

18/00135/REM

LAND BETWEEN WINDERMERE AVENUE, MALYONS LANE AND LOWER ROAD, HULLBRIDGE.

APPLICATION FOR RESERVED MATTERS (IN RESPECT OF LAYOUT, SCALE, DESIGN, EXTERNAL APPEARANCE, ACCESS (SAVE FOR ACCESS POINTS TO THE SITE AS SHOWN ON THE APPROVED PARAMETERS PLAN) AND LANDSCAPING IN RELATION TO THE OUTLINE APPLICATION PERMISSION 14/00813/OUT AT LAND BETWEEN WINDERMERE AVENUE, MALYONS LANE AND LOWER ROAD HULLBRIDGE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF 500 DWELLINGS TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING, OPEN SPACE AND RELATED WORKS

APPLICANT: BARRATT DAVID WILSON HOMES (EASTERN COUNTIES)

ZONING: SER 6A AND SER 6B – SOUTH WEST HULLBRIDGE.

PARISH: HULLBRIDGE AND RAWRETH

WARD: HULLBRIDGE AND DOWNHALL AND RAWRETH

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is proposed that the Committee RESOLVES

That planning permission be approved, subject to the following conditions:-

Approved Plans

- (1) The development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the list of approved plans showing layout, designs and external finishes for the development as set out in the approved Drawing Register titled 18/00235/REM –Definitive Drawing List for Lower Road, Hullbridge dated 20/12/18.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify the scope of matters considered to which this permission relates.

Implementation of Landscaping Scheme

- (2) The landscaping for the development hereby approved shall be implemented in accordance with the Design Brief Document and Public Realm Design Strategy and detailed planting and hard and soft landscaping proposals set out on the Document Register and Issue sheet Job No. 2051 Project :Land at Hullbridge (SV/AF as at issue dated 17.09.18.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to clarify the scope of matters considered and to which this permission relates.

2 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 2.1 This application is to a site of some 21.79ha east of the settlement of Hullbridge forming “Malyons Farm” that is released from the Green Belt as part of the settlement extension SER6 and SER 6A to the Council’s adopted allocations document (2014). The site extends from Lower Road in the south to Windermere Avenue to the north and has an existing access from Malyons Lane. The eastern edge to the site adjoins existing residential development fronting Harrison Gardens, Ambleside Gardens, Elm Grove, Malyons Lane, Abbey Close, The Priors and Monksford Drive.
- 2.2 The site is subject to outline planning permission for 500 dwellings granted on 18 January 2017 under application reference 14/00813/OUT. That outline permission is subject to a legal agreement requiring the developers to provide a number of requirements as set out below;
- Provision of a roundabout access on Lower Road as shown on drawing on CCE drawing F221-101 Revision A as amended by planning permission 18/00126/FUL approved 24 May 2018 which includes a bus layby and bus stop off the inner east-bound lane as shown on approved plans H7485-3B-GA-1201 Revision P6 and H7485-3B-GA-1202 Revision P7;
 - Provision of the new roundabout proposed at the junction of Hullbridge Road/Rawreth Lane/Hambro Hill permitted by planning permission 16/00162/FUL by the time the 50th dwelling to be built is occupied (or such other trigger as may be advised by the Local Highway Authority);
 - provision of Watery Lane right turn improvements from Lower Road, as recommended by the Local Highway Authority;
 - provision of signage improvements at the Watery Lane/Lower Road junction;

- payment of an indexed education contribution - calculated at 2016/17 pricing as £2,201,540;
- payment of an indexed Travel Plan monitoring fee to Essex County Council calculated at 2016/17 pricing at £3,000;
- provision and implementation of a residential Travel Information Pack for every household on the development;
- payment of 12-month season tickets for bus travel to all eligible occupiers of the development (maximum tickets per household);
- provision of a minimum 35% affordable housing to be provided in each phase of the development to a mix of 80% affordable homes for rent and 20% intermediate housing, subject to delivery triggers, appropriate location of affordable housing in the development, appropriate dwelling size and type, nomination rights and other relevant matters;
- payment of £150,000 before occupation of the 50th dwelling for the construction of a multi-use games area or a skate park on land within the vicinity of the site. In the event that Rochford District Council should decline to accept transfer of the facilities, these are to be maintained in perpetuity by a management company;
- payment of £70,000 before occupation of the 50th dwelling for the improvement of sports facilities in Hullbridge by carrying out works to improve drainage at Pooles Lane playing field;
- provision of a Sustainable Urban Drainage system to serve the development in accordance with details to be agreed pursuant to the relevant planning conditions (conditions 20, 21, 22 and 23);
- payment of an indexed contribution of £164,560 payable before occupation of the 100th dwelling towards capital projects associated with the delivery of primary health care services in the vicinity of the site;
- provision of public open space in accordance with the requirements of the relevant planning condition (condition 37). This equates to 6.2 hectares (15.3 acres) of public accessible open space within the site; and
- Payment of £100,000 payable before occupation of the 100th dwelling towards the costs of providing the proposed National Cycle Network Route 135 (Stock to Southend).

- 2.3 All matters of detail, namely, layout, scale, design, external appearance, landscaping and access - save for the access points for vehicles (Lower Road and Malyons Lane) and for pedestrians/cyclists (Windermere Avenue, Harrison Gardens, Malyons Lane, The priories and the connection with public footpath Rawreth No. 2), as shown on the Access and Movement

Parameter Plan that supported the outline planning application - have been reserved for approval.

- 2.4 The current application is for those reserved matters and was originally reported to the meeting of 19 July 2018 with an officer recommendation to refuse planning permission due to the unsatisfactory layout based upon objections raised by the County Council's specialist consultees on Urban Design, and concern by District officers at the failing of the application, at that time, in meeting the national space standards for gross floor spaces and storage for the dwellings proposed. Immediately prior to the meeting, the applicants requested the application be deferred to allow officers to consider the soundness of a refusal based upon the national technical space standards. At the meeting Members resolved to defer consideration of the application to allow the applicant to address and clarify several matters in addition to those raised by officers as follows:-
- Allow preparation and consideration of further improvements to the development in urban design terms;
 - Allow consideration of the status of the National Space Standards relevant to this application in light of the applicants comments and legal opinion;
 - Provision of bridle path/cycle way;
 - Incorporation of youth facilities into the retained farm house and out buildings;
 - Consultation on the revisions with Ward Members, Parish Council and Hullbridge Residents Association;
 - Tree Planting;
 - Acceptability of three storey buildings in Hullbridge;
 - Concern at flat roofed dormer designs;
 - Affordable housing not pepper potted within the site and not tenure blind;
 - SUDS safety features to open flooded areas;
 - Clarification of how the flood management will work in periods of prolonged rain and where sluices will be closed for incoming tide;
 - Car dominated layout;
 - Inadequate amount of visitor parking spaces in the northern quarter in the vicinity of Harrison Gardens;
 - Youth facilities – need for skate park in the development;

- Lack of amenity areas/drying areas for flats adjoining public open space areas;
 - Improvements to the buffer zones between the existing properties and the proposed development;
 - Boundary treatment not good enough;
 - Minimum size green buffer;
 - Police to be consulted in respect of secure by design;
 - How units 462 and 383 fit in with existing properties, e.g., 18 Harrison Gardens; and
 - How the proposed layout can better complement the existing farm house buildings to be retained, given specialist advice from the Listed Buildings Adviser.
- 2.5 The applicant has since revised the designs to feature new, larger dwellings, and revised the layout and landscaping to address the concerns raised in the original recommendation and the debate by Members at the previous meeting.

3 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Urban Design Issues

- 3.2 Following July's Committee, the applicant met regularly with ECC's Principal Urban Designer to address Members' comments. On 21 October 2018 Essex County Council Place Services formal consultation on the revisions to the current application concludes that:-

“...substantial amount of work has been put into the redesign by the applicant, resulting in three distinct character areas and a considered approach to many other aspects of the scheme which were previously considered substandard. I am confident that the latest proposal is of a much higher design quality with better place-making credentials, and therefore I recommend the application for approval”.

- 3.3 The originally submitted house designs comprised the applicant's corporate designs with the intended character areas only distinguishable by Barratt and David Wilson Homes branding and the proposed landscaping. The revised overall layout of the proposal is similar to that previously considered in that the road layout and plot positions are generally the same, with the main access from Lower Road leading up into the site, and access also from Malyons Lane and a number of pedestrian and cycle connectivity links to existing streets. The main change has been to substitute the revised house designs and to reinforce the character areas. In a few cases this has resulted

in revision to the layout to accommodate the changes, which are mostly focused upon the central village core character area.

- 3.4 To the south of the site layout is proposed a Parkland Quarter (inspired by the arts and crafts movement) to an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare. This has a strong architectural relationship to the landscaped areas, reflecting garden city principles, and irregularity in the building line, with prominent roof gables, and the following architectural detailing:-

- simple door detailing;
- plain tile roof covering;
- hipped roofing;
- pitched roofed dormers;
- Tudor beam detailing to selected roof gables;
- brick corbel features to roof ends;
- rendered walling above brick course “kicker”;
- red brick work with light coloured mortar and diaper (decorative) detail;
- render bell drip detailing above windows;
- stone window surrounds and sills;
- Contemporary style windows;
- Boundary treatment including railings and hedges; and
- open landscaped frontages.

- 3.5 The central part of the site would comprise a Village Core with a density of 35–45 dwellings per hectare. This has a more urban and contemporary aesthetic, including three storey flatted forms that define focal elements of the layout and provide passive surveillance of open spaces on selected junctions and with the following architectural detailing:-

- A door surround featuring as a common thread throughout the character area;
- plain tile and fibre cement slate roof covering;
- modern flat roofed dormers;
- brick string courses to walling and to window heads;
- red and buff brick work with grey mortar;

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- white render;
 - Blue and white coloured weather boarding;
 - render bell drip detailing above windows;
 - contrasting brick work to ground floor of flats;
 - sail loft influences on flats with opaque glazed panels for privacy;
 - feature window surrounds;
 - Contemporary style windows;
 - continuous frontage urban street form; and
 - on street parking screened by landscaping.
- 3.6 The northern quarter will be predominantly detached, lower density housing at an average density of 25–35 dwellings per hectare. The built form is of Georgian influence, with classic styling and the following architectural detailing:-
- classic front doors and door canopy detail;
 - Georgian inspired porches;
 - plain tile roof covering;
 - flat roofed dormers;
 - brick corbel features to roof ends;
 - brick detail at eaves level;
 - red and buff brick work;
 - cream and white render to walling;
 - render bell drip detailing above windows;
 - splayed brick detail to window heads;
 - stone window sills;
 - Georgian style windows; and
 - predominantly hedged frontages.
- 3.7 The development would mainly be two storey, but with some elements of two and a half storey and three storey development. The two and a half storey

would have the second floor accommodation in the roof space and would be little different in terms of height and bulk compared with conventional two storey development.

- 3.8 The three storey development is restricted to the flatted buildings which would be a full three storeys with pitched roofing over. This arrangement has, however, been accepted under the principles agreed for the outline planning permission. The three storey development would mostly be located in the middle part of the site, well removed from the site boundaries and sited in accordance with the Density and Heights Parameter Plan established and agreed at the outline stage.
- 3.9 The current reserved matters application is supported by a Massing Plan that identifies the distribution of the different storey heights across the development. This shows a good mix of storey heights across the site, with most of the development being two storeys. The scheme is consistent with the Density and Height Parameter Plan approved under the outline planning permission.
- 3.10 The detailed comments from the County Council's specialist urban designer at Place Services are set out below. Officers take the view that the design revisions to the proposed development and layout adjustments are acceptable, and reinforce the desired character areas and creating a sense of place, thus overcoming the objections officers previously raised on the urban design issue.

National Space Standards Issues

- 3.11 The dwellings now proposed show an increase to the gross floor space, bedroom sizes, storage space (cupboards/water cylinder), and under stair storage options. Officers consider that the revised designs now proposed overcome previous objections to the earlier details on this issue.

Provision of a Bridle Path/Cycle Way

- 3.12 On 24 May 2018, the Development Committee resolved to approve [18/00124/FUL] the removal of condition 33, thereby deleting the requirement for a circulatory bridle path. There is a Public Right of Way (routes 2 and 7) across the centre of the site, which will remain, and is proposed to be fully integrated into the Public Open Space strategy. In its letter dated 16 May 2018, ECC Highways stated it "could not support the creation of an adopted bridleway" and that "the most critical issues here at this location are the safety aspect and the lack of real connectivity" a bridle path would provide. ECC fully supported the removal of the bridle path condition and this was central to the Committee's decision in May 2018. Furthermore, BDW is not omitting a bridle path, as none exists, but is offering a landscaped circulatory pedestrian path which will likely be of greater benefit to a wider section of the public, divert dog walkers away from the estuary and so away from wintering birds. This is consistent with the pre-application advice provided by ECC Place

Services and the scheme provides cycle connectivity through the site. The Committee's decision to remove the condition previously requiring a bridle path is established and so there is no requirement for a bridle path.

Incorporation of Youth Facilities into the Retained Farm House and Out Buildings

- 3.13 The applicant is legally obliged under the s106 agreement to pay £220,000 as contribution towards sports and recreation facilities before the 50th dwelling is occupied. Of this, £70,000 is to be paid for the improvement of sports facilities in Hullbridge, for improvements to drainage at Pooles Lane Playing Field. The remaining £150,000 is for the construction of a multi-use games area (MUGA) or skate park. The unlisted farm house is no longer occupied and is proposed to be renovated in accordance with its established residential (C3) use. In the context of the District-wide housing shortfall, the loss of a family home to youth facilities, when such facilities are already legally required, is not considered necessary or proportionate to the approved quantum of development.

Consultation on the Revisions with Ward Members, Parish Council and Hullbridge Residents Association

- 3.14 Since the application was deferred in July, the applicant has engaged comprehensively with statutory and non-statutory consultees. Three meetings have been held with representatives of Action Group Resisting Over-Development (AGRO) and Hullbridge Residents' Association. A meeting also took place with Ward Councillors on 3 September. The applicant met with Hullbridge Parish Council in September and November. The extent of consultation exceeds that set out in the Statement of Community Involvement for a reserved matters application and has been used effectively to inform and evolve the scheme as now proposed.

Tree Planting

- 3.15 The landscape strategy is an integrated approach to the layout and has been praised by ECC Place Services as being of a high standard. The boundary treatment has been revised relating to Elm Grove. The layout has been amended to ensure the amenities of residents on Harrison Gardens and Ambleside Gardens are not unreasonably affected, as referenced below.

Three Storey Buildings Inappropriate to Hullbridge

- 3.16 The building heights parameter plan approved with the outline consent establishes the principle of three storey buildings on this site. Therefore, a blanket ban on three storey buildings in this reserved matters proposal would not be defensible. As a design feature three storey buildings can be used to good effect to emphasise corner plots and terminate key vistas. The location of the three storey apartment blocks entirely within the Village Core area and away from adjacent residential properties accords with the approved building

heights parameter plan. ECC Place Services advised at the July Committee that it could not support a recommendation to refuse a proposal solely on the basis that three storeys are proposed. It should be noted that the applicant has replaced the three storey flats south of 49 Ambleside Gardens with two storey dwellings, including a windowless gable on the northern elevation. It is considered that this fully addresses Members' concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on existing residents.

Concern at Flat Roofed Dormer Designs

- 3.17 The Essex Design Guide (EDG) states that dormers “should have gabled, cat-slide or flat lead roofs”. Flat roof dormers feature widely in Hullbridge, but are more suited to the contemporary idiom of the central village core character area. In accordance with the EDG, flat roof dormers are, by reason of their scale, “a minor incident in the roof plane”. ECC would not support a recommendation to refuse consent based on flat roof rather than pitched roof dormers.

Affordable Housing Not Pepper Potted Within the Site and Not Tenure Blind

- 3.18 Adopted Core Strategy policy H4 requires provision of at least 35% affordable housing on developments of 15 or more units, with the requirement that these be tenure blind and spread (“pepper potted”) throughout larger developments to avoid social exclusion.
- 3.19 The applicant proposes a total of 500 units. The legal agreement to the outline planning permission requires the provision of 35% of those units (175 units) to be affordable comprising a mix of 80% social rent and 20% shared equity part owned and part rented tenure. The mix of units has been drawn up in consultation with the Council's Housing Strategy Team and complies with the Council's current affordable housing needs for people applying to the Council for housing, assessed against local criteria. The need for the district is predominantly for accommodation for small households that present to the Council for housing. Whilst there is a proportion of need for larger families requiring three and four-bedroomed homes, the overwhelming requirement is for housing for smaller households and this must be reflected in the provision made on application sites. The provision of affordable housing is secured through the Section 106 agreement that has already been concluded as part of the outline planning permission. This reserved matters application serves simply to secure the form, distribution and specific mix of affordable housing to be provided within the development as required by the Council both as Local Planning Authority and as Local Housing Authority.
- 3.20 Of the 175 “affordable” units to be provided, 141 (80%) would be affordable rented units, and 34 (20%) affordable shared ownership units.
- 3.21 The mix of affordable dwellings would be as follows:-

- 76 One-bedroomed flats provided across eight different designs;
- 56 of the required 57 two-bedroomed units provided across five designs, including flats, houses and the five proposed bungalows;
- 39 of the 40 three-bedroomed houses provided across five designs; and
- 4 instead of the 2 agreed four-bedroomed houses provided across three designs.

The affordable homes would be provided in several clusters of between 6 and 41 units to enable efficiency in maintenance and management. London and Quadrant, the preferred bidder, is understood to fully support the scheme as proposed. The s106 agreement requires that no more than 90% of the market dwellings in any phase shall be occupied until 50% of the affordable housing in that same phase is delivered. The buildings would share the same materials and character features as the open market housing and thus appear tenure blind by design. Whilst the three storey flatted buildings would be located in their own settings, the affordable houses would be grouped in clusters of various sizes. The clustered distribution proposed would achieve operational efficiencies and by sharing the external finishes of the open market housing would achieve the ambition of tenure blind provision well integrated into the development as a whole in accord with policy.

SUDS Safety Features to Open Flooded Areas

- 3.22 The SuDS features will not be steep sided at 1:5 rather than 1:3 slope and so will not appear as over engineered embankments. The slopes will be landscaped to further soften their appearance and to promote wildlife.

Clarification of How the Flood Management Will Work in Periods of Prolonged Rain and Where Sluices Will be Closed for Incoming Tide

- 3.23 The Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy were both approved with the outline planning permission; Anglian Water and the Environment Agency raised no objection. The drainage strategy is based on climate change plus 40% allowance.

Car Dominated Layout/Inadequate Amount of Visitor Parking Spaces in the Northern Quarter in the Vicinity of Harrison Gardens

- 3.24 The car parking provision meets the standards required but the way in which the parking is provided has been improved. The parking courts were considered by Members to be over engineered. These have been reviewed with landscaping breaks proposed every 4 spaces and planting strips added to all boundaries to fence/brick walls at the rear/side of properties.

Youth Facilities – Need for Skate Park in the Development

- 3.25 As referred to above, the s106 agreement requires £70k to improve the sports facilities in Hullbridge by improving the Pooles Lane playing field. Also, £150k is to be paid for the construction of a “multi-use games area or a skate park on land within the vicinity of the development”. The applicant proposes space for a MUGA within the central area of public open space, adjacent to the retained public footpath referred to above. Hullbridge Parish Council considers there is no justification for two skate parks in a location the size of Hullbridge and that the monies could be more usefully split to provide an on-site MUGA and to improve existing off-site facilities. It is considered this approach would cater for a wider section of youth sports and recreation facilities.

Lack of Amenity Areas/Drying Areas for Flats Adjoining Public Open Space Areas

- 3.26 The layout has been improved so that the apartments enjoy more useable areas of open space.

Buffer Zones Between the Existing Properties and the Proposed Development to be Improved to All Parts of the Site

- 3.27 The relationship with existing neighbouring properties has been reviewed and the quality of the landscaping is considered by ECC to be of a high standard. It is considered the proposal would have no unacceptable detrimental effects on the amenities which neighbouring residents might reasonably expect to enjoy.

Boundary Treatment Not Good Enough

- 3.28 Improvements to the boundary treatment are referenced in ECC Urban Design’s response, which notes the substantial amount of additional brick wall boundary treatments enhance the overall design quality.

Police to be Consulted in Respect of Secured by Design

- 3.29 Place Services (Essex County Council Urban Design) comment that areas of the previous layout which were noted as causing potential issues of anti-social behaviour have been addressed. For example, the north-east corner where a gate is now proposed will restrict access behind properties where a right of access is required to be maintained.

How Unit 462 and Plot 383 Fit in with Existing Properties, e.g., 18 Harrison Gardens

- 3.30 Plots 462 to 468 have been revised to ensure there is no unacceptable impact on the amenities which existing residents on Harrison Gardens might reasonably expect to enjoy.

How Proposed Layout Can Better Complement the Existing Farm House Building to be Retained in Light of Specialist Advice from the Listed Buildings Adviser

- 3.31 The layout as now proposed ensures the unlisted 3–bedroomed farm house has a domestic curtilage of approximately ten times its ground floor footprint. Members are advised that a total of 6.23 hectares of open space is proposed being slightly more than the 6.20 hectares obligated and that this calculation excludes the 1,246 square metres (0.31 acres) curtilage afforded to the farmhouse.

OTHER MATTERS**Landscaping**

- 3.32 The applicant has revised the landscaping proposals to reflect the built form revisions to the proposed layout. Each character area would be reinforced by the choice of landscaping to create a sense of place.
- 3.33 The Parkland Quarter at the south of the development would be dominated by the informal crescent fronting onto the parkland edge to the west of the site, together with landscape buffer, including open swales with existing development to the east. Two varieties of hedging together with shrubs and trees with post and rail fencing and knee rail fencing would reinforce the parkland edge setting for this part of the development.
- 3.34 The higher density Village Core would comprise more formal tree planting, retaining the existing hedgerow as part of a central landscaped corridor, with tree planting suited to suburban environment. Two varieties of hedge planting would compliment the lawned front garden areas.
- 3.35 The Northern Quarter would provide the lower density rural edge to the north fronting Windermere Avenue and with open space to the western edge of the layout.
- 3.36 The layout principles and details have the support of the Council's arboricultural officer. The revised scheme retains the same principles and features, but is updated to account for the changes in built form and layout.
- 3.37 It will be necessary to condition the submitted details to be implemented as part of the grant of permission.

Car Parking and Servicing

- 3.38 Car parking would be provided to the Council's standards both in terms of the preferred sizing and allocation. Visitor bays would be provided in layby formats alongside the road network typically adjoining the network of open spaces throughout the development.

- 3.39 The proposed single garage designs would be 2.7m wide and 5.2m in depth. The double garage designs would be to 5.4 and 6.4m widths and to 5.2 and 6.3m depths. Though smaller than the Council's preferred standard, nevertheless the garaging proposed would provide adequate off street parking.
- 3.40 Refuse storage would be provided to garden areas with bin and cycle stores to flatted buildings. Collection points would be placed adjoining the highway or within 15m or so from the carriageway to aid collection in accord with Appendix 1 to the Council's Development Management Plan.
- 3.41 Although a matter primarily for consent under the Building Regulations, the submitted fire strategy plan shows that fire appliances would be able to reach the farthest extent of any of the dwellings proposed.

Garden Areas

- 3.42 The proposed two one-bedroomed flats to plots 124 and 125 show a communal garden area of 49.6m², marginly below the 50 m² required. The space is, however, to a useable shape.
- 3.43 The three-bedroomed semi-detached Paglesham house type to plot 350 shows a rear garden area of 94.6m², slightly under the 100 m² required, but again to a usable shape.
- 3.44 The proposed flats at plots 324–336, close to the retained farm house, now show an amenity area of some 423.8 m², overcoming previous concerns at the lack of amenity space in the original layout for these units. This revision still represents a shortfall of 176.2m² to the 600m² required for these 12 No. flats, but this building adjoins a large area of open space together with the equipped play areas. The Council's guidance allows for a lower provision of amenity space in these circumstances where homes would adjoin open space.
- 3.45 The minor proportion of garden area shortfall in the context of the scheme as a whole would not amount to a reason for refusing permission that could be substantiated, and the proposed layout is considered acceptable.

Privacy and Overlooking Considerations

- 3.46 The Essex Design Guide sets down a requirement that where dwellings face back to back a distance of 15m is required with existing housing and a distance of 25m between proposed housing. That distance is greater at 35m for flats. The distance can be reduced where the buildings would not be directly opposed.
- 3.47 The layout proposed is predominantly outward facing onto a landscaped perimeter with existing housing. Where that is not the case, the proposed housing would present a side wall in relation to existing development. The exception is the three pairs of houses to plots 386 – 391 which back onto Nos.

31 – 45 Ambleside Gardens, but over a distance of 45m and way in excess of the 25m required to maintain reasonable privacy conditions.

4 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Hullbridge Parish Council

- 4.1 Members are supportive of the proposed design and layout of the development and are pleased that the issues that we have raised at our meetings have been taken on board and incorporated in the revised and enhanced designs. We are pleased to note that the recreation space is of a size that can site a full size Muga Court and other associated facilities which will be part of the Section 106 Youth Facility.
- 4.2 The only observation which hasn't been included, and that we have raised previously, is for an outer footpath in the top left hand corner of the development so this open space is fully utilised, even if this is a more rustic footpath, i.e. made from cockle shell.
- 4.3 This development provides housing for all needs with three main type housing areas (Parkland Quarter, Village Core and Northern Quarter) and we understand meets the space standards criteria and also has a number of green spaces, buffers.
- 4.4 In the future to promote cohesion of this development with the existing village we feel a boundary review would need to be done to include the whole site within Hullbridge as currently this is split with Rawreth Parish.

Essex County Council Place Services (Urban Design)

- 4.5 This response follows on from previous urban design consultation reports regarding the proposed development of 500 homes to the west of Hullbridge where numerous concerns were raised relating to the design of the scheme. Whilst this did not amount to a formal objection, it was considered that the development as submitted and discussed at the July 2018 Development Committee had substantial shortcomings, particularly regarding non-compliance with NDSS, a lack of strong and identifiable character areas, and other design concerns, as addressed in earlier correspondence.
- 4.6 The view was taken by Rochford District Council (RDC) officers that this, in totality, amounted to a recommendation for refusal of the application. At this point, Barratt David Wilson Homes (BDW) requested that the decision for a deferral was put forward to the Committee to enable time to work through the weaknesses of the scheme with a view to re-submitting at a later date which was subsequently agreed at the Committee.
- 4.7 Following this, BDW has engaged with ECC Place Services Urban Design on multiple occasions through an iterative design process which has resulted in some considerable changes to the scheme. The purpose of this letter is not to list all of the changes which have been undertaken throughout the redesign,

as this will largely be covered through the applicant's submitted Design Brief Addendum (October 2018), but to provide an overarching response to the main changes undertaken by BDW, and why this now makes the development acceptable on design grounds.

Design Amendments

- 4.8 Firstly and most importantly, considerable changes have been made to the design to address the issue of the character areas which were formerly solely defined by the house builders (Barratt/David Wilson) standard house types with very little real distinction between the 'quarters'. The proposal now includes three character areas, as per the earlier iteration; however, there is now much greater distinction between them with the Village Core (Contemporary), Parkland Quarter (Arts and Crafts) and Northern Quarter (Traditional) each having a different character. This is exemplified in the numerous street level visualisations which have been produced.
- 4.9 This differentiation has been achieved through amendments to the standard house types, which are in many cases now specific to the Hullbridge site and feature names which are locally specific. Further information on the changes are shown in the elevational and floor plans; however, as an overview they concern:-
- Enhancements to gables
 - Addition of chimney stacks to key buildings and at key gateways
 - Elevational improvements to produce two primary aspects on corner turners
 - Introduction of new materials such as hung tiles, increasing the palette
 - Improved brick treatment and detailing eg. Diaper brick work/gable vents/corbels
 - Introduction of decorative fascia/soffit elements
 - Improvements to boundary treatments reflecting each character area
 - Introduction of a variety of window and door/garage door types to reflect each area
 - Provision of windows to side elevations overlooking parking areas
- 4.10 There have also been changes to individual buildings to reflect a better quality and standard of design, including the numerous apartment blocks across the scheme. This has included realignment to ensure that they both act as key buildings in the street scape and to better enclose the street and public realm areas they overlook. Special treatments have been added to two key apartment blocks around the core of the development which have been

treated with different colour weather board treatments and balconies reflecting the sail loft design and proximity to the Crouch. Brick treatment has also been amended to include a different colour brick to ground floor, making the buildings both more visually attractive and helping to reinforce distinction between character areas. Other improvements to individual buildings include the provision of 'hit and miss' brick work to the FOG units overlooking the green space to avoid a blank frontage and the introduction of Juliet balconies where they were not present previously.

- 4.11 In terms of the physical form of the development, there have been multiple changes to address concerns by Members and the public relating to the taller elements of the scheme. These are now solely located in the Village Core area, away from adjacent residential properties. There has also been a reduction in the density of properties surrounding the existing bungalow and spacing of some buildings further from boundaries where distances were tight and this is welcomed.
- 4.12 A key element of the scheme which I raised from the outset is the requirement to see the 'core' of the site being of a denser nature than that surrounding it, enclosing the street and creating a tight knit fabric. This has been addressed with measures such as linked garages helping to enclose the street and other design interventions including a raised table along the length of the 'core' street to help give the impression of a distinct space at the centre of the development and aid speed reduction. This has also been reinforced through the introduction of the apartment buildings at the key entry and terminating vista with differing material treatments.
- 4.13 Areas of the previous design which were noted as causing a potential issue of anti-social behaviour have also been addressed such as in the north-east corner where a gate has now been provided to restrict access behind properties where the right of access is required to be maintained. This will remove issues of potential fly tipping.
- 4.14 Landscaping has been given much greater emphasis as part of the redesign, particularly relating to boundary treatments and parking courts. There are numerous parking courts which were considered to be 'over engineered' and too hard in appearance. These have been reviewed, with landscaping breaks added every maximum of 4 spaces and planting strips around all boundaries to fence/brick walls at the rear/side of properties. It is also noted that the redesign has included a substantial amount more brick wall boundary treatments.
- 4.15 It is also important to note that through redesign of the house types, all buildings are now also NDSS compliant.

Summary

- 4.16 A substantial amount of work has been put into the redesign by the applicant, resulting in three distinct character areas and a considered approach to many

other aspects of the scheme which were previously considered sub standard. The latest proposal is of a much higher design quality with better place-making credentials, and therefore I recommend the application for approval.

Hullbridge Residents Association

- 4.17 The Hullbridge Residents Association has provided extensive comments to this application.
- 4.18 Concern is expressed at the impact of the proposal upon local infrastructure and supporting the original objections raised by Essex County Council Place Services at the need for the original design to be improved, together with support for the District officers' original recommendation to refuse planning permission of July 2018.
- 4.19 Concern raised at flood risk.
- 4.20 Concern is raised at a number of detailed matters on design, some of which overlap with requirements under the Building Regulations such as that WC doors open outwards and some window designs are inadequate to meet daylighting standards. Objections raised to three storey development.
- 4.21 Objections are made at the development overlapping between the boundary between Rawreth and Hullbridge Parishes.
- 4.22 Criticism is raised at incapacity in local drainage conditions and the design of the road network within the development and that construction activity will disrupt for a number of years.
- 4.23 With its own "Village Core" the development would be a separate village.
- 4.24 There would be a risk to future residents from the retained mobile phone masts.
- 4.25 Consider the roundabout infrastructure at the junction of the site with Lower Road and the improvements to the junction with Rawreth Lane should be built first, prior to any houses.
- 4.26 Predict difficulties for construction equipment and materials in being delivered.

The proposed garages are inadequate in size at 5m long and 2.4m wide.

Neighbour Representations

- 4.27 Seventeen letters have been received from the following addresses:-

Elm Grove: 30.

Grasmere Avenue: 48, 79.

Harrison Gardens: 5 (2 letters) 20 (3 letters).

Hilltop Avenue: 26.

Kendal Close: 6.

Lower Road: 105.

Malyons Lane: 12.

Mapledene Avenue: 12.

Monksford Drive: 3.

Oakleigh Avenue: 1.

West Avenue: 10.

and one unaddressed letter

and which in the main, make the following comments and objections;

4.28 Development Issues

- Over development cramming quart into pint pot.
- Apartment blocks still not in keeping with our surrounding area, blocking views and losing privacy. They should be moved to lower ground.
- The homes are not affordable.
- Against any houses being built on this land because it is a flood plain, blue clay, extra traffic, only one school in the village, only one doctor in the village, it is a village and would like it to stay that way.
- Most of the houses look like rabbit hutches not giving much room for parking or emergency services.
- Detailed criticism of the window designs, cloakroom sizes, other room sizes for acceptable fire escape.
- Proposal totally out of context with the ability of shops, schools, doctors roads and the terrific amount of traffic. Hullbridge cannot tolerate this massive construction.
- What changes to infrastructure are planned prior to the commencement of the development ?
- Why is there 500 houses being built when this figure should be 482 due to the top corner no longer being part of the project.
- Policy objection
- Who is responsible if there is a fatality in one of the drainage lakes?
- Unhappy that work has continued with demolition and using Malyons Lane for construction access despite reserved matters being deferred. This really does not give the community good feelings about the developers not upholding statements and rules.
- Development would be on a flood plain
- Blue Clay is on the land.

- Only one school in the village.
- Only one doctor in the village
- This is a village and would like to stay that way.
- Poor layout/over-development
- We have lived here for 52 years. Our road is still unmade. The homes are not wanted unless they are for local people.
- Another change to spoil our life here.
- A few good neighbours have already moved because of the housing.
- Our children and grand children can play safe as strangers are noticed straight away. Will give access for those who hang around and cause trouble.
- Nothing has been done to consider the real issues of drainage and pollution bearing in mind Hullbridge has a high air pollution issue. Increased number of children and no thought as to supplying facilities for them.

4.29 Highway Issues

- Parking
- Access to and off the site is deplorable.
- North east access should be provided for the school run / return as Malyons Lane/Ferry Road junction will not be able to cope with the traffic. People will not walk or bike to school. 5/6 year olds will not be safe on the roads. Exits onto Harrison Gardens or Windermere Avenue should be considered or roundabout to Malyons Lane Ferry Road junction.
- Congestion and tail backs form the new roundabout.
- Harrison Gardens will be a turn around for visiting cars and deliveries given pedestrian links to the site and detrimental to the quiet of this cul de sac and will lose existing limited on street parking. Will give access to those who hang around and cause trouble like teenagers and people walking dogs.
- Traffic generation/access
- Pictures of the scheme look nice but layout portrays a very congested picture. Revised plan should be rejected.
- Recent road closures and restricted traffic hold up within Hullbridge has shown that the builders and utility companies have no regard whatsoever for current residences and tax payers of Hullbridge. So I strongly recommend that the aforementioned, house builders and utility company providers, first prove their ability to coordinate their disruption to current residences to the minimum, with reasonable notice being given
- Have recently been told that the plans include a walkway leading into Harrison Gardens. This would be detrimental to us who enjoy this quiet cul de sac.
- Harrison Gardens will be used as a parking area for visitors given the proposed walkway link to the development and concern for security.
- Across the site the car parking arrangements for apartment blocks result in large parking courts that heavily impact on the block's amenity space. It is important to consider the area of amenity space which would be both

private and useable for residents, particularly where blocks are not nearby or fronting onto Public Open Space.

- Parking around the North East corner backing onto Ambleside Drive and Harrison Gardens will definitely be an issue. Here there are over 25 dwellings and a block of flats and is of a high density development. Slightly off of this section are two further blocks of flats which surround the green park area. The three blocks have a total of 23 apartments, some 1 bed, and some 2 bed. They are allocated one parking space for one bed and two spaces for two beds and a Disabled Bay for the apartments with wheelchair access. From knowledge and experience of these types of blocks they are quite often occupied by couples who both have vehicles to go to work in. This has resulted in residents parking on the footpath or anywhere that they can put their vehicles which may include the existing residential areas adjacent to this area? There are only 10 visitor parking spaces scattered in this location and parking for residents is woefully poor. How will this work for so many dwellings? It will impact on the existing local roads and streets and does not bode well for the harmony between the new and old communities. This is a repeated issue beyond this section and around the centre of the development. It will have a major impact on the community. Would it not be reasonable to have a further visitors car park(s) alongside the central green opposite unit 409? This area has a number of dotted parking spaces. Would it be better if a visitors' car park was contained in one area with the potential of surveillance cameras sited nearby for the prevention of crime and nuisance?
- The unrest within Hullbridge community is such that the digging up of the same piece of roads on multiple occasions is such that civil unrest, which I believe has already manifested itself with temporary traffic lights being pulled down at night as well as blocking roads for builder access will only escalate. Bus Passes - Provision of 12 month season tickets to new residents. Why is it felt that this should be given to the new occupants, when other residents outside the development have to pay for their travel.
- Will there be more provision for the extra burden on transport services for the area in view of the fact that the new occupants are likely to use this free service.
- The amount of parking to be provided would be inadequate to provide for the number of vehicles generated by a 500 dwelling development. There would also be insufficient visitor parking. It is against the principles set-out in the Essex Design Guide, which seeks to minimise the visual impact of parking in the street scene.
- Parking around the high density building is woefully inadequate.
- 500 houses mean over 1000 cars on the road.
- Recent road works with controlled lights have been a nightmare

4.30 Design Issues

- Poor design
- Too close to boundary
- Newest plans have improved but the skyline still remains blighted by the two most northern apartment blocks surrounding the park area on the

- highest land area and will block the views of existing residents and will top the natural valley style landscape and the first view visitors will see.
- Most of the houses look like rabbit hutches built on top of each other with not much room for parking and access for emergency services.
 - Apartment blocks still not in keeping with the area and still at the highest point in the village losing views and privacy.
 - Whilst looking nice on paper, layout portrays a very congested picture.
 - The mixture of social and private homes do not mix. It will just be the slums of the future
 - People in cars and lorries won't worry about landscaping and the things you write about.
 - In terms of design there is a shortfall with the Technical Housing Standards and Nationally Described Space Standards. This shows that a significant number of the house types proposed are under-sized in terms of overall gross, room-sizes and/or storage space. The shortfall of some 43% of the dwellings proposed across the range of house-types proposed is so great that this justifies refusal of planning permission.
 - It has to also be considered that in areas of high density / undersized dwellings, residents will have a feeling of being closed in. The surrounding area to their situation does not give them any respite as it is the same. This will not create a harmonious atmosphere for these people. Just because it is affordable or rented accommodation should not mean that they live in substandard housing. This may have the potential of more neighbour domestic related issues, calling for more blue light resources for anti-social and noise related incidents.
 - Priority for Crime Prevention Officer and multi-agency collaboration is requested here. The development would be predominantly two storeys, but with some elements of two and a half storey development and some three storey development. Most of the blocks would be located in the Village Core character area, but two of the blocks would be in the Northern Quarter character area, which is, densely built-up character area but where there is still the potential to accommodate a certain amount of 3 storey development without causing harm.
 - There are three blocks in the northern quarter. They are alongside each other so don't know how you missed this. The one backing onto Ambleside Drive and Harrison Gardens does not fit into the scale of surrounding buildings.
 - Three storey buildings are totally unacceptable on the grounds that the existing built-up area is predominantly one and two storeys.
 - The three storey buildings are placed in an area of very high density development. Reducing the size and height of these will create a better outlook for both local and new residents. It will also allow for more parking availability around these areas. Reducing or completely changing the three storey apartment 383 would be acceptable as the design and height of the building conflicts to the existing neighbouring dwellings. Why was this allowed?
 - The siting and scale of the house proposed on plot 462 backing onto no 18 Harrison Gardens is unacceptable, which is: (A) contrary to the Essex

Design Guide and (B) contrary to Development Management Policies DM1 and DM3 because of (i) inadequate boundary treatment, (ii) issues of overlooking, (iii) loss of privacy, (iv) poor relationship to existing buildings and (v) inappropriate scale and form.

- Why hasn't the existing building opposite 18 Harrison Gardens also been considered here? Plot 383 is a four storey building with its roof and will flank the existing buildings it backs onto in Ambleside Drive and Harrison Gardens. It does not have an adequate boundary; it will cause issues with overlooking and loss of privacy and has an extremely poor relationship to the existing buildings it backs onto. It has without doubt inappropriate scale and form. Why is this continuing to be allowed?
- Designs do not comply with Building Regulations for windows, cloakrooms, emergency egress, car ports under size, daylighting standards.

4.31 Amenity Issues

- Loss of privacy/overlooking
- Loss of view
- Noise and disturbance
- The submitted garden plan does not make it clear if the flat blocks amenity space includes a proportion of private communal space, or if the surrounding space is in fact publicly accessible.
- Apartment blocks 383, 398 and 350 surround a green. They do not appear to have any private community space. The green will be used by the residents as a "go to Place". This has the potential to be an area where noise and anti-social behaviour could occur. This area has a very high density of dwellings with a high number of people which could exacerbate this issue. It will impact on the neighbouring area of Ambleside and Harrison Gardens. I cannot see how this potential issue is being tackled within any written reports available to me. It does not seem to identify this potential issue.
- I live at 20 Harrison Gardens and on the last set of plans that I have seen plot 462 is still at the bottom of my garden, I have been informed by a neighbour that the plot has been relocated next to plot 463, could you please confirm if that is the case. Can you also tell me if the proposed walkway into Harrison Gardens is still going ahead.
- Five one storey dwellings have been proposed on site adjacent to the residential dwellings on Elm Grove, reducing the likelihood of overlooking in this area and could be replicated elsewhere where overlooking becomes an issue.
- Elm Grove has long gardens backing onto the new site however they have been allowed a green buffer. Why is there not a green buffer to the North East corner backing onto Ambleside and Harrison Gardens, especially as there is a three storey apartment block here where overlooking the gardens and homes of these roads will definitely be an issue. In fact most of the development is bordered by a green buffer except for this area. Why can't there be one storey dwellings backing onto this North East section to match those similar to Elm Grove. It is an oddity that the unit 383-391 three storey apartment block is the only one backing onto current

residential properties. Why is this and why weren't the residents in these roads advised that this was going to be the case. I for one have been repeatedly told that there would not be three storey buildings, but there was a likelihood of 2.5. How has this been passed?

- The proposed house on plot 462 in the north-eastern part of the site would result in overlooking and loss of privacy for properties in Harrison Gardens, in relation to which what is sought here, would also appear overbearing.
- Extension of the planted buffer down the entire eastern boundary would result in an improvement in the level of amenity enjoyed by all the residents adjoining the eastern side of the development, instead there is no buffer to provide protection for the occupiers of dwellings in Harrison Gardens and Ambleside Drive.

4.32 Ecological Issues

- Loss of trees and vegetation
- Protection of Wildlife

4.33 Other Issues

- On the land is a WW2 searchlight base. I have been in contact with Essex County Council (Place Services) and whilst they inform me that it is well documented and registered it does not have any kind of protection. Help me appeal to BDW's good nature and to stop them ripping it up.
- Furthermore, have Essex Police and other blue light services been consulted. Are they aware of the potential for this location to be a problem area and to impact on their ever decreasing demands, resources and funds.
- Local infrastructure is already stretched and cannot support a development of this large scale. There is no police station or bank in Hullbridge, emergency vehicles, such as ambulances and fire appliances, have to attend from outside the village and there is insufficient capacity available at local medical services and schools to meet the additional demands that a development of this large scale will place on them.
- All blue light services should be consulted as the impact on the community is not only the issue here. Budgets and resources have severely been reduced over the years and this is one of several major building developments around the area. All other services to the area must be reviewed as travelling to and from the area to these necessary establishments is already a problem now. This will of course be exacerbated by additional numbers residing in Hullbridge.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and found there to be no impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The application as now revised would provide an attractive layout and sense of place as required by national and local design policies fulfilling the requirements of the outline planning permission.

Marcus Hotten



Assistant Director, Environmental Services

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Allocations Document (2014)

Policies SER 6a and SER6b.

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011)

Policy CP1.

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan (2014)

Policies DM1, DM4,

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document 2 – Housing Design (2007)

The Essex Design Guide (2005).

Background Papers

None.

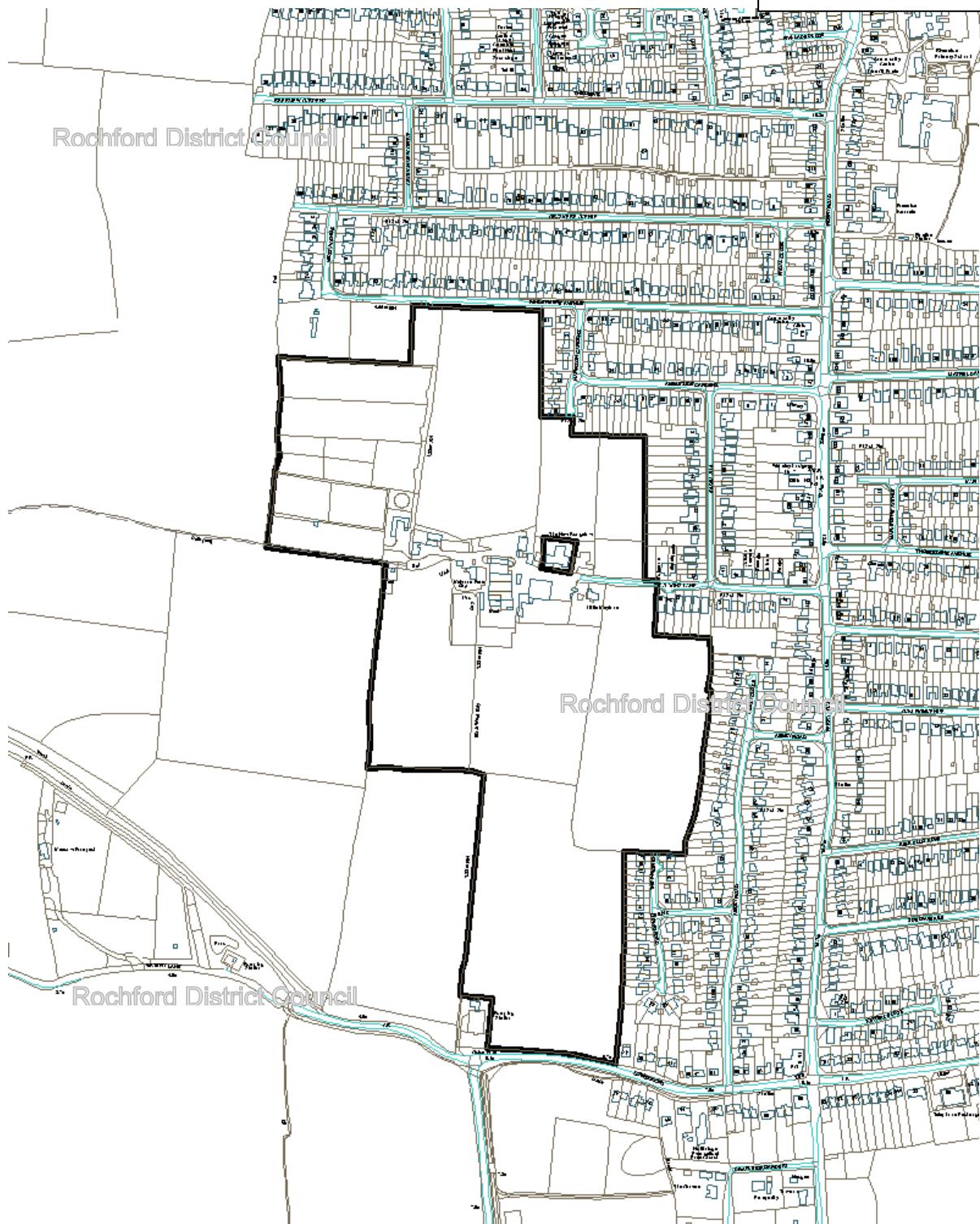
For further information please contact Mike Stranks on:-

Phone: 01702 318032

Email: Mike.stranks@rochford.gov.uk

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

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