwellings on previously developed land, (Paper RP/35/20). The scheme included a large open green space to the north to be retained for an open landscaped area, incorporating a children's play area. The Authority resolved not to object to this outline application recognising the site as 'previously developed'. Concerns were raised however, about the lack of up to date ecological surveys and the need for these to be undertaken. A formal request was made for conditions to be attached to ensure any reserved matters applications for landscaping, design and access adequately protected and enhanced the adjoining open areas of the Regional Park. In the event the Council refused the application and an appeal made against this decision by the applicant was dismissed, due largely to the unsuitable location of the proposal having regard to its accessibility to services and facilities.
- 8 In May 2020, permission was granted for an open sided building (800sqm) to cover an existing ménage located in the central part of the application site close to its northern boundary. The open-sided construction of the building was considered acceptable in Green Belt terms as this would assist in retaining the openness of the Green Belt and its use fulfils the requirement of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation.

POLICY BACKGROUND

- 9 Local Plan policy both in the Combined Policies of Epping Forest District Local Plan 1998 and Alterations 2006 (published 2008) and the Submission Version Local Plan 2017 is supportive of the Lee Valley Regional Park, recognising its role as a key asset for the District, and an important component of the region's green infrastructure. Green Belt policy in both Plans seeks to protect the openness of the Green Belt; planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development, except in very special circumstances (SP6 and DM4, Local Plan Submission Version). This is in accordance with national policy (NPPF July 2021 para 149) which considers the construction of new buildings to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Exceptions to this policy include:
- the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor recreation as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it, (para 149 b).
 - the limited infilling or partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the

development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the local planning authority (para149 g).

- 10 The Council's habitat and biodiversity policies seek to preserve and enhance biodiversity and networks of natural habitats (CP2 Combined Policies). The draft Submission Version Local Plan policy states that all development should seek to deliver biodiversity net gain in addition to protecting existing habitat and species – proposals should integrate biodiversity through their design and layout Development Management Policy DM1.
- 11 The application site is located within the Zone of Influence for the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), identified by the Council in consultation with Natural England as part of the draft Local Plan process. The Council recognises that additional development in the District is likely to give rise to further visitor and recreational pressure on the Forest and that this needs to be mitigated. This mitigation can in part, be achieved by increasing public access to land that is not in the Forest, and altering the character of existing open spaces and the links between open spaces. These requirements are embedded in the Submission Version Local Plan Policy DM2 and have been strengthened as a result of the Local Plan Examination process.
- 12 The policy position states that both provision of and access to sufficient Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs) and/or the implementation of enhancements to existing Green and Blue Infrastructure assets will be pursued as mitigation for the potential adverse recreational effects arising from additional residential development within the Epping Forest SAC Zone of Influence. Reference is now included to the Council's adopted Green Infrastructure Strategy (2021) which identifies green infrastructure assets that can contribute to attracting people away from using the Epping Forest. The Regional Park is recognised in the Strategy as an important part of the District's green infrastructure.
- 13 The Park Development Framework (PDF) adopted Area 5 Proposals 'The Waterlands: King George V Reservoir to Rammey Marsh' locate the application site within Proposal 5.A.3 Gunpowder Park and Sewardstone. This identifies the area as having an attractive landscape requiring that landscape features which make a positive contribution, such as hedgerows and areas of woodland, be retained and strengthened. Proposals recognise the sensitivity of this area to large scale development and seek to improve boundary treatment to assimilate 'developed sites' into the Regional Park. Visitor proposals seek the promotion of pedestrian links into Gunpowder Park. Connections between the Lee Valley Pathway and public footpaths, including the London Outer Orbital Path are to be protected and enhanced to strengthen links through to both the western and eastern sides of the Regional Park. Access into sensitive wildlife areas is to be designed to avoid disturbance to habitats.
- 14 Biodiversity proposals identify the importance of managing and enhancing Gunpowder Park, Sewardstone Marsh and Patty Pool Mead as a key access to nature site with habitat improvements to be undertaken throughout. Floodplain grassland and fen habitat is to be enhanced on Sewardstone Marsh and the wet grassland habitat of Patty Pool Mead to be improved to provide nesting opportunities for breeding waders. Existing wet woodland habitats at Osier Marsh and Sewardstone Marsh are to be managed to maintain and expand their special wildlife interest. Visitor access is to be enhanced by extending

boardwalks and improving interpretation.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 15 The application seeks outline permission for a proposed mixed use development comprising residential development (of up to 106 dwellings) with community building (Use Class E [f], F1 or F2), open space and play area together with the relocation of the existing livery. All matters are reserved except access to, but not within, the site. A proposed site layout for the development is included as part of the Planning Statement with general principles and details provided in the Design and Access Statement (DAS). Supporting documents include a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), a Tree Survey and Assessment, Flood and Drainage Assessment and Transport Assessment.
- 16 **Proposed Layout**
The proposed layout of the outline scheme can be divided into three parts. The first, 'residential component' is shown on the eastern portion of the site, located behind the existing houses fronting Sewardstone Road. The proposed residential layout extends west into the site to a point approximately level with the existing residential developments along Butlers Drive to the north and Godwin Close to the south— please refer to the proposed site plan at Appendix B to this report. The applicant describes this as an infill development (circa 2.85ha) on a previously developed site.
- 17 The second component of the layout sits adjacent and to the west of the residential area. Here the applicant proposes to locate the community use (0.2ha) with a new building of 564sqm and 16 parking spaces, and an area of public open space (1.1ha) incorporating a children's play area and amenity space. 22 parking spaces are included, allocated specifically for the play area. Together these elements extend over half the remaining area. Finally, the third component of the outline scheme, the relocated Barnfield Stables Equestrian Centre (1.2ha) is positioned within the western most part of the site. The purpose built stables, ménage, living quarters, offices, staff and visitor parking (24 spaces) are located in the south-western corner adjacent to Sewardstone Marsh with the paddocks on the remaining land to the north.
- 18 The main access into the site will be from Sewardstone Road as existing but will require the removal of Barnfield House to serve the proposed residential element. A new access road off from Godwin Close is also proposed, just at the point where it terminates, adjacent to the Park's access gate. This road will serve the relocated stables, community building, play area and public open space, although there will also be pedestrian access from the residential area through to the community, play and open space facilities. The indicative layout shows a surfaced path/pedestrian link from Godwin Close connecting to the play area, community building and public open space. A secondary pedestrian access onto Sewardstone Rd through from the residential area is also shown to the north of the main access road.
- 19 The proposed residential layout comprises a central estate road which leads into a mews court and then private drives and courtyards. Part of the residential area is to be served from Godwin Close which allows rear garden to rear garden development. The housing mix will include 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed dwellings of which it is stated, 40% will be affordable. The application form is confusing in that it refers to an outline scheme of 106 units but later in the details refers to the provision of 117 units. The Council is seeking to resolve this matter. In any

event, a proportion approx. 30 units will be in the form of 1, 2 and 3 bed apartments over three storeys with the rest as semi-detached houses. Matters relating to external appearance, scale and landscaping are reserved for future approval.

20 Landscaping, Flooding and Ecology

The DAS highlights the mix of small trees and shrubs beyond or partially on the site boundaries that are shown as being retained. Trees or shrubs within the site are to be reviewed and maintenance and pruning undertaken as required to ensure these are brought back into good order. As part of the proposals new native hedges will be planted to the site boundaries and at key locations within the layout, as specified by the ecologist and landscape architects. A tree survey accompanies the application. This shows that as part of the new access off from Godwin Close a semi-mature, twin stemmed 9-metre tall ash tree will need to be felled. This is described as a tree in good health.

21 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 with a very low risk, less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any one year. The DAS recognises that the development will need to deal with its own surface water and ensure that run-off is no greater than the existing situation prior to development. It is proposed that the open space component of the development could be configured to accommodate surface water attenuation via ponds as shown on the proposed site plan. This is also promoted as a potential ecological benefit. New soakaways and permeable road and drive surfaces could then be investigated at the next stage if planning is secured.

22 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was undertaken in Feb 2021. This describes the habitat on site as of low to moderate ecological value. As a result, it is considered the development is likely to have a low negative impact on habitats at the site level. The appraisal did identify the importance of the hedgerow along the north western site boundary (Priority habitat) but as this is to remain post development there will be no negative impact on this habitat. The PEA did not consider that any of the buildings or trees on site were suitable to provide bat roosting features or opportunities and that as perimeter trees and scrub are to be largely retained bat foraging habitat, although considered of low quality, would also be retained. The trees and scrub vegetation around the site and the stable buildings do provide opportunities for nesting birds so the PEA recommends that any vegetation clearance would need to take place outside the nesting season (March to September) to avoid a major negative impact. Hedgehog access points are also recommended to be incorporated in all fences on site to enable continued access across the site.

PLANNING APPRAISAL

23 Principle of Development and Impact on the Regional Park

The three components of this outline application each present different issues in terms of the general principles of the proposed development and its likely impact on the open and largely rural character of the Park and its wider recreational and ecological value. Its proximity to the entrance point into Sewardstone Marsh is also relevant.

24 The residential component of the outline application is proposed on previously developed land. It is positioned between two established areas of residential development to the north and south and does not extend into the largely open areas beyond. As such the residential use is confined to an area where existing

- buildings, structures, hardstanding concrete yards and parking exist. This limits its impact on the Regional Park in terms of its visual impact and landscape character as it will be read as an infill development and as part of the established residential area, albeit that the site as existing presents as more 'open' than the residential layout shown in the indicative plans. However, in principle, and subject to the detail to be presented under the reserved matters, the residential component can be considered acceptable.
- 25 The principle of the community building and associated car parking (16 spaces) together with the additional car parking to serve the children's play area (22 spaces) are more problematic, mainly due to their proposed location. The proposed community building is a substantial structure at 564sqm, described as a single or 1.5 storey building. These components intrude into the more open area of the site. They would sit beyond the current 'infill line,' although are still positioned on previously developed land. It is unclear why the community building is not integrated with the residential layout particularly if it is proposed to serve the new residents (and nearby existing residents) as a nursery or similar as suggested in the DAS; this would also alleviate the need for additional parking given local people could walk or cycle to the centre. Similarly, the area set aside for parking proposed for the children's play area seems excessive given the proximity of the play area to the residential area.
- 26 In its current form there is concern that this component of the development proposal will have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the Park and with the associated road and parking intrude upon the openness and largely rural setting to the floodplain landscape of Sewardstone Marsh. The citing of the building, and areas of parking and the new road would also substantially change the quiet and rural setting to the Park entrance at the end of Godwin Close. Vehicular access into the site would also need careful design to take account of pedestrians and cyclists visiting and entering the Park at this point. These matters could be resolved by a more integrated design for the development layout and a better understanding of the purpose and use of the community building and parking requirements.
- 27 The proposed public open space and play area (1.1ha) that is shown to the north of the community building is a positive element of the outline development proposal. This provision would enable the development to meet the recreational and/or sporting requirements of the new residents, although this would depend on the final design and landscape details.
- 28 In principle the third component of the development, the relocated Equestrian Centre, is an acceptable use in terms of the Regional Park and its remit. In terms of built development within the Green Belt is it also acceptable providing the facilities proposed preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The issue with the current indicative layout is that the placement of the community building and car parking has pushed the relocated Equestrian Centre further back into the open areas of the site. It places buildings, parking and a new access road adjacent to the entrance into the Park, and to Sewardstone Marsh and the existing hedgerows and tree planting which currently act as a buffer between the Park and the site along its southern and western boundaries. Whilst the Authority would have no objection to the equestrian use the placement of the built elements (to include living quarters, offices, visitor and staff parking) as shown in the proposed layout intrude into the open areas of the site drawing the built and urban character associated with Sewardstone Road well into the Park and the Green Belt. Little account appears to have been taken of the open and

intimate character of the Park's landscape as visitors pass from Godwin Close into Sewardstone Marsh.

29 Landscaping

Landscaping is identified as a reserved matter and details included within the outline scheme are limited. It will be important to ensure the existing boundary hedges, scrub and trees around the southern and western boundaries of the site are retained, protected and enhanced as they provide important wildlife corridors, notably for foraging bats, as well as providing a screen or buffer between the Park and activities on the development site. Additional native planting to strengthen the boundary habitats should be sought; however, on the western boundary any planting should be kept to a reasonable distance to prevent additional shading of the adjacent ditch. The findings of the tree survey are noted. The semi-mature tree on the site boundary, adjacent to Godwin Close and the entrance to the Park, should be retained and the new access road layout reconfigured accordingly. It is understood the Council have received a similar comment from their internal tree and landscape advisers.

30 Landscaping details for the proposed public open space should provide for a range of recreational uses, including as suggested in the DAS, informal areas for ball games and footpaths for dog walkers. This area could also accommodate wildlife friendly planting and habitat creation to support biodiversity, potentially contributing to the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement and to complement the wider Park area adjacent. Planting with native and local provenance species is to be encouraged. These matters should be conditioned and brought forward as part of reserved matters applications if the Council are minded to approve the outline scheme.

31 The design of the new site access off from Godwin Close will also need to take account of visitor access into the Park and the Authority's operational access requirements. Pedestrians and cyclist should take priority at this entrance point to the Park.

32 Ecology

The PEA provides a useful overview of the application sites habitats and ecological value. Officers would concur with its findings that the development as proposed is likely to have a low negative impact on the habitats on site at the local level. Should the application proceed to the reserved matter stage further ecological work will be required to ensure existing habitats such as the hedgerows, particularly along the north and western boundary are protected and that biodiversity enhancements are incorporated into the development, including integrated bat bricks, nest boxes and hedgehog access points. Landscape proposals should demonstrate a 10% gain in biodiversity through for example the planting of native, species rich hedgerows and standard trees particularly on the boundaries of the site as recommended in the PEA. Conditions will also need to be included to ensure any vegetation clearance takes place outside the bird nesting season. An overarching Biodiversity Enhancement and Mitigation Plan would be helpful in this respect.

33 Officers are aware that an active Badger sett is with 300m of the application site and during a recent site visit, feeding signs were noted outside but adjacent to the southern and western boundaries of the application site. This information has been passed on to the case officer at Epping Forest District Council. Although the signs were noted outside the application site, the applicant should as a precaution update the Badger survey to ensure development including the

construction phase will not impact on this protected species. The Council will need to take a view as to whether this update should be submitted as part of the outline application process as it could form a material consideration for the Local Planning Authority in making their decision.

- 34 There are concerns about the proximity to Sewardstone Marsh of the buildings associated with the relocated Equestrian Centre and the community building, particularly in terms of the hedgerows along the southern and western boundaries. These function as dark wildlife corridors and a buffer for the Park area beyond and it is important the new development does not negatively impact on these functions. A lighting strategy should be designed, in accordance with the 'Institution of Lighting Professionals (2018), Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK, Guidance Note 08/18', both for the construction period and once the sites are occupied to take account of the adjoining Park areas and designated species.
- 35 **Planning Obligations/S106 and SANGs**
 Details for the onsite public open space will need to be provided as part of the reserved matters. These will need to ensure it is retained and managed as public open space in the long term and caters for local recreational needs including play and sports use and provides for dog walking/exercise. This will alleviate some of the recreational pressure on the adjoining areas of the Park. However, it is clear that the proposed development of 106/117 residential units in such close proximity to the Park will result in a considerable and sustained increase in the number of people using the Park on a regular basis. The Park Authority welcomes visitors to its open spaces but needs to manage access to and around/through sites to maintain and enhance access for all visitors and ensure the wildlife interest and key biodiversity features are protected.
- 36 Consideration should be given to how the development can contribute to works that will mitigate this impact and both protect and improve access within the Park for all users. The Regional Park could also function as SANGs in mitigation for any recreational impacts the proposed residential development might be considered to have on the Epping Forest SAC in line with the Council's Local Plan policies and Green Infrastructure Strategy. Officers have drawn up a list of indicative projects that would improve access within and between sites and enhance the robustness of sensitive habitats in order to help minimise impacts from the development. Please refer to the Schedule at Appendix C to this report. These projects would also meet SANGs requirements in terms of making natural greenspace more accessible. It is therefore proposed that if the Council are minded to approve the application, S106 monies and/or SANGs contributions are allocated to the Park to mitigate for recreational impacts.
- 37 **Conclusion**
 In conclusion, the residential development on the eastern portion of the site, located on previously developed land is acceptable, although in terms of protecting the openness of the Park and the Green Belt the community building should be accommodated within the residential layout, together with a revised parking layout. The public open space component is supported with the condition that the detailed design provides for a range of recreational uses including dog walking/exercise and makes provision for wildlife. The principle of relocating the Equestrian Centre is also acceptable but the new facilities buildings associated with this should be located away from the boundaries with Sewardstone Marsh and placed closer to the residential component, this would also reduce the length of the new road to be provided from Godwin Close.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

38 Environmental implications are addressed in the body of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

39 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

40 Planning applications referred to this Authority are submitted under the consultative arrangements of Section 14 (4-7) of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 (the Park Act). The Park Act requires a local planning authority to consult with the Authority on any planning application for development, whether within the designated area of the Park or not, which might affect any part of the Park.

41 The Park Act enables the Authority to make representations to the local planning authority which they shall take into account when determining the planning application.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

42 There are no risk management implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

43 There are no equality implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

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BACKGROUND REPORTS

Application Papers 22.003

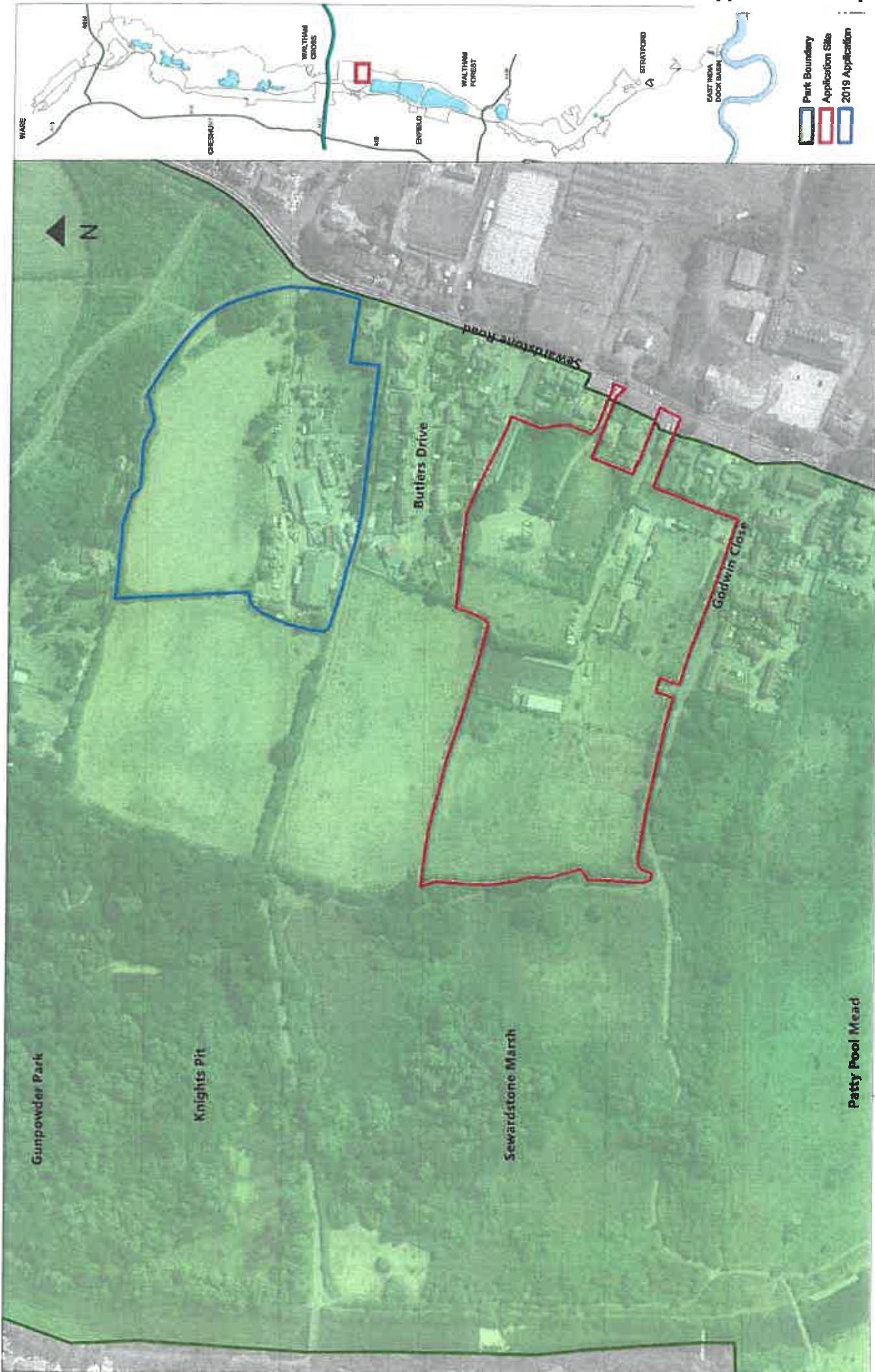
January 2022

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix A	Site Location Plan
Appendix B	Proposed site layout
Appendix C	Schedule of Indicative projects for Park Improvement Works

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DAS	Design and Access Statement
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Survey
SAC	Site of Conservation Importance
SANG	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
the Park Act	Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966



Proposed outline application for mixed residential and commercial development. Bramfield Stables, Sewardstone Road, Sewardstone.

NTS @ A4
10.02.22

Produced by: Corporate GIS (AAB)

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SEWARDSTONE ROAD, WALTHAM ABBEY



NORTH SCALE 1:500

NO DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT!
 NO SEWARDSTONE ROAD & COORNS C
 SEWARDSTONE, WALTHAM ABBEY, E

PROPOSED SITE PLAN
 REF: 159/159
 DATE: 2015
 DRAWN BY: [Name]

LEGEND:
 [Symbol] CLIMATE
 [Symbol] LIGHTNING
 [Symbol] OVERHEAD
 [Symbol] STREETS



PLANNING PERMISSION NO. [Number]

PREPARED BY: [Name]

DATE: [Date]

SCALE: 1:500

NORTH

Indicative Schedule of Projects for S106 request

Project Number	Project	Location	Project details	Indicative cost
1	Extend access to nature opportunities in south of the GPP Last Link	Linking Knight's Pit to Gunpowder Park	Install approx. 200m length of Boardwalk and improve access routes connecting Gunpowder Park to Knights pits/Sewardstone Marsh creating a circular route.	£100,000
2	Access Improvements	Gunpowder Park Farm Fields	Access improvements into and through farm fields to help protect ground nesting birds and improve site security.	£20,000
3	Ditch habitat improvements	Sewardstone Ditch/Patty Pool Mead	Habitat improvement works along ditch network to increase marginal vegetation and improve water quality, providing valuable habitat for species including Water Voles.	£3,000
4	Lake and pool habitat improvements	Knights Pits and Osier Marsh	Habitat improvements around Knights Pits and shallow pools within Osier Marsh to open up banks, increase marginal vegetation and manage invasive species.	£5,000
			Total	£128,000



Barnfield Riding Stables S106 Projects



Author: Richardson, Dawn
 Scale: 1: 9,026 @A4
 Date: 14 / 02 / 2022

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