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**WALSINGHAM PLANNING**

SPECIALIST PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

## Planning Statement

Land at Lynchmead Farm

*Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset*

On behalf of Mead Realisations Ltd

June 2020

### **Walsingham Planning**

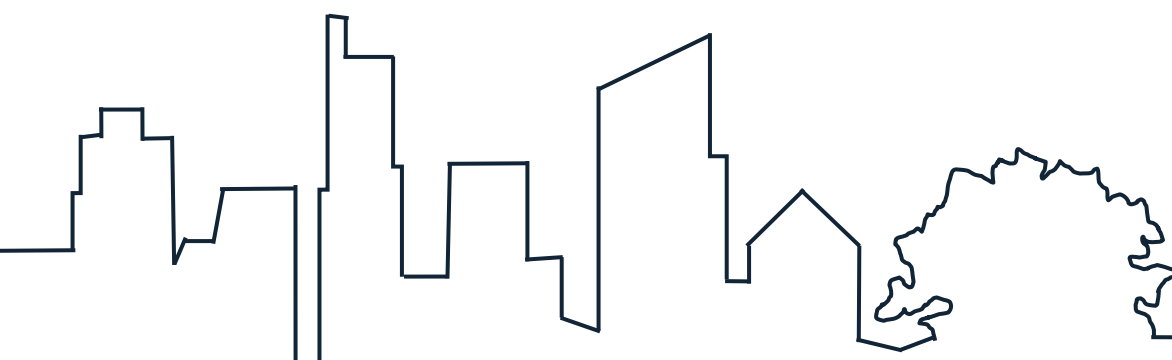
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# I INTRODUCTION

- I.1.1 This statement has been prepared by Walsingham Planning (WP), on behalf of Mead Realisations Ltd (the Applicant), to support an outline planning application for residential development at Land on Lynchmead Farm, Weston-super-Mare. The application seeks permission for the construction of up to 75 dwellings, with all matters reserved for future determination, with the exception of access.
- I.1.2 The proposals have been the subject of pre-application discussions with North Somerset Council (the LPA). Residents and key stakeholders, including the Town Council and Ward Councillors of whom have also been consulted.
- I.1.3 The following sections provide an overview of the application site, a description of the proposed development, an outline of the relevant planning history and planning policy, and the justification for the proposals in the context of S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Further information is provided in other supporting documents submitted with this application.
- I.1.4 The full list of the supporting information submitted with this application is as follows:
- Cover Letter
  - Planning Application forms and certificates
  - Site Location Plan
  - Illustrative Masterplan
  - Planning Statement
  - Design and Access Statement
  - Landscape and Visual Appraisal
  - Statement of Community Involvement
  - Affordable Housing Statement
  - Sequential Test
  - Heritage Statement
  - Geophysical Survey
  - Ecological Appraisal and Phase 2 Surveys
  - Phase I Contaminated Land Report
  - Transport Statement
  - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy

- Sequential Test
- Arboricultural Survey
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Landscape Masterplan and Indicative Species List
- s106 Heads of Terms
- Energy Statement

1.1.5 Overall, this Statement, along with the other supporting documents that accompany the planning application, demonstrates that the proposals accord with relevant planning policy are appropriate for the area and address any potential technical issues; which could arise as a result of development proceeding.

## 2 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

### 2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The application site comprises of undeveloped land extending to an area of approximately 4.99 hectares to the North-East of Weston-Super-Mare in the Ebdon area (GR: Easting 335833, Northing 164349).
- 2.1.2 The site is a large, open agricultural field immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of Weston-Super-Mare. The site is predominantly flat with minor gradients falling from the south of the site to the north.
- 2.1.3 The site boundary is lined with hedgerow and trees to the North, East and West which leads to more agricultural fields. However, Ebdon Road is located on the Southern Boundary of the site, separating the site from the existing residential development.
- 2.1.4 There are a number of rhynes located across the site.
- 2.1.5 An existing access point to the site is located off Ebdon Road via a field gate.
- 2.1.6 The boundary of the site is shown edged red on the Site Location Plan submitted with the outline planning application and replicated at **Appendix I**.

### 2.2 SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2.1 As set out above existing residential development lies directly to the South beyond Ebdon Road. Surrounding the rest of the site is agricultural land, however, there is a small industrial estate to the South-East of the site comprising of various companies, including Cash for Clothes.
- 2.2.2 The site is located less than 2.5km from several Local Centres, including Ebdon, Norton, Worle and Milton. The site is also located approximately 5km from the town centre of Weston-Super-Mare.
- 2.2.3 The site is within walking distance of several local services and amenities, including shops, schools, community facilities, places of worship and sports and health facilities. The approximate distance to each is listed below:
- Castle Batch Community Primary School – 0.4 miles

- Priory Community School – 0.95 miles
- St Mark's VA Ecumenical Church of England/ Methodist Primary School – 0.5 miles
- Crematorium – 0.3 miles
- Playing Fields – 0.6 miles
- Community Centre – 0.6 miles
- Allotment Gardens – 0.7 miles
- Tesco Express – 0.5 miles
- Sainsbury – 1.1 miles
- Worle Baptist Church – 0.5 miles
- St Lawrence's Church – 0.8 miles
- The Ebdon Arms – 0.3 miles
- Riverbank Medical Centre (GP Surgery) – 0.7 miles

2.2.4 The site is located close to bus stops on Besket Road, St Marks Road and Ebdon Road, all within 630m. Worle train station is approximately 2.1km away and accommodates all major Great Western Railway. The station is directly accessible by bus.

2.2.5 According to the EA flood map the site is wholly located within Flood Zone 3, therefore, a Sequential Test is required for development in this location. There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) or European Wildlife designations on or around the site. The site does not lie in or part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Conservation Area, however, Motte at Castle Batch, a Scheduled Monument, lie roughly 0.5 miles from the site.

### **3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

#### **3.1 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

3.1.1 The application site is located within the administrative area of North Somerset. According to the Council's website no planning applications have been submitted on the site in recent years.

#### **3.2 STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHLAA)**

3.2.1 The site was assessed in North Somerset Council's 2014 HELAA as 'Lynchmead Farm, Ebdon, WSM' (Ref HE14315). The 2014 HELAA was prepared by North Somerset Council to inform the Core Strategy. The site was identified as having potential for residential or employment development and the SHLAA schedule shows a yield of 236 dwellings at the site.

3.2.2 The site was also submitted as part of a larger site in North Somerset Council's most recent 2018 SHLAA as 'Lynchmead Farm, Ebdon' (Ref HE18127). However, at the time of writing North Somerset Council are preparing a new SHLAA as part of the evidence base for the emerging new Local Plan. This will form part of the evidence base and will include a reassessment of the sites submitted to the 2018 SHLAA, new call for site submissions and will build on and refresh the previous North Somerset SHLAAs published in 2008 and 2014.

#### **3.3 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION**

3.3.1 Walsingham Planning submitted a request for formal pre-application advice on behalf of the Applicant on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017. The red line for the pre-application submission also included land further north. A formal advice letter was initially received from the LPA on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 (LPA Ref: 17/P/5072/PRE) and a meeting was held with a representative of North Somerset Council's Planning Department on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018. Following the meeting, an updated formal advice letter was received from the LPA on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018. A copy is attached at **Appendix 2**.

3.3.2 The key issues considered in the response are as follows:

- Effect on the surrounding highway network
- Flood Risk / Surface Water
- Ecology
- Landscape impact
- Assessment of impact on heritage assets

3.3.3 The formal advice received provides guidance on the suitability of the site for residential development, key issues and validation requirements. Importantly no in principle objection was received to the development of the site for residential purposes.

#### **3.4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

3.4.1 A consultation leaflet outlining the proposals was delivered by post on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019 to approximately 630 households and businesses in the local area. The leaflet was also sent to relevant Town/Parish Councils and local ward members for comment prior to distributing to the local community.

3.4.2 Further information on the public consultation undertaken by the Applicant is provided in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted with this application.



## 4 THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1.1 The proposals seek outline planning permission for residential development comprising up to 75 dwellings and associated infrastructure. All matters are reserved for future consideration with the exception of access, details of which form part of the application.
- 4.1.2 The application is supported by an Illustrative Masterplan (**Appendix 3**) which shows how a scheme of up to 75 dwellings, with a mix of type and tenure, ranging in size from 1 to 5-bedroom houses with gardens and associated parking, could be developed.
- 4.1.3 In accordance with Policy CS16 of the Adopted North Somerset Core Strategy the application also includes provision for 30% affordable housing (i.e. 23 units based on a scheme of 75 units).
- 4.1.4 The proposals include two main vehicular accesses to the site which will be taken from the Ebdon Road on the southern boundary designed in accordance with relevant standards and traffic speeds.
- 4.1.5 Pedestrian access will be provided on both accesses with a footpath connecting the two accesses along the site frontage. A pedestrian crossing is proposed on the eastern arm of the mini roundabout. Further details of the access proposals are contained within the Transport Statement submitted in support of the planning application.
- 4.1.6 While the internal road layout is reserved for future determination the Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates how internal access to individual plots could be achieved.
- 4.1.7 The Illustrative Masterplan also includes areas of open space, additional planting and a potential area for SUDs. Areas of woodland/ecological buffering are located along the northern boundary of the site. The Illustrative Masterplan also includes appropriate offsets from the rhynes located on the site.
- 4.1.8 Further information on the proposals is provided in the Design and Access Statement submitted with this application.

## 5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### 5.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

- 5.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in March 2012 and replaces the majority of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs).
- 5.1.2 A revision of the Framework was published on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018 implementing around 85 reforms announced previously through the Housing White Paper, the planning for the right homes in the right places consultation and the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework consultation.
- 5.1.3 On 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019, the revised Framework was updated following consultation to update planning practice guidance on housing need assessment to be consistent with the Government’s ambitions for increasing housing supply. The consultation also proposed clarifications to national planning policy on, Housing Land Supply, the definition of “deliverable” and appropriate assessment for habitats sites.
- 5.1.4 National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 and supplements the Framework and replaces previous forms of guidance.
- 5.1.5 The Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions and places the key emphasis on achieving sustainable development. At paragraph 8 it identifies the three dimensions to this objective:
- *‘a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
  - *b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with*

*accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

- *c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.'*

5.1.6 In respect of implementation paragraph 11 advises that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It advises that for decision-taking this means:

*“c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

*d) 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 of 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.”*

5.1.7 This is reiterated in the NPPG which states that:

*‘Where a proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan it should be approved without delay.’*

(Paragraph: 006, Reference ID: 21b-006-20140306)

5.1.8 Section 6 of the Framework relates to building a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 80 states:

*“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation<sup>40</sup>, and in*

*areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.”*

## **5.2 DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

5.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2.2 For the purposes of this application the Development Plan for the Site comprises the North Somerset Core Strategy (adopted in April 2012), the Sites and Policies Part 1: Development Management Policies (adopted in July 2016) and the Sites and policies plan part 2: site allocations plan (adopted in April 2018).

### **North Somerset Core Strategy (April 2012)**

5.2.3 The North Somerset Core Strategy was formally adopted on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2012 and contains strategic policies to guide development in the area up to 2026. This document supersedes the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan (2007) and works alongside further documents to provide guidance for new developments. Following a high court challenge nine policies were remitted for re-examination. In September 2015 policy CS13: scale of new housing was re-adopted. In January 2017 policies CS6, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33 were readopted.

5.2.4 The following strategies and policies are considered relevant to the application proposals:

- CS1 Addressing climate change and carbon reduction
- CS2 Delivering sustainable design and construction
- CS3 Environmental impacts and flood risk management
- CS4 Nature Conservation
- CS5 Landscape and the historic environment
- CS9 Green infrastructure
- CS10 Transport and movement
- CS11 Parking
- CS12 Achieving high quality design and place making
- CS13 Scale of new housing
- CS14 Distribution of new housing

- CS15 Mixed and balanced communities
- CS16 Affordable housing
- CS28 Weston-super-Mare
- CS34 Infrastructure delivery and Development Contributions

5.2.5 Policy CS13 of the adopted Core Strategy document has set a target to deliver a ‘minimum’ of 20,985 dwellings in the plan period (2006 to 2026).

5.2.6 Policy CS16 of the Core Strategy seeks the provision of at least 150 affordable housing dwellings per annum. The policy also states that there is a ‘benchmark’ of 30% affordable housing provision for developments to meet the local need.

5.2.7 Policy CS28 sets out the strategic policy requirements for Weston-super-Mare:

*“Weston-super-Mare will be the primary focus for development within North Somerset. A minimum of 12,800 dwellings will be delivered over the plan period at Weston-super-Mare and the sustainable new communities, together with approximately 10,500 jobs as part of an employment-led strategy to deliver improved self-containment and reduced out-commuting during the plan period.*

*New development at Weston-super-Mare will be focused on two key locations:*

- *Town centre and gateway where the emphasis is on the regeneration of a range of key sites to stimulate investment, and will include residential, retail, employment and leisure opportunities (see Policy CS29).*
- *Weston Villages where the emphasis is on comprehensive development to create two sustainable new communities linked to the delivery of employment (see Policy CS30).*

*Residential development will be delivered in accordance with the employment-led strategy (see policies CS20 and CS30 for more detail).*

*No strategic development will be permitted to the east of the M5 motorway. The settlement boundary of Weston-super-Mare will be amended to incorporate the new Weston Villages.*

*New development proposals at Weston-super-Mare within or adjoining the settlement boundary should take into account the following objectives:*

- support the focus of the town centre as the location for higher order facilities and services, including retail, tourism and leisure opportunities;
- support existing community hubs of local retailing and other services located within the town;
- respect the characteristic heritage of Weston-super-Mare;
- provide high quality design;
- support the enhancement of its green infrastructure and biodiversity, including the ridges and hinterland to the north and south, the woodland areas, the rhynes network, and the seafront;
- improve accessibility within Weston-Super-Mare by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with, for example, local facilities, service centres, the town centre and sea front and do not lead to significant adverse impacts on the transport network; and ensure that services and infrastructure are adequate to support the development.

*Housing sites outside the settlement boundary in excess of about 75 dwellings must be brought forward as allocations through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Development Plans.”*

### **Sites and Policies Part I: Development management Policies (July 2016)**

5.2.8 The Sites and Policies Part I was formally adopted on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016 and supplements policies in the Core Strategy. The following strategies and policies are considered relevant to the application proposals:

- DM 1 Flooding and drainage
- DM 2 Renewable and low carbon energy
- DM 6 Archaeology
- DM 8 Nature Conservation
- DM 9 Trees and Woodlands
- DM10 Landscape
- DM19 Green infrastructure
- DM24 Safety, traffic and provision of infrastructure etc. associated with development
- DM25 Public rights of way, pedestrian and cycle access
- DM27 Bus accessibility criteria
- DM28 Parking standards
- DM32 High quality design and place making

- DM34 Housing type and mix
- DM36 Residential densities
- DM70 Development infrastructure
- DM71 Development contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy and viability

## **Sites and Policies Part 2: Site Allocations Plan**

5.2.9 The Sites and Policies Part 2 was adopted on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and works alongside the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies Part 1 to form the overall Development Plan. Policy SA2 establishes the Settlement Boundaries for the various settlements within the District.

## **5.3 EMERGING PLANNING POLICY**

### **North Somerset Local Plan**

5.3.1 The West of England Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) was being prepared by North Somerset, Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils. North Somerset were in the process of preparing a new Local Plan to compliment the JSP. However, on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019 the Inspectors issued a letter to the respective councils which detailed their concerns about the soundness of the JSP. On 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 North Somerset Council formally withdrew from the JSP process and are now preparing a new Local Plan which will include strategic and non-strategic policies including housing allocations. A Pre-commencement consultation is took place between 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 until 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020.

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

5.3.2 At the time of writing there was no neighbourhood plan being prepared in Ebdon/Worle.

## **5.4 OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

5.4.1 The following additional documents and sections are considered relevant to the application proposals:

- Travel Plans SPD (adopted November 2010)
- Residential Design Guide Section 1: Protecting Living Conditions of Neighbours SPD (adopted January 2013)
- Affordable Housing SPD (adopted November 2013)

- Parking Standards SPD (adopted November 2013)
- Biodiversity and Trees SPD (adopted December 2005)
- Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places SPD (adopted March 2015)
- Highways Development Design Guide (adopted December 2015)
- Development Contributions SPD (adopted January 2016)
- North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Guidance on Development: Supplementary Planning Document (adopted January 2018)
- Accessible and Adaptable Housing Needs Assessment SPD (adopted May 2018)
- National Planning Design Guide (published October 2019)



## **6 JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSALS**

### **6.1 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

#### **Introduction**

- 6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. As outlined in Section 5 of this statement the Development Plan for the area comprises the North Somerset Core Strategy (adopted in April 2012), the Sites and Policies Part 1: Development Management Policies (adopted in July 2016) and the Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (adopted April 2018).
- 6.1.2 This section contains an assessment of the proposal against Policy CS28 of the Core Strategy, as well as other relevant policies within the Development Plan documents.
- 6.1.3 Overall, this section considers the following:
- The principle of development including compliance with Policy CS28.
  - How the site accords with other Development Plan policies.
  - How the proposals represent Sustainable Development and address the three roles set out by the NPPF.
  - Other material considerations which justify the granting of planning permission.

#### **Principle of Residential Development**

- 6.1.4 As set out in Section 5, Policy CS13 of the adopted Core Strategy document sets a target to deliver a 'minimum' of 20,985 dwellings in the plan period (2006 to 2026). Policy CS28 sets a target to deliver a 'minimum' of 12,800 dwellings over the plan period at Weston-super-Mare. It is important to note these targets are expressed as minimum requirements.
- 6.1.5 Policy CS14 sets out the distribution of the housing requirement across the settlement hierarchy. This prioritises new housing development at Weston-super-Mare followed by the other towns and then service villages. It states:

*“Weston-super-Mare will be the focus for new residential development within North Somerset, including the strategic allocation at Weston Villages. Development at Weston will be employment-led.”*

6.1.6 Policy CS28 (Weston-super-Mare) of the Core Strategy sets out the objectives under which new development proposals within or adjoining the settlement boundary (not in excess of about 75 dwellings) should consider. It states:

*“New development proposals at Weston-super-Mare within or adjoining the settlement boundary should take into account the following objectives:*

- support the focus of the town centre as the location for higher order facilities and services, including retail, tourism and leisure opportunities;*
- support existing community hubs of local retailing and other services located within the town;*
- respect the characteristic heritage of Weston-super-Mare;*
- provide high quality design;*
- support the enhancement of its green infrastructure and biodiversity, including the ridges and hinterland to the north and south, the woodland areas, the rhynes network, and the seafront;*
- improve accessibility within Weston-super-Mare by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with, for example, local facilities, service centres, the town centre and sea front and do not lead to significant adverse impacts on the transport network; and*
- ensure that services and infrastructure are adequate to support the development.*

*Housing sites outside the settlement boundary in excess of about 75 dwellings must be brought forward as allocations through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Development Plans.”*

6.1.7 The application accords with the locational requirement of the policy as the site adjoins the settlement boundary for Weston-super-Mare. The proposals also comply with the quantum requirement as the application is for up to 75 dwellings and therefore does not need to be brought forward as an allocation through a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan. This is also reflected in the pre-application advice received from North Somerset (attached at **Appendix 2**) which states:

*“The site is adjacent to the settlement boundary for Weston-super-Mare and the proposal is not larger than 75 dwellings Therefore the proposal is compliant with Policy CS28 provided that the detailed criteria set out in that policy are met “*

- 6.1.8 The LPA should therefore support the application providing that it can be demonstrated that the proposals consider seven objectives listed in Policy CS28 and comply with other policies in the Development Plan. An assessment of the proposed development against the objectives in Policy CS28 is set out below.

**Support the focus of the town centre as the location for higher order facilities and services, including retail, tourism and leisure opportunities.**

- 6.1.9 The application is for a residential development on the edge of Weston-super-Mare in the Ebdon area approximately 3.8 miles north east of the town centre where existing higher order facilities and services are located and where new opportunities for retail, tourism and leisure opportunities are encouraged as set out in Policy CS29 of the Core Strategy (Weston-super-Mare town centre). The site is in a sustainable location well connected to the town centre with good transport links including by foot, cycle, bus and train. This will ensure the occupiers of the new dwellings will be able to easily use facilities and services in the town centre thereby supporting their growth.
- 6.1.10 The proposals will therefore play an important role in ensuring the vitality and viability of existing facilities and services in the town centre which is an important component of Paragraph 85 of the Framework.

**Support existing community hubs of local retailing and other services located within the town.**

- 6.1.11 In addition to benefitting from good transport links to the town centre, the application site lies within 800 metres of an existing local centre, consisting of the Ebdon Arms Public House, Convenience Stores, Castle Batch Community Primary School and Worle Baptist Church and is also located within walking distance of retail uses and other services in the town. The increased patronage arising from occupation of the new homes will support local organisations and services, including existing community hubs and other services, thereby helping to sustain them in the longer term.

### **Respect the characteristic heritage of Weston-super-Mare.**

6.1.12 Paragraph 4.11 which supports Policy CS28 identifies Weston-super-Mare as an area which ‘has a strong identity as a Victorian seaside town and the town centre and seafront contains five conservation areas and numerous listed buildings.’

6.1.13 The application site is located in the Ebdon area of Weston-super-Mare. The landscape led approach to the proposed layout with a strong green infrastructure, will ensure the development reflects locally distinctive typologies and forms a sensitive edge to the settlement, therefore respecting the identity in the Ebdon area. It is important to note that the application site contains no Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Registered Battlefields or World Heritage Sites. The application is supported by a Historic Environment Statement prepared by AC Archaeology which concludes:

*“An appraisal of designated heritage assets has been carried out using the methodology outlined in The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (Second Edition). It is considered that the proposed development would not affect any of the aspects of setting that contribute towards the significance of the designated heritage assets within the study area and will not be visible within any of the key views that allow that significance to be appreciated.”*

6.1.14 On this basis it is considered the proposals will respect the characteristic heritage of Weston-super-Mare.

### **Provide high quality design.**

6.1.15 The Design and Access Statement describes in detail the process that was followed to ensure that a high-quality development that is appropriate to its context will be delivered. It highlights that the proposals are the result of a landscape-led design approach. As the application is being made in outline the appearance, layout, scale and landscaping will not be considered until the Reserved Matters stage. Nevertheless, an Illustrative Planning Masterplan has been prepared to show how a high quality residential development of 75 dwellings could be accommodated.

6.1.16 The Design and Access Statement sets out the following points which will ensure the development is a high quality design:

- The illustrative layout has been created with best practice in terms of urban design and as such would perform well in relation to Building for Life 12.
- The layout creates a series of permeable streets and spaces that could then provide the backdrop to locally distinctive high quality dwellings through a reserved matters application.
- The landscape led approach to the layout with a strong green infrastructure, that reflects locally distinctive typologies, would form a sensitive edge to the settlement.
- At reserved matters application stage, the architectural proposals could follow this approach to create a high quality neighbourhood.

**Support the enhancement of its green infrastructure and biodiversity, including the ridges and hinterland to the north and south, the woodland areas, the rhynes network, and the seafront.**

6.1.17 The application is supported by numerous technical assessments including in relation to landscape, ecology and arboriculture. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared by Viridian Landscape Planning Ltd confirms the site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations. In terms of landscape character, it concludes:

*“Although the development would change the character of the site from grazed fields to residential development, the proposals would retain most of the existing hedges and rhynes as well as provide new rhynes, new planting and accessible open space where currently there is none. All retained landscape features and new landscape works would be subject to a management plan, agreed with the local authority, that would enhance and ensure the long-term viability of those features. As a result, the development would be contained within compartments in the existing landscape structure which would ensure integration into that landscape.”*

6.1.18 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Aspect Tree Consultancy Ltd advises that *“the existing tree cover on the site is of low to moderate quality with heavily degraded hedges and trees with limited viability.”* and that the *“proposal retains the most significant trees and hedges with only the loss of a small number of minor insignificant trees.”* concluding that the overall impact will be low.

6.1.19 The Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by EAD Ecology Ltd concludes:

*“Overall, it is considered that the development would protect, maintain and enhance the biodiversity within the site in accordance with policies concerning the conservation of biodiversity in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), North Somerset Core Strategy and the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan.”*

6.1.20 The technical assessments have helped to inform the illustrative masterplan which includes the provision of village greens/wetland meadows, vehicular free green corridors, areas of designated woodland/ecological buffering along with green infrastructure connections which will all contribute to the enhancement of green infrastructure/biodiversity.

6.1.21 Overall the proposal constitutes a sustainable form of development which takes full account of and responds positively to landscape, arboriculture and ecology considerations.

**Improve accessibility within Weston-super-Mare by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with, for example, local facilities, service centres, the town centre and sea front and do not lead to significant adverse impacts on the transport network.**

6.1.22 The site is in a suitable location, as it is accessible by all modes of travel and its location presents a genuine choice of sustainable travel modes. There is excellent potential to encourage sustainable mobility habits in future residents from the outset. The site is located within walking and cycling distance of key services and facilities.

6.1.23 The site can access local bus route number 7 which provides links to Old Mixon and Weston-super-Mare. Worle rail station is in Worle itself, approximately 2.5km from the development site. This is only a 9 minute journey from the site by bicycle, and the station provides 78 sheltered cycle parking stands.

6.1.24 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment prepared by Vectos Ltd. This sets out that the proposals will have a low level of transport impact and will not have a significant effect on the operation of the local highway network. The details of access to the site are also included in the Transport Assessment including new accesses for pedestrians from the site on a desire line between the site and key services/facilities.

**Ensure that services and infrastructure are adequate to support the development.**

- 6.1.25 The proposed development will contribute to the improvement and enhancement of local infrastructure through the payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and site specific Section 106 contributions subject to meeting the tests in Paragraph 56 of the Framework.

**Summary**

- 6.1.26 The application accords with the locational and quantum requirements of the Policy CS28. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the proposals comply with all seven objectives listed in the policy. On this basis the LPA should support the application as it is fully compliant with Policy CS28 subject to compliance with other policies in the Development Plan.

**Compliance with other policies of the Development Plan**

- 6.1.27 As set out above the key policy in respect of the application is Policy CS28 of the Core Strategy. Nevertheless, there are several other policies within the Development Plan documents which are relevant to the site. In order to demonstrate that the proposed development accords with the relevant policies of the Development Plan the application is accompanied by several supporting documents. The documents and their main conclusions are summarised below.

**Design and Access Statement**

- 6.1.28 The Design and Access Statement that accompanies the planning application describes the site in its wider context, key constraints and the design principles that have informed the illustrative design solution. It also provides an illustration of how a deliverable scheme could be achieved. As the planning application is being made in outline with all matters reserved for future determination (except for access) the design of the proposed scheme will not be finalised until the Reserved Matters stage. Nevertheless, the Design and Access Statement includes an Illustrative Masterplan which shows that a scheme of up to 75 dwellings can be delivered in accordance with the identified constraints and opportunities. It also seeks to provide clarity as to the quality of the final scheme which will be considered at the reserved matters stage should outline permission be granted.
- 6.1.29 In conclusion, the principles set out in the Design and Access Statement will ensure that the proposed development is of a high design quality. The proposed development will therefore

accord with the NPPF, as well as Policy CS12 (Design) and CS28 (Weston-super-Mare) of the adopted Core Strategy, and Policy DM32 (High quality design and place making) of the Sites and Policies Part I.

### **Landscape and Visual Appraisal**

- 6.1.30 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) that accompanies the planning application presents the methodology, context and results of the landscape and visual appraisal process.
- 6.1.31 The pre-application response from North Somerset (attached at **Appendix 2**) noted that the built development should not project too far into the moor. The application area has been reduced from approximately 10.04 hectares to 4.99 hectares since the pre-application advice was received and the site no longer extends as far beyond the settlement edge, therefore reducing landscape impact. The illustrative masterplan has been informed by the LVA and includes good landscaped buffers along the northern boundaries and key features including hedges and rhynes have been retained. Details in relation to scale and height will be considered at reserved matters stage. Further mitigation measures and a Landscape Strategy Plan can be secured by a landscape condition or planning agreement (Section 106), involving works on or off-site as necessary.
- 6.1.32 The LVA confirms that identified landscape and visual receptors are deemed able to accommodate up to 75 dwellings on the site. It sets out how the application accords with all Development Plan policies relating to landscape including Policy DM10 as follows:

*“The proposed development would comply with Local Plan Core Strategy Policies as follows.*

*CS4, Nature Conservation, and CS9 Green Infrastructure, the development would retain hedges and rhynes as part of the green infrastructure, and they would be managed and enhanced for the benefit of biodiversity and landscape. New planting would reflect the character of native planting in the area.*

*CS5: Landscape and the historic environment, by careful and sensitive management and design to protect the character of the landscape through the retention and enhancement of the rhynes and hedges. However, there would be some adverse effects on landscape character by the loss of open agricultural land.*

*CS12: Achieving high quality design and place-making, by employing a robust and multi-disciplinary design process taking account of the context of the site with development to the*



*south and open landscape to the north and by using significant areas of open space to accommodate new and existing rhynes and appropriate planting.*

*CS28: Weston-super-Mare by providing high quality spaces and enhancing green infrastructure and biodiversity.*

*The development would accord with Sites and Policies Part 1: Development Management Policies as set out below.*

*DM9: Trees and Woodlands by the retention of the few trees on the site and significant new tree planting within the existing hedges and across open spaces, including a high proportion of native species.*

*Policy DM10: Landscape by according with all of the relevant criteria including not having an unacceptable impact on landscape character and through landscape design that is an integral part of the scheme.*

*DM 19: Green Infrastructure by the design of high quality and accessible green infrastructure.*

*DM32: High quality design and place-making by responding to local character with opportunities for physical activity.”*

6.1.33 Overall, the LVA confirms that the proposed development will not adversely affect the landscape and accords with relevant sections contained within the NPPF, Policy CS4-CS5, CS12 and CS28 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM9-DM10, DM19 and DM32 of the Site and Policies Plan (Part One). Furthermore, it is likely detailed landscaping proposals and planting scheme will be conditioned on any consent for approval.

### **Transport Assessment**

6.1.34 In accordance with the pre-application advice response received the proposals are supported by a Transport Assessment and the application has responded to the feedback within the response.

6.1.35 The Transport Assessment (TA) addresses the transportation issues relating to the proposed development site (existing conditions) and details of the development proposals (proposed development). The likely effects of the proposals on existing highway conditions has been the subject of detailed consideration and discussion with the Highway Authority (Somerset County Council).

6.1.36 In summary the TA confirms the following:

- The development proposals are for a total of 75 dwellings. Access will be provided to the south of the site onto Ebdon Road, in two locations. The development provides two accesses which are safe and appropriate.
- Pedestrian access will be provided on both accesses with a footpath connecting the two accesses along the site frontage (along Ebdon Road).
- The site is highly suitable for such development, as it is accessible by all modes of travel and its location presents a genuine choice of sustainable travel modes.
- There is excellent potential to encourage sustainable mobility habits in future residents from the outset.
- Car Parking is provided in accordance with North Somerset's Parking Standards SPD.
- An assessment of the potential trip generation of the development proposals has been undertaken, which determines that the site could generate up to 37 vehicular movements per hour on the local highway network.
- This low level of impact will not have a significant effect on the operation of the local highway network. Therefore, there is no good reason to object to the proposed development on transport grounds.
- The development will not result in a severe residual cumulative impact and as such there is no reason on transport grounds to refuse this application.

6.1.37 In conclusion, the Transport Statement demonstrates that there are no highway or transportation reasons which should prevent the proposed development of the site. It also shows that the proposed development accords with relevant sections contained within the NPPF, Policy CS10 and CS11 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM24 – DM28 of the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan (Part One)

### **Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy**

6.1.38 The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy that accompanies the planning application assesses the level of flood risk associated with the proposed development. In summary the FRA and Drainage Strategy confirms the following:

- The site is located in the defended tidal Flood Zone 3. This means that the site is protected from flooding. However, a residual risk remains, if the defences were to become overtopped, or if the breaches were to fail from a breach.
- In order to protect the proposed development against this residual risk and ensure that the development is safe from flooding, flood mitigation measures have been agreed with the Environment Agency. This has included the creation of a safe refuge on an upper floor or roof space.
- Much of the site is to be unaffected by surface water flooding, which is defined as a very low risk. However, some minor areas are susceptible to a greater risk from this source of flooding, including the local rhyne network. Any major flow paths associated with this source of flooding will be accommodated in the site layout plan.
- All other sources of flood risk have been assessed to be low.
- An attenuation led surface water drainage strategy has been proposed to manage the impact of the development on surface water runoff. The storage will be provided by appropriately sized and located swales and areas of permeable paving throughout the development, discharging into existing rhyne.
- The surface water drainage strategy has been designed to accommodate the 1 in 100 year rainfall event including climate change (40% increase in peak rainfall intensity) and has been based on the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). It has been designed to restrict discharge to the QBAR rate, which will help to mimic the existing drainage regime.

6.1.39 On this basis, the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy development ensures that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, as well as Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy and Policy DMI of the Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1).

### **Sequential Test**

6.1.40 In accordance with the pre-application advice received the application is accompanied by a Sequential Test. Whilst the site is located in Flood Zone 3, the Sequential Test confirms that no reasonably alternative sites exist which are at a lesser risk of flooding. It has also been demonstrated that the Exceptions Test is passed.

6.1.41 Overall the Sequential Test ensures that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, as well as Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy.

### **Ecological Impact Assessment**

6.1.42 The Ecological Impact Assessment that accompanies the planning application comprised both a database search and a field survey. The application is also supported by a full suite of phase 2 ecology surveys including relating to bats, dormouse, reptiles and badgers. In summary the Ecological Impact Assessment confirms the following:

- In the view of the proposed mitigation, all negative effects would be at Sub-Parish level or below and are not considered significant.
- There would no effect on the integrity of European-designated site as a result of the development, and no effects on other designated sites are predicted.
- No significant residual effects to habitats or legally protected species would occur, and construction measures would ensure legal compliance in respect of protected species.
- Overall, it is considered that the development would protect, maintain and enhance the biodiversity within the site in accordance with policies concerning the conservation of biodiversity in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), North Somerset Core Strategy and the North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan.
- If North Somerset Council considered that Habitats Regulations Assessment of the development was required, it could conclude that there would be no effect on the integrity of the Severn Estuary SAC/SPA/Ramsar Site, and no likely significant effect on other European designated sites, alone and in-combination with other plans or projects.

6.1.43 In conclusion, the Ecological Impact Assessment demonstrates that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of ecological impact and accords with the NPPF, as well as Policy CS4 and CS9 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM8 and DM19 of the Sites and Policies Plan (Part I).

### **Arboricultural Survey**

6.1.44 The Tree Survey, Tree Constraints Plan and Arboricultural Impact Assessment which accompany the planning application set out the arboricultural constraints that have informed the Illustrative Masterplan, and which need to be considered at the Reserved Matters stage. In summary the Arboricultural Impact Assessment confirms the following:

- The existing tree cover on the site is of low to moderate quality with heavily degraded hedges and trees with limited viability.

- The outline residential proposal retains the most significant trees and hedges with only the loss of a small number of minor insignificant trees. Several sections of hedge will be removed to allow access into the site and between fields. The impact of this will be low.
- The indicative layout shows some minor impacts arising from the layout and the proposed attenuation. There is scope to limit the impacts arising from this through the detailed design and via the production of arboricultural method statements to control operations at the construction stage.
- The layout shows that there is ample space for new tree planting as well as opportunities to improve the quality of the retained hedgerows. This will lead to a significant positive long-term impact in the sites' vegetation cover.
- The proposal accords with national policy as well as locally adopted policy relating to trees and development.

6.1.45 In conclusion the Arboricultural Impact Assessment ensures that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, as well as Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM9 of the Sites and Policies Plan (Part I).

### **Historic Environment Statement**

6.1.46 The Historic Environment Statement was carried out to establish the known or potential cultural heritage resource in a local, regional, national or international context. The reports' main findings are summarised below:

- A geophysical survey undertaken within the proposed development site in March 2019 has highlighted the potential for archaeological deposits to be present within the site, the majority of which are likely to relate to former field division and features relating to water management.
- An RAF aerial photograph dating to the 1940s shows numerous drainage features throughout the proposed development site.
- There are currently no records within the proposed development site on the North Somerset HER, although there is a record relating to the findspot of Romano-British pottery immediately beyond the southern boundary of the site.
- Evidence from historic maps has indicated that there was formerly a small square structure within the northeast corner of Plot 1 in the southwest part of the site. No above-ground remains relating to this structure survive within the site and the

potential for the survival of associated below ground archaeological deposits could not be determined from the results of the geophysical survey. The tithe field name 'Salt Hams', within the northern part of the site, may indicate a connection with salt extraction in the vicinity of the site, although no evidence for this was visible within the results of the geophysical survey.

- The proposed development site is located approximately 185m to the northwest of the medieval motte at Castle Batch and near the historic settlements at Lynchmead Farm and Ebdon.
- The Avon Historic Landscape Characterisation project has characterised the land within the southern part of the proposed development site as 'late medieval enclosed open fields created by local arrangement and exchange' indicating that the land is likely to have formed part of the agricultural landscape surrounding the nearby settlements at this date.
- An appraisal of designated heritage assets has been carried out using the methodology outlined in The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (Second Edition).
- It is considered that the proposed development would not affect any of the aspects of setting that contribute towards the significance of the designated heritage assets within the study area and will not be visible within any of the key views that allow that significance to be appreciated.

6.1.47 On this basis, the Historic Environment Statement ensures that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, as well as Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM9 of the Sites and Policies Plan (Part I).

### **Phase I Ground Investigation Desk Study**

6.1.48 The Phase I Desk Study Report that accompanies the planning application summarises findings of geological, historical and environmental desk study information and develops a conceptual model. The reports main findings are summarised below:

- The historic data review indicates that the site has been in agricultural use since before the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884 to the present. Drains are located on site and the site is relatively low lying, therefore groundwater is likely to be at shallow depth.

- The British Geological Survey mapping indicates the site to be underlain by Tidal Flat Deposits comprising Clay, Silt and Sand, overlying Jurassic Blue Lias Formation comprising Mudstone and Limestone. Whilst not mapped, Head deposits would be anticipated overlying the solid geology.
- The Envirocheck report indicates that no radon protection measures are required for new developments.
- A drainage channel has been infilled between 1999 and 2006 in Area B. Investigation will be required in this area to determine the nature of the backfill.
- Agricultural practices may have resulted in minor impact with hydrocarbons, metals, sulphates and pesticides/herbicides. Sampling and analysis should be considered to assess this as part of a pre-development ground investigation.
- Whilst the issues identified, if found to be present, may require specific mitigation measures, such as a clean cover soil system for gardens they would not be envisaged to be of sufficient magnitude or complexity as to prevent development of the site due to chemical restrictions and as such could be addressed by appropriate conditions in any grant of planning permission.
- A preliminary Phase 2 ground investigation is recommended as detailed in Section 5 of this report.
- Soakaway infiltration drainage is unlikely to be viable at this site due to the anticipated shallow groundwater table and low-permeability alluvial soils underlying the site.
- Groundwater monitoring wells should be installed and monitored to determine the winter ground water levels.
- Deep Tidal Flat deposits underlying the site indicate potential for long-term secondary settlement and medium-term consolidation settlement resulting from increased ground levels likely to be required for development. This may require pre-loading surcharge to build in projected consolidation and secondary settlement.
- Structures are likely to require pile foundations due to anticipated depth to a competent bearing stratum and potential for differential settlement.

6.1.49 In conclusion, the Phase I Desk Study Report demonstrates that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, as well as relevant policies in the Development Plan documents.

### **Statement of Community Involvement**

6.1.50 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the pre-application consultation that has taken place in respect of the proposed development.

- 6.1.51 The public consultation included initial contact with Town Council/Parish Councils and relevant Local Ward Members. It also included a consultation leaflet dropout to residents potentially affected by the proposals.
- 6.1.52 The SCI sets out how any issues raised during the public consultation have been addressed in the submission documents.
- 6.1.53 By engaging with the local community, the Applicant has demonstrated compliance with the NPPF as well as the relevant policies in the Development Plan documents.

### **Section 106 Draft Heads of Terms**

- 6.1.54 The Draft Section 106 Heads of Terms document sets out the contributions that are likely to be sought in order to mitigate the impact of the proposed development. The following planning obligations are proposed (and as identified in the pre-application advice), subject to meeting the tests in paragraph 56 of the Framework:
- Provision of affordable housing at 30% of the total number of dwellings proposed.
  - Off-site transport works.
  - Financial contribution for sustainable travel initiative.
  - Provision of on-site public open space and green infrastructure, and mechanism for adoption and payment of commuted sums for future maintenance and / or off-site financial contribution.
- 6.1.55 In conclusion, the Section 106 Draft Heads of Terms demonstrates that the proposed development accords with the NPPF, as well as Policy CS34 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM70 and 71 of the Sites and Policies Plan (Part 1).
- 6.1.56 In addition to s106 obligations it is also worth noting that North Somerset Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule, which took effect on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The CIL allows the Council to raise funds from new building projects undertaken in their area and is governed by the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). CIL is charged as a fixed rate per square metre of new floor space created, and the money raised can be used to help fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed to support development. As the proposals generate new residential floorspace the development will be liable to CIL payments which can be used to improve local infrastructure.

### **Summary**



6.1.57 The above text demonstrates how the proposals comply with policies in the adopted Local Plan for Cornwall. In fact, it has been demonstrated that:

- A high quality development of up to 75 dwellings can be accommodated on the site (including 30% affordable housing).
- The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area.
- The proposed development will not have a material impact on the operation and safety of the local highway network and there are no valid highway or transportation reasons which should prevent the proposed development of the site. The proposed development is acceptable in terms of highway impact.
- The proposed development will not have a significant ecological impact.
- The site has been assessed against all existing sources of flooding and is not at risk of flooding throughout the developments 100 year lifetime.
- The Sequential Test and Exception Test confirm the site is appropriate for development.
- The proposed development would not affect any of the aspects of setting that contribute towards the significance of the designated heritage assets within the study area
- The Geophysical Survey identified no archaeological interest on the site.

## **6.2 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Five Year Housing Land Supply**

6.2.1 As set out above it is considered that the application is fully compliant with Policy CS28 of the Core Strategy and all other relevant Development Plan policies. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the LPA is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. This was originally confirmed by an appeal decision on Land at and adjoining Weston Business Park, Laney's Drove issued on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2018 (PINS Ref: 3184845). At paragraph 54 of the appeal decision the Inspector states:

*“In consider that the total five-year supply of deliverable housing is 8,565 dwellings, or 4.4 years”.*

6.2.2 On this basis the ‘tilted balance’ exercise set out at paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged and planning permission for the proposed development should be granted unless there are:

- Adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development; or
- Specific policies in the NPPF that indicate development should be restricted.

6.2.3 The technical assessments that are submitted with the application demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts of the proposed development that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development. Furthermore, there are no specific policies in the NPPF that indicate development should be restricted.

### **National Policy**

6.2.4 As outlined in Section 5 of this statement the NPPF aims to boost significantly the supply of housing and includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6.2.5 In terms of what is meant by ‘sustainable development’ the NPPF states at paragraph 8 that there are three dimensions to sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) and three roles that the planning system needs to perform. In summary, the proposals would address these three dimensions as follows:

#### ***Economic***

6.2.6 The site is in a sustainable location and the proposed development would help to contribute to growth in North Somerset by boosting the supply of housing in the local area.

6.2.7 Housing construction supports more jobs compared with investment in many other sectors of the economy because it supports a large amount of related activity. The provision of construction jobs and jobs in associated trades is an important economic consideration and benefit arising from the proposed development.

6.2.8 A further economic benefit is that occupiers of the proposed dwellings will use local services and facilities in Weston-super-Mare, and this will help to sustain local businesses. This is an important material planning consideration as identified in the Framework (Paragraph 78) and PPG.

6.2.9 Importantly the application proposals will deliver housing to improve choice and competition in the market place and support growth, in accordance with paragraph 73 of the Framework. The new housing will also generate New Homes Bonus payments. The considerable positive economic benefit of the proposed development will clearly outweigh any minor disadvantage arising from the loss of agricultural land.

6.2.10 In addition due to its size the site has potential to attract a wide range of housebuilders including smaller sized companies which can produce a broader range of house types and styles to suit the local vernacular and market. The smaller housebuilders will almost inevitably be local and therefore contribution expenditure and jobs provided will contribute to the local economy.

### **Social**

6.2.11 The application proposals will have a major social benefit in terms of the delivery of a mix of new affordable housing to meet identified local needs. The proposed development will include the provision of 23 affordable homes, including for social rent and shared ownership which will make a not insignificant contribution towards meeting affordable housing need.

6.2.12 In addition, the proposed dwellings will be well connected to the facilities on offer in Weston-super-Mare, and the increased patronage arising from occupation of the new homes will support local organisations and services, including bus services, thereby helping to sustain them in the longer term. Furthermore, the illustrative layout demonstrates that a high quality built environment can be created for the benefit of residents, with good access to public open space, a play area and a cycle / pedestrian route through the site. These are significant social benefits not just to the future residents of the scheme, but also the wider local community.

### **Environmental**

6.2.13 Paragraph 170 seeks to protect the natural environment. The proposals will contribute to the enhancement of the natural environment by providing biodiversity gain.

6.2.14 It is accepted that the proposed development will result in some change to the rural character of the area with the loss of agricultural land. However, the site itself is not subject to any specific policies as referred to in footnote 6 to paragraph 11 of the Framework that would indicate that development should be restricted.

6.2.15 The proposed development will retain the most significant trees and hedges, and will seek to enhance them through additional native species planting, providing opportunities to increase the biodiversity interest of the site. Ecological mitigation and enhancement involving measures as outlined in the Ecological Impact Assessment can be secured by way of a planning condition. In summary, the proposals can be considered sustainable development.

6.2.16 Taken in the balance, the economic and social benefits of the proposed development outweigh any relatively minor environmental harm, which is tempered by opportunities for appropriate

mitigation. Accordingly, based on the three roles, the application proposals represent a sustainable form of development which complies with the Framework when taken as a whole.

### **Emerging Planning Policy**

#### ***North Somerset Local Plan***

6.2.17 As set out in Section 5, North Somerset Local Plan are still at the very early stage and therefore it carries limited weight.

### **Summary**

6.2.18 The above section demonstrates that the proposed development accords with relevant policies contained within the Development Plan documents for North Somerset. Subject to appropriate mitigation which can be secured through planning conditions or a s106 legal agreement the proposals will not result in any adverse impacts which would indicate that planning permission should be withheld. Importantly the proposals address the three roles of sustainable development set out in the NPPF.

6.2.19 Overall the proposals can be considered sustainable development. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF therefore applies to the extent that the proposals should be approved without delay.

## 7 CONCLUSION

7.1.1 This planning statement supports a planning application for residential development on land at Lynchmead Farm in Weston-super-Mare. The application is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved for future determination, with the exception of access.

7.1.2 The application is accompanied by a range of supporting documents which demonstrate how the proposed development accords with the policies in the Development Plan documents. It has been demonstrated that:

- The scheme is compliant with Policy CS28.
- A high quality development of up to 75 dwellings can be accommodated on the site (including 30% affordable housing).
- The proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area.
- The proposed development will not have a material impact on the operation and safety of the local highway network and there are no valid highway or transportation reasons which should prevent the proposed development of the site. The proposed development is acceptable in terms of highway impact.
- The proposed development will not have a significant ecological impact.
- The site has been assessed against all existing sources of flooding and is not at risk of flooding throughout the developments 100 year lifetime.
- The Sequential Test and Exception Test confirm the site is appropriate for development.
- The proposed development would not affect any of the aspects of setting that contribute towards the significance of the designated heritage assets within the study area
- The Geophysical Survey identified no archaeological interest on the site.

7.1.3 The proposals also address the three roles of sustainable development set out in the NPPF. The proposals will also make a positive contribution to housing supply, including the delivery of affordable housing,

7.1.4 Based on the above it is considered that there is an overwhelming justification for planning permission being granted.