Development Management Committee 14th October 2020

Item 4
Report No. EPSH2030
Section C

The information, recommendations and advice contained in this report are correct as at the date of preparation, which is more than two weeks in advance of the Committee meeting. Because of these time constraints some reports may have been prepared in advance of the final date given for consultee responses or neighbour comment. Any changes or necessary updates to the report will be made orally at the Committee meeting.

Case Officer Chris Jones

Application No. 20/00593/FULPP

Date Valid 14th August 2020

Expiry date of

consultations

25th September 2020

Proposal Alterations and extensions to existing dwelling to form 2 three-

bedroom semi-detached dwellings and 1 three bedroom detached

dwelling house with parking and additional dropped kerb

Address 16 Churchill Avenue Aldershot Hampshire GU12 4JR

Ward Manor Park

Applicant Mrs Fahmida Mandozai

Agent Mr Mit Auluck

Recommendation Refuse

Description

The site comprises a two-storey three-bedroom detached dwelling house with single storey side and rear extensions on a substantial plot at the south-eastern end of Churchill Avenue, a cul-de-sac off Church Hill. The property is located on elevated ground above the level of the roadway and has two vehicular access points providing an in and out drive. Aside from the house and the driveway, the majority of the site is laid to grass with some hedging along the boundary. Ground levels within the rise towards the rear.

The proposal is to demolish the existing single-storey extensions to the house and to add a two-storey extension on its north-western side, single-storey extensions to the rear and an additional two-storey bay window on the front elevation. The extended building would be divided into a pair of part two-storey and part single storey 3-bedroom semi-detached houses of symmetrical appearance. On the south-eastern side of this extended building, a detached 3 bedroom dwellinghouse of similar design would be erected. Each property would have a private garden to the rear, including a patio area, which would be dug into the slope of the land. The development would utilise external materials matching those used in the existing building - brickwork and tile-hanging for the walls and tiled, hipped roofs. A parking area would be provided to the front of each property containing two parking spaces – the existing vehicular entrances would be retained to serve the outer-most properties and a new vehicular entrance between them would serve the central property. The drive and parking

area would be surfaced with permeable materials.

Consultee Responses

HCC Highways Development

Planning

No Objection.

Natural England No objection, provided that mitigation is provided for

the impact of the development upon the Thames Basin

Heaths Special Protection Area.

Neighbours notified

In addition to posting a site notice and press advertisement, 6 individual letters of notification were sent to properties in Churchill Avenue, Samson Close and Church Lane East.

Neighbour comments

Letters of objection have been received from the occupiers of 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 20 Churchill Avenue, who oppose the scheme on the grounds that:

The proposal would result in a dense mass of buildings in an elevated position, which would be wholly out-of-character with its surroundings and therefore would be an overdevelopment of the site, detrimental to the character and amenity of Churchill Avenue. The proposal also fails to respect established building lines, would have a frontage dominated by car parking and would fail to include high-quality design that respects the character and appearance of the local area or make a positive contribution to the public realm – facing the street, animating it and ensuring that all open space within the curtilage of the site is positively used and managed, as required by Policy DE1 of the Rushmoor Local Plan.

The proposal to extend the existing dwelling to form a pair of semi-detached houses may result in a poor visual appearance if the developer is unable or unwilling to find closely matching materials.

The proposed development would have an unacceptable impact upon the outlook and natural daylight at the adjoining property to the northeast, 10 Churchill Avenue, the additional dwellings would increase overlooking of the existing dwellinghouses opposite and would detract from their outlook.

The proposal would increase traffic into Churchill Avenue, which is a narrow road and is often congested with parked vehicles. The proposal would result in the loss of an on-street parking bay without re-providing it elsewhere, contrary to Principle 5 of the Car & Cycle Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document and would provide insufficient parking for three houses and this would increase competition for any available on-street parking spaces and this would increase the existing difficulties for emergency and other larger vehicles navigating the street. A full Transport Assessment should be carried out before permission is granted to demonstrate that such problems will not occur. Requirements to submit Traffic Management plan for approval should be made conditional of any planning permission.

The underlying geology is unsuited for the proposed permeable paving for the drive and this is likely to result in surface water runoff onto the road and flooding of properties opposite.

That extending an old and insufficiently thermally insulated would not be as sustainability as demolishing the existing building and erecting new dwellings.

That the construction might affect the stability of the ground and adjacent retaining walls.

That the proposal is unclear as to whether existing boundary hedging will need to be removed and whether new fencing will be provided.

That the proposal would not accord with the plot layout and house numbering that the original developer for Churchill Avenue specified and which indicates that only one additional property should be permitted at 16 Church Avenue.

That there are a number of inaccuracies and misleading statements in the submitted Design & Access Statement.

If permission is granted, conditions should be imposed to control the hours of construction, dust emissions from the site, the parking and delivery arrangements for construction workers and to ensure that side facing windows on the new dwellings are fitted with obscured glazing.

Policy and determining issues

The property is within the Defined Urban Area on the proposals map of the Rushmoor Local Plan 2014-2032.

Policies SS2 (Spatial Strategy), IN2 (Transport), DE1 (Design in the Built Environment), DE2 (Residential Internal Space Standards), DE3 (Residential Amenity Space Standards), DE4 (Sustainable Water Use), DE6 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation), DE7 (Sports Pitches), LN1 (Housing mix), NE1 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area), NE2 (Green Infrastructure), NE4 (Biodiversity) and NE8 (Sustainable Drainage Systems) are considered relevant to the current proposal..) Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan in respect of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area is also relevant.

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) on 'Planning Contributions - Transport' 2008, new 'Car and Cycle Parking Standards' (adopted November 2017), the Rushmoor Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2020; and the advice contained in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) and Planning Practice Guidance are also relevant.

The main determining issues are considered to be:

- 1. Principle of development;
- 2. Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- 3. The impact on neighbours;
- 4. The living environment created;
- 5. Impact on trees:
- 6. Impact on wildlife;
- 7. Highway considerations:
- 8. Public Open Space and
- 9. Drainage issues;

Commentary

Principle of development -

The site is within the built-up area, where residential development is considered to be acceptable, provided that it is appropriate to the character of the area and satisfies the relevant policies of the Local Plan.

Impact on the character and appearance of the area –

Churchill Avenue is characterized by two distinct types of housing: The majority of dwellings are semi-detached houses of uniform design, on plots of varying widths and depths. Many of these have been extended. Four properties, including the application property, are of individual design and are located in larger plots. The application site is by far the largest of these plots. However the existing dwelling is located centrally in its plot and is well spaced from its neighbours. The semi-detached houses around the head of the cul-de-sac are also set in wider plots, which give the south-eastern end of Churchill Avenue a somewhat different and more open character than the remainder of this road. Redevelopment of this site, which is elevated relative to the road, would need to retain this more open character in order to address the requirements of Policy DE1, to include high quality design that respects the character and appearance of the local area and with regard to Policy DE11, achieve a development that would not harm the character of the area in terms of its relationships and integration with the existing buildings and spaces and its impact on the street scene.

The proposal would extend the existing building to the side to within one metre of the boundary with No,10 Churchill Avenue and the proposed new detached property would be one metre from the boundary with No,18. While there would be a small gap between the detached and semi-detached houses, this would not be visible from most angles and thus the built form would extend almost from boundary to boundary in marked contrast to the current situation. The separation between the new dwellings would be substantially less than even the most closely spaced dwellings in the street. While the proportions of the semi-detached houses appear satisfactory when viewed from the street, the detached dwelling appears to have been designed to fit in the remaining gap and is substantially smaller in width than any other detached property in this road. The result of this, combined with frontages that would be dominated by parking areas, would be a cramped development that would not make a positive contribution towards improving the quality of the built environment, would relate poorly to its surroundings and would detract from the street scene and the character of the area, contrary to Policies DE1 and DE11 of the Local Plan.

The impact on neighbours

The existing building is set back from the road and its front elevation is approximately level with the rear elevation of the adjoining property 10 Churchill Avenue. However, the existing dwelling is set a considerable distance from the boundary and, accordingly, has little impact upon the light, outlook and amenity of this property. However, the proposal involves the extension of the building to within a metre of the boundary. Consequently almost the whole of the side elevation of the new dwelling would be visible from the rear facing windows of this property and its rear garden. While the rear part of the new building would be single storey, it is considered that the unrelieved mass and bulk of building close to the boundary would have a material and adverse impact upon the outlook and amenity of the occupants of this property. The proposal would also be likely to block direct sunlight from the rear facing window of that property. The occupier of this property has submitted drawings showing how

the proposal would breach BRE guidelines by infringing on a 45 degree line drawn from the centre point of his dining and sitting-room windows on the rear elevation. Whilst adherence to or breach of BRE guidance is not determinative of all such applications, it is referred to in the Home Improvements SPD, which acknowledges its value in assessing the impact of household extensions to determine whether the relationship with adjoining properties would be acceptable. It is considered that if the side extension proposed in the current application had been intended to enlarge a single dwelling, rather than to convert the property into two units, it would fall outside what would be considered acceptable using the criteria set out in the Home Improvements SPD. For the purposes of assessing the current application, it is considered that the indication given by applying the BRE test adds weight to the conclusion that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenity of this property, contrary to Policies DE1 and DE11.

The occupiers of this property also comment that the proposed parking spaces would bring vehicle parking area closer to their house, resulting in additional noise and disturbance. While this impact could be ameliorated by an appropriate boundary wall or fence, the arrangements as shown add to the adverse impact of the development on the amenity of the occupiers of 10 Churchill Avenue. The proposed relationship with the property on the opposite side - 20 Churchill Avenue – would be much more conventional and is considered acceptable, as is the relationship with properties in Samson Close and Church Lane East.

Occupants of the properties on the opposite side of Churchill Avenue have objected to the proposal on the grounds that the development would result in an increase in the number of properties on raised ground overlooking their properties, thus resulting in an unacceptable loss of privacy. It is noted that the separation between the mutually facing windows would be substantial, and significantly greater than the equivalent distance between facing properties in the majority of suburban residential streets elsewhere in the Borough, including other sections of Churchill Avenue. It is considered that any impact in this respect could not substantiate a reason for refusal of planning permission.

The living environment created –

It is considered that the proposal would meet the internal space standards set out in the in the Government's Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard and Rushmoor Local Plan Policy DE2 and would be acceptable in this regard. The new dwellings would benefit from an acceptable amount of natural daylight and ventilation and would be provided with private garden areas that would meet the requirements of Policy DE3. It is therefore considered that a satisfactory living environment would be provided for the occupants of the proposed properties.

Impact on trees –

There are no amenity trees on the land or adjoining it that would need to be removed or otherwise be threatened by the development..

Impact on wildlife -

Following the receipt of information from the applicants, the Council has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment of the proposals under Regulation 63(1) of the Habitats Regulations. This has concluded that the proposals would, in combination with other plans and projects, be likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). Therefore, having reached this conclusion, in order to be

lawfully permitted, it is necessary for the applicants to secure a package of avoidance and mitigation measures.

In this respect, the Rushmoor Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy is in place to provide the possibility to secure appropriate mitigation and comprises two elements. Firstly, the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) in order to divert additional recreational pressure away from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA); and, secondly, the provision of a range of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures to avoid displacing visitors from one part of the TBHSPA to another and to minimize the impact of visitors on the TBHSPA.

However, although the applicants are aware of the need to address SPA impact and have indicated that they are prepared to make a financial contribution for SPA mitigation and avoidance, they have not obtained an allocation of SPA mitigation capacity from the Council at the pre-application stage to support their proposals. A pre-application submitted earlier in the year resulted in the Council declining to offer SPA mitigation to support that project as it was considered that the proposal was not planning policy compliant. Since the applicants have not taken steps to address this policy requirement it is considered that they have not taken any steps to mitigate the impact of their proposed development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. The proposals thereby conflict with the requirements of Rushmoor Local Plan Policy NE1. The conclusion of the Appropriate Assessment in this case is, therefore, that planning permission be refused on SPA grounds.

No details of any Biodiversity Enhancements to meet the requirements of Policy NE4. This could be dealt with by means of a condition if the Council were minded to grant planning permission.

Highway considerations -

The proposal would provide two parking spaces for each three-bedroom property which fully accords with the adopted parking standards as set out In the Car and Cycle Parking Standards SPD. No visitor parking spaces are shown, although one additional vehicle could be accommodated on the driveway or be parked across the dropped kerb. Therefore, while it is acknowledged that there is high demand for on-street parking in Churchill Avenue, the proposal would not increase this significantly.

Concerns have been raised that the new vehicular access would be dangerous and that the additional dwellings would result in an unacceptable increase in traffic within the Churchill Avenue. Hampshire County Council were consulted on this application and have commented that they, as the highway authority, are satisfied that the additional vehicle movements generated would not result in a severe detrimental impact on the operation or safety of the local highway network.

Objectors have suggested that the proposal is contrary to Principle 5 – Loss of on street parking of the Car & Cycle Parking SPD. This states that the loss of on street parking spaces to facilitate a new or modified access to the highway shall be re-provided. The supporting text says that where planning permission is required, the loss of an on-street parking space to facilitate a new vehicular access to the highway for a new development shall be reprovided within the site or accommodated on street. Given that the proposal would result in an overall increase in off-road parking at the site to meet the requirements of the SPD, it is

considered that this principle is satisfied.

Some objectors have suggested that a Transport Assessment should be undertaken before this application is determined but the threshold for housing development requiring such an assessment is 50 units or more as set out in the Car & Cycle Parking Standards SPD.

Cycle Parking is shown to the rear of the properties although no indication of any enclosure is given. Further details of secure and weatherproof storage should be sought through a planning condition to ensure that provision in accordance with the standards is provided. Bin storage is also shown to the rear.

The proposal is likely to result in an increase in multi-modal trips to and from the premises and therefore a financial contribution towards Transport Infrastructure Improvements pursuant to Policy IN2 and the Planning Contributions: Transport SPD may have previously been sought. Due to changes in Government Planning Policy & Guidance, it is not possible to seek a Transport Contribution in respect of a scheme for fewer than 10 dwelling units, as is the case in this instance.

Drainage issues -

The site is within Flood Zone 1 and as such is considered to be at low risk of fluvial flooding and the proposal accords with Policy NE6 in this respect. Policy NE8 requires the implementation of integrated and maintainable SuDS (using the SuDS management train principles) in all floodzones.

The Design & Access Statement indicates that a permeable paving system will be used for the driveway with soakaways provided to the front and rear of each property but provides no further details of how this would mitigate the impact of two additional dwellings with extensions, patios and extended driveways. The underlying geology of the area is the generally impermeable London Clay where infiltration methods of controlling surface water runoff may not be effective. (The map contained in Appendix 2 of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment prepared as part of the evidence base to support the current Rushmoor Local Plan suggests that infiltration is probably possible in this area. However, no details of infiltration measurement or runoff calculations have been submitted and it is not therefore possible to confirm compliance with Policy NE8 at this time. It is considered that if a SuDS system based upon infiltration would not be effective in this location, a tanked system which would attenuate water flows to greenfield discharge rates would be an effective alternative. If the Council was minded to grant planning permission, a suitably worded condition could be imposed to require this details of a SuDS system or equivalent, to be submitted for approval and subsequent implementation. However, since the recommendation is that permission is refused for other reasons this issue cannot be addressed in this way.

Public open space -

The Local Plan seeks to ensure that adequate open space provision is made to cater for future residents in connection with new residential developments. Policies DE6 and DE7 allow provision to be made on the site, or in appropriate circumstances, a contribution to be made towards upgrading facilities nearby. The policy does not set a threshold of a particular number of dwellings or size of site above which the provision is required. The site is not big enough to accommodate anything other than the development proposed and any associated landscape planting. However, as a scheme for fewer than 10 dwelling units, this is a

circumstance where a financial contribution towards the off-site provision of public open space can no longer be required as a result of the changes in Government policy and quidance.

Other Matters -

Some objectors have referred to discrepancies and inconsistencies in the Design and Access Statement. While these discrepancies are noted, it is considered that the submitted plans are sufficiently clear and consistent to allow the Council make a judgement on the merits of the proposal.

Residents have expressed concern regarding the impact of construction works upon residential amenity and highway safety. If the Council were minded to grant planning permission, conditions limiting the hours of construction and requiring the submission and approval of a construction management plan.

There is little information about the proposed boundary treatments, but it is considered that this could be dealt with by a condition.

A consideration of the impact of the development upon the stability of existing retaining walls is not considered to be a planning matter.

Conclusion -

It is concluded that the proposal represents a cramped form of development that would be detrimental to the character of the area, detrimental to the outlook and amenity of adjoining residents, which fails to provide adequate mitigation for the impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and bio-diversity within the site and includes insufficient information in respect of surface water drainage.

Full Recommendation

It is recommended that permission be **Refused** for the following reasons:

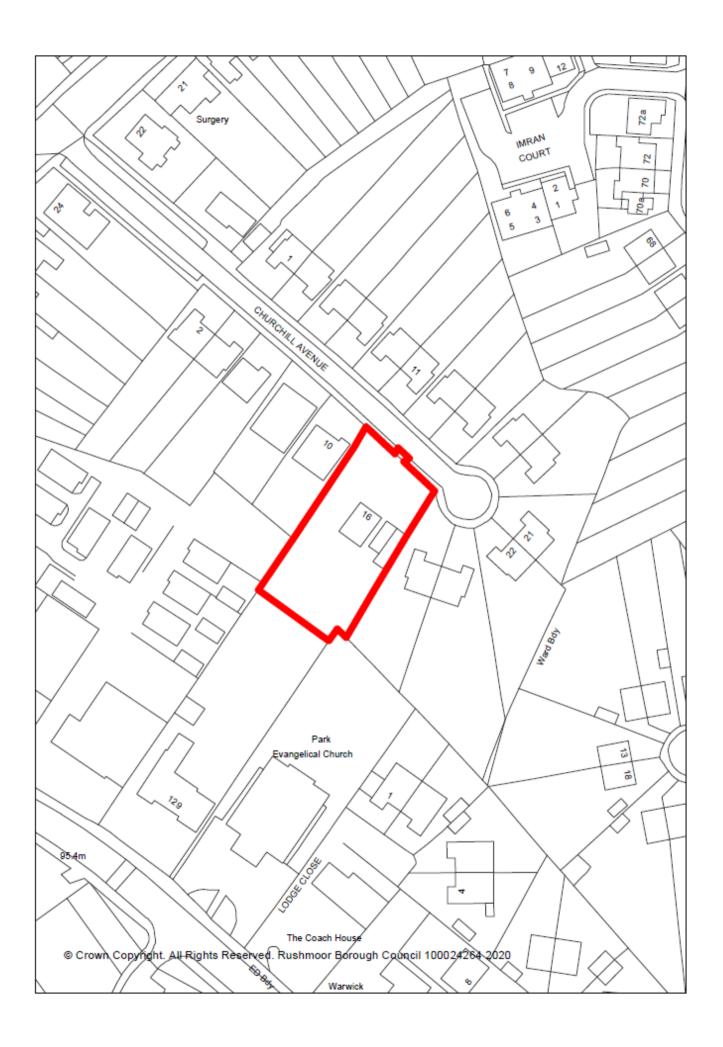
- The proposed development, by reason of the number and design of dwellings proposed, the lack of spacing around the buildings, their position within the plot, and with a frontage dominated by parking, would result in an incongruous development that would be over dominant in the street scene and which would not reflect the prevailing character of the area, to its detriment. The proposal would therefore constitute an unacceptable overdevelopment of the site, contrary to the provisions of Policies DE1 and DE11 of the Rushmoor Local Plan, and National Planning Policy Framework/Practice Guidance.
- The proposal, by reason of the bulk and mass of building alongside the boundary with the adjoining property to the north-west, would have unacceptable impact upon the light, outlook and amenity of the occupiers of that property, contrary to Policies DE1 and DE11 of the Rushmoor Local Plan.
- The proposed development makes no provision to address the likely significant impact of the additional residential unit on the objectives and nature conservation interests of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. The proposal does not include any information to demonstrate how the development will enhance bio-diversity within the

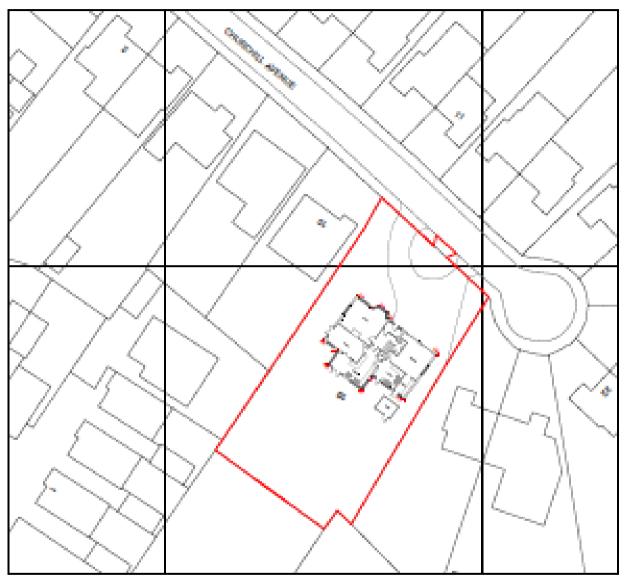
site to produce a net gain in biodiversity. The proposals are thereby contrary to the requirements of retained South East Plan Policy NRM6 and Policies NE1 and NE4 of the Rushmoor Local Plan.

The proposals fail to provide details of appropriate surface water drainage for the development as required by Rushmoor Local Plan Policy NE8.

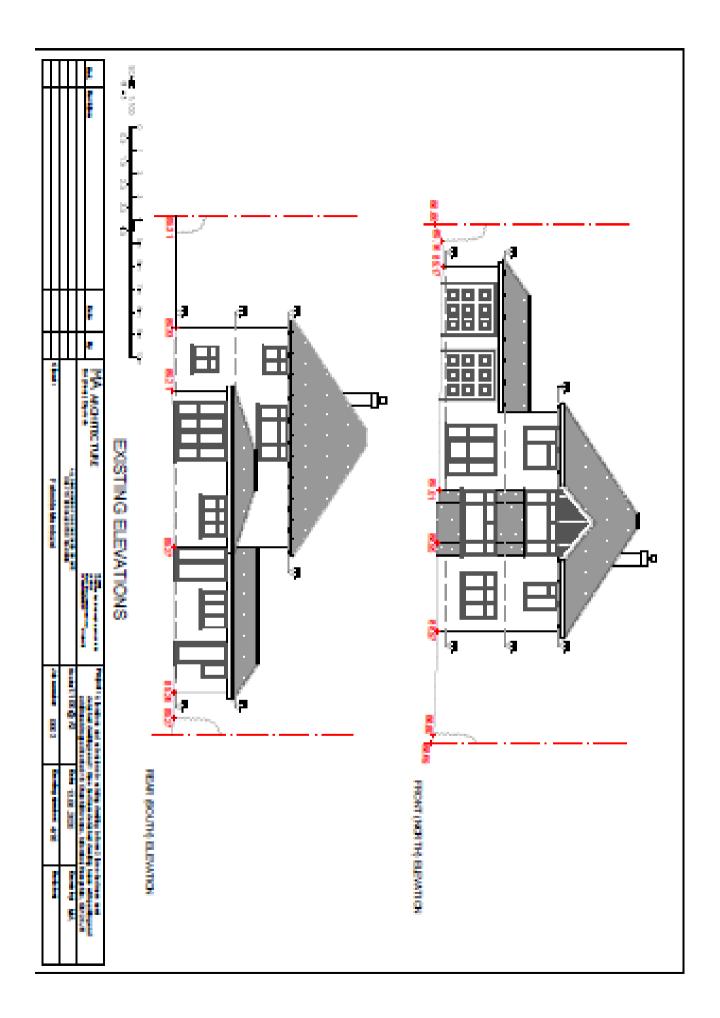
Informatives

1 INFORMATIVE – The Local Planning Authority's commitment to working with the applicants in a positive and proactive way is demonstrated by its offer of preapplication discussion to all, and assistance in the validation and determination of applications through the provision of clear guidance regarding necessary supporting information or amendments both before and after submission, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.





SCALE 1:500





SCALE 1:500

