

Dear Members

Special Planning Committee (Large Scale Major Application)

A special meeting of the Planning Committee will be held in the **Craddock Room, Civic Suite, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford** on **Tuesday 18 March 2025** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

The Committee will meet at the rear of the Civic Centre and depart at **9.30am** to visit the site(s) as set out in the agenda and re-convene at the Civic Centre at approximately **11.00am** to determine the application(s).

Members are reminded that contact officers are shown in each report and members are welcome to raise questions etc in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.



Head of Law and Governance

**SPECIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
(LARGE SCALE MAJOR APPLICATION)
18 MARCH 2025**

**Chairman - Councillor B McKeown
Vice-Chairman - Councillor A Nixon**

AGENDA

1	Apologies	
2	Declaration of Member's Interests/Lobbying	
3	Planning Applications	Page Nos 3 - 74

MEMBERSHIP

Chairman - Councillor B McKeown

B M Cross	A R McNaughton
I D Fordham	A Nixon
A D Hobbs	M Phillips
E G R Jones	A J Sandiford
P W Jones	S N Spencer
B McKeown	

SPECIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE - 18 MARCH 2025

Ward Interest - Nil

Planning Applications

Report of Head of Economic Development and Planning

Purpose of Report

To consider the following planning applications, the reports for which are set out in the attached **APPENDIX**:-

		Page Nos
22/36919/OUT	Land Off Sandon Road And MOD 4 Site, Beaconside, Stafford	4 - 49
	This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because the development is a large scale major application	
	Officer Contact - Richard Wood, Development Lead Telephone 01785 619324	
24/38969/FUL	GE Grid Solutions, Ranshaw Drive, Stafford	50 - 74
	This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because the development is a large scale major application	
	Officer Contact - Sian Wright, Development Lead Telephone 01785 619528	

Previous Consideration

Nil

Background Papers

Planning application files are available for Members to inspect, by prior arrangement, in the Development Management Section. The applications including the background papers, information and correspondence received during the consideration of the application, consultation replies, neighbour representations are scanned and are available to view on the Council website.

Application:	22/36919/OUT
Case Officer:	Ed Handley
Date Registered:	13 January 2023
Target Decision Date:	14 April 2023
Extended To:	31 January 2024
Address:	Land Off Sandon Road and MOD 4 Site, Beaconside, Stafford
Ward:	Milwich
Parish:	Hopton and Coton
Proposal:	Outline planning application for residential development of up to 420 dwellings (Use Class C3) with supporting infrastructure (including green infrastructure, highways and associated works) and the demolition of existing buildings and structures. All matters are reserved other than means of access to the Site from Beaconside and Sandon Road
Applicant:	Homes England
Recommendation:	<p>That the Planning Committee delegate authority to the Head of Economic Development and Planning to approve the application subject to the highway authority confirming the area of land and financial sum required as a contribution towards a new roundabout (Sandon Road/Beaconside junction), in accordance with the conditions set out in the Agenda, and to the applicant entering into a s106 agreement with regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel plan and associated monitoring fees.• Contribution towards 'public transport purposes'• Dedication of land to provide a roundabout and associated footways at the junction of Beaconside and Sandon Road.• Contribution towards the construction costs of a roundabout at the junction of Beaconside and Sandon Road.• Affordable housing provision.• Contribution towards education services.• Contribution towards mitigation measures in relation to impacts upon the Cannock Chase SAC.• Provision of on-site open space.

- Contribution to sports facilities.
- Biodiversity net gain.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because it relates to development which is classified as 'large scale major' which the Council's Constitution specifies is determined by the Planning Committee.

CONTEXT

1.0 Site and surroundings

- 1.1 The application site comprises 16ha of land to the north of Stafford. The southern roughly triangular part of the site (4.4ha) was last in agricultural use, whilst the remaining northern rectangular portion is currently in use by the Ministry of Defence (MOD).
- 1.2 The site is located to the north of Beaconside (A513), adjacent to the junction with Sandon Road. The land is enclosed by hedgerows and security fences and there are a number of buildings, structures, and areas of hardstanding which would be removed from the site.
- 1.3 The site is surrounded to the north, west and east by the north of Stafford Strategic Development Location (SDL) as identified in the Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB). The northern part of the site is allocated as MOD safeguarded land whilst the southern part is unallocated in the TPSB, although it is noted that outline consent was granted for up to 120 dwellings on this part of the site in 2017.
- 1.4 The site is within the following designations:
 - Flood zone 1
 - 15km of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - The buffer zone of a former landfill site
 - Red, amber, and green impact risk zones for Great Crested Newts (GCN).

A public right of way (Hopton and Coton 11) runs north-south to the east of the site, and there are tree preservation orders on the southern part of the site.

2.0 The proposal

- 2.1 This application is for outline consent for the provision of up to 420 dwellings and supporting infrastructure with only means of access for consideration at this stage.

- 2.2 The supporting information identifies two proposed access points (one from Beaconside and one from Sandon Road) and an additional five potential links into the surrounding area; SuDS features and green infrastructure; children's play areas; and a pumping station.
- 2.3 Parameter plans demonstrate a density of up to 40 dwellings per hectare, predominantly two storeys in height with a proportion of 2.5 storeys to provide variation in the urban form, and a small number of landmark buildings which may be up to three storeys in height to aid legibility and wayfinding. An indicative layout is proposed to demonstrate how the scheme could be developed.

3.0 Development plan framework

- 3.1 Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) require decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2 The development plan for the purposes of this application comprises The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031 Parts 1 and 2.

OFFICER ASSESSMENT – KEY CONSIDERATIONS

4.0 Principle of development

- 4.1 The application site is surrounded on three sides by the north of Stafford SDL (a strategic housing site) and to the south by the Tollgate Industrial Estate at the north end of Stafford.
- 4.2 Following the publication of the NPPF in December 2024 and with its new mandatory housing targets Stafford Borough does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply and consequently settlement boundaries for the purposes of new residential development no longer carry any weight. A 'tilted balance' is therefore engaged where the NPPF 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is applied as set out in paragraph 11.
- 4.3 Notwithstanding this, the site is considered to be within a sustainable location with being surrounded by the north of Stafford SDL, its proximity to the built up area of Stafford and the level of services which Stafford provides with being the largest settlement in the borough.
- 4.4 On this basis the development of up to 420 dwellings in this location is considered to be acceptable, in principle, but subject to other material considerations being satisfied as discussed later in this report.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs: 7, 8, 10, 11, 48, 50, 61

The Plan for Stafford Borough

SP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development;

Stafford 2 North of Stafford;

5.0 Character and appearance, heritage conservation

Character and appearance

- 5.1 The application site comprises an MOD complex to the north of Stafford and an additional parcel of agricultural land. To the north, west, and east is agricultural land which form part of the north of Stafford SDL, an allocated residential-led mixed use development location. Consequently, it is accepted that the character of the wider surroundings will drastically change in the near future with the development of the north SDL. To the south, on the other side of Beaconside (A513) is Tollgate Industrial Estate.
- 5.2 The site's northern boundary is predominantly defined by fences whilst the southern part is bound by hedgerows and trees in small groups. The site slopes down gently from northeast to southwest.
- 5.3 The development of up to 420 dwellings on this site would result in significant visual changes, although in the context of the forthcoming development of the eastern part of the surrounding SDL it is considered that, in principle, this would not result in adverse harm to the character and appearance of the area. Finer details of any scheme would also be secured via the approval of subsequent reserved matters application(s) in relation to the appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale of the development.
- 5.4 The application is supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which considers the likely effects of the proposed development upon the local landscape character and visual amenities within the area. The site is described as being on the urban fringe of Stafford with an industrial estate to the south and large open fields to the other directions; as having low landscape sensitivity; and as having limited visual receptors.
- 5.5 The LVIA recommends mitigation planting to offer screening for the proposed development and to facilitate its integration into the landscape. The LVIA further notes that the surrounding landscape will be subject to significant change from the strategic development location which envelopes the site and into which the proposed development would eventually amalgamate visually.
- 5.6 The LVIA therefore concludes that the proposed development could be delivered without undue permanent harm to the landscape character and visual receptors. It is not considered that there is any reason to challenge the conclusion of the LVIA and this conclusion is accepted. Any landscaping scheme (the subject of any future reserved matters application) would need to ensure the retention of landscape features where possible and the provision of appropriate planting to provide visual screening.

- 5.7 The Council's Design Advisor, whilst making comments regarding the extent of matters which can be reserved, raises no objection to the principle of development, advising that the design and access statement supporting the application demonstrates a good understanding of the site and its broader context. The indicative drawings are considered to be broadly acceptable and it is clear that a well-designed residential development could come forward which would align well with the structure and grain of the surrounding SDL site.
- 5.8 Concerns are raised, however, with regard to the indicative drawings in relation to the prevalence of on-street parking; the need to provide open, legible, and safe routes through the development; and the need to ensure meaningful interconnectivity with the adjacent development sites. It is considered that these elements of a detailed scheme would however be considered at the reserved matters stage and therefore do not constitute a reason for the refusal of this application.

Heritage conservation

- 5.9 The Council's Conservation Officer confirms that there are no designated heritage assets within, or adjacent to, the site. The submitted heritage assessment refers to two non-designated heritage assets within the site which are identified on the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 5.10 There are WWII buildings remaining on the site (five buildings in the centre of the site representing the core of the original WWII satellite site, three to the north, five air raid shelters, various boundary walls, and street furniture original to the camp). Most of these structures are relatively intact although there have been some unsympathetic modifications the buildings hold individual and group value.
- 5.11 The Council's Conservation Officer states that the site has significance as it is one of four satellite camps to MOD Stafford built during WWII, however the type and design of the buildings are not uncommon and there are plenty of other examples which survive elsewhere in the country and the significance is of a local magnitude. The site is surplus to MOD requirements, and they have disposed of the site, depriving it of its original purpose.

Archaeology

- 5.12 The County Archaeologist advises that the site has high potential for surviving built and below ground archaeology relating to post-medieval to modern (WWII) activity within the site, although the construction of the MOD satellite site likely disturbed earlier archaeological remains in that location. The other parcel of land (agricultural land south of the MOD complex) is more likely to hold below ground remains.
- 5.13 It is recommended that a programme of historic building recording be carried out, sufficiently in advance of any stripping out or demolition works, to a level consistent with a level 2 survey as outlined by Historic England and to include all of the original standing buildings, air raid shelters, isolated walls, and street furniture, both individually and as a group. Furthermore, an archaeological watching brief should be completed on the agricultural land prior to the commencement of development,

in the areas identified in the application documents as containing the out-farm and brick kiln. Such provision should be secured by condition.

- 5.14 The Council's Conservation Officer confirms agreement with the recommendations of the County Archaeologist and raises no objection to the proposed development of the site.
- 5.15 It is considered that, subject to conditions, the proposed development would be acceptable with regard to heritage conservation and matters of character and appearance.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs: 131, 135, 137, 139, 202, 207, 208, 210, 216, 217, 218

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies: N1 Design; N8 Landscape character; N9 Historic environment

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Design

6.0 Amenity and public health

Residential amenity

- 6.1 There is a small group of houses abutting the application site on the eastern boundary off Sandon Road. Numbers 1-3 back onto the application site and benefit from rear gardens of ample size whilst number 4 shares its rear and side boundaries.
- 6.2 It is clear that a detailed scheme could come forward, at reserved matters stage, which would not result in any undue harm with regard outlook and privacy to existing residents and to for future occupiers of the application site.

Ground contamination

- 6.3 The application is supported by a Phase 1 contaminated land risk report, noise and vibration report, and air quality assessment. The Council's Environmental Health Officer, having considered these reports, raises no objection to the proposed development. It is, however, considered that conditions are required with regard to these matters.
- 6.4 The contaminated land report recommends further investigation at paragraph 8.1.6 which should be secured by a pre-commencement condition and which is also recommended by the Environment Agency who raise no objection. The Environment Agency advising that otherwise the proposed development would be contrary to paragraph 184 of the NPPF without such mitigation being secured as there would be no guarantee that the development would not be put at unacceptable risk from, or be adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water

pollution. Paragraph 191 puts the responsibility for securing a safe development on the developer and/or landowner.

- 6.5 An informative should be attached to any approval to bring the other comments and advice from the Environment Agency to the attention of applicant.

Noise and dust

- 6.6 The noise report advises that any application for the approval of reserved matters be accompanied by a detailed noise assessment and mitigation scheme; a condition to secure this is considered to be appropriate. A pre-commencement condition to secure mitigation measures regarding dust management is also considered to be appropriate.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs: 135, 184, 191

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies: N1 Design

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Design

7.0 Highway matters, access and parking

- 7.1 The site is adjacent to the north of Stafford SDL which will deliver over 3,000 dwellings and local facilities, approximately 2.6km from the town centre.
- 7.2 The proposal includes the provision of a four-arm roundabout at the A513/Tollgate Drive junction and a ghost island priority junction off Sandon Road. Other off-site highway works proposed include pedestrian/shared footways and crossings.
- 7.3 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (TA) which concludes that the proposed site access junctions (and additional road improvements carried out as part of the SDL development) are predicted to operate within acceptable capacity thresholds; that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe.
- 7.4 The local Highway Authority initially raised objection to the proposed development, raising concerns regarding the following:
- There is no indication of the timescales for the proposed development and parts of the SDL providing improvements which do not yet benefit from detailed approval.

- The development would be reliant on schemes from a different development on adjacent sites to provide the infrastructure required and there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposal would meet connectivity guidelines without relying upon other development which may not come forward.
- There is no indication as to how the vehicular connection into the SDL site would be secured. There is no condition or obligation which secures a connection from the adjacent site into this site. Until such an agreement is in place, the application must be assessed on its own merits without any direct connection to the facilities proposed on the SDL site.
- There are no bus stops within 400m of the site and it is unclear how any bus stops would be accessed safely from the site.
- It is unclear how pedestrians and cyclists would access schools, food stores, and health facilities. The connectivity and quality of routes would not meet guidelines for walking and cycling.
- A footway/cycleway should be provided along the site frontage to connect to existing and proposed routes along Beaconside.
- No safe controlled crossings on Beaconside are proposed.

7.5 During the course of the consideration of the application the applicant provided a technical note as an addendum to the TA along with a written response to the local Highway Authority. The written response refers to the commitment for the delivery of the SDL site as an allocation in the local plan and the reference to connections into the application site from the SDL within the approved masterplan, amongst other things. The technical note sets out a timeline showing the delivery of local amenities in the SDL site, an assessment of walking and cycling routes, an identification of existing bus routes, a calculation of person trip generation from the proposed development, and interim off-site highway works as well as junction modelling. The note concludes that the site can be accessed by a choice of sustainable transport modes in an interim scenario without reliance upon the full build out of the north of Stafford SDL. The technical note further outlines the view that any significant improvement to bus services in the interim scenario would not be proportionate to the impact from the proposed development. The technical note reasserts the view that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety and that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe.

7.6 Further to this, an access improvement strategy document was submitted in July 2024. The document sets out the view that the proposed development can be acceptable in the absence of the infrastructure committed within the SDL site and concludes that a safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users without reliance on infrastructure being delivered elsewhere; that alterations to the number 11 bus could create opportunities to maximise sustainable transport for the site and wider area; and that the proposed development is acceptable on highway grounds.

- 7.7 Numerous representations have been made by the local Highway Authority with regard to the submissions made by the applicant, culminating in that received in February 2025 raising no objection, subject to a number of conditions and planning obligations.
- 7.8 In raising no objection, the local Highway Authority made the following (summarised) comments:

The primary vehicular access would be via a four-arm roundabout off the A513, replacing the priority junction with Tollgate Drive. A local vehicular access for up to 120 properties is a proposed ghost island priority junction off Sandon Road; this access would form an alternative emergency access onto the local road network should the main access not be available. A 3m wide shared footway/cycleway would be provided on the western side of Sandon Road, and speed limits would be reduced to 40mph then to 30mph on this stretch of road.

A 33m inscribed circle diameter (ICD) roundabout at the junction of Sandon Road and Beaconside would not be suitable for forecasted traffic flows and a 41m ICD roundabout is required. The applicant's initial modelling was based on a 41m roundabout. The land under the control of the local highway authority would only allow for a 33m roundabout and would not allow for the continuation of the footpath/cycleway on Beaconside and Sandon Road to connect. Land should be secured and a financial contribution made towards the provision of a 41m roundabout. The applicant has acknowledged that such provision is an opportunity to maximise sustainable transport solutions and have agreed to dedicate land and make a financial contribution towards the provision of a roundabout and footway/cycleway along Beaconside.

The proposed temporary measure, to enhance public transport use, of a £338,000 contribution over five years would facilitate the expansion of the number 11 bus service by 3 hours per day during weekdays and 11 hours on a Saturday.

The route of the number 11 service would need to be temporarily extended in the application site to ensure that there is a bus stop within the 400m recommended walking distance. The applicant should demonstrate how a bus service could operate within the site.

A 3.5m shared footway/cycleway is required along the north side of Beaconside and Sandon Road. Furthermore, a link from the site into the adjacent SDL site to the west would assist in resolving connectivity issues; the link should be adequate to accommodate cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles (including buses).

The travel plan submitted in support of the application requires revising to tie in with the trips forecast in the transport assessment, to include annual automatic traffic counts in the survey mechanism, seek a 50% response rate to questionnaire survey, and include a four-week free taster bus ticket to encourage the use of new bus services.

In order to enhance road safety and connectivity a toucan crossing is proposed on Beaconside; further details, including street lighting and speed restrictions, will need to be agreed as part of the highway works agreement with Staffordshire County Council.

7.9 The following conditions are recommended, as shown in italics, and which are then considered:

1) *Further details to form part of a reserved matters application.*

The majority of additional information set out in the first recommended condition would be covered by the definitions of the reserved matters as set out in the Development Management Procedure Order or other conditions and, therefore, their inclusion would constitute unnecessary duplication. However, it would be appropriate to ensure that reserved matters applications include details of the alignment (including width and gradient) of connection points to and from the neighbouring SDL site (west) for pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles.

2) *Construction management plan relating to temporary construction impacts.*

It is considered appropriate for a construction management plan relating to temporary construction impacts to be secured by condition.

3) *Provision of the new accesses off Beaconside and Sandon Road, and Toucan crossing at the Beaconside access; the Sandon Road access to be restricted for the use of up to 120 properties and form an emergency alternative access.*

It would be entirely reasonable to attach a condition to ensure that the construction of the vehicular access into the site is completed before any dwelling which would rely upon that access is first occupied. The provision of appropriate crossing points associated with these junctions (including the Toucan crossing on Beaconside) should also be secured. It is understood that modelling has been carried out to demonstrate that the proposed ghost island off Sandon Road would be suitable for up to 120 properties; consequently, limiting the number of properties to be accessed off this new junction (except for in emergency situations) to 120 properties is considered to be reasonable.

4) *Provision of 3.5m shared use path along the site boundary with Beaconside and Sandon Road prior to first occupation.*

The provision of a 3.5m wide shared use path along the site boundary with Beaconside should be secured by condition.

- 5) *Development to be occupied in accordance with a revised travel plan to be submitted and approved prior to first occupation.*

It is considered appropriate for a revised travel plan to be secured by condition; a travel plan would assist in ensuring that the need to travel by private car is reduced and that the use of more sustainable modes of transport is maximised.

- 6) *Provision of bus stop and bus turning facility within the site prior to occupation of 50th dwelling. Retention for five years or completion of development, whichever is sooner.*

It is not considered that provision for a bus service to run through the site, including bus turning facility and bus stop, would be required to make the proposed development acceptable. Furthermore, requiring a bus connection through this site into the SDL would further constrain the layout of the SDL site without the proper consideration afforded to such a decision. This application site is immediately adjacent to Beaconside and Sandon Road, both of which could serve bus routes; and, furthermore, the North of Stafford SDL would require enhanced bus services under policy Stafford 2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough. It is considered that a financial contribution towards bus services as an interim measure until the SDL comes forward is an appropriate method to mitigate this concern; a temporary bus-stop layby could also be secured as part of a major works agreement with Staffordshire County Council for the proposed (Tollgate Drive) roundabout.

- 7.10 Further to the above, the local Highway Authority are seeking a 55m ICD roundabout at the junction of Sandon Road and Beaconside in order to provide a betterment and ensure that the local highway network is sustainable into the future. A proportionate (land and financial) contribution to this larger roundabout is sought on the basis that the development would necessitate the provision of a 41m ICD roundabout; the contribution and land dedication should form part of a s106 agreement.

- 7.11 It is also considered that the requested obligations, listed below, be secured via a s106 agreement are considered to be reasonable and any approval should therefore be subject to the applicant entering into a s106 agreement.

- a) *Contribution of £6,000 towards residential travel plan monitoring.*
- b) *£5,000 additional school sum for the travel plan.*
- c) *£338,000 for 'public transport purposes' commencing after the occupation of the first 50 dwellings and thereafter proportioned annually over a 5-year period.* It is understood that this would provide for an extension (with regard to a route extension and the hours served) to the existing number 11 bus service for a temporary period.

- d) *Contribution of land (7,500sqm) to facilitate the provision of a roundabout with appropriate footways and cycleways at the junction of Beaconside/Sandon Road and the provision of a 3.5m cycleway/footway on Sandon Road.*
- e) *Financial contribution (sum estimated to be approximately £630,000) towards the construction costs of the Beaconside/Sandon Road junction roundabout.*

- 7.12 The local Highway Authority make reference to the need for approval under the Highways Act 1980 and highway works agreements with Staffordshire County Council. In order to bring these comments to the attention of the applicant, an informative should be attached to any approval.
- 7.13 A public right of way runs adjacent to the application site; the County Rights of Way Officer raises no objection to the proposed development, however it is considered that the proposal would likely result in greater use and therefore a financial contribution was initially requested towards improvements to local routes. Notwithstanding this, it has since been confirmed that Staffordshire County Council does not currently have the legal framework in place to request s106 funding with regard to this matter.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs: 105, 112 and 113

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies: T1 Transport; T2 Parking and manoeuvring facilities; Appendix B – Car parking standards

8.0 Ecology and biodiversity

Special Areas of Conservation

- 8.1 The proposal would result in a net increase in dwellings within 15km of the Cannock Chase SAC and therefore an appropriate assessment under the habitat regulations needs to be carried out. The latest evidence suggests that the SAMMMs (Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures) will deliver sufficient mitigation and avoidance measures to prevent any likely significant effect arising towards the Cannock Chase SAC from residential development in this area. It is considered that any likely significant effects to the Cannock Chase SAC would be appropriately mitigated through financial contributions provided towards the SAMMMs (at a rate of £344.01 per net additional dwelling). Natural England confirm agreement with this conclusion.
- 8.2 The application site is also 5.9km from the Pasturefields Salt Marsh SAC and 8.9km from the West Midlands Meres and Mosses SAC and RAMSAR. The applicant has provided a statement in support of the application which concurs with the above assessment regarding the Cannock Chase SAC and impacts to the other European sites noted above are screened out. Given the context of the site, the nature of the application, and separation distances from these sites the council has

not carried out a further screening under the habitat regulations with regard to these European sites.

- 8.3 Furthermore, Natural England advise that based on the application documents it is not considered that the proposed development would result in damage or destruction of the interest features for which the Cannock Chase SSSI has been notified.

Biodiversity net gain

- 8.4 The application was made before the BNG (biodiversity net gain) condition became mandatory and, therefore, it is considered to be exempt from national BNG requirements. In the absence of mandatory BNG, the NPPF and The Plan for Stafford Borough both seek to ensure net gains for biodiversity. The application is supported by a BNG assessment which concludes that the proposed development could achieve a gain in hedgerow units and river units (through the creation of ditches) and a loss in habitat units.
- 8.5 The Council's Biodiversity Officer advises that, whilst the proposed biodiversity net gain is disappointing and somewhat contradicts the aspirations set out within the applicant's design statement, it technically meets the relevant (non-mandatory) standards of BNG. Whilst the Biodiversity Officer initially requested that biodiversity net gain is reviewed and a greater enhancement secured, it is not considered that there is any policy justification to require this and the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in this regard. The applicant proposes a 1% gain by virtue of a financial contribution towards off-site habitats.

Protected species

- 8.6 The preliminary ecological appraisal submitted in support of the application identified no evidence of badgers although there is clearly potential for nesting birds. Further bat surveys and great crested newt surveys were submitted in support of the application which identified populations of both protected species within the site. Newts were found to be present in one pond and, whilst translocation could be possible, the Newt Officer has confirmed that the applicant has joined the District Licence Scheme and raises no objection, subject to conditions to ensure that the development is carried out in compliance with the conditions of Stafford Borough Council's District Licence.
- 8.7 A Natural England licence would be required with regard to works in the presence of bats and recommendations are made within the report in order to avoid and mitigate any harm in this regard. The Council's Biodiversity Officer raises no objection to the proposed development, advising that the recommendations made in the bat survey report (paragraph 4.2) should be secured by condition. It is recommended that the development is carried out in accordance with a construction environmental management plan (CEMP) to be secured by condition; the CEMP should include precautionary and avoidance measures for potential wildlife on site, including but not limited to pre-works checks for badgers, the provision of means of escape in any excavations left open overnight, and precautionary working methods for hedgehogs. An ecological management and monitoring plan should be secured by condition to ensure that mitigation objectives

are achieved. Furthermore, a number of conditions are recommended to secure the provision of bat bricks and swift boxes within 10% of dwellings in appropriate locations; the installation of woodcrete bat boxes in mature trees to be retained; external lighting of a design to avoid light spill on bat boxes; and the provision of hedgehog gaps in fences.

- 8.8 Whilst the Biodiversity Officer recommends a condition to prohibit works to trees and hedgerows during bird nesting season, it is considered that nesting birds are more appropriately protected under separate legislation and therefore this matter should be covered by an informative attached to any approval bringing the protected status of nesting birds to the attention of the applicant.

Arboricultural

- 8.9 The application is supported by an arboricultural report which identifies numerous trees dispersed across the site and the Council's Tree Officer confirms that these have been assessed objectively. The Tree Officer raises no objection to the proposed development, stating that, in principle, the proposal would be deliverable provided there is adequate protection of valuable trees. As demolition of the existing buildings could present a problem to retained trees further information will be required, to include an Arboricultural Impact Assessment with an associated Tree Protection Plan, plus an Arboricultural Method Statement to cover suitable working methods around the retained trees from initial site preparation through to the final landscaping. This information should be secured by condition.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs: 8, 125, 162, 164, 192, 193, 195, 196, 197

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies: N2 Climate change; N4 The natural environment and green infrastructure; N5 Sites of European, national and local nature conservation importance; N6 Cannock Chase special area of conservation; I1 Infrastructure delivery policy

9.0 Flood risk and drainage

- 9.1 The application site is within flood zone 1 where flood risk is low. The application is supported by a flood risk assessment and drainage strategy which concludes that there is a low risk of fluvial flooding and a moderate risk of pluvial flooding due to the topography and context of the site. However, it is stated that this risk can be mitigated using flood risk management measures. The drainage strategy refers to the incorporation of the following flood risk management measures:
- Maintenance of a corridor to accommodate the existing surface water flow paths which pass through the site.
 - The finished floor level of all dwellings at least 0.15m above adjacent external ground levels.

- Direction of surface water away from buildings via external ground profile.
- Modification of ground profile to eliminate isolated depressions where water could accumulate.
- A positive surface water drainage system which will intercept run-off from roofs and paved areas.

Surface water would then be discharged to the unnamed watercourse to the west of the site via pipework, as infiltration is not considered viable, limited to the average annual (QBAR) greenfield equivalent run-off rate. SuDS features including retention basins, swales, bio-retention/filter strips, filter drains, and permeable paving are proposed.

- 9.2 The Lead Local Flood Authority raise no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions to ensure that the full detailed drainage design and suitable ongoing management and maintenance is secured.

10.0 Other

- 10.1 The Council hold no record of any high-pressure pipelines or other hazardous installations within or immediately adjacent to the site; including data from the Health and Safety Executive, National Gas, National Grid, and Cadent. It is acknowledged that, in objecting to the proposed development, a neighbouring resident makes reference to gas pipelines within the application site. However, no objection is raised regarding the application from the relevant technical bodies. The Health and Safety Executive advise that the application site does not lie within the consultation distance of any major hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline and therefore they do not require consultation. Cadent advise that there are medium and low-pressure assts in the vicinity of the site but their plans do not show any service pipes which may serve gas meters at individual properties. Cadent raise no objection but recommend an informative note on any approval to bring to the attention of the applicant the presence of Cadent's assets and advise that the developer makes an enquiry through LSBUD (line search before you dig) so that an appropriate risk assessment can be carried out.
- 10.2 The application is supported by a Minerals Safeguarding Assessment which concludes that there is no viable minerals resource present on the site. The site is not within an area designated as a safeguarding area and therefore it is not considered that any further action is required in this regard.
- 10.3 Staffordshire Police Service raise no objection to the proposed development although a number of comments are raised with regard to design. It is noted that the introduction of a new roundabout and the addition of signalised crossing points along Beaconside are supported. Comments are made with regard to potential implications of a secondary vehicular access off Sandon Road, however the concerns raised regarding the speed limit in this area are not shared by the local Highway Authority; as the professional experts in this field, it is considered that the views of the Highway Authority should be afforded more weight than those of Staffordshire Police's Design Officer. It is considered that the various comments made with regard to design should be brought to the attention of the applicant via

an informative on any approval and thereafter consideration can be given to these matters in drawing up a detailed design for submission seeking approval of reserved matters.

- 10.4 Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service raise no objection to the proposed development, however standard comments are offered with regard to the need for appropriate vehicle access and supplies of water for firefighting at the site and the recommendation that domestic sprinkler systems are installed within the proposed dwellings. It is considered that the comments of the Fire Service should be brought to the attention of the applicant via an informative attached to any approval.

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs: 8, 125, 162, 164, 170, 172, 176, 177, 178, 181, 196, 197

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies: N2 Climate change; N4 The natural environment and green infrastructure

11.0 Planning obligations

- 11.1 Should the application be approved a s106 agreement would be required to secure the aforementioned contribution to the Cannock Chase SAC SAMMMs. Furthermore, any such s106 agreement should include schedules with regard to contributions towards education provision, open space and sports facilities provision, affordable housing and a biodiversity net-gain of 1%. It is noted that the local care board has requested a contribution towards improvements to the primary care network, however as outlined below it is not considered that such an obligation would be appropriate at this time.
- 11.2 Policy I1 states that new development which provides additional residential development will be supported by appropriate levels of physical, social and environmental infrastructure at a timely stage, as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP was published in 2012 and identified that health investment was required to facilitate the Strategic Development Locations but did not specify any requirements for windfall development. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Care Board raise no objection to the scheme, but request a contribution of £312,510 towards local health infrastructure.
- 11.3 The NPPF states at paragraph 57 that:
- “Planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:*
- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
 - b) directly related to the development; and*
 - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.”*

- 11.4 In this instance, the requested public health infrastructure contribution is not considered to be directly related to the proposed development as it has not been identified how the contribution would be related to additional patients resulting from the proposed development. It is also not considered to be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms as Policy I1 and the IDP do not specify the requirements for windfall developments of this nature. As such, it is not considered reasonable to require a contribution to public health infrastructure.
- 11.5 Further to this, with regard to the consideration given in section 7 of this report, the following highways matters should be secured as part of any s106 agreement:
- a. *Development to be occupied in accordance with a travel plan.*
 - b. *£6,000 towards residential travel plan monitoring.*
 - c. *£5,000 additional school sum for travel plan.*
 - d. *£338,000 towards 'public transport purposes' commencing following the occupation of the first 50 dwellings and proportioned annually over a five-year period.*
 - e. *Contribution of land to provide a roundabout with appropriate footways and cycleways at the junction of Beaconside/Sandon Road.*
 - f. *Financial contribution (estimated to be £630,000) towards the construction costs of the roundabout.*
 - g. *Contribution of land to provide a 3.5m cycleway/footway on Sandon Road.*

Policies and Guidance:-

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraphs: 56, 58

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies: C1 Dwelling types and sizes; C2 Affordable housing; C7 Open space, sport, and recreation; N6 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation; I1 Infrastructure delivery policy

12.0 Conclusion and planning balance

- 12.1 The application site is considered to be in a sustainable location within the settlement of Stafford where residential development is supported. The inherently sustainable location within the settlement of Stafford at the top of the Borough's settlement hierarchy suggests that public transport routes could be sustained in the immediate vicinity of the site along Beaconside and that it would not be necessary for such provision to be secured within the site to make this development acceptable. However, all other highways matters could be appropriately resolved via condition.

- 12.2 The impacts upon the historic environment within the MOD site are considered to be acceptable subject to a programme of building recording; the impacts upon the wider landscape are considered to be acceptable on the basis that the site is surrounded on three sides by the north of Stafford SDL which will be coming forward as a major allocated residential development. Sufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that matters of public health, public safety, and amenity can be appropriately mitigated through appropriately worded conditions and the submission of a policy compliant detailed scheme at reserved matters stage.
- 12.3 Notwithstanding the need for a licence from Natural England regarding protected species, other ecological matters can be mitigated appropriately via a planning obligation and conditions as set out in section 11 of this report. Similarly, matters of drainage can also be dealt with via condition.
- 12.4 Standard obligations and a number of other highway-related matters should be secured via s106 agreement.
- 12.5 It is considered that the application should be approved, subject to conditions and to the applicant entering into a s106 agreement.

CONSULTATIONS (summarised)

Design Advisor:

(Comments dated May 2023):

No objection.

- It should be noted that whilst the application only seeks approval of access and the maximum number of residential units, the definition of 'access' set out in the Development Management Procedure Order should be understood from the outset. This sets out that in practical terms, the arrangement and disposition of the road, cycle, and pedestrian networks of the development are bound within the definition of access.
- The layout and related design information should be acceptable prior to approval to ensure that the scheme would deliver an overall quality of design which complies with and reflects the standards set out in the National Design Guide and other design related policies.
- Approval of outline consent should require the submitted indicative layout to act as an explicit reference to which the future reserved matters applications are bound to, with any subsequent divergence from the approved 'access' element therefore being discordant with the outline approval.
- The D&A demonstrates a good understanding of the site and its broader context.
- It is commended that the scheme is seeking to deliver a development which is an improvement over the more standard housing developments around the site. Consequently, the more urban solution indicated is not necessarily unacceptable from a contextual compatibility perspective.

- The strong urban structure, natural hierarchy of the street typologies and apparently high level of landscape/planting provision to the streets and public spaces is a key element in establishing quite a distinctive identity to the development and is broadly considered a significant positive to the underlying character and quality of the scheme.
- The indicative layout is considered to provide a coherent, rational, and relatively compact block structure which broadly reflects good urban design principles in that the streets are defined by the built form and activated by their active frontages. The structure and grain of the layout is disposed in a manner that would spatially align well with the adjacent structure and grain of the surrounding SDL sites and this should provide a fairly legible continuity of street scenes and built form between adjacent developments. This aspect is considered an important approach to creating the conditions whereby well-related connected development is delivered and which is a notably positive aspect of the design of the layout. The corresponding street sections provided within the street design principles section of the D&A appear to accord with the guidance set out in the Stafford Borough Design SPD and articulate how the various streets would support and express the underlying hierarchy of the layout and contribute positively to the underlying legibility and design coherence of the development.
- One aspect which raises concern is that many of the streets appear to have a very high level of on-street parking and although there appears to be an apparently good level of street tree planting and landscape, the arrangement of landscape to parking appears especially repetitive and exerts a quite formal character to the street scenes. Concern therefore remains that many of the streets would be dominated by hardstanding parking areas and, depending on final detailed designs, this could be considered to not fulfil the spirit of the National Design Guide.
- There are a number of rear access parking 'lanes' which have a high degree of parking provision within the street scenes; this raises concern from parking in less than convenient locations and the quality of place. Most of these lanes are through routes and whilst Staffordshire Police advice that these should be provided with gated, restricted, or secured access it is considered that open through routes are beneficial to the underlying permeability and legibility of the layout. However, this is dependent on appropriate levels of passive surveillance from the principal frontage and habitable rooms of dwellings. In this regard there is concern regarding some lanes.
- The proliferation of frontage parking arrangements raises a query as to how they would facilitate requirements for infrastructure to enable electric vehicle charging. Ensuring that there are no health and safety or aesthetic implications would need to be convincingly dealt with in more detail in subsequent applications.
- The urban structure and grain of the layout is relatively convincing in that it appears to provide a clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets and public spaces. Notwithstanding the weakness of the scheme in the lack of meaningful inter-connectivity with the adjacent development sites, it is acknowledged that the urban structure and grain appears quite well related to the adjacent sites and there appears to be opportunity to provide legible pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the site and the surrounding built and open green space.

- The D&A states that just short of 4ha of multi-functional green space would be provided. The illustrative site layout plan suggests that landscape provision would be a relatively prevalent characteristic of the developments and the majority of existing trees would be retained.
- Provision of SuDS related swales within the primary street scene is considered a significantly positive element in providing ecology and biodiversity enhancement and in imbuing and reinforcing a more naturalist character to some of the key areas of public realm. It is hoped that this approach is not lost in subsequent detailed applications.
- The provision and disposition of streets, squares, and other open space appears well considered throughout the layout and creates a rational hierarchy ranging between large strategic spaces which help to define the underlying character through to small local squares and greens. This should enable a wide variety of activities and social interaction as well as encouraging cycling and walking at a local level.
- There appears to be a reasonable mix of home tenures and a relatively wide range of house types and sizes.
- Whilst layout and architectural details of the house types are not part of this submission, the broad principles of the D&A are a sound basis for the future detailed submissions. It is noted that the vision section of the D&A clearly alludes to the development delivering high quality homes in a more contemporary architectural language and style in order to distinguish itself from more standard designs. It is hoped that this approach is maintained and borne out in the subsequent detailed applications.
- In overall terms, there is much about the design approach of this scheme which is commendable and supported and which represents good urban practice. However, there are some elements of the scheme which hold it back from being unreservedly supported.

Highway Authority:

(Revised comments dated 12 February 2025):

Comments updated to refer to the travel plan; a revised travel plan should be secured by condition.

(Comments dated 21 February 2025):

No objection, subject to conditions.

- A local vehicle access for up to 120 properties is proposed off Sandon Road in the form of a ghost island priority junction. The transport assessment suggests that only 70 vehicles would use this junction and demonstrates the queues that could be expected, however no modelling has been carried out for this junction for over 120 properties. Although this junction should be restricted to 120 properties it could be used as an emergency alternative access onto the local road network if the main access was not available.

- The proposed vehicular access points must be constructed prior to the first occupation of any dwelling which would utilise the access.
- The applicant should dedicate land and make a financial contribution towards the installation of a 41m ICD roundabout. An indicative drawing is provided by Staffordshire County Council showing its preference for a larger roundabout and the land that this would require; the drawing indicates a slightly relocated roundabout into the development site so that it could be constructed whilst the Sandon Road Beaconside junction remained open and it would provide additional benefits to the sustainability of the area. This would require a slightly larger area of land to be dedicated by the developer, to be secured via s106 agreement.
- An estimated figure of £630,000 is suggested as a contribution towards the roundabout, and a land dedication of 7,500sqm.
- Other points raised in January 2025 remain of relevance.
- Conditions are recommended as follows:
 - a) The reserved matters application(s) shall include the following details:
 - The means of inclusive access to the dwellings for all users.
 - The means of enclosure of the site, including the height, design, and position of all new walls, fences, and hedges.
 - Levels of the site, including finished floor levels of the dwellings.
 - The alignment, (including width and gradient) and construction details of all roads, footways, cycleways, and other means of access including lighting, signage, and road markings.
 - Pedestrian/cycle and vehicular movement parameters in accordance with the Outline Illustrative Masterplan 21002-07 revision B.
 - Connectivity to and from the site from neighbour development to the west for pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles, including provision from a bus connection.
 - Provision of adequate turning and servicing facilities within the site.
 - Tactile treatment of all paved surfaces.
 - The drainage of the site, including surface water drainage from roads, footpaths, and other hardstanding to an acceptable outfall.
 - Provision to be made for the adequate garaging and/or parking of cars.
 - b) Before any dwelling is first occupied within the relevant phase of development, details of the new access on Beaconside (and associated Toucan crossing) and Sandon Road (drawing 5206018-ATK-RB-ZZ-DR-C-2002 P05 and 5206018-ATK-PJ-ZZ-DR-C-1001 P02) shall have been approved and constructed. The access

off Sandon Road shall be restricted for the use of up to 120 dwellings only and would form an emergency alternative access onto the local road network to help if the main access of A513 was not available.

- c) Prior to first occupation a new 3.5m shared use path shall be provided in accordance with details which shall first be approved.
 - d) Prior to the occupation of the 50th dwelling, and before the commencement of a temporary bus service, details of a temporary bus stop and means of a bus turning facility within the site shall be implemented in accordance with details which shall first be approved. This provision shall remain in place for five years.
 - e) Development shall be carried out in accordance with a construction environmental management plan to be secured by condition.
- The following should be secured via s106 Agreement:
 - a) Contribution of £6,000 towards residential travel plan monitoring.
 - b) £5,000 additional school sum for the travel plan.
 - c) £338,000 for 'public transport purposes' commencing after the occupation of the first 50 dwellings and thereafter proportioned annually over a 5 year period.
 - d) Contribution of land (7,500sqm) to facilitate the provision of a roundabout with appropriate footways and cycleways at the junction of Beaconside/Sandon Road and the provision of a 3.5m cycleway/footway on Sandon Road.
 - e) Financial contribution (sum estimated to be approximately £630,000) towards the construction costs of the Beaconside/Sandon Road junction roundabout.
 - An informative should be attached to any approval to bring to the attention of the applicant the need for approvals under section 7 of the Staffordshire Act 1983 and section 38 of the Highways Act 1980, and the fees associated with necessary traffic regulation orders or legal agreements required.

(Comments dated 21 January 2025):

No objection, subject to conditions.

- Modelling checks stipulate that a 33m ICD roundabout at the junction of Sandon Road and Beaconside would not be suitable for the forecast traffic flows and would be constrained; a 41m ICD roundabout would be required.
- The land currently under the control of the highway authority would only allow for a 33m roundabout and would not allow for the continuation of the footpath/cycleway on Beaconside and Sandon Road to connect.
- It is noted that the developer previously (in 2016) agreed to dedicate 1,500sqm of land and contribute £125,000 towards a 41m roundabout in this location.

- The applicant's technical note confirms agreement that a financial contribution and land towards a 41m roundabout is an opportunity to maximise sustainable transport solutions and allow the delivery of footways and cycleways for the wider area.
- At this stage, the exact area of land and financial contribution required are to be confirmed.
- It has been agreed that the applicant will dedicate land on the Sandon road frontage to facilitate the provision of a 3.5m footway/cycleway to connect to the proposed route along Beaconside.
- To enhance the current public transport use the applicant proposed a £338,000 contribution over 5 years to expand the existing number 11 bus service by 3 hours per day during weekdays and 11 hours on a Saturday. The closest existing bus stop is over 1.1km (13 minute walk) away from the proposed roundabout; the recommended walking distance is 400m in urban areas so the route would need to temporarily extend into the proposed development. The applicant should demonstrate how a temporary bus service could operate from a temporary bus stop within the application site and how a bus could follow a designated route in forward gear.
- The applicant has suggested that a link from the site into the SDL site to the west would help to resolve some of the connectivity issues; this link must be adequate to accommodate cyclists, pedestrians, vehicles, and buses, although at this stage a bus service within the development is not considered. Such a link is required to provide access to services being provided as part of other proposed developments close to the application site.
- A Toucan crossing is proposed on Beaconside to enhance road safety and pedestrian/cycle connectivity. Although this is agreed in principle, further details including street lighting and speed must be agreed as part of the highway works agreement with the County Council.
- The permanent access to the site must be fully constructed prior to the commencement of any construction work of the proposed dwellings.
- Conditions are recommended as detailed.

(Comments dated 11 October 2024):

Objection.

- Whilst the additional information is welcome issues remain which need to be resolved.
- A 41m roundabout remains stated in the transport statement and that this land is to be dedicated under this application. given issues with the adjacent SDL site the adjacent developer is bringing forward a 33m roundabout within the next 6 months and the applicant would therefore need to upgrade this new roundabout to a 41m roundabout before a threshold of 50 dwellings are occupied. Further information is required on how a 41m roundabout would be developed and its layout.
- The proposed contribution towards improving bus services is acknowledged, however it needs to be demonstrated how a bus can operate within the application site.

- The wider movement network needs to ensure that daily needs can be met within walking and/or cycling distances. Provision of a high-quality connected street and path network is required. A shared 3.5m cycle/pedestrian route is required along the north side of Beaconside to provide connectivity. Details are required to ensure that the desired route can be achieved.
- The proposed link into the adjacent site needs to be adequate to accommodate cyclists, walkers, and buses in order to provide access to services close to the development. It is recommended that the existing access at the east from Sandon Road is used and remodelled. Details of this improved access and link are required. Further information is required from both parties to ensure a link between this site and the adjacent site is provided.
- The proposed toucan crossing would require street lighting; such details are required to ascertain whether the location is achievable. A toucan crossing in this location may result in the need for additional speed reduction measures.

(Comments dated 4 September 2024):

Objection.

- Additional notes in response to earlier objections do not resolve the outstanding concerns.
- It has not been demonstrated when the various sections of the wider SDL and associated amenities, links, infrastructure, services, and off-site works will come forward and how this would impact on the proposed development. It is, however, agreed that there are various applications submitted and or built within the SDL and various infrastructure agreed. As these services and amenities would be funded from different stages of development, of independent development within the SDL there is no definitive information provided to allow fixed scheduling.
- The proposed development is reliant on facilities being provided by neighbouring development as part of the wider SDL, including connectivity to adjoining sites' facilities. At this stage there is no detailed proposal to develop the neighbouring site and there are reservations over delivery coming forward in a timescale suitable to provide the much-needed facilities, including shops, schools, and employment. There would be no local facilities or services within a 10-minute walk for an unknown period of time.
- If the LPA is minded to grant permission, it should be subject to conditions to secure the provision of the services to be provided by the SDL.
- To temporarily enhance the public transport use the applicant proposes a £338,000 contribution over 5 years to expand the existing number 11 bus service by 3 hours per day during weekdays and 11 hours on a Saturday. The closest bus stop is over 1.1km from the proposed roundabout so the route would need to be extended into the application site to achieve a reasonable walking distance to a bus service. Consequently, it needs to be demonstrated that a bus could operate within the site (without reversing).

- Further information is required with regard to the footway/cycleway to cover the site frontage, to include the provision of street lighting. There may be issues regarding land levels in this regard.
- More detail is required with regard the toucan crossing and lighting provision.
- Land is required to provide a new roundabout at the Beaconside/Sandon Road junction to resolve capacity issues at this location.

(Comments dated 17 November 2023):

Objection.

- A transport assessment has been submitted in response to the earlier representation.
- The proposed development can only be considered as a standalone scheme until further firm timescale information is provided or the services and amenities proposed under the north SDL are provided.
- It has not been demonstrated with any certainty when the various sections of the SDL developments will come forward and how this would affect the proposed development.
- As the various amenities and infrastructure are to be funded by different phases of development within the SDL there is no definite information provided which would allow any fixed scheduling. If this proposal is dependent on those amenities and services a fixed schedule would be required.
- There is no information provided which demonstrates how and if any physical links between the proposed development and the SDL could be secured at this stage.
- It is unclear whether the applicant is proposing to contribute proportionately to any off-site highway work and services which are not yet built, which are currently to be funded by the SDL developers, and which the proposed development would affect.
- There is no indication as to when various junctions would hit capacity if this site and the SDL are built out simultaneously before improvements triggered by SDL thresholds are provided.
- There are no bus stops within 400m of the site, a limited service which stops over a kilometre away, and no bus routes which run along the perimeter of the site. It is unclear how the existing bus services would be accessed and what facilities, including crossing points, would be provided.
- Whilst the transport assessment indicates that there will be bus routes running through the SDL and within 400m of the application site, it is not clear how or when these routes would be implemented.
- Whilst the nearest (Parkside) Primary School is within the 2km threshold, all cohorts at this school are full. Children from the proposed development may be able to gain a place at the primary school to be constructed within the SDL, however there is currently no connectivity to this as-yet unbuilt school.

- The catchment secondary school is The Weston Road Academy (2.3km away) which is over the recommended distance and projected to be full for all cohorts for the foreseeable future. The next closest secondary school (Sir Graham Balfour) is 3.1km away and is projected to be full for all cohorts and has no pedestrian connectivity from the application site.
- A new high school is proposed in the SDL site, however there is no date for the construction or opening of this new school.
- The nearest convenience store and GP are over the preferred maximum distance away from the development site.
- The facilities which the transport assessment states could be reached within 5 minutes by bicycle are not yet built.
- The existing connectivity to the proposed development currently does not meet the guidelines for walking/cycling and distances to bus stops or the quality of the routes.
- The development is reliant on schemes from another developer on adjacent sites to produce the infrastructure required. There is no evidence to demonstrate that the proposed site could stand alone and meet connectivity guidelines until any such time when other facilities become available.
- If the adjacent site (SDL) was developed the connectivity for this application site is reliant on an internal link between the two sites which is not secured by any condition, obligation, or timescale on the adjacent site.
- Tapered speed limits and visibility splays at the proposed access from Sandon Road would be required; this would require a traffic regulation order.
- Land would need to be transferred to the highway authority to introduce a roundabout at the Beaconside/Sandon Road junction.
- The developer should contribute proportionately to public transport and infrastructure improvements.
- The proposal fails to demonstrate how or when the site could be accessed by sustainable travel and would therefore increase the likelihood of pedestrian/vehicle conflict resulting in increased highway danger. As a result there is a significant likelihood that visitors to the development would be reliant upon private cars as a means of travel.

(Comments dated 27 March 2023):

Objection.

- The site is adjacent to the north of Stafford SDL which will deliver over 3,000 dwellings and local facilities. It is approximately 2.6km from the town centre.

- The transport assessment states that the proposed access junctions and additional road improvements carried out as part of the SDL development there would not be a severe impact on highway safety and that the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe.
- However, there are no indications of the timescales for the proposed development and parts of the SDL providing improvements do not yet benefit from reserved matters approval.
- The proposed main vehicular access is a four-arm roundabout on the A513 which would replace the existing priority junction with Tollgate Drive. A local vehicular access for 120 dwellings is proposed off Sandon Road in the location of the site access which was approved for the St Philips development of this site in 2017. The junction on Sandon Road would take the form of a ghost island priority junction which would form an alternative access onto the local road network to help with emergency access.
- Although approval is only sought for vehicular access off Beaconside and Sandon Road, the developer is also proposing a vehicular connection from the western side into the Bloor Homes and St Philips site. At this stage there are no indications how this connection would be secured; it is noted on the masterplans that this area along the boundary was a ditch forming part of the surface water drainage system.
- There are currently no bus stops within 400m of the site – they are 20 minutes' walk away. There are no bus routes which run along the perimeter of the site. It is unclear how the bus stops would be accessed and what facilities, including crossing points, would be provided. Facilities provided by adjacent sites may take a number of years to come into operation. It is not clear how the proposed bus route through the SDL will be delivered so this cannot be assessed.
- It is unclear how cyclists could reach schools, food stores, and health facilities within ten minutes.
- The existing connectivity to the site does not meet guidelines for walking and cycling or distances to bus stops. The quality of routes also do not meet guidelines.
- The development would be reliant on schemes from a different developer on adjacent sites to produce the infrastructure required and there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposal would meet connectivity guidelines without relying upon other development which may not come forward.
- There is no condition or obligation which secures a connection from the adjacent site into this site. until any such agreement is in place this application must be assessed on its own merits without any direct connection to the facilities being provided on the adjacent SDL site.
- The proposal does not show improvements to the highway network, such as a 4m footway/cycleway along the development frontage to connect to existing and proposed footways.
- No safe controlled crossings on Beaconside are shown.

- In conclusion, it is unclear how the site can be accessed by sustainable travel.

County Rights of Way Officer:

(Comments dated 20 November 2023):

No objection.

- The County Council is currently in a rights of way review and do not currently have the legal framework in place to request s106 funding.

(Comments dated 26 January 2023):

No objection.

- The development is likely to result in much greater use of the bridleway and adjoining rights of way. Further discussion is requested regarding s106 funding to benefit adjacent routes.
- Any grant of planning permission would not constitute authority for any interference with the public right of way and associated items or its obstruction (temporary or permanent).

Lead Local Flood Authority:

(Comments dated 8 February 2023):

No objection.

- Following discussion with the applicant regarding discharge rates there is no objection, subject to conditions.
- A full detailed drainage design should be secured by condition, along with a suitable arrangement for the management and maintenance of the drainage system. Sufficient measures should be put in place to ensure no increase in flood risk during the construction phase.

Natural England:

No objection.

- Without appropriate mitigation the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation. Mitigation should be delivered for recreational impacts by means of the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring measures.
- The proposed development would not damage or destroy the interest features for which the Cannock Chase SSSI has been notified.

SBC Biodiversity Officer:

(Comments dated 7 January 2025):

No objection.

- The 1% net gain should be achieved on site.

(Comments dated 26 September 2023):

Comments made only with regard to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

- The proposed BNG is disappointing at only 1.09% - the very minimum requirement possible. Technically this meets the current standards of BNG though against the imminent arrival of mandatory net gain of 10% and where many developers have already begun to provide this.
- The 1.09% contradicts the standards to which the applicant aspires within their design statement and increased BNG could assist in achieving their objectives.
- It is requested that the BNG is reviewed and a greater enhancement secured to fulfil the objectives of the applicant's design statement.

(Comments dated 16 March 2023):

No objection.

- Recommendations made in the Bat Survey report (paragraph 4.2) by Wood which should be undertaken as stated.

(Comments dated 7 February 2023):

Objection.

- The application is supported by an ecological impact assessment following earlier preliminary ecological appraisals and phase 1 habitat surveys.
- A biodiversity net gain assessment is submitted but requires further work.
- A pre-commencement emergence re-entry survey of all trees and buildings with PRFs within the site is recommended in mid-May-July in order to identify any potential maternity roosts missed by previous surveys.
- The report recommends the installation of bat bricks within 10% of housing, this should be targeted to the most appropriate locations.
- Woodcrete bat boxes should be installed in retained mature trees.
- External lighting should be designed to avoid light spill on bat boxes where possible.
- A pre-works check for signs of badger must be conducted no more than 34 hours before works begin.
- During construction any excavations left open overnight shall be provided with a means of escape.

- A precautionary method of working to include badgers shall be provided and shall be followed during development.
- Precautionary working methods for hedgehogs should be implemented.
- Creation of hedgehog gaps in garden fencing would allow passage across the site.
- Nesting birds should be protected – no works to trees and hedgerows during nesting season.
- Swift boxes should be integrated within 10% of the housing.
- A construction environmental management plan should be submitted to include precautionary and avoidance measures for potential wildlife on site.
- Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained.
- The biodiversity net gain of 1% is not acceptable; a 10% minimum should be provided.
- The biodiversity net gain report should be revised with a more defined plan for habitat creation, linking in with landscape design and SuDS provision.
- An ecological management and monitoring plan should be included.

Newt Officer:

(Comments dated March 2024):

No objection.

- The applicant has joined the District Licence Scheme and there is no further objection.
- Conditions should be attached to any approval as set out in the NatureSpace Report (in verbatim) in order to comply specifically with the conditions of Stafford Borough Council's District Licence.

(Comments dated 24 May 2023):

Objection.

- Further information is required, either in the form of an outline mitigation strategy or evidence of entry into the District licence Scheme to demonstrate that impacts to great crested newts and/or their habitat as a result of the development being approved can be adequately dealt with.

(Comments dated 16 February 2023):

Objection.

- Further information is required.
- The application site falls within the red impact risk zone for great crested newts (GCN) where there is highly suitable habitat and a high likelihood of GCN presence.

- There are ponds within 500m of the site, GCN records within the site, and indirect connectivity between the site and surrounding features in the landscape.
- The preliminary ecological appraisal and ecological impact assessment are accepted. However, more information is required on the ponds within 500m or evidence of entry into the District Licence Scheme is required to adequately demonstrate that there would be no impact to GCN and/or their habitat.

Tree Officer:

(Comments dated 16 February 2023):

No objection.

- There are numerous trees present, dispersed throughout the site. The supporting information appears to have objectively assessed the trees.
- In principle the proposal should be deliverable provided that there is adequate protection of valuable trees. Demolition of the existing buildings could present a problem to retained trees and this would need to be considered.
- Further information would be required at a later stage, to include an arboricultural impact assessment with an associated tree protection plan, plus an arboricultural method statement to cover suitable working methods around the retained trees from initial site preparation through to the final landscaping.
- Conditions are recommended to secure provision of these documents.

Environment Agency:

(Comments dated 2 March 2023):

No objection, subject to a condition to secure a remediation strategy to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site.

- The supporting information identifies contamination risk associated with the former use of the site. In addition, controlled waters are sensitive due to the presence of Secondary A aquifer deposits and potentially linked surface water receptors in the vicinity.
- There is potential for radiation to existing within buildings and there are reported radium concentrations from previous investigations carried out on site.
- The potential contamination risk could be mobilised during development and contaminate controlled waters receptors. A limited intrusive investigation should be carried out.

Health and Safety Executive:

The application site does not lie within the consultation distance of any major hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline. HSE does not need to be consulted.

SBC Environmental Health Officer:

(Comments dated 24 May 2023):

No objection.

- The recommendation of the Environment Agency is noted and it is agreed that a pre-commencement condition to secure an appropriate remediation strategy is required.

(Comments dated 20 March 2023):

No objection.

- The Noise and Vibration Assessment (5208018. NOI.001) makes it clear that parts of the proposed development would be exposed to adverse levels of noise.
- If outline consent is granted, a further detailed noise assessment should be secured by condition. The assessment should set out a comprehensive scheme of noise mitigating measures (including ventilation arrangements), specific to each phase of the development.
- Where internal guideline levels would be exceeded and where façade insulation (including keeping windows closed) is relied upon to achieve recommended levels, a mechanical ventilation arrangement should be installed. This system must be capable of achieving a ventilation rate of 4 air changes per hour on demand in all affected habitable rooms. The windows shall not be sealed closed.

(Comments dated 9 February 2023):

No objection.

- The acoustic report is satisfactory and there are no additional comments on that matter.
- The air quality impact report is satisfactory. Mitigation is recommended in a future construction dust management plan to be secured by condition.
- The contaminated land risk report stage 1 is noted; it recommends further investigation (paragraph 8.1.6) which should be secured.

Cadent:

(Comments dated 6 March 2023):

No objection.

- Plans do not show service pipes which serve gas meters at individual properties. Before any works are carried out an enquiry should be made through www.LSBUD.co.uk where a risk assessment can be carried out.

(Comments dated 23 January 2023):

No objection.

- The site is in close proximity to our medium and low-pressure assets.
- To prevent damage to assets or interference with our rights an informative note is requested on any approval.

SBC Sport and Outdoor Leisure Officer:

No objection.

- A quantitative provision of 30.81sqm of open space per person is requested; all of which should be on-site.
- The contribution required for the proposed development should be £384,540.87 (capital) and £716,350.37 (maintenance).
- Sports contributions are requested as follows:
 - o Swimming pools: £199,087.00
 - o Sports courts/halls: £181,639.00
 - o Artificial turf (3G) pitches: £27,464.00.
- The Borough Council will not be seeking to adopt any footpath, cycleway, or associated infrastructure.
- The Borough Council will not be seeking to adopt any of the open space and alternative management methods must be secured.
- Trees planted should be native and not include Sycamore under any circumstances. Trees planted adjacent to hard surfaces should be planted in tree pits and liner pavement protection should be installed.

SCC County Schools Organisation:

- A contribution of £5,427,853.96 is requested to mitigate the impact on education.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB:

No objection.

- A commuted sum should be secured via s106 to support the adaptation/enlargement of the Primary Care Networks (PCNs) impacted in this case.
- The local plan acknowledges that growth will place additional pressure on existing infrastructure; the burden of providing necessary new infrastructure should be shared by developments at a level commensurate to their scale.
- The site is adjacent to the north of Stafford SDL (strategic development location). Policy Stafford 2 makes clear that increasing capacity within the local primary care infrastructure will be required via contributions to achieve sustainable development in this location.

- The contribution would support the development of primary care services in the Stafford Central and Stafford Town PCNs. The relevant practices experience an existing shortfall of available clinical rooms to serve the current patient population.
- A sum of £312,510 is requested (£744 per dwelling) to support the development of the relevant PCNs.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service:

No objection.

- Appropriate vehicle access and supplies of water for firefighting should be provided at the site.
- Roads and drives upon which appliances would have to travel to reach within 45m of any point within a property should be capable of withstanding the weight of a Staffordshire firefighting appliance (GVW of 17,800kg).
- Domestic sprinkler systems are strongly recommended.

SBC Conservation Officer:

No objection.

- There are no designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the site. The heritage assessment identifies two non-designated heritage assets within the site which are identified on the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record.
- Of the remaining WWII buildings, most are relatively intact and there have been a few unsympathetic modifications but the buildings hold both individual and group value. Their architecture is typical of other WWII buildings and the site has some limited national significance as one of four satellite camps built during WWII. The type and design of buildings are not uncommon and there are plenty of other examples similar to these which survive elsewhere in the country. They are therefore more of local significance, particularly for personnel who may have served and been based at this camp. The site has been disposed of by MOD as surplus to requirements and no longer forms part of the military portfolio, therefore the site has been deprived of its original purpose.
- Taking into consideration the proposed demolition of the WWI camp buildings and structures and the proposed erection of 420 new homes, the recommendation of the County Archaeologist is accepted and a level 2 building recording survey should be secured by condition, to be carried out prior to any demolition works commencing with regard to the buildings of the former WWII satellite camp.

SBC Housing Officer:

(Comments dated 16 February 2023):

No objection.

- The proposed development would assist in reducing the housing shortfall.

- The tenure mix should be 25% first homes and 75% social rent. The affordable element of the development should deliver 32 first homes and 94 social rented homes.
- There is an undersupply of one- and two-bedroom homes and an oversupply of three-bedroom homes. A mix of these properties would be expected on site.
- Affordable housing must meet the standards recommended by the Homes and Communities Agency.
- There should be a mix of bedroom numbers and sizes.
- Any one-bedroom accommodation should contain a minimum of three habitable rooms.
- Two or more bedroom units should not be delivered as part of flat/apartment units as these are unaffordable for single people or couples on benefits and are not considered to be the best environment for families with young children.
- On large developments with a mix of market housing and affordable housing, the affordable housing should be spread across the development in clusters of roughly 8 units to allow for easy management by the Registered Providers.
- Affordable housing should be indistinguishable in appearance from the market housing.

SCC Archaeologist:

No objection.

- The site has high potential for both built and built ground archaeology to survive relating to post-medieval to modern (WWII) activity within the site.
- Parcel 1 of the site is within Stafford's agricultural hinterland during the early medieval, medieval, and post medieval period and was, until very recently, part of MOD Stafford which was constructed as one of four satellite camps to the WWII and military base of RAF Stafford. The construction of the camp has likely disturbed any earlier archaeological remains. A number of WWII structures survive within the site which are described as having a generally good level of preservation and hold both individual and group value.
- There are five buildings in the centre of the site which represent the core of the original WWII satellite site, three to the north, and five air raid shelters, various boundary walls, and street furniture original to the camp.
- Parcel 2 of the site is within Stafford's agricultural hinterland during the early medieval, medieval, and post medieval period. An out-farm, probably associated with the nearby Hopton Farm is recorded on first edition Ordnance Survey maps and is likely to date to the early 19th Century. Below ground remains are likely to survive. The eastern portion of the application site includes 'Brick Field' and the first edition mapping locates several brick kilns and ancillary structures in this area. The kiln site is probably associated with the buildings of Hopton Farm.

- Should permission be granted it is recommended that a programme of historic building recording be carried out on parcel 1, sufficiently in advance of any stripping out or demolition works. The building recording should be to a level consistent with a level 2 survey as outlined by Historic England and should include all the original standing buildings, air raid shelters, isolated walls, and street furniture, individually and as a group.
- Should permission be granted, an archaeological watching brief should be completed on parcel 2 prior to any development works taking place. This should be undertaken in the areas identified as containing the out-farm and brick kiln and the brief should be scalable to a strip, map, and sample excavation should significant archaeological remains be observed during the monitoring works.

Staffordshire Police:

No objection.

- There would be no direct link to the north of Stafford SDL, however the illustrative layout indicates that the footpath may extend from the northern border, and there may be a path to the west of the site which runs adjacent to the site boundary.
- The 6m wide footpaths should be provided in the green infrastructure and open space areas providing a sense of security and fellow walkers and cyclists can pass safely at a distance.
- The landscape planting 3m either side of the path should consist of low lying shrubs to reducing possible hiding places and blind spots, and allowing for natural light to cover the path during the day.
- Lighting should be provided along paths in the green infrastructure and open space areas to ensure users can see the path in front and behind them.
- The introduction of a new roundabout would be beneficial to occupiers of the proposed development and those using Tollgate Drive. The addition of signalised crossing points would allow for safe crossing for all and may encourage more people to walk to work.
- A secondary vehicular access is proposed off Sandon Road. Drivers usually accelerate once they have turned onto Sandon Road and may not realise a vehicle is crossing to enter the proposed development. The speed limit could be reduced in this area and speed reducing measures could be introduced to prevent accidents on Sandon Road.
- A qualified lighting engineer should be consulted with regard to the lighting provision to ensure a safe well-lit environment.
- The number of children's play areas and open spaces would encourage people to enjoy the outdoor facilities and landscape.
- Children's play areas should have maximum natural surveillance for the safety of children and to prevent anti-social behaviour.

- If natural surveillance is not possible CCTV should be considered, linked back to the Borough Council's CCTV control room.
- Rear parking courtyards are discouraged by Secured by Design guidance.
- Rear gates should be operable on both sides.
- PIR lighting is essential in rear parking courts and rear gardens to allow safe passage between parking and homes.
- An access-controlled gate on the rear parking courtyard would reduce the fear of crime and potentially reduce on-street parking due to fear of crime.
- Privacy of existing properties on Sandon Road should be considered.
- The development should be built to Secured by Design standards.

Hopton and Coton Parish Council:

No representation received.

Neighbours:

Nine representations received in objection, raising the following points:

- Encroachment of Stafford into Hopton.
- Loss of green space.
- Loss of biodiversity.
- Loss of trees.
- Additional risk of flooding.
- Insufficient local facilities.
- Increased highway danger due to increasing volume of traffic.
- Insufficient capacity on local highway network.
- An access off Sandon Road would be unsafe.
- No consideration of gas pipes which cross the site.
- Drainage pipes from adjacent dwellings cross the application site and will need to be protected.
- Another developer has bought the site from Homes England.
- No social housing to be provided.
- Houses adjacent to Beaconside would be subjected to road noise.

- The buildings to be demolished would be suitable for employment use.
- There are no details of the appearance of the proposed buildings.
- Loss of light.
- The application is premature as it is currently unsustainable with regard to transport.
- The data provided in support of the application is out of date.
- The plans show inaccurate details of the adjacent sites.

Two representations received, neither in support nor objection, raising the following points:

- Consideration should be given to school places and health care provision.
- Consideration should be given to provision of temporary traffic lights.
- Hedgerows along the A513 and B5066 should be protected.

PUBLICITY

Site notice expiry date: 15 March 2023

Newsletter advert expiry date: 15 February 2023

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 14/20816/OUT | Redevelopment of site to form up to 120 dwellings including formation of new vehicular access onto Sandon Road. All other matters reserved – Approved 14 November 2017 |
| 18/29161/REM | Redevelopment of site to form up to 120 dwellings including details of the appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale – Refused 5 April 2019 |
| 16/25450/OUT | Outline planning application for mixed-use development, comprising of the demolition of existing buildings and structures, the erection of up to 2,000 dwellings (Use Class C3), 2 no. Local Centres to provide up to 4,500 sqm of GIA (Use Class A1- up to 1,100 sqm, Use Classes A2/A3/A5 - up to 2,800 sqm and Use Class A4- up to 600 sqm), 1 no. Health Centre (Use Class D1- up to 600 sqm), 1 no. (up to 60 bed) elderly Living Facility (Use Class C2), a two form entry Primary School (Use Class D1), a five form entry Secondary School (Use Class D1), together with supporting infrastructure including: green infrastructure, highways and associated works. All matters are reserved with the exception of principal means of access on to existing highway – Approved 30 May 2022 |
| 24/39597/FUL | Variation of conditions 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 19 and 26 on application 16/25450/OUT – Pending consideration |

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. This is a grant of outline consent for means of access only and before the development is commenced details of the appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale of the proposal (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
2. Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
3. The development shall thereafter be begun before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.
4. This permission relates to the originally submitted details and specification and to drawing 21002 09 (Site location plan).
5. The submission of reserved matters application(s) pursuant to condition 1 of this outline consent shall be in broad accordance with the following parameter plans:
 - 21002 10 (Building heights and density)
 - 21002 11 (Green and blue infrastructure)
 - 21002 12 (Land use)
 - 21002 13 A (Movement)
6. Application(s) for the approval of reserved matters submitted pursuant to condition 1 of this outline consent shall be supported by an acoustic assessment to include any recommended scheme of noise mitigation measures.
7. Application(s) for the approval of reserved matters submitted pursuant to condition 1 of this outline consent shall be supported by a Tree Protection Plan and an Arboricultural Method Statement covering all aspects of development which are within root protection areas of retained trees or that have the potential to result in damage to retained trees.
8. Application(s) for the approval of reserved matters submitted pursuant to condition 1 of this outline consent shall include the following details:
 - Existing and proposed site levels and finished floor levels.
 - The alignment (including the width and gradient) and construction details of all roads, footways, footpaths, cycleways, and other means of access.
 - Pedestrian, cycle, and vehicular connectivity to and from the site from the west of the site.
9. Application(s) for the approval of reserved matters submitted pursuant to condition 1 of this outline consent shall be supported by the following details:

- Provision of bat bricks in 10% of dwellings.
- Provision of woodcrete bat boxes in retained trees.
- Provision of swift boxes within 10% of dwellings.
- Lighting strategy to incorporate dark corridors and avoid light spill on trees T1, T2, and T3, bat boxes, and bat bricks.

10. No development shall commence unless and until a written scheme of archaeological investigation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The scheme shall include details of the programme of archaeological works to be carried out within the site, including post-fieldwork assessment, reporting, and appropriate publication.

The archaeological site work shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme and timeframes contained therein.

11. No development shall commence unless and until a further ground investigation assessment has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The assessment shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations set out at 8.1.6 of the Geo-environmental desk study (reference 5206018.LCA.001 v4.0). The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the assessment and any mitigation measures recommended therein.

12. No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Council's Organisational Licence (WML-OR148, or a 'Further Licence') and with the proposals detailed on plan Land Off Sandon Road and MOD 4 Site: Impact plan for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 1)", dated 23 June 2023.

13. No development hereby permitted shall take place unless and until a certificate from the Delivery Partner (as set out in the District Licence WML-OR148, or a 'Further Licence'), confirming that all necessary measures regarding great crested newt compensation have been appropriately dealt with, has been submitted to and approved by the planning authority and the authority has provided authorisation for the development to proceed under the district newt licence.

14. No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with Part 1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles, as set out in the District Licence (WML-OR148, or a 'Further Licence'):

- Works to existing ponds onsite may only be undertaken during autumn/winter, unless otherwise in accordance with the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles.
- Works which will affect likely newt hibernacula may only be undertaken during the active period for amphibians.

- Capture methods must be used at suitable habitat features prior to the commencement of the development (i.e., hand/destructive/night searches), which may include the use of temporary amphibian fencing, to prevent newts moving onto a development site from adjacent suitable habitat, installed for the period of the development (and removed upon completion of the development).
- Amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping must be undertaken at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of the development.

15. No development shall commence unless and until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The CEMP shall be informed by the recommendations of the bat survey report (reference: 807134-WOOD-XX-XX-RP-OE-00001_A_C01 revision 3) and shall include:

- Detailed mitigation measures to minimise effects on bats due to lighting during construction.
- Avoidance measures and precautionary method of working relating to potential wildlife on site, specifically with regard to badgers and hedgehogs.

16. No development shall commence unless and until a construction transport management plan (CTMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The CTMP shall include details relating to construction access; hours of construction; routing of HGVs; delivery times; construction programme; the location of the contractors' compounds, cabins, loading and unloading areas, plant/material storage areas, and contractors' parking; and a scheme for the management and suppression of dust and mud from construction activities including the provision of a vehicle wheel wash. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved CTMP.

17. No development, except for demolition, shall commence unless and until a detailed surface water drainage design has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority.

The design shall further detail the key design principles of the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (5206018-FRA-0001, December 2022) approved at outline stage and shall demonstrate:

- Surface water drainage system(s) designed in accordance with the non-technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (DEFRA, March 2015).
- Evidence of infiltration testing in accordance with BRE digest 365 shall be provided to fully demonstrate whether shallow infiltration via attenuation basins/ permeable paving etc., is/ is not feasible within the development site.
- Limiting the discharge rate generated by all rainfall events up to the 100 year plus climate change event (40%) to 63 l/s.
- Provision of surface water runoff attenuation storage to achieve the limited discharge.

- SuDS design to provide sufficient water quality treatment, in accordance with the CIRIA SuDS Manual Simple Index Approach and SuDS treatment design criteria. Mitigation indices are to exceed pollution indices for all sources of runoff. All SuDS measures are to be demonstrated on the drainage plan.
- Detailed design (plans, network details and full hydraulic calculations) in support of any surface water drainage scheme, including details on any attenuation system, SuDS features and the outfall arrangements.
- Calculations shall demonstrate the performance of the designed system and attenuation storage for a range of return periods and storm durations, to include as a minimum the 1:1 year, 1:30 year and the 1:100-year plus climate change return periods.
- Plans illustrating flooded areas and flow paths in the event of exceedance of the drainage system.
- Finished floor levels to be set higher than ground levels to mitigate the risk from exceedance flows.
- Arrangements for the control of surface water as part of any temporary works associated with the permanent development
- Management and maintenance plan for surface water drainage to ensure that surface water drainage systems shall be maintained and managed for the lifetime of the development.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

18. The development shall be carried out in accordance with a dust management plan to control dust and other emissions during all phases of development which shall first have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority.
19. No dwellinghouse accessed from the A513 (Beaconside) shall be occupied unless and until the new access from the A513 and the associated Toucan crossing have been provided in accordance with details, which shall be broadly in accordance with drawing 5206018-ATK-RB-ZZ-DR-C-2002 P03, and which shall have first been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority.
20. No dwellinghouse accessed from the B5066 (Sandon Road) shall be occupied unless and until the new access from the B5066 has been provided in accordance with details, which shall be broadly in accordance with drawing 5206018-ATK-PJ-ZZ-DR-C-1001 P02, and which shall have first been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The B5066 access shall thereafter be restricted for the use of up to 120 properties only, except when in use as an emergency access onto the local road network should the primary access off the A513 be unavailable.

21. No dwellinghouse shall be occupied unless and until a 3.5m wide shared use path along the site boundary on the A513 (Beaconside) and B5066 (Sandon Road) has been provided in accordance with details which shall first have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority.
22. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use unless and until a travel plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The travel plan shall set out proposals (including a timetable) to promote travel by sustainable modes and report to the local highway authority. The Travel Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the timetable set out in that plan.

The reasons for the Council's decision to approve the development subject to the above conditions are:

1. This is a grant of outline planning permission only.
2. To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
3. To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
4. To define the permission.
5. To define the permission.
6. To safeguard the occupiers of the approved dwelling(s) from undue noise. (Policy N1e of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
7. To enable the Local Planning Authority to consider the scheme of development and the landscaping proposals in relation to the existing trees and hedges. (Policy N4 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
8. In order to ensure ease of movement and permeability in to, out of, and within the development. (Policy N1 (o) of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
9. In order to ensure that the development does not result in damage or harm to legally protected species or their habitat/roost and that the development results in a net gain in biodiversity. (Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework).
10. In order to ensure that an appropriate record is kept of a heritage asset in accordance with paragraph 218 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
11. In order to ensure that adequate provision is made to safeguard human health. (Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy N1e of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
12. In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the Organisational Licence (WML-OR148, or a 'Further Licence'), section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

13. In order to adequately compensate for negative impacts to great crested newts, and in line with section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
14. In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the Organisational Licence (WML-OR148, or a 'Further Licence'), section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
15. In order to ensure that the development does not result in damage or harm to legally protected species or their habitat/roost. (Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework).
16. In the interests of the safety and convenience of users of the highway. (Policy T1c of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
17. To prevent the increased risk of flooding both on and off site (Policy N2 of the Plan for Stafford Borough).
18. In order to ensure that adequate provision is made to safeguard human health. (Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy N1e of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
19. In the interests of the safety and convenience of users of the highway. (Policy T1c of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
20. In the interests of the safety and convenience of users of the highway. (Policy T1c of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
21. In the interests of the safety and convenience of pedestrians. (Policy T1 and N1o of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
22. In order to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes and reduce the impact of traffic from new development on the road network. (Policy T1 (b, d, and g) of The Plan for Stafford Borough).

Informatives

- 1 In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Order) 2015, as amended, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, the Council has worked in a positive and proactive way in determining the application and has granted planning permission.
- 2 It is recommended that the NatureSpace Best Practice Principles are considered and implemented where possible and appropriate.

It is recommended that the NatureSpace certificate is submitted to this planning authority at least 6 months prior to the intended commencement of any works on site.

It is essential to note that any works or activities whatsoever undertaken on site (including ground investigations, site preparatory works or ground clearance) prior to receipt of the written authorisation from the planning authority which permits the development to proceed under the District Licence (WML-OR148, or a 'Further Licence') are not licensed under the great crested newt District Licence. Any such works or activities have no legal protection under the great crested newt District Licence and if offences against great crested newts are thereby committed then criminal investigation and prosecution by the police may follow.

It is essential to note that any ground investigations, site preparatory works and ground /vegetation clearance works / activities (where not constituting development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) in a red zone site authorised under the District Licence but which fail to respect controls equivalent to those detailed in the planning condition above which refers to the NatureSpace great crested newt mitigation principles would give rise to separate criminal liability under the District Licence, requiring authorised developers to comply with the District Licence and (in certain cases) with the GCN Mitigation Principles (for which Natural England is the enforcing authority); and may also give rise to criminal liability under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and/or the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (for which the Police would be the enforcing authority).

- 3 The applicant's attention is drawn to the comments of various consultees, and in particular the local highway authority, the Environment Agency, Cadent, Staffordshire Police, and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service. All comments can be viewed online through the planning public access pages of the Council's website (www.staffordbc.gov.uk).
- 4 The applicant's attention is drawn to the protected status of nesting birds and the requirement that they are not disrupted during the nesting season (March to August).

22/36919/OUT

Land Off Sandon Road And MOD 4 Site Beaconside

Stafford



Application:	24/38969/FUL
Case Officer:	Steven Owen
Date Registered:	13 August 2024
Target Decision Date:	12 November 2024
Extended To:	-
Address:	GE Grid Solutions, Ranshaw Drive, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST17 4FD
Ward:	Forebridge
Parish:	-
Proposal:	Demolition of existing 4 storey office block and proposed new HVDC buildings
Applicant:	GE Grid Solutions
Recommendation:	Approve, subject to conditions

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application has been referred to the Planning Committee because the development is a large-scale major application which the Council's Constitution requires determination by the Planning Committee.

Context

The application site comprises a large factory complex inside the Forebridge ward of Stafford. The 42,800sqm site is owned and operated by the applicant, GE Grid Solutions – an energy and technology business. The site is used to manufacture large power transformers which form part of an electrical grid's infrastructure. According to GE Vernova's own website, the application site is the UK's only large-scale electrical grid manufacturing facility.

The site is inside the settlement of Stafford and is within 1 mile of its town centre. The site is surrounded by a mix of land uses and development types. The site shares its northern boundary with a Travelodge hotel, a Taco Bell and a KFC. Along its eastern boundary, the site is accessed via two vehicle entrances off Ranshaw Drive. The land use to the south and west is principally residential, however the western boundary is shared with a children's nursery and St Pauls Primary School. The playing field of St Augustine's Primary School is also located to the north-west of the site.

The residential land-use continues beyond the site's eastern boundary. There is an ongoing redevelopment of the former Lichfield Road works to provide 359 dwellinghouses (20/32041/OUT and 22/36245/REM). Commercial land-use also extends beyond the site's north eastern boundary. The nearby Hough retail park contains several large units and an expansive carpark.

The sites development constraints include the following:

- The Forebridge Conservation Area is located to the north and north-west of the site.
- The site is within 15km of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation.
- The site falls within Flood Zone 1 (The least likely to flood).
- The Amber and Green Newt Impact zone extends across the site.
- Tree Protection Order A1 is adjacent to the north-west corner of the site.

The Development Site

The site contains the large factory building, a four-storey office block, associated service yards, subservient buildings, and two carparks. The site also contains a new building currently under construction (23/38311/FUL and 24/39233/FUL).

The main factory is an expansive building with a floor area of approx. 18,607sqm. The factory has a rectangular footprint and rises in height in steps from 13m up to 26.5m (west to east), before reducing to 10m in height at the east. The four-storey office block also has an approx. 1,285sqm footprint and reaches a total height of 16m.

Background

The site has a well-established industrial and manufacturing use. The existing factory first appears on OS maps dated from 1956-1973. Historically the site formed part of a much larger complex which included the adjacent Lichfield Road works. The Lichfield Road works first industrialised the area in the early 1900s.

In 2023 planning permission was granted for the demolition of the Lichfield Road works and replacement with 359 dwellinghouses. The northern element of this permission is substantially complete and occupied. The remaining portion is under construction.

A prior approval application has been submitted for the demolition of the existing 4-storey office block (24/40068/PDEM).

Proposal

The application seeks Full planning permission to expand the factory. The factory expansion would provide a new test building for the High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) electrical transformers prior to dispatch. Currently the new product is loaded externally onto vehicles. The adjacent dispatch facility would provide a dedicated internal space to prepare HVDCs for dispatch.

In summary the proposal includes the following elements:

- Demolition of the existing 4-storey office block.
- A reorganised parking arrangement resulting in three parking areas and 242 parking spaces.
- Extension of the factory to create three sections: a 1,012smq 'Connect' facility (25m high) which would link the existing factory to the proposed 2,113sqm 'HVDC' test facility (42m high). The third section comprises the 1956sqm dispatch facility (27m high).

The design and height of the 'Dispatch' and 'Connect' facilities would be similar in height to the existing factory. The 42m height of the HDVC lab has been determined by the height of the test equipment (max 35m), electrical clearances during operation, and safe working zones.

Officer Assessment – Key Considerations

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) sets out that the determination of applications must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan comprises of The Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031, The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 2011-2031.

In this case the material planning considerations include:

- 1) The principle of the development type within the settlement of Stafford.
- 2) The impact of the development upon the character and appearance of its site and setting, including the Conservation Area and distant views.
- 3) The benefit to the local and national economy.
- 4) The resulting impact upon the area's amenity.
- 5) The proposal's impact upon vehicle access, parking and highway safety.
- 6) The development's drainage strategy and the effect on flood risk.
- 7) The resulting effect upon ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain.

The assessment of each of these material considerations is detailed within the subsequent sections of this report. The report concludes with a planning balance and a recommendation.

1. Principle of Development

The Principle of Development

- 1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, this is echoed in Spatial Principle 1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB). Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that:

“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making...”

However, paragraph 195 states:

“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.”

- 1.2 In this case the site falls within the catchment of a number of SACs, therefore it is necessary for the development to demonstrate it has satisfied the Habitats and Species Regulations in that the integrity of the SACs will not be adversely affected, having regard to avoidance or mitigation measures. This issue is addressed later under section 7 of this report.

Policy Context

- 1.3 Spatial Principle 3 (SP3) states the majority of future development will be delivered through the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy. The county town of Stafford is located at the top of this hierarchy due to its position on national road and rail networks, and its high concentration of services and facilities. Consequently, Stafford has the greatest potential to provide major new development in the borough.
- 1.4 Spatial Principle 7 (SP7) supports development and activities of a scale and nature appropriate to secure the sustainability of any specific settlement.
- 1.5 Policy Stafford 1 states the county towns position at the head of the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy means the strategy for Stafford will seek to enhance its role by increase the range and quality of services and facilities.
- 1.6 Policy E1 states the local economy will be sustained by supporting the location, diversity and intensity of new economic development.
- 1.7 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states sustainable development will be partially achieved through an economic objective to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
- 1.8 Consideration has been given to the suitability of the development within the settlement. It has been concluded that the expansion of an existing factory within Stafford accords with the economic objectives of TPSB and NPPF. This development is therefore acceptable in principle, subject to all other material planning considerations.

Polices and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraphs 8, 12 and 195

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

Policies SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), SP3 (Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy), SP7 (Supporting the Location of New Development), Policy Stafford 1 (Stafford Town) and Policy E1 (Local Economy)

2. Design, Appearance and Conservation

Policy Context

- 2.1 TPSB Policy N1 sets out design criteria including the requirement for design and layout to take account of residential amenity and local context and have high design standards.
- 2.2 Policy N8 states that new development should respect the character of the landscape setting, through design, layout and materials.
- 2.3 Policy N9 explains that development proposals will be expected to sustain and where appropriate enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting by, amongst other matters, promoting high quality design and avoiding unnecessary loss of historic fabric.
- 2.4 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states the creation of high quality, beautiful, and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.
- 2.5 Paragraph 135 states planning decisions should ensure development meets a list of criteria. In summation the paragraph states development should be well-designed to add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of the development. It also states development should be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 2.6 Consideration has therefore been given to the development and its visual impact on the site, the immediate area, and its wider setting in terms of its scale, form and use of materials.

The Existing Site and Setting

- 2.7 The existing complex comprises a large factory, a four-storey office block, and other associated development, such as: service yards, car parks and subservient buildings.
- 2.8 The existing factory has a functional and industrial appearance. The tallest section reaches 26.5m high but the overall massing is staggered, with the buildings smallest section reaching 10m high. The factory is principally finished with grey cladding, but also includes other features, such as a single-storey brick element and openings/windows.
- 2.9 The four-storey office block has a simple form and rectangular footprint. The building is finished with red brickwork and stands on the sites north-eastern corner.

- 2.10 The site's other elements, such as the carpark and service yards, are typical features common within industrial complexes.
- 2.11 The site is situated within an urbanised environment with a mix of surrounding land uses and development types. Residential areas, characterised by low profile dwellinghouses, extend beyond the sites western and southern boundary. East of the site, the former Lichfield Road works is currently being replaced with further residential development. In contrast, the immediate land use to the north is principally commercial, and comprises the Travelodge, KFC and Taco Bell. The Hough retail is also to the north-east of the site.
- 2.12 The Forebridge Conservation Area runs north and west of the site. A portion of the Conservation Area, comprising the St Augustine Primary School playing field, abuts the sites north-west corner. Although not a part of the Conservation Area, the site is within its setting.

The Proposed Development

- 2.13 The application proposes the demolition of the office block and replacement with an expanded factory facility comprising three sections: the 25m high 'Connect' facility, the 42m high HVDC test lab, and the 27m high 'Dispatch' facility. The proposal would expand the factory towards Ranshaw Drive. The expansion would significantly increase the factories height, form and massing.
- 2.14 The dispatch and connect facility have been designed to match the 26.5m height of the highest part of the existing factory. The size and scale of the 42m high HVDC test lab has been determined by the size of the testing equipment and the need for electrical clearances and safe working zones.
- 2.15 In an attempt to visually fragment the buildings massing, the design applies a multi-colour, 'pixelated' pattern to the external cladding. The pixelated pattern would be graded in four grey colour tones. A brick slip would also run along the base of the building.

The Visual Impact Upon the Site

- 2.16 The demolition of the four-storey office block would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the site to a degree which is harmful.
- 2.17 The proposed expansion of the factory would significantly increase its height, scale and mass. While the smaller 'dispatch' and 'connect' elements would have a scale similar to the existing factory, the HDVC building would far surpass the existing factory. The 15.5m difference between the height of the existing factory and HDVC test lab does not sound significant, however the height in combination with its footprint would create a building of substantial mass and scale. Overall, the proposal will become the dominant feature within the site.
- 2.18 However, given the site has a well-established industrial use and functional character, viewed in isolation, the development would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the site itself.

The Visual Impact Upon the Immediate Area

- 2.19 When viewed from within the neighbouring commercial areas, the development would be seen within the context of the Hough retail park and the adjacent fast-food restaurants. These areas have no special character or architectural quality. While the factory extension would dominate views from this vantage, the overall impact upon the character of the commercial area would be acceptable.
- 2.20 While the development would have an acceptable impact upon its commercial setting, it will be mostly experienced from vantages within its residential setting. The areas most affected include the residential properties along Ranshaw Drive and the entrance to the Lichfield Road housing development. However, the development will be experienced daily by any resident who travels along Ranshaw Drive as the development would stand prominently along that road.
- 2.21 The Design Advisor has considered the proposal and commented on its likely visual impact. Within his initial consultation response, he has commented the following:
- 'The height, form and massing of the proposed design, by some contrast, is both significantly taller, incredibly monolithic 3 dimensionally, and is sited at what is possibly the most visible and notable point of the site.'*
- 2.22 Following the submission of amended plans which added the pixelated cladding and brick slip the Design Advisor has commented the following:
- 'Though the siting, scale and massing of the new design is unchanged, the revised design has applied a multi-colour, graded and pixelated approach to the design of the buildings cladding, and in this manner is considered to "fragment" the visual massing and monolithic qualities of the building and renders it as a potentially less visually dominant and imposing presence in its locality.'*
- 2.23 The Design Advisor has concluded his comments with the following analysis,
- 'While there are wider reasons that make support for this proposal compelling, from a design perspective, the latest design, despite commendable and to an extent, successful efforts to ameliorate the concerns about the local impacts of the schemes scale and massing, it is still considered that simply by virtue of the building being so massive, and certainly much larger and taller than any building or structure nearby, that it would still constitute a highly dominant and over-bearing presence locally.'*
- 2.24 The building's scale, mass and height would appear disproportionate to the built scale and pattern of neighbouring dwellings. The proposal has been amended to include a 'pixelated' cladding pattern and brick base to soften the buildings impact. However, due to the proposals vast height and mass, no measures could adequately mitigate the overall visual harm to the character and appearance of the residential setting. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy N1 which states development must have regard for the local context and should preserve and enhance the character of the area.

The Impact Upon Forebridge Conservation Area

- 2.25 Forebridge Conservation Area runs north of the site and abuts the sites northern boundary. The existing factory is already a substantial feature within the setting of the Conservation Area. The proposal would significantly increase the site's prominence.
- 2.26 Commenting on the application, the Conservation Officer has advised that the bulk and massing of the proposed building is inappropriate. She has advised that the development would have a significant impact upon the setting and views of the Conservation Area. She notes the attempt to soft its visual impact with the 'pixelated' cladding but considers it ultimately ineffective given the scale of the building. Consequently, she has concluded that the development would result in *'less than substantial harm to the highest degree'* and is, *'in the realms of what could be described as serious harm.'*
- 2.27 In considering the developments impact upon the Conservation Area, the view of the Conservation Officer has been given weight. It is agreed that the proposal's height, scale and appearance would harm and degrade the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 2.28 Policy N9 of TPSB states all harm to the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, will require clear justification. In this instance it is noted that proposal would expand and develop an industrial complex with a significant manufacturing heritage. The site and the adjacent Lichfield Road works have been industrialised for a combined 120 years. It is also noted that the design and scale of the development has been determined by the technical requirements of the HVDC test lab. Overall, it is considered that the living preservation of the site's industrial heritage, and the technical requirements of the building, provide - on balance - a clear and convincing justification for the harm caused to the setting of Forebridge Conservation Area.

The Impact Upon Distant Views

- 2.29 Due to its form, scale and height, the development would be seen from distant vantages throughout Stafford and the surrounding landscapes. A consultation response has been received from the National Landscapes Officer objecting to the development due to its impact on views within Cannock Chase, and towards Stafford. The Design Advisor has commented on the reasonable expectation that the development would be seen from many locations within the town and surrounding areas. They have advised the development will make a notable feature when viewed against the urbanised areas. While they consider these impacts can't be avoided, they have commented that the cladding design should contribute towards a lessening of the visual impact upon the local area, but the pixelated approach could render the development more noticeable from more far-reaching views.

- 2.30 It is considered that the development's impact upon far and distant views will be notable. However, when this occurs within Stafford, the development would be seen within the urbanised environment. Although imposing from some distant vantages, more generally the developments visual impact should be mitigated by its urban context and the pixelated cladding pattern.
- 2.31 Viewed from further landscapes, such as Cannock Chase, the developments visual impact will be notable due to the lower profile of the settlement. This is to be expected as the tallest structures within an environment become more distinct when viewed at a distance. Even so, the development would be of similar height to other tall buildings within the settlement including Pennycroft Flats, Highfield Flats and the BT building. Therefore, when viewed from far distances the proposed buildings would not stand isolated within the townscape.

Conditions

- 2.32 Should planning permission be granted, conditions should be attached to secure the appearance of the building. A condition should be added which requires the final pattern, finish and colour of the external cladding to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation. A condition should also be added which removes permitted development rights for changes of use, extension and alteration and tele-communications infrastructure. This condition would secure the appearance of the building and would prevent an adverse visual alteration allowed without planning permission under the General Permitted Development Order.

Section Conclusion

- 2.33 The proposed development would have a far-reaching visual impact due to its design, massing and 42m height. To a degree, the visual impact would be reduced by the context from which the building is seen. Within the context of the adjacent retail park, the development would have an acceptable appearance. From distant views within Stafford, the development would be seen within an already urbanised environment. The proposed 'pixelated' cladding pattern will also help lessen its visual impact from some vantages. While the development would harm the setting of the Forebridge Conservation Area, the proposal's manufacturing heritage and its technical requirements provide sufficient justification for its appearance.
- 2.34 However, when considering the developments impact upon its residential settling, it has been concluded that the buildings scale, size and massing would appear overly dominating and wholly disproportionate to a degree which is harmful and contrary to policy N1 of TPSB.

Polices and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraphs 131 and 135

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

Policies N1 (Design), N8 (Landscape Character)

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Design

3. Economic Development

Policy Context

- 3.1 Policy E1 of TPSB states the local economy will be sustained by supporting the local, diversity and intensity of new economic development through the provision of site expansions for current and future employment uses for both small and large businesses.
- 3.2 Policy Stafford 1 states the strategy for Stafford will seek to enhance its role as the county town through the creation of employment growth. The policy states this will be achieved through supporting the continued retention and growth of private sector employers.
- 3.3 In deciding planning applications, the NPPF highlights the need to create the conditions for business to invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 85 states significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. The same paragraph states this is particularly important where, *'Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.'*
- 3.4 Since the application was submitted a revised NPPF has been published which states planning decision should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sections.
- 3.5 Paragraph 87 of the new NPPF states provision should be given to; high technology industries, and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities that are needed to support the growth of these industries. The paragraph also states planning decisions should make provision for the expansion or modernisation of industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.
- 3.6 The NPPF gives no specific definition of an industry of *'local, regional or national importance'*. However, Footnote 43 of the NPPF states the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy identifies priority sectors for growth and support as; advanced manufacturing; clean energy industries; creative industries; defence industries; digital and technology businesses; financial services; life sciences; and professional and business services.
- 3.7 Within this NPPF context, it is considered reasonable to describe the creation and testing of large-scale grid transformers as an industrial activity which falls within the definition of 'advanced manufacturing' and 'high technology industry'.

The Proposals Economic Impact

- 3.8 The proposal would expand and upgrade the sites industrial facilities to meet the market demand for HVDC transformers. To meet this objective the applicant has proposed the construction of the new transformer testing lab and the improved dispatch facility.

- 3.9 In support of their application, an Economic Statement has been provided which highlights the potential economic benefits. Regarding the existing situation, the Statement notes that Stafford is suited for research and advanced manufacturing due to GEs highly skilled staff and the town's position at the heart of the UK's transportation network. The Statement also describes GE as Stafford's largest employer with around 1,700 employees across its sites.
- 3.10 Focusing on the future economic benefits, the Statement describes the HVDC transformers as an essential part of the world's electrical infrastructure and important for the energy transformation. HVDC transformers are technically suited for the requirements of renewable energy production. The proposed expansion of the site is sought to meet the growing market for these transformers. According to the Economic Statement, the site's expansion would result in the recruitment of 97 additional full-time roles working in production, testing, engineering, quality, and procurement. The Economic Statement concludes that the proposed expansion would more than double the sites production capacity to 28-32 HVDC units per year.
- 3.11 The Council's own Economic Development team have reviewed the proposal and provided a consultation response. The response notes that the source for jobs forecast is unknown, but it still advises that the Economic Statement clearly articulates the roles created will be of high value. The response also points to the Council's own economic strategy which promotes commercial investment. In summary, the Economic Development Team has advised that the proposal will result in economic growth and is aligned with the Council's economic growth strategy.

Section Conclusion

- 3.12 The proposed factory expansion would likely result in new high value jobs and local economic development. The expansion and upgrade is needed by the applicant to produce large-scale HVDC transformers, which are key electrical grid infrastructure and support the renewable energy transformation. This form of industry clearly aligns with national economic strategy which places significant support behind high level technology and advanced manufacturing. Overall, the development would result in a clear benefit to the local and national economy. The development strongly accords with Policy E1 of TPSB and Policy 1 Stafford. The application is therefore acceptable regarding its economic development.

4. Residential Amenity

Policy Context

- 4.1 Policy N1 requires the design and layout of development to take account of noise and light implications and amenity of adjacent residential areas. The Design SPD provides guidance on amenity standards and separation distances.
- 4.2 The NPPF states in Paragraph 196 that planning decisions should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking into account its ground conditions, land stability, and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards and former uses.

- 4.3 The NPPF also states in Paragraph 198, that planning decisions should ensure new development is appropriate for its location taking into account its likely effects. The NPPF mentions several effects to consider including pollution, living conditions, the natural environment, noise resulting from the development, tranquillity, light pollution, and any cumulative effect upon amenity.
- 4.4 The Environmental Protection Act (EPA) establishes a mechanism for local authorities to investigate 'statutory nuisances'. These nuisances can include noise and artificial light. The EPA is separate from the Town and County Planning Act legislation and is enforced via the Councils own Environmental Health Team.
- 4.5 Paragraph 201 of the NPPF states the focus of planning decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions. Where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes, planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. The EPA can be considered one such regime.
- 4.6 Notwithstanding the EPA, consideration has still been given to whether the proposed development is an appropriate use of land, and how the finished proposal would impact residential well-being through disturbance or nuisance material to planning.

Existing Level of Amenity

- 4.7 The site has a well-established industrial and manufacturing use. The current use causes the site to emit a baselevel of existing noise and residential disturbance. It is this level of existing noise and disturbance that the application has been considered against.

Proposed Developments Impact

- 4.8 The application proposes a factory expansion to facilitate the manufacture, testing, and dispatch of electrical transformers. The new facility would increase the massing of the existing building to a substantial degree. The construction of this facility aims to increase its productivity and the frequency of dispatches.
- 4.9 As the application would expand the factory's use, and its physical massing, consideration has been given to how the proposal would affect the amenity of surrounding uses.
- 4.10 The enlarged factory would have an increase footprint and height. The footprint of the building would expand towards the northern boundary by 18m. This expansion would reduce the distance of the factory to the hotel to 12.5m. The distance to the Taco Bell and the KFC would also be reduced to 13m and 16m. In comparison to the existing factory the 'Connect' section would not significantly increase the factories height. However, the HDVC test lab facility would result in a 26m increase compared with the existing office building. The encroachment in combination with the proposal's height would result in an overbearing impact and would result in a significant increase in shadow falling on these units.

- 4.11 Despite the shadow and the buildings mass, the ability of these units to undertake their commercial function would be unaffected. Although the setting of their use would be infringed, the development would not adversely harm their ability to operate.
- 4.12 Consideration has also been given to the development's impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residential properties and schools. The nearest residential dwelling No. 19 Ranshaw Drive is approx. 56m to the south of the proposed development. No.19 is one of a 9 terraced dwellings which would face the development. Two semi-detached dwellings No. 2 and 4 Ranshaw Drive would also face the development at a distance of 112m. The nearest dwellings on the new Lichfield Road development would stand 269m from the development. The nearest school, St Pauls Primary school would be 112m to the north-west of the 'Connect' facility and 116m from the HDVC test facility. However, the existing factory would stand between it and the proposed development.
- 4.13 In terms of shadowing, the proposed development is located to the north of the dwellings which would be close enough to be affected by shadows. There is therefore low risk of shadows being cast onto dwellings located to the south of the proposal. While St. Pauls Primary School is to the north-west of the site, its 116m distance and position behind the existing factory should reduce additional shadowing effect.
- 4.14 In terms of noise and general disturbance, it is noted that the application seeks to expand the factory's current use. The expansion of an existing manufacturing operation should not – in itself- generate an unacceptable increase in noise levels. Although it is anticipated that the frequency of dispatches would increase, it is not anticipated that the level of noise would increase. It is therefore anticipated that the level of noise and disturbance emanating from the site during operation should not adversely increase due to the development.
- 4.15 The objections from neighbours to the development due to concerns relating to noise and disturbance have been considered.
- 4.16 The Environmental Health team has been consulted on the development. Following the submission of additional information the Environmental Health Team has raised no objection. The additional information provided includes a Construction Environmental Management Plan, lighting report and a land contamination report. Although the Environmental Health Team have not requested a condition securing compliance with these documents, where necessary a condition should be attached to protect amenity during and after construction.
- 4.17 Environmental Health has however requested a condition relating to mechanical ventilation. The condition would require the details of any mechanical ventilation system to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation. This condition is considered reasonable and necessary and should be attached to the decision notice if permission is granted.
- 4.18 Environmental Health has confirmed that given the site already has an existing commercial/industrial use, they do not require a planning condition which controls noise resulting from the developments use and operation.

- 4.19 The Environment Agency has been consulted on the development has raised no objection but has suggested a standard informative relating to land contamination.
- 4.20 Notwithstanding the Lighting report which has been submitted with the application, a condition should be attached to the decision notice requiring the submission and approval of any external lighting prior to installation.

Section Conclusion

- 4.21 The proposed development would replace an office block with and expanded factory facility. The Environmental Health team has been consulted on the development and no objection has been raised subject to a noise condition relating to mechanical ventilation. Other conditions relating to the construction phase and lighting should also be attached if permission is granted. In terms of the developments impact upon dwellings and schools, it is considered on balance that the development would not result in any adverse loss of light or any adverse increase in noise. It is concluded that the proposed development, subject to these conditions would adhere to Policy N1. The development is therefore acceptable regarding amenity.

Polices and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

Paragraph 196, 198, 201

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

Policy N1 (Design)

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Design

5. Access, Parking and Highway Safety

Policy Context

- 5.1 Policy T2 states that all new development must have a safe and adequate means of access and internal circulation. It also stated development should provide sufficient parking provision.
- 5.2 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.3 Within this policy context, consideration has been given to how the proposed development would affect the functioning and safety of the highway for all users.

The Impact Upon Parking and Public Highway

- 5.4 The proposed development would demolish the office block, expand the existing factory, and rearrange the onsite parking provision. Currently the parking provision within the site is separated into the main carpark (east) and the office block carpark (north). These two carparks in combination provide 268 parking spaces. Following completion of this proposal, and the building approved under 23/38311/FUL, the parking provision would be split into three areas, the main carpark, the remaining northern carpark, and the new rear yard parking. These three carparks would provide a total of 242 parking spaces – a reduction of 26 spaces.
- 5.5 The Highway Authority has been consulted on the proposed parking provision. The Highway Authority notes the resulting loss of 26 parking spaces. The Highway Authority however also notes that the parking standards for industrial buildings is different than office buildings.
- 5.6 Appendix B of TPSB requires 1 space per 25sqm of office floor area up to 250sqm, and then 1 space per 30sqm thereafter. For 'Industry' Appendix B requires 1 space per 25sqm of floor space up to 250sqm then 1 space per 50sqm thereafter.
- 5.7 In this case, the proposed the four-storey office block has a total floor area of approx. 3970sqm. The parking requirement for this building is 134 carparking spaces. The proposed factory expansion has a total floor area of approx. 5,650sqm. The parking requirement for the proposed expansion is 118 parking spaces. The expanded factory therefore requires 16 spaces less than the current office block.
- 5.8 Although the development and parking rearrangement would result in the physical loss of 26 spaces, according to Appendix B, the development would result in the net loss of 10 parking spaces.
- 5.9 In completing their assessment, the Highway Authority conclude that the net loss of 10 parking spaces is acceptable. The Highway Authority concludes that all the existing spaces are not utilised, and given the site proximity to the town centre, the proposed 242 parking spaces would not cause any road safety concerns.
- 5.10 The Highway Authority has raised no object to the development subject to a condition requiring the parking and turning spaces to be implemented in accordance with the submitted plans.
- 5.11 The applicant has confirmed in their Transport Statement that the overall method of dispatching products from the factory would remain unchanged. The same vehicle access would be used and no new turning circles are required. The Highway Authority notes in their comments that there is an anticipated increase in the frequency of products being dispatched but they have raised no concerns or objections. Similarly, the Police have noted the transport movement information in their consultation response and have raised no objections.

- 5.12 Within their Transport Statement, the applicant has detailed an intention to implement a strategy to reduce the number of supplier deliveries to the site. The strategy involves the use of a storage warehouse on the Redhill Estate. However, the applicant is still negotiating for the warehouse, and its use has not been secured. The stated reduction of 37 deliveries a week has therefore been given little weight.
- 5.13 Regarding construction traffic, the submitted CEMP states the delivery periods will be limited to Monday to Friday 0800 to 13.45, and from 14.15 to 18:00. This is due to shift changes at the facility. The CEMP also states where heavy or multiple deliveries occur they will be redirected to a holding area and called when required to prevent congestion on both Ranshaw Drive and the site. The Highway Authority has noted the CEMP in their comments but has not requested a condition securing its implementation. It is considered reasonable and necessary to add this condition if permission is approved to limit impacts on the highway network during construction.
- 5.14 Multiple neighbour comments have been received concerned about the state of on street parking along Ranshaw Drive. During site visits it has been noted that the road is congested with vehicles parked along much of its length. However, the Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposed parking arrangement and has advised that there is sufficient parking provision given its sustainable location within the settlement.

The Planning Balance and Section Conclusion

- 5.15 The development, subject to conditions, would provide sufficient parking provision and limit the construction phase impact upon the functioning of the highway network. The proposal is considered to adhere with Policy T2 of TPSB. The application is therefore acceptable with regards to parking, access and highway safety.

Polices and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

Section 9

The Plan for Stafford Borough (TPSB) 2011-2031

Policies T1 (Transport), T2 (Parking and Manoeuvring Facilities), Appendix B – Car Parking Standards

6. Flooding and Drainage

The Policy Context

- 6.1 TPSB Policy N2 requires developments to provide sustainable drainage systems. Policy Stafford 1 reiterates this and also states that development should not harm but enhance watercourses in the town.

The Flood Risk and Proposed Drainage System

- 6.2 The proposed development is located within Flood Zone 1 which is least likely to flood (1 in 1000 year event). The application however is a Large-Scale Major, and so the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has been consulted.
- 6.3 The LLFA has considered the submitted drainage strategy and has raised no objection subject to a pre-commencement condition which requires the final surface water drainage plan to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This condition is considered reasonable and necessary and should be attached to the decision notice if permission is granted.

Planning Balance and Section Conclusion

- 6.4 Subject to the stated condition, the proposal would result in a sufficient surface water drainage system. The application is therefore compliant with Policy N2 of TPSB and acceptable regarding flooding and drainage.

Polices and Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

Sections 14 and 15

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies Stafford 1 (Stafford Town), N2 (Climate Change),

7. Ecology and Landscaping

Policy Context

- 7.1 TPSB Policy N4 states that the natural environment will be protected and that new development where damage to the natural environment is unavoidable must provide appropriate mitigation.
- 7.2 Policy N1 requires development to retain significant biodiversity and landscaping features and create new biodiversity areas.
- 7.3 Policy N5 states the highest level of protect will be given to European Sites, with new development only permitted where;
- A) There will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, or
 - B) If adverse effects are identified, it can be demonstrated that the proposed mitigation measures show that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any European site; or
 - C) if it cannot be ascertained that no adverse effect on integrity will result, the proposed development will only be able to proceed where there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

Habitat Regulation Assessment

- 7.4 The site is within 15km of the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation; however, due to the nature of the proposal it is not considered that the development would result in any impact on the reasons for the designation of the SAC. The Council is, therefore, not required to carry out an appropriate assessment.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.5 The proposed development would see the demolition of an existing building and redevelopment of brownfield land. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment has been submitted which states no protected species were found. However, the standard informative should be attached to the decision notice if approved which reminds developers that nesting birds are legally protected.
- 7.6 The site is not exempt from national Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. The applicant has submitted a BNG metric which indicates a -14% loss of onsite biodiversity but has submitted a report which details a plan to provide the 10% net gain through the purchase of BNG credits. To secure the required BNG, a standard pre-commencement condition should be attached which requires the developer to submit a Biodiversity Gain Plan for approval by the Local Planning Authority.
- 7.7 Regarding trees, the Tree Officer has advised that there is no apparent impact on any retained trees on the site and the more valuable trees along the southern edge of the site are not directly affected by the proposal. However, given the scale of the development they have advised a pre-commencement condition should be attached detailing the protection of those trees which are to be retained within the site. This condition is considered reasonable and necessary and should be attached to the decision notice if permission is approved.

Section Conclusion

- 7.8 Subject to adhering to BNG condition the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regards to ecology and landscaping, and adheres to the development plan and NPPF in this regard.

Polices and Guidance:

Environment Act 2021

National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (NPPF)

Section 15, Paragraphs 192-195

The Plan for Stafford Borough

Policies N1 (Design), N2 (Climate Change), N4 (The Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure), N5 (Sites of European, National and Local Nature Conservation Importance) N6 (Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC))

Planning Balance and Conclusion

In conclusion the proposal is acceptable in principle and would expand an existing factory within the settlement of Stafford. The scale, massing and height of the development would appear wholly disproportionate to the neighbouring residential area and would result in adverse visual harm contrary to Policy N1 and harm to the setting of the Forebridge Conservation Area. However, the proposed expansion of a HVDC transformer factory would provide local and national economic benefits which accords with Policy E1 of TPSB and Policy 1 Stafford. While the decision is finely balanced, the economic benefits have been given greater weight in this case. This conclusion has been made because of several factors:

- Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states significant weight should be placed on supporting economic growth and productivity. Paragraph 87 also states planning decisions should make provision for high technology industries and the expansion of industries of local, regional and national importance.
- The permission would increase the manufacture of HVDC transformers, a key part of electrical grid infrastructure which supports the energy transformation. This industry is considered of local, regional and national importance.
- The proposed expansion of the site is likely to result in the creation of high value jobs and significant financial investment within an industrial site inside Stafford.
- Although disproportionate to its residential setting, the size and scale of the 42m high HVDC test lab has been determined by the technical requirements of the advanced manufacturing process.
- While the proposal would cause visual harm to its residential setting, the development would occur within a well-established factory complex.

Overall, the proposal is also considered acceptable regarding conservation, amenity, parking and access, flood risk and drainage, and ecology.

On balance, and subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to comply with TPSB as a whole and to the NPPF, and is recommended for approval.

Consultations

Design Advisor:

Advises the development, due its height, mass and scale would exert a significantly dominating visual impact.

Conservation Officer:

Objects to the development due to its harm to the setting of the Forebridge Conservation Area

Environmental Health:

No objection, subject to a condition securing a noise assessment and mechanical ventilation details prior to installation.

The Highway Authority:

No objection, subject to a condition secure the proposed parking and access.

Economic Development Team:

Supports the application

Historic England:

No comment

Environment Agency:

No objection

Police Liaison Officer:

No objection

Lead Local Flood Team:

No objection, subject to a pre-commencement condition requiring the submission of a final drainage plan.

Biodiversity Officer: (Comments dated 20/01/2025 - received prior to the most recently received BNG metric and information)

The BNG metric shows a unit deficit with input errors/rule breaks in the Metric. Insufficient information on 10% BNG delivery. No comments received on the revised BNG metric and information.

Newt Officer:

No objection

Tree Officer:

No objection, subject to a pre-commencement condition requiring tree protection measures.

National Landscapes Officer:

Objects due to the developments impact upon view of and from Cannock Chase National Landscape.

Neighbours (274 consulted):

17 responses: Material planning considerations summarised below:

- The existing congestion of Ranshaw Drive caused by on street carparking and concerns the development would worsen the situation to a degree which is dangerous and unsafe.
- The loss of light.
- Concerns regarding a lack of construction traffic parking.
- Concerns the development would result in dust, noise and debris
- Concern the development would have an adverse visual impact due to its size and location within a residential setting.
- Concern the development would result in an adverse increase in site noise.
- Concern the development would result in adverse site vibration.

Site Notice expiry date: 11 October 2024

Newsletter Advert expiry date: 9 October 2024

Relevant Planning History

23/38311/FUL - Proposed new test supply building – Permit - 3 April 2024

24/39233/FUL - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on application 23/38311/FUL – Permit - 23 September 2024

24/40068/PDEM - Former 4 storey office block, with flat roof, brick walls and timber windows – Pending Consideration

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings, except where indicated otherwise by a condition attached to this consent, in which case the condition shall take precedence: -

Location Plan (Drawing No. 2314/PL/10)

Proposed Site Plan (Drawing No. 2314/PL/12 Revision E)

Proposed Floor Plan (Drawing No. 2314/PL/13 Revision A)

Proposed Elevations (Drawing No. 2314/PL/15 Revision D)

Proposed Elevations (Drawing No. 2314/PL/14 Revision D)

3. Prior to commencement, details of a Temporary Traffic Management Scheme along Ranshaw Drive shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
4. Prior to commencement of any ground works and construction activity, details of the location and type of protective fencing around the soft landscaping shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the local planning authority, including the delivery to site of any materials or equipment. The protective fencing shall be maintained throughout development until completion of all construction related activity unless agreed otherwise in writing with the local planning authority.
5. No development shall begin until the final detailed surface water drainage design has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority. The final design must conform to the design detail summarised in the Drainage strategy Document 100118378-MMD-XX-RP-ZZ-0002 (27 November 2024).

The design must further demonstrate:

- a) A surface water drainage system designed in accordance with the non-technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (DEFRA, March 2015).
- b) Restricted discharge rate as per the approved drainage document or as by requested by the either Severn Trent Water or the Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board.
- c) Attenuation storage to achieve restricted rate.
- d) The use of permeable paving in private parking areas.
- e) Detailed design (plans, network details and full hydraulic calculations) in support of any surface water drainage scheme, including details on any attenuation system, SuDS features (i.e., permeable paving), hydrobrake and the outfall arrangements.
- f) Performance calculations should demonstrate the performance of the designed system and attenuation storage for a range of return periods and critical storm durations (15 mins up to 48 hours), to include as a minimum the 1:2 year, 1:30 year and the 1:100-year plus climate change return periods.
- g) The hydraulic modelling design shall use FEH Rainfall Data and shall apply a 30% allowance upon rainfall to model the impact of climate change.
- h) A plan showing the total impermeable/ permeable areas of the development layout shall be submitted alongside the drainage design to confirm the contributing areas within the hydraulic model.
- i) Plans illustrating flooded areas and flow paths in the event of exceedance of the drainage system. In all cases, the surrounding ground level shall slope away from the finished floor level of any entrances to mitigate against the risk of surface water inundation.

- j) Provision of an acceptable management and maintenance plan to ensure that surface water drainage systems shall be maintained and managed for the lifetime of the development. To include the name and contact details of the body(-ies) responsible.

The development shall thereafter proceed in accordance with the approved details.

6. Prior to the development first being brought into use, the parking, servicing and turning areas shall have been provided in accordance with the approved plans and thereafter retained.
7. Notwithstanding the approved plans, prior to installation, the pattern, finish and colour of the external flat metal panels shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and thereafter fully implemented in accordance with those details.
8. Prior to the installation of any mechanical ventilation, an existing site noise assessment and full specification details of the proposed ventilation equipment, including anticipated noise, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with those approved details.
9. Prior to the installation of any external lighting, a plan detailing its location, orientation and brightness shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall thereafter be implemented in full accordance with the approved details.
10. The proposed development shall be constructed in accordance with the submitted Construction Environmental Management Plan (Document: 413417000420-HS-0018 Revision 01 and Document: 413417000420-HS-016 Revision 01).
11. Notwithstanding the Construction Environmental Management Plan, construction phase deliveries shall only occur between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday - Friday and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
12. Notwithstanding the Construction Environmental Management Plan, the construction hours shall be limited to between 08:00 and 18:00 Monday - Friday, and 08:00 and 14:00 on Saturdays, and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
13. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development permitted by virtue of Part 3 (Changes of Use), Part 7 (Non-domestic extensions and alterations etc), Part 16 (Communications) of Schedule 2 to the Order shall be undertaken.

The reasons for the Council's decision to approve the development subject to the above conditions are:

1. To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. To define the permission.

3. For the safety and convenience of all road users (Policy T2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
4. To safeguard trees from harm (Policy N4 of The Plan for Stafford Borough).
5. To secure a suitable drainage strategy (Policy N2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
6. For the safety and convenience of all road users (Policy T2 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
7. To safeguard the character and appearance of the area (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
8. To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
9. To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
10. To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
11. To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
12. To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)
13. To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and prevent uses of inappropriate for the buildings scale (Policy N1 of The Plan for Stafford Borough)

Informatives

- 1 In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Order) 2015, as amended, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, the Council has worked in a positive and proactive way in determining the application and has granted planning permission.
- 2 The applicant's attention is drawn to the protected status of nesting birds and the requirement that they are not disrupted during the nesting season (March to August).

24/38969/FUL
GE Grid Solutions
Ranshaw Drive
Stafford

