

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/25/99188

Site Address: Willow Mead, Wildern Lane, Hedge End, SO30 4RB

Case Officer: Gary Osmond

Description: Construction of 2No. semi-detached two bedroom retirement bungalows

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
- Within the urban edge - Tree Preservation Orders (Oak – 93-E & Oak – 869-E) - Adjacent to public footpath		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
F/23/95982 – Construction of 4No. one bedroom retirement flats and associated parking – Refused Jan 2024		
Z/28701/001/00 - Erection of 36 flats for the elderly (approval of details of landscaping, materials and minor alterations to design) – Approved Sept 1987		
Z/28701/000/00 - Outline: Erection of 35 category 1 sheltered flats with warden accommodation and communal lounge – Approved June 1987		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	A total of 11 objections have been received: - Loss of green space - Impact upon wildlife - Impact on trees - Impact upon the visual amenity and character of the locality - Visually intrusive - Site is waterlogged - Loss of privacy - Loss of light - Loss of outlook - Height of proposal - Detrimental impact upon existing boundary hedge through proximity and loss of light - Drainage concerns - Flooding of adjacent public footpath - Increased noise pollution - Increased traffic - Insufficient parking for wider Willow Mead flats - Bin storage - Access for construction vehicles - Disturbance during construction - Safety of residents during construction - Contractor parking		
Hedge End Town Council:	Object Strongly Object on the basis of overdevelopment. There is known flooding in the area and this is likely to exacerbate this. The Council is also concerned about the long-term future of the trees as it is not uncommon for new homeowners to seek to reduce or remove trees due to perceived issues.		

Trees:	No objection subject to conditions The new proposal is an improvement on the previous iteration of the scheme: the height of the structure has been reduced; the structure has been pulled away from the significant trees; and the arboricultural report address some of the previous concerns. On balance, we do not raise an arboricultural objection to the proposal, subject to a condition relating to tree protection.
Environmental Health (Noise):	No Objection The submitted noise impact assessment demonstrates that noise from Wildern Lane will not be an issue for future occupiers so long as the rear garden fence is upgraded to a 1.8 metre close board fence.
Environmental Health (Pollution):	No Objection subject to conditions I have reviewed the Environmental Desk Study and Preliminary Risk Assessment prepared by Apple Environmental (April 2025) for the site known as Willow Mead, Hedge End. The report provides an initial assessment and includes various elements and recommendations. I support the recommendation for an intrusive site investigation and observation strategy during groundworks. This will help to confirm the presence and extent of any residual contamination and ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented prior to development. Conditions recommended.
Ecology:	No Objection subject to conditions This site is in an amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. Merlin Gardens pond to the south of the site is linked to Wildern Nature Park SINC and Local Nature Reserve by vegetation in the adjacent domestic gardens between Coltsfoot Close and Merlin Gardens. There are records of common reptiles, amphibians, and hedgehogs in Wildern Nature Park (110 m to the south of the site) so it is possible that they could be using this connected site also. I have reviewed the Updated Ecological Appraisal by Aluco Ecology (March 2025). Within the red line boundary, the site consists of hardstanding used as parking, bramble scrub and a strip of ruderal ephemeral vegetation. The area on the southern edge of the site is outside the red line boundary of this application, is at a lower level and contains vegetation indicative of wetter soil conditions during the winter. There is a mostly native species garden hedge along the north-eastern boundary and off site within the adjacent garden to the north. The site has potential habitat for nesting birds, commuting and foraging bats, hedgehogs, amphibians and common reptiles. There are records of stag beetles in the local area. A reptile survey in 2023 did not record evidence of reptiles. The two ponds within 500 m of the site are both assessed to be poor quality for great crested newts. Since there has been no significant change since the previous surveys, reptiles and amphibians can both be presumed absent, although precautionary working methods must be used and included within a CEMP.

	BNG Analysis of the Statutory Metric for this application confirms that there is a decrease in area habitats of -75.15% and no net gain for hedgerow habitat. Ten percent net gain is required for both of these habitats if they are both within the red line boundary. There is a net loss of 0.12 biodiversity units (BU) of medium distinctiveness (Heathland and shrub-Bramble scrub) and a net change of 0.022 BU for low distinctiveness habitats reported. Section 6.8 of the report states that a total of 0.15 habitat credits will be required to achieve 10% biodiversity net gain. If 10% biodiversity net gain is not possible on site then off-site biodiversity units will need to be purchased, although statutory credits are only meant as a last resort, if suitable units cannot be found.
Newt Officer:	No Objection I am satisfied with the ecological reports and agree with the conclusion of the Great Crested Newt Survey Report. A mitigation method statement for protected and notable species is proposed and that is considered appropriate for the likely low impacts of the works. I recommend that a compliance condition be used to ensure the measures are complied with. The precautionary measures should be produced by a suitable qualified ecologist and submitted to the planning authority either before determination or after determination, if secured by a pre-commencement condition.
Hampshire Highways:	No Objection In regard to application F/25/99188, having reviewed the information contained within the application pack, there would be no objection to the proposals from a highway perspective, subject to the application of the a CEMP condition. Access into the site is proposed to be via the existing priority junction access from Wildern Lane, which already serves the existing 35 retirement flats on site. The additional 2 two-bed dwellings are not anticipated to produce a significant impact upon traffic flows and as such there are no concerns in this regard. Servicing arrangements are anticipated to remain the same, with a refuse vehicle collecting from the site via an internal movement which is existing and unaffected by these proposals. This is acceptable. Whilst the parking quantum has not been assessed as this is a function of EBC as Local Parking Authority, where the EBC Parking Standards must be adhered to. However, it is noted in the Design & Access Statement that a parking assessment has been undertaken which shows that for the existing 35 units, 29 unallocated car parking spaces are provided. It outlines that that the EBC parking standard requires 0.5 spaces per unit, which equates to a need for 15 spaces rounded up. As such, this would suggest an over provision of 14 spaces which could easily accommodate the extra 2 dwellings on site, even if the parking for these was to be allocated (2 spaces per unit).
Natural England:	Object. As submitted, we consider it will have an adverse effect on the integrity of the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site from increased recreational disturbance. The impacts are also likely to affect the

	features of the associated Sites of Special Scientific Interest which underpin the above habitats site designations.
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Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 29/05/2025 – See separate site photographs.		

Policy: National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM6, DM8, DM10, DM11, DM13, DM14, DM23, DM25, DM29 and DM30. Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Residential Parking Standards; Character Area Appraisals; Trees and Development; Accommodation for Elderly People and Those in Need of Care; Biodiversity.
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Assessment: Proposals: The application seeks consent for the construction of 2No. two bedroom retirement bungalows as a semi-detached pair, together with associated parking, amenity space and landscaping. Site Context: The application site is linked to the existing Willow Mead retirement flats, a development of 36 flats built in the late 1980s. The site is an unused 'spur' of land positioned between the main Willow Mead development and Wildern Lane. As identified by the Council's Environmental Health Team, the site originally formed the access to a farm which was previously on the main site. This is evident from the shape and form of immediate boundaries. To the immediate north of the site is a 1960s two storey detached dwelling know as 'Palavas'. The southern boundary of the site is marked by a paved public footpath which serves a 1990s housing estate to the south and west. To either side of this footpath are landscaped verges, together with a sizable pond to the south-west. To the east of the site, on the opposite side of Wildern Lane is Shamblehurst Primary School, with Wildern Secondary School behind this. The presence of these schools and the community facilities associated with them, together with Wildern Lane being the only north-south route through this part of Hedge End, makes Wildern Lane a busy and well used route for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. The site itself is orientated roughly north-west to south-east, parallel to the public footpath. Boundary treatment consists of a roughly two metre high hedge along the northern boundary with Palavas, with taller and denser shrubbery to the eastern end onto Wildern Lane. In contrast, the southern boundary with the footpath is very open, only being marked by a very basic post and wire fence. The western end of the site adjoins part of the parking area for the main Willow Mead development and is again very open. Just outside the southern edge of the site are a pair of mature Oak trees which are subject to preservation orders. There are further trees on the opposite side of the footpath and to the west of the site and around the pond which all contribute to an attractive green pocket within the housing estate. In terms of topography, the site lies approximately a metre lower than the main Willow Mead development to the north-west and at around the same level as the public footpath,

which was partly flooded at the time of the case officer's previous site visit for the application scheme which was refused in January 2024. This appears to be an ongoing problem given the comments received.

Policy & Principle:

The application site lies within the urban edge where the basic principle of development is acceptable. The site is also within a predominantly residential area, meaning that again there is no objection in principle to further residential development. However, any formal planning approval will be dependent upon how well that proposed is considered to accord with the relevant adopted local plan policies and supplementary guidance. In this instance the main policies to be considered are DM1, DM6, DM8, DM11, DM25 and DM29.

Policy DM1 requires new development to have no unacceptable impact upon the "amenities of new and existing residents; the character and appearance of urban areas, the countryside and the coast", make efficient use of the site, as well as "take full and proper account of the context of the site including the character, appearance and land uses of the locality or neighbourhood, and be compatible with adjoining uses and be well integrated with these in terms of mass, scale, materials, layout, density, design and siting, both in itself and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views." It goes on to state that "Where adjoining development is poor in urban design terms, new development should contribute to improving the character of the area".

Policy DM6 requires all new development to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and wherever feasible, naturalised filtration should be included within the treatment train.

Policy DM8 states that "Development will not be permitted if it is likely to cause loss of amenity or impact on public health or other unacceptable environmental impacts through: a) air pollution (including odours or particulate emissions); b) pollution of surface, underground, coastal waters or other watercourses; c) noise or vibration; d) light intrusion, both generally and with respect to the South Downs National Park's status as an International Dark Night Skies reserve; or e) land contamination." It goes on to state that "Development susceptible to particular forms of pollution will not be permitted... where it will be adversely affected by such pollution, unless measures can be taken that adequately mitigate the polluting effects".

Policy DM11 relates to nature conservation and requires the impact of development upon areas of nature conservation interest to be appropriately protected and/or mitigated, with the level of mitigation required being dependent upon the importance of the nature conservation interest.

Policy DM25 relates to the provision of housing for older people. It states that "New development should seek to respond to the requirements of an ageing population by increasing the supply of specialist housing and accessible housing in accordance with policy DM29." It goes on to set out that "Proposals should: be located in sustainable locations with good access to the public transport network; close to local facilities that residents can use, ideally Extra Care housing should be in or close to local centre; and well integrated into the local community." Connected to this is DM29 which requires that all development should meet the higher national access standards as set out in Part M of the building regulations for new residential development.

In principle therefore, development of the application site is acceptable, although any formal planning approval will be dependent upon the details of that proposed and how well the scheme is considered to accord with the policies set out above.

Planning History:

As set out above, there has been at least one other application on this site, which was for 4No. flats in a two storey block. This application raised various concerns in relation to the scale of that proposed, resulting in overdevelopment of the site, adverse impact upon the public realm and impact upon the neighbouring property, 'Palavas'. In addition to these

main concerns, the application was refused on further grounds relating to parking, impact upon protected trees, local biodiversity, drainage, noise, refuse storage capacity, and failure to secure the necessary mitigation for recreational impact upon the Solent and New Forest SPAs, as well as nutrient impacts upon water quality.

Form, Scale, Layout & Design:

The height and scale of the previously scheme, and its resulting impact upon various aspects including the character of the locality, the public realm, and the amenity of neighbouring residential properties, was the main reason for its refusal. The latest scheme addresses many of these issues by now only being single storey in scale, as opposed to two. This overcomes concerns of visual and physical impact upon near neighbours, dominance of the adjacent public footway, as well as trees and reduces the amount of additional parking required.

In terms of its form and appearance, the proposal is now a pair of modest single storey bungalows with hipped roofs and finished in brick and tile to match materials used within the wider Willow Mead development. Due to the topography of the site, they will still need to be raised above the level of the footpath, but not to any significant extent, with further softening coming from their set back position and planting.

In terms of general form, scale, design, and layout, that now proposed is considered to be far more acceptable than the previously refused scheme and to generally accord with the requirements of Policy DM1 and the Council's 'Quality Places' SPD.

Street Scene & Area Character:

A concern of the previously refused scheme was its two storey scale, raised above the adjacent public footpath, together with the depth of the flank wall of the proposal, which included little in the way of fenestration. Together this would have resulted in a tall, bulky and dominating structure which failed to have any interaction with the footpath and public realm.

As mentioned above, that now proposed addresses many of these previous concerns by reducing the scale to single storey and having a much more domestic bungalow form. Additionally, the southern elevation facing the public footpath now includes fenestration which serves main habitable living space, thereby having a better relationship to the public realm, as well as providing a degree of overlooking which will help with public safety.

In terms of area character, that now proposed is a subservient form and scale of development which will not dominate as was the case of the refused scheme. Although the concerns of objectors at the loss of a 'green space' are noted, it is not considered that the proposed development will have any adverse or detrimental impact upon the immediate locality, which itself is relatively well developed with a good mix of residential development forms.

Whilst that proposed will have a visual impact upon the general public realm and the private realm within the existing Willow Mead development, it is considered that this impact will not be to any detrimental extent due to the much-reduced height and scale, with further options to soften and blend the development through new shrub planting between it and the public footpath.

The significantly revised scheme is considered to be a much more acceptable option with is considered to accord with the requirements of Policy DM1 and the Council's 'Quality Places' SPD.

Amenity:

Existing neighbours:

Objections have been received from a number of immediate neighbours who have raised concerns in relation to loss of privacy, light and outlook, as well as disturbance during and after construction.

With regards to privacy, the single storey nature of that now proposed, together with the distance between properties and orientation of windows means that there will be no unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy for any neighbouring occupiers. The reduction to a single storey scale and use of a fully hipped roof also means that there would be no adverse loss of daylight or sunlight to any neighbouring properties.

In terms of outlook, the two storey scale of the previous scheme raised concerns for the outlook from Palavas and its garden, particularly due to the close proximity of the development's flank wall to the shared boundary. This has now been overcome by the single storey scale of that now proposed. Whilst the roof will still be visible above the existing boundary hedge, its fully hipped form will slope away from the boundary, ensuring no adverse impact upon outlook.

That now proposed has overcome all of the previous amenity concerns in relation to existing neighbours, and in this regard is considered to accord with the requirements of Policy DM1 and the 'Quality Places' SPD.

A further concern raised by neighbours, in particular those living in Willow Mead, is disturbance during construction, including contractor parking and deliveries. Additionally, objections have been raised regarding the route of the proposed drainage and the need to dig a trench and attenuation tank close to existing Willow Mead flats and their patio areas. Whilst these concerns are noted, building works by their nature will always result in a degree of disturbance and inconvenience for existing neighbours. Notwithstanding, conditions are recommended requiring details of how these impacts can be mitigated through the submission and approval of a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), as well as restrictions in terms of working hours, burning, deliveries, etc. Restrictions in relation to delivery times are also considered necessary due to the site's very close proximity to the primary and secondary schools, where there could be adverse conflict and safety issues associated with large delivery vehicles, school traffic, and pupils using Wildern Lane. A further condition is also recommended to ensure that the adjacent public footpath is not used to access the site in any way, for reasons of safety.

Future occupiers:

At 69 square metres both proposed properties exceed the 61 square metre minimum set out by Policy DM30 of the adopted local plan. They should also meet the higher access requirements of Policy DM29. Natural light and outlook from the main habitable spaces of each proposed dwelling will be acceptable, and a good degree of privacy will be provided. Externally, each would have a modest raised patio area to the rear, with steps down to a shared amenity space which will be protected by existing and new shrub planting around its edge. Whilst this external space will be shaded to some extent by the large neighbouring protected trees, there should still be sufficient daylight to ensure this space is useable.

This latest scheme demonstrates that more thought as to the resulting quality of environment for future occupiers has been undertaken with advantage of attractive features of the site, such as the available views of the neighbouring pond, being taken. As such, that proposed is considered to meet the design quality required by Policy DM1 and the Council's 'Quality Places' and 'Accommodation for Elderly People and Those in Need of Care' SPDs.

A further issue related to amenity to some extent is consideration of an age restriction for the development. The existing Willow Mead scheme is restricted to persons over 55 years of age which has resulted in a settled community of residents. If the proposed pair of bungalows were to be unrestricted and open to persons of any age, including potentially families, the existing character of the Willow Mead development would be significantly altered, potentially to the detriment of existing residents, through increased activity and need for parking. As such, it is considered reasonable to apply a similar age restriction to the proposed development, so that it properly integrates with the existing Willow Mead flats, which can also include contributing to services charges etc, albeit this is a matter for the applicant and cannot be controlled by the Local Planning Authority.

Parking, Access & Highways:

Parking provision has been raised as a concern for objectors, as it was for the previous scheme. This formed one of the reasons for refusal, or more specifically a lack of information as to the current situation and how parking for the resulting new residents would be accommodated.

As part of this latest application, it has been confirmed that there are 10 dedicated parking spaces immediately adjacent to the application site, with a further 19 within the wider Willow Mead flats development. None are formally allocated to any particular flat, although there are a couple of spaces reserved for use by doctors/ambulances. Residents are concerned that any additional vehicle requirements will result in insufficient parking to serve existing residents, their visitors, carers and contractors. Whilst this was not an unreasonable concern, particularly for the previous scheme which would have resulted in four additional dwelling units, this latest proposal is for two dwellings. The applicant has suggested that there is already sufficient parking provision to accommodate any additional vehicles, which does technically meet the standards set out within the Council's 'Residential Parking Standards' SPD for development classed as being 'Active elderly with warden control' and having more than 50% of spaces unallocated. Notwithstanding, it was noted on the case officer's site visit that there were only a couple of empty spaces available, and it was confirmed that the Willow Mead development has no official warden, albeit there is an on-site manager. As such, it is clear that existing parking provision is already well utilised, and additional vehicles associated with the proposed new dwellings could result in added parking pressure and inconvenience to existing residents.

It was also noted on the case officer's site visit that there was scope to better utilise space within the existing car park, which overall could provide at least two or three additional spaces without any significant alterations to the existing car parking or landscape areas. The applicant has provided a plan demonstrating that at least two new spaces can be provided within an unused outside drying area next to the car park and application site, which would provide a space for each of the proposed dwellings. It is therefore proposed that a condition is applied to any planning permission requiring at least two additional spaces – totalling no less than 31 spaces within the overall parking areas – to be provided prior to occupation of the two dwellings. This will ensure that the requirements of Policy DM14 and the parking standards SPD are clearly met.

A further parking concern raised by existing residents was temporary loss of parking during construction, through contractors using existing spaces and whilst deliveries are being undertaken. Again, this is not an unreasonable concern. Although a degree of inconvenience is to be expected, the need for some residents to be able to park close to their accommodation is more than just a matter of convenience. As such, it is recommended that the CEMP discussed above includes details of where contractors can park, how deliveries will be managed, and where/how provision of temporary replacement parking for residents can be provided.

The highway impact and suitability of the existing site access has been assessed by Hampshire Highways, who have raised no objection in these respects and were generally happy with the existing parking and servicing of the development which should be able to easily accommodate two additional dwellings. As such the requirements of Policies DM1 and DM13 are met.

Trees:

Unlike the previously refused application, this latest scheme does take into account the large, protected trees along the southern edge of the site. These trees fall outside of the redline boundary, but their root protection areas (RPAs) encroach well inside the application site. They are an important feature within the immediate streetscape given their size and close proximity to the public footpath. As such, it needs to be demonstrated that they would not be adversely harmed as a result of construction of the proposed development.

The application is supported by an arboricultural report which demonstrates that the reduced building footprint and positioning of the dwellings towards the western side of the site will mean only minimal encroachment into the edge of the RPA of one tree, and that this can be protected through appropriate measures both during and after construction. The report has been assessed by the Council's Tree Officer who raises no objection subject to conditions being applied.

Nature Conservation:

With regards to nature conservation, the Council's Ecologist and the County Newt Officer have reviewed the ecological report submitted in support of the application and both are in general agreement with its content in relation to the quality of the site's existing habitat value and the potential impact of the proposed development. Both have raised no objection but have recommended that details of ecological protection measures during site clearance and construction be submitted and approved by the LPA prior to commencement of any activities on site.

BNG:

In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of at least 10%. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development. Whilst some forms and scales of development are exempt from this requirement, the application proposal is not.

As part of the submitted supporting ecological information, it is demonstrated that the completed development cannot provide the required BNG uplift of 10% through measures on site, which is the preferable option. As such, off-site gain will be required through the purchase of suitable off-site BNG credits. There are a number of private schemes currently available for this together with a national scheme. Whilst it is not clear at the current moment exactly which scheme the applicant intends to use, it is still possible to secure the required net gain through an appropriately worded planning condition requiring proof of appropriate credit purchase prior to occupation of the development.

Nitrates & Phosphates:

Natural England have advised that the increase in wastewater from new housing developments within the borough is having a detrimental effect on the quality of water entering the Itchen and Solent catchment areas through nitrification. As such all developments for additional housing are required to reach nutrient neutrality (ensuring that development does not add to existing nutrient burdens), in order to meet the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

The application site would use the Peel Common wastewater treatment works, which discharges into The Solent. As such the proposed development is required to achieve nutrient neutrality for its resulting nitrogen impact. Eastleigh Borough Council has a scheme which takes land out of agricultural uses and creates recreational spaces, thus reducing the nutrient output of the land. This scheme is available to the applicant, although they have not confirmed if they intend to make use of this scheme or provide another form of mitigation. Notwithstanding, the necessary mitigation can be secured by way of a suitably worded planning condition.

Recreational Disturbance:

The site is within the 13.8km catchment area for the New Forest Special Protection Area. It is recognised that new housing developments within this catchment area is likely to result in additional visitors to these protected sites. Again, Eastleigh Borough Council has set up a mitigation strategy to address this issue.

The site falls inside the 5.6km buffer zone for the Solent SPA. It is recognised that new housing developments within these catchment areas are likely to result in additional visitors to these protected sites.

In order to mitigate for these impacts, the developer has provided contributions towards the Solent Recreational Disturbance Strategy and the Council's New Forest Mitigation Strategy (which provides Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces within the borough).

Habitats Regulations:

Any proposed residential development in this area will have a likely impact upon The Solent SPAs. As such, an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations has been reviewed by Natural England who have raised an objection on the grounds of the impact of recreational disturbance upon the New Forest site.

Whilst this objection is noted, as the designated competent authority, the LPA can still consider granting planning approval if it is of the view that adequate mitigations for the impacts of the development have been or can be secured, as is the case for this planning application.

Drainage & Flooding:

As discussed above, the application site appears to suffer from waterlogging and drainage problems. It is unclear if this is as a result of neighbouring development, or if it is a historic issue, given its close proximity to the adjacent pond, which existed prior to the development of the surrounding area. In either case it has been considered necessary to undertake a more detailed assessment of the present situation and how that proposed could impact the application site and immediately surrounding sites.

The submitted drainage assessment demonstrates that due to the soil conditions of the site and surrounding areas, which are predominantly clay, the permeability of the soil is very poor. This is most likely the reason for waterlogging of the application site and flooding of the adjacent public footpath.

Concerns have been raised by objectors that building on the site will lead to further flooding problems. These concerns are noted. However, the proposed drainage scheme, which will link the development's surface water drainage to the existing Willow Mead drainage should not result in any increased flooding and may help to improve the situation. Whilst some capacity for natural infiltration within the site will be lost via the footprint of the building, any rainwater which falls on the roof and areas of hardstanding will be collected and directed into the existing surface water drainage for Willow Mead and will not be released onto the remainder of the application site. That being the case, the volume of water falling on the remaining undeveloped land will be no greater than at present. As such, there should be no increased risk of flooding to the footpath.

Foul drainage will also be linked to the existing foul drainage system for the main Willow Mead development. Due to the application site siting at a lower level than both the existing foul and surface water drainage outlets, water will need to be pumped from the application site to the existing drainage. These pumps would be relatively small and installed below ground on the application site. Surface water drainage would also include an attenuation tank to store excess surface water, which would be released into the existing system through a flow control valve to prevent the existing system being overwhelmed.

Some objections have been received from residents whose flats would be close to the route of the proposed drainage concerned that access to their flats would be obstructed during its construction and that existing patios would need to be pulled up. Whilst these concerns are noted, the works required would not be very extensive and should only take a short period to be completed. Notwithstanding, the amenity of these residents can be given a reasonable degree of protection via the CEMP which would be a condition of the planning approval.

Overall therefore, it has been demonstrated that suitable surface and foul drainage can be provided for the proposed development in a sustainable manner which should not result in any increased risk of flooding to the adjacent public footpath. As such, the requirements of Policies DM5 and DM6 of the adopted Local Plan.

Noise:

The close proximity of Wildern Lane, which is a very busy road, and the impact of traffic noise upon future occupiers of the development had previously been raised as a concern by the Council's Environmental Health Team. Whilst Wildern Lane has a 20mph speed limit and speed calming measure along much of its length, the quantity of traffic using the lane will have a noise impact upon future occupiers of the proposed development.

The current application is supported by a noise assessment which demonstrates that noise levels within the pair of dwellings should be acceptable with simple mitigation measures such as double glazing, and that levels in the private amenity area can be made acceptable through the inclusion of a two metre high close board fence on the site boundaries. Whilst the inclusion of a fence will have some visual impact upon views from the public footpath, the level of retained and new soft landscaping in front of the fence will be sufficient to alleviate any adverse visual impact. Inclusion of the fencing will also ensure that the amenity space would be sufficiently private for residents to use.

A condition requiring the recommendations of the submitted noise report to be included within the final scheme is recommended and will ensure that the development meets the requirements of Policy DM8.

Servicing:

Concern has been raised by neighbours within the existing Willow Mead development that the existing bin storage and refuse collection facilities are not adequate for the existing development, and that further residential units will only add to these problems. Whilst these concerns were understood for the previous scheme which would have resulted in four additional dwellings, that now proposed would only increase the number of properties within Willow Mead by two. The existing refuse facilities should be able to accommodate the small number of additional dwellings proposed. It is certainly not evident that the additional quantity of refuse created could be used as a reasonable reason for refusal.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

No information has been provided to demonstrate what if any sustainability measures would be included within the development. Whilst there may be scope for PV panels on

the southern roof slope, these are unlikely to be very efficient given the level of shading which would be caused by the adjacent mature Oaks. Notwithstanding, there are other sustainability options which are available.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Conclusion:

Recommendation:	PERMIT ☒	REFUSE ☐
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For the reasons set out above, the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.