

General Development Applications

(5/b) Application No: PAP/2025/0155

Land South Of Warton Recreation Ground, Orton Road, Warton,

Outline planning application for the construction of up to 110 dwellings, with access, landscaping, sustainable drainage features, and associated infrastructure. All matters are reserved except for primary vehicular access from Church Road, for

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1. Introduction

1.1 The receipt of this application is reported to the Board for information in advance of a full determination report.

2. The Site

2.1 The application site comprises 6.37ha of land located directly to the west of the settlement of Warton in North Warwickshire. It is located approximately 4km to the east of Tamworth. The site is currently in agricultural use (arable) and is made up of one field parcel. The site is gently sloping with a gradual fall from the west and north towards the south east. The site is defined by Church Road to the north and west, Orton Road to the south and the recently constructed 'Cornfields' development to the east. The eastern boundary meets the existing settlement edge of Warton.

2.2 The north western boundary of the application site is defined by a hedgerow and hedgerow trees and runs alongside Church Road. There is an existing field entrance with a dropped kerb in the north of the site where agricultural access is gained into the field. On the northern side of Church Road there are several residential properties. The southern boundary of the field is defined by an existing hedgerow and a number of mature trees, particularly to the centre of the southern boundary. The hedgerow thins in the south eastern corner where there is an existing field entrance with a gate. On the southern side of Orton Road are further agricultural fields.

2.3 The eastern boundary is adjacent to the recently built properties on the 'Cornfield' estate. This development was previously promoted by the applicants in 2018, with reserved matters consent achieved in 2019. There is no physical boundary marking the edge of this development. The northern part of the eastern boundary is adjacent to Warton Recreation Ground. Hedgerow and small hedgerow trees along with remnants of wire fencing separate the site from the recreation ground. Further east of the recreation ground and 'Cornfield' development is the village of Warton.

2.4 A small pond forms part of the eastern edge of the site, adjacent to the recreation ground. There are no Public Rights of Way (PROW) within the site. There is a PROW (AE15) on the top end of Church Road, to the east of the site which runs down to Stipers Hill.

2.5 The eastern boundary of the application site adjoins the residential edge of Warton at the 'Cornfields' development. There is also linear residential development running west out of Warton along Church Road. This part of the village is predominantly residential. Warton Recreation Ground is adjacent and Warton Holy Trinity Church is 150m from the north-eastern boundary. Allotments are provided off Waverton Avenue. 'The Top Shop', is in the village which provides a Post Office and convenience store. 'The Office at Warton's public house and the Village Hall are 350m from the north-eastern corner of the site along Church Road and Maypole Road. Warton Nethersole C of E Primary School lies further to the east along Maypole Road, 400m from the eastern site boundary. To the north, west and south is open countryside, predominately in agricultural use. Polesworth is located further west of the site, approximately 2km from the site's western boundary. This contains further educational, recreational and employment facilities.

2.6 Location plans are at Appendix A and Appendix B is an aerial photograph.

3. The Proposal

3.1 This application is in outline with all matters reserved with the exception of access. A parameters plan defines the proposal, with regards to housing, landscaping and recreation. This is at Appendix C.

3.2 The application has set out that the "aspiration for the development of the site is to provide an opportunity to create a sustainable and attractive extension to the village, inspired by the context and local character of Warton. Embracing high quality and sustainable design principles the proposals are designed to sensitively integrate with the surrounding landscape and built form, providing a range of new homes that can respond to future needs." The overarching principles opportunities that underpin the proposal are said to be as follows:

- Vehicular and pedestrian access to Church Road;
- Keeping a rural, landscape edge along the western boundary of the Site to define the edge of development whilst creating a buffer to blend with the wider landscape and surroundings;
- Protecting and enhancing existing trees and hedgerows along the boundaries of the Site, along with the existing pond, through the creation of ecological corridors;
- Offering an attractive central green focal space, providing opportunities for people to meet and socialise;
- Creating a network of pedestrian connections to facilitate active travel within the Site and to the wider area;
- Creating active travel links through to the recreation ground to the north east to provide access to the local bus services via Red Marl Way; and
- Maximising views out from dwellings fronting the landscape edge to provide an attractive setting.

3.3 The application sets out with regards to access and parking, that the primary access to the proposed residential development is to be delivered in the form of simple priority junction with Church Road. This access will have a 5.5m wide carriageway and adjacent 2m wide footways proposed in accordance with the Warwickshire County Council's Design Guide. The access drawing can be viewed at Appendix D. The primary access road into the site would be designed to adoptable standards, connecting to a hierarchy of internal streets, including secondary streets (also designed to adoptable standards) and tertiary streets. Private drives serving up to 5 dwellings will typically feature to the edges of development. A separate pedestrian access is also proposed to be served from Church Road at the western boundary of the site, which is to connect with existing footways that directly lead to Polesworth. Off-site junction improvements at the Orton Road / Kisses Barn Lane / Stiper's Hill / Linden Lane junction are proposed in the form of providing larger, illuminated and overall, more visible give-way signs along Kisses Barn Lane and Linden Lane, both on approach and at the junction with Stiper's Hill and Linden Lane. Each new dwelling will have on-plot car parking with 1 space for 1 bedroom properties plus 0.5 for visitor parking and a minimum of 2 allocated spaces for every 2+ bed property. This includes the provision of garages for the 4 bed properties. All properties will have electric vehicle charging.

3.5 The residential use of the site is proposed to be up to 110 dwellings, including the provision of 40% affordable dwellings. The proposal provides an opportunity to deliver a range of types, sizes and tenures that reflect local need. The built development area includes roads, footways, private drives, incidental open space and other associated infrastructure. The masterplan allows for a mix of dwelling types and sizes to assist in providing choice within the local housing market and contribute to creating a sustainable, mixed community. The application has assumed that development will, in the main, comprise 2 storey housing, consistent with the typical height of development seen in the surrounding residential areas of Warton. In key locations 2.5 storey dwellings could be used to create focal points, define primary vistas/entrances and add variation to the roofscape. 40% of all proposed dwellings will be delivered as affordable housing (85% affordable/social rent and 15% intermediate rent). The affordable housing will be secured through a Section 106 Agreement. The applicants would support the inclusion of Local Occupancy Criteria within the Agreement to ensure those with a connection to Warton are prioritised.

3.6 When considering open space, the masterplan shows the delivery of approximately 2ha of green infrastructure. This includes 0.83ha of amenity green space and 1.17ha of natural and semi natural green space. Existing boundary hedging and tress would be retained, unless needed for vehicle or pedestrian entrances. Open space is provided in the form of a central, focal green and a circular walk incorporating natural play opportunities. The site identifies a proposed link to the neighbouring recreation ground which includes equipped play. A financial contribution to improve existing equipped play has been identified. Orchard planting is proposed within the western extent of the public open space.

3.7 Specific habitats for biodiversity have been incorporated within the green infrastructure network including species-rich, meadow and wetland meadow grassland. Areas relied upon for the provision of biodiversity net gain are protected by proposed fencing. A small section of low-quality hedgerow is proposed to be removed to accommodate the principal vehicular access and pedestrian routes onto Church Road.

However, all other existing hedgerows around the site and all other existing trees will be retained and strengthened. There will also be new tree and hedgerow planting throughout the new development.

3.8 With regards to surface water attenuation, the proposed development is accompanied by a draft drainage strategy which identifies a new SuDS attenuation pond located in the south-eastern area of the site where the topography slightly falls. This SuDS attenuation pond will provide drainage attenuation for the proposed development

- Supporting documentation has also been submitted and this summarised below.

3.12 Design and Access Statement explains how the parameters plan has been arrived at within the context of the setting of the site.

3.13 A Transport Statement and Plan concludes that the site is in a sustainable location in transport terms, with local facilities within a comfortable walking and cycling distance of the site, and bus services connecting the site to larger settlements to the north and south of the village. The Statement has considered the proposed access and finds that a safe and suitable vehicular access to the site can be provided via Church Road. The additional traffic generation associated with the proposed development is forecast to be minimal and will not be noticeable across the highway network. The Statement finds that there are no existing highway safety issues in the vicinity of the site, nor will the proposed development have a material impact on highway safety. Active travel permeability has been provided through the provision of a further footpath/cycleway links to Church Road to the west and Warton Recreation Ground.

3.14 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy identifies the site as being located within Flood Zone 1 and is assessed as being at low or very low risk of flooding from fluvial and pluvial sources. A Surface Water Drainage Strategy has been prepared to demonstrate that a sustainable drainage solution can be provided for the proposed development. The Surface Water Drainage Strategy has been designed in accordance with current sustainable development best practice. The proposed development will discharge to the local drainage network, at rates equivalent to existing conditions. The surface water drainage system is to be designed to ensure that flood storage volumes are retained onsite for critical storm events up to the 1 in 100-year return period plus an allowance for the effects of climate change. To further mitigate the flood risk to properties in the event of a failure within the drainage system, surface levels will be designed to ensure that flood flows are not directed toward dwellings. A SuDS attenuation basin is proposed to the south-east of the site which will treat and store flows ahead of discharge. The development drainage system is to have a controlled outfall east beneath Orton Road, before ultimately discharging into the existing Seven Trent Water (STW) public sewer at the junction between Orton Road to the surface water sewer. The development proposals ensure that the nature and behaviour of the surface water drainage replicates that of the pre-developed site. A foul water drainage strategy has been prepared which implements measures to discharge foul water flow from the proposed development. Foul water will connect into an existing public foul water sewer located at the junction between Orton Road and Barn End Road. The Drainage Strategy is said to demonstrate that the proposed development will not result in any detrimental impact on existing surrounding properties.

3.15 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment describes the existing landscape and visual conditions of the site and its surroundings, provides a commentary on the impacts of the proposed development and appraises the likely effects of the proposal. The site is on the southwestern edge of Warton Village, which has a similar landform as the site. The centre of the village is found at approximately 91m AOD at the junction of Church Road and Maypole Road. The Assessment says that the landscape context for this proposal is not simply open agricultural land of the site, but it includes the peri-urban landscape of Warton and the wider built context of the village, which provide the setting for this proposal. It was considered that the site could successfully accommodate the proposed residential development with minor adverse impacts on the landscape resource, character and visual amenity of the site and surrounding area. From a landscape perspective, the Assessment concludes the proposals as now formulated, will deliver a coherent and logical development of new homes on the southwestern edge of Warton village providing a high quality new landscape with a new social landscape function, and would preserve the distinctiveness of the village, as well as the open countryside setting of the No Mans Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area, and its nucleated settlement pattern. The scheme will replace the site's agricultural character, but a substantial degree of naturalness will remain, albeit in a different form to that which currently exists. A Landscape Strategy Plan has been submitted with the application setting out the proposed landscaping across the site. This includes strengthening of existing trees and hedgerows, the introduction of new native trees (including traditional orchard planting) and creation of dedicated habitats for biodiversity net gain including species rich grassland, tussock and wetland meadow planting. The Landscape Masterplan can be viewed at Appendix E

3.16 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal shows that the site comprises arable land and a pond with willow scrub. Species rich hedgerows form the boundaries of the site. No statutory or non-statutory designated sites are present within the site boundary. The site falls within the risk zones of Birches Barn Meadow SSSI and Alvecote Pools SSSI. It is currently undetermined how many units the scheme will propose or the level of discharge. However, if it is above 100 units and/ or more than 5m³/day of water or liquid waste is discharged, then Natural England will need to be consulted. It was concluded that the development will not have a significant impact on any Statutory Nature Conservation Sites. Four hedgerows are present within the application site. The vast majority of these will be retained. Habitat offering a low ecological value at the site level includes improved grassland, and dense/continuous scrub. Habitat offering higher ecological value includes hedgerows and mature broadleaved trees. The proposal would remove small sections of hedgerow to facilitate the development of the site through the provision of access. Mitigation and compensation for the loss of this habitat can be accommodated through the creation and enhancement of species-rich grassland within the proposed open space provision.

3.17 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment concludes that based upon the illustrative proposals a net gain in biodiversity can be delivered as a result of the proposed development. Specifically, an increase in habitat units from 12.23 units to 13.97 units which equates to an 14.24% increase overall. An increase in hedgerow units has also been calculated, from 18.17 units to 20.59 units (which equates to a 13.3% increase).

3.18 A Noise Assessment, relates to the potential impact of existing noise sources on the proposed external amenity areas and on the living rooms and bedrooms within the proposed development. The Noise Assessment demonstrates the feasibility of the site for residential use, assuming that the proposed dwellings are located a reasonable setback distance within the proposed developable area.

3.19 A Heritage Statement considers the potential impact of the proposed development on the setting and significance of those designated and non-designated heritage assets located in the vicinity of the application site. The assessment identified two Listed Buildings, and twenty-one potential non-designated built heritage assets located within a 1km search radius around the site. The report has also considered a Grade I Listed Building located outside of the search area. The statement established that only the Holy Trinity Church (Grade II) and St Edith Church (Grade I) have the potential for their significance to be affected by the site's development, through changes within their settings. The assessment concludes that the site comprises a neutral element within the setting of both of these designated heritage assets whereby it makes no contribution to their significance. The development will result in a small visual change within their settings, which will have no effect on how their significance is appreciated or understood.

3.20 Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment looks at whether there are any likely archaeological constraints to development of the site and identifies whether there will be a requirement for any further archaeological investigation. It concludes that there are no archaeological constraints to the site's development, and it is unlikely that the site will contain any archaeological remains that will need to be preserved in-situ or to be designed around. The identified activity on the adjacent site to the east was investigated through trial trenching post consent and there is no evidence that any of the features extend into this site. It would therefore be appropriate for any further archaeological works to be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.

3.21 A Grounds Investigation Desk Study Report concludes that any risks to human health could be reduced to an acceptable level by the use of mitigation measures including cover layers, gas resistant membranes and contaminant resistant water supply infrastructure at the proposed development. Additionally, the site is indicated to be in an area that may be affected by coal mining. However, given the anticipated depth to any worked coal and the anticipated thickness of competent solid geology above, the risk posed at the site is considered to be very low such that further assessment and/or investigation with regards to the risk associated with coal mining is not considered necessary. It is recommended that an intrusive ground investigation is completed ahead of any development works to determine the geotechnical properties of the underlying ground conditions and to determine the actual contaminative status of the site. The intrusive investigation should include an assessment of hazardous ground gases.

3.22 A Soils and Agricultural Land Report says that the soils within the survey area comprise a sandy clay loam topsoil overlying a similarly-textured upper subsoil. The field is grade 2 (72%) and grade 3a (26%) with the remainder being other land.

3.24 A Statement of Community Engagement explains that four questions were asked by the applicant at pre-application stage. The first being a closed question asking whether residents supported the proposals and provided 'Yes', 'No' and 'To an extent' options. This allowed residents to express either their support or their opposition to the proposals. The second question asked residents to rank how important certain elements of the scheme would be to them on a graded scale. The remaining two questions were open questions asking for residents' views on the proposed scheme with an opportunity to add any further comments relating to the proposals (positive or negative). A total of 115 responses were received (which represents an approximately 20% responses rate) with many comments received both positive and negative, thus in the applicant's view demonstrating that the questionnaire did not force positive answers.

3.25 An Affordable Housing Statement says that there is a growing need for affordable housing both nationally and in North Warwickshire. There has been an under provision of affordable housing completions in the last five years across the Borough. It has been demonstrated that the provision of up to 44 affordable homes as part of this proposed development accords with the policy requirements as set out in the adopted Local Plan. The proposed development will provide a suitable mix and variety of dwelling sizes with the provision of affordable housing attracting substantial weight in the determination of the application

3.26 A Planning Statement draws all of the matters together and places the in the overall national and local planning policy context. The applicant considered the proposal would meet housing needs in North Warwickshire, providing a sustainable extension to the settlement whilst also thus helping address the Council's housing shortage. A range of technical and environmental assessments have been undertaken to inform the preparation of the development proposals and ensure appropriate mitigation is included to address any adverse impacts that may arise from the development. These are not considered to give rise to any unsurmountable constraints. Overall, the applicant concludes that there are no adverse impacts that would (individually or collectively) 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the clear and substantial benefits of the proposed residential development of the application site.

4. Development Plan

The North Warwickshire Local Plan 2021 – LP1 (Sustainable Development); LP13 (Rural Employment), LP14 (Landscape), LP15 (Historic Environment), LP16 (Natural Environment), LP29 (Development Considerations), LP30 (Built Form), LP33 (Water Management) and LP35 (Renewable Energy)

5. Other Material Planning Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 – (the "NNPF")

National Planning Practice Guidance – (the "NPPG")

The North Warwickshire Landscape Character Assessment 2010

North Warwickshire Annual Monitoring Report.

6. Observations

6.1 Members will be familiar with the planning issues involved with large scale housing developments. Warton has had a number of housing approvals in recent years, with one being on an adjacent parcel of land as built. The key issues will be assessments of the potential landscape and visual impacts as well as understanding the impact on the openness of the countryside. The impact upon Warton, along with highways, agricultural land loss, highways matters, bio-diversity, ecology and amenities are further considerations to consider in the planning balance. The latest planning policy consideration and Government guidance is also material in any consideration of the application. The application will need to consider consultation responses and representations.

6.2 It is advised that as with the other cases, the Board should visit the site.

Recommendation

That receipt of the report is noted and that Members visit the site prior to determination of the application.

Appendix A – Site location Plan

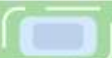


Appendix B – Aerial Image

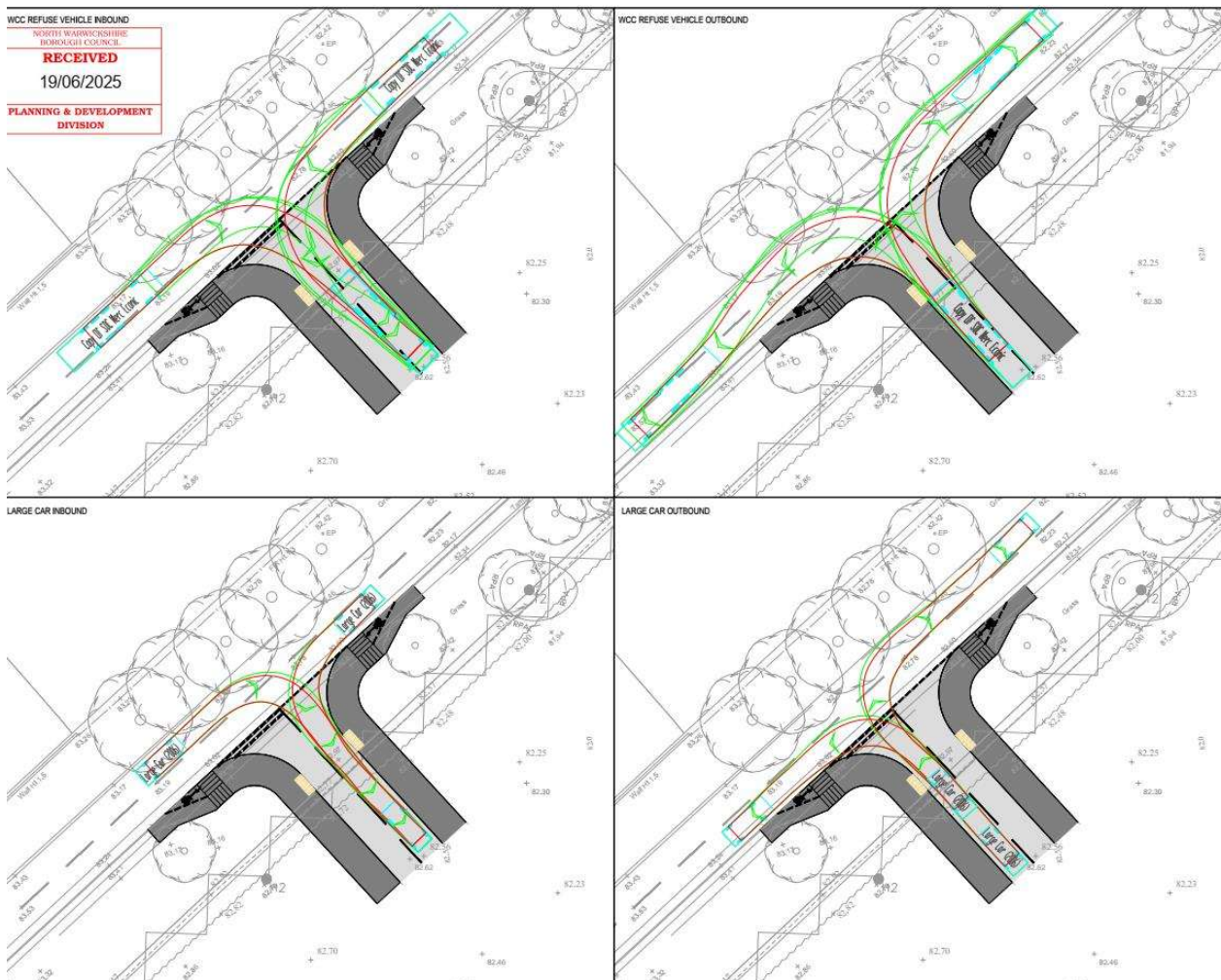


Appendix C – Parameters Plan



-  Site Boundary
-  Proposed Residential Development
-  Proposed Open Space and Paths
-  Proposed Highway
-  Proposed Sustainable Drainage
-  Existing Recreation Ground
-  Proposed Access/Egress for All Modes
-  Proposed Access/Egress for Pedestrians
-  Potential Future Access
-  Existing Landscape

Appendix D – Vehicle access and pedestrian access



Appendix E – Indicative Landscape Plan



LEGEND

	Boundary		
	Existing trees retained		
	Existing trees removed		Proposed species-rich native hedgerow undersown with EH1
	Existing hedgerows to be removed		Proposed traditional orchards
	Existing hedgerows to be retained (+ enhanced)		Proposed native trees
	Existing hedgerows recently planted		Proposed modified grassland
	Existing scrub retained		Proposed other neutral grassland (EM3 Species-rich grassland)

