

Barton under Needwood Parish Council

Parish Council Meeting 7th August 2025

Report of the Planning Committee

P/2025/00513

Outline application with all matters reserved for the demolition of the existing agricultural buildings and the erection of up to 70 dwellings with associated open space, car parking and sustainable drainage on land to the north of The Green

Summary of the main points of concern and objection

- The site is not allocated for residential use in the Local Plan and lies outside of the settlement boundary for the village, where restrictive planning policies apply;
 - The site has been identified In the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2021) as not suitable, achievable, deliverable and developable;
 - The site is contrary to the Policy SP 2 Settlement Hierarchy and Development Strategy which directs development to the most sustainable locations;
 - The Local Plan under Policies SP 3 and SP4 has allocated enough land to meet the housing needs of the village until the end of the plan period;
 - According to a report (May 2025), the Borough Council has 5.13 years supply;
 - The Applicant's Housing Needs Survey only supplies data at a Borough wide level and provides no evidence as to why this particular site, in this particular village should be released;
 - The Transport Assessment appears to be a desk-top study which fails to take account of the day-to-day experience of life coping with traffic in the village;
 - Whilst the illustrative design layout contains some good ideas, in the light of our past experience with the Causer Road development off Efflinch Lane then the trees and hedgerows need protection at this early stage;
 - Severn Trent Water has commented that there is insufficient capacity to accept foul flows from the site. There is no budgetary provision for any upgrading work, and it is not included in any current programme;
 - Surface water drainage will discharge into a combined sewer;
 - No land has been set aside for a pumping station on site;
 - We believe that the drainage situation makes the site undeliverable, at least in the short term, and, therefore, we cannot see that how it can make a contribution to the five-year supply as the Applicants claim.
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Introduction

1.1 An application, in outline, has been submitted by Providence Land Ltd to develop 4.5ha of grade 3 agricultural land for up to 70 houses on land off The Green. The site is irregular in shape and sits to the rear of properties fronting The Green including the Royal Oak PH. The western boundary describes an arc in a south westerly direction from the current built-up edge of the Park Road development. The site is bordered by hedgerows and scattered trees. Ditches run along both the western and southern boundaries of the site and there is an existing pond which lies alongside what is proposed as the access into the site along this open fronted part of The Green. Access to the site requires the demolition of some, partly open sided agricultural structures. The land is in agricultural use as grassland and is sub-divided by a line of hedgerow.

1.2 Although submitted in outline as a means of testing the principle of whether residential development is acceptable on the site, the application is accompanied by a range of documents. These include a Planning and Sustainability Statement, a Housing Needs Survey, a Heritage Statement, a Flood Risk Assessment, a Design and Access Statement and a Transport Assessment. There is also an illustrative layout to demonstrate how 70 houses might be accommodated on the site.

Parish Council Comments

Planning Policy Considerations

2.1 Planning applications are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This means that the Local Planning Authority has to assess the proposal against the planning policies contained in the Local Plan as well as considering the merits of the proposal itself and any other relevant considerations. This will include the government's planning policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.2 In May, the Parish Council was forewarned of this impending application by agents for the applicants who told us that they were undertaking a consultation exercise in the village as a prelude to the submission of this application. We encouraged the applicants to undertake as extensive a consultation as possible in the time allowed.

2.3 The site is not allocated for development in the Local Plan. The Local Plan was adopted in 2015 and as stated in the document "Note on 5 Year Land Supply Methodology" dated March 2025, the Local Plan continues to meet the housing needs of the Borough up to 2030. Sufficient land has, therefore, been allocated to meet the needs of the Borough including Barton under Needwood village up to 2030.

2.4 We understand that ESBC has recently published a Local Development Scheme which establishes a timetable for a review of this Local Plan. The aim is to have a new Local Plan adopted by December 2028. If that date is achieved, then it will be well within the current

Local Plan period. Logic, therefore, dictates that the proposed site is not required within the current Local Plan period. It will be open, of course, to the applicants to promote the site as a potential allocation in the revised Local Plan, when it can be considered as against other potential sites to meet any identified future need.

2.5 The site has been identified in the Borough Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2021 (SHLAA). This looks at the potential of sites to meet the Borough's five years supply of housing, but inclusion in the Assessment does not bring with it any confirmation that it should be developed. The site was found to be not suitable, achievable, deliverable and developable.

2.6 The site lies outside, but albeit adjacent to the settlement boundary of the village. This defines the built-up part of Barton and means that the principle of development inside the boundary is acceptable, whereas development outside the boundary falls into the open countryside, where restrictive planning policies apply. Here Policy SP 8 states that development will not be permitted unless it meets a range of criteria, for example, if it is essential to meet the needs of an existing business or it is otherwise appropriate in the countryside. If it meets one of these criteria then there is a second range of hoops that it also has to address. We cannot see that this proposal meets any of the criteria of Policy SP 8 as, for example, housing is not regarded as otherwise appropriate in the open countryside. We, therefore, object to the proposal as being contrary to Policy SP 8.

2.7 The Local Plan sets out a Settlement Hierarchy. Policy SP 2 Settlement Hierarchy directs development to the most sustainable locations. The most sustainable locations are defined as Burton and Uttoxeter. The second tier in the hierarchy includes four 'Strategic Villages' which are Tutbury, Barton Rocester and Rolleston. Further down the hierarchy are what are referred to as Local Service Villages and then Small Villages and Settlements. The further down the hierarchy you go the less the amount of housing development is proposed as these are less sustainable settlements.

2.8 This is also reflected in the provision of homes and jobs as set out in Policies SP 3 and SP 4 which allocates housing numbers to these layers of the hierarchy. The implication is that you direct development to these more sustainable locations, in terms of services and facilities, so that you restrict development elsewhere. In this way, the Local Plan sets out a development strategy for the whole borough. In that sense, approval for a substantial amount of housing development in Barton may have a negative impact on the development strategy. We, therefore, object to the proposal as being contrary to Policies SP 2,3 and 4. If, for whatever reason, further housing, over and above the Local Plan figures, is deemed to be required then the development strategy surely dictates that it should be directed, in the first instance, to the most sustainable locations, i.e. Burton and Uttoxeter. In accordance with the NPPF guidance sites allocated must also be capable of delivery within 5 years.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 Government policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (NPPF) is regarded as a material consideration. This has recently been updated in view of the Government's proposals for growth which include the target of providing 1.5m homes over the next five years. To meet this requirement a local housing need figure for each district has been identified. This is expressed purely in terms of a nationally derived figure and for East Staffordshire this is proposed to be 602 houses pa. This is above the 546 houses pa found in the Local Plan (10384 over the period 2012 to 2031). Local Planning Authorities are also required to monitor the supply of housing to demonstrate that there is a readily available supply of land to meet housing needs over a period of five years.

3.2 In the short term, a report to ESBC's Cabinet Meeting 24th March 2025 noted that this national need for further housing is likely to result in a reduction of the housing land supply. The report also suggests that, due to the increased housing requirement, the ability to maintain a 5 year supply is likely to become more difficult. The implication of this is that where a housing land supply falls below 5 years then the weight that can be afforded to housing policies reduces.

3.3 Just recently, in May 2025, ESBC produced a paper on the current status of the five-year supply as at year ending March 2025. This stated that there was a supply figure of 5.13 years, based on an annual housing need of 637. We note that this annual figure is above the government's estimated global figure for the Borough of 602 houses pa. Whilst the overall supply has reduced, we can only conclude that the Borough still has a five-year supply and, in addition, that this is above the Government's prescribed per annum target.

3.4 The applicant's Planning and Sustainability Statement asserts in paras 4.12 and 4.13 that ESBC does not have a five-year supply. They then argue that, because there is no five-year supply then, their application should be approved. We find this assertion hard to believe and understand especially because, when this Statement was written, the latest information available was that the Borough had a housing supply of 7.37 years. This latest calculation still confirms a five-year supply even taking into account the government's revised estimates. Even if the figure had been slightly below the five-year figure, we cannot believe that it was the intention of the NPPF to immediately permit development proposals anywhere, without consideration of sustainability and compliance with local plan policies, presumably until sufficient land had been permitted to reach a new five-year supply. That doesn't make sense and is contrary to the whole idea of planning. You surely still have to assess the proposal against the Local Plan policies and what they are trying to achieve, and here we believe that the settlement hierarchy and the development strategy are both still relevant and valid.

3.5 Para 78 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should identify and update a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five-year's worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in the adopted Local Plan or against local

housing need where the policies are more than five years old. This requirement relates to the SHLAA, (para. 2.5) above.

3.6 Within the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy dated May 2025, the Applicants include a response from Severn Trent Water (STW) which states that, *“Due to the nature of the development, the additional flows and existing flood and surcharge levels, there is insufficient capacity within the Severn Trent network at present and modelling will be required, which may show that improvements are required to the Severn Trent network. We are undergoing a prioritisation process of all investment requirements and emerging risks from growth on our network and treatment works as we build our plan for the coming Asset Management Plan period (2025-2030) and beyond.”* This response indicates that STW will require to undertake improvements to the Barton sewerage network, but these will only take place beyond the current programme AMP period i.e. post 2030. This means that, even if approved, this site is not going to make any contribution to the current five-year housing supply.

3.7 A similar consideration is set out in the Applicant’s Transport Assessment. This assumes that final completion of the site will be by 2035, also taking us – at least in part, if not in total - beyond the current five-year supply calculations.

3.8 We recognise, however, that the government’s enhanced housing requirements for the Borough mean that additional housing provision will need to be made. The logical way of achieving this is through a review of the Local Plan which will have to allocate land, to meet these higher targets. This is a far more rational approach where all potential sites can be assessed, rather than permitting ad hoc and opportunistic proposals.

3.9 From what we understand, all we have in terms of projected housing trends is a projected housing figure for each local planning authority area derived from a national calculation of housing need. What applies in Battersea may not be the same as in Barton and, therefore, presumably these housing figures can be challenged as not reflecting local needs or circumstances. We recall that, when the Local Plan was prepared, all authorities had to prepare what was called a Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This considered population and migration trends, the need for affordable housing and of what type, be it social housing or low-cost housing for sale, housing size, densities, housing markets and need in geographical areas. All of this data is best collected at a borough wide level. We assume that ESBC will be undertaking a similar exercise this time round as a means of being able to influence and update their detailed housing policies. With this type of detailed evidence, it may be that the government’s figure is higher or lower than what might be the appropriate amount for the Borough. And whatever housing figure is promoted can be subject to debate through the Local Plan Examination in Public process. That is the rational way to proceed, and so we believe that, in the light of what information we have, at the present time, there is no need to release this site

The Applicant's Housing Needs Survey

3.10 The NPPF (para 82) states that in rural areas planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, the NPPF asserts that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

3.11 In order to support their proposal, the applicants have produced a Housing Needs Survey. Their survey identifies the number of households in the village at the 2021 Census as 2,091. It then identifies a 10% increase in households in the Borough as a whole over the next decade and applies this 10% increase to Barton as revealing a figure of 2300 households. This is a very simplistic way of calculating need as, due to the development strategy, housing growth is unlikely to be uniform over the whole borough.

3.12 The Housing Needs Survey (para 3.2.1) notes a shortfall in affordable housing of 6935 households in the Borough. This is obviously a high number but there is no further breakdown in terms how this figure has been calculated, or what that figure might mean for Barton. The Parish Council has recognised for some time that there is a need for affordable housing in the village and has campaigned to achieve this. This need also came across in our own recent survey in 2024, quoted by the applicants.

3.13 As we mentioned in para 2.2 above, the applicants also conducted a short questionnaire survey. Despite the applicants wanting to establish the principle of development, through an outline application, it was unfortunate that no information was forthcoming about any opposition to the site. Their survey reveals that there were a number of responses which supported starter homes, and they also set out the number in favour of 2, 3, and 4 bedroom houses. They take this as evidence of demand for their proposal. On the basis of this survey, however, we cannot believe that housing need has been adequately defined or is critically rigorous enough to warrant it being a material consideration to justify overruling the policies of the local plan.

3.14 The Parish Council has spoken to the local schools. From what we can gather from these discussions, the Infant and the Junior Schools are, more or less, at capacity. We have also spoken to the Barton Family Practice. They have expressed concern that, with such an increase in patients, they would have difficulty coping with that level of demand, that it would have an impact on the quality and accessibility of care that they could provide. Of course, more housing will provide additional customers for village shops and businesses, but in the light of these capacity issues, we cannot believe that a further 70 houses, with the attendant impact on local services, will contribute to enhancing or maintaining the vitality of the community as required by the NPPF.

Transport Assessment

3.15 The applicant's Transport Assessment concludes that the baseline transport conditions show that there is a very good active travel network including an extensive public footpath

network, a national cycle route, a regular bus service and that Barton is close to the A 38. It indicates that the proposal can link seamlessly into this existing network. They suggest, for example, that the site access and the Wales Lane/Main Street junctions can operate well within the road capacity. This is based on a single day's survey during what they claim to be peak hours, but which actually misses the peak time of 15.30 -16.00 when schools close.

3.16 This may be fine from a technical desk study, but it is far from the day-to-day experience of local people. Travel along Main Street at any time but especially during peak flows at school opening and closing times is tortuous. Flow is hindered not just by sheer volumes but also by the presence of parked cars, often on both sides of the road. This means that queues of cars often build up behind parked vehicles, to allow for traffic to pass from the opposite direction as the Main Street carriageway narrows. The junction of Wales Lane with Main Street is particularly affected at these times of day. Again, parked cars on the eastern side of Wales Lane close to the junction narrow the carriageway and this makes traffic flows difficult for two reasons – for larger vehicles turning into Wales Lane, and also for traffic queueing and wishing to turn left or right onto Main Street. This junction is also used by public transport.

3.17 We believe that, as the proposal is located on the opposite side of the village, some distance from all three schools then, there will be a temptation for parents to use their cars to ferry their children to school, thus adding to the additional traffic at this junction. We, therefore, find it very hard to believe, if we have interpreted Table 11 correctly, that the Traffic Assessment's current delay at the Wales Lane/Main Street junction is only 11 seconds (peak AM) and 12 seconds (peak PM) and that adding traffic from the additional 70 houses will barely add a second or so.

3.18 It appears that the Assessment has only modelled this junction and Bar Lane/ The Green/Dogshead Lane, which we believe is short sighted. What happens in practice is that drivers perceive a queue at the Wales Lane/ Main Street junction and within Main Street and so decide to take alternative routes thus increasing traffic flows on nearby roads and at other junctions with Main Street. The Dogshead Lane/A38 Catholme Junction northbound access, fondly used by satellite navigation systems, is also problematic and avoided by residents as the acceleration lane and visibility is below national (DMRB) standards.

3.19 The Assessment claims that *"The site access has been designed to be compliant with Manual for Streets design requirements"*. The MfS has a requirement for a separation of at least 30m between offset junctions and for the development access to Bar Lane/The Green/Dogshead Lane. This measures at about 33 m. Visibility splay at the junction has been set at x 2.4 m and y 43 m. What is not explicitly declared is that, in order to deliver the visibility splay, it is necessary to remove the boundary hedge to the west of the access, impacting on and exposing the pond. Provision of fencing or replacing the hedgerow at the rear of the splay would be problematic as it would be located within the pond. The width of Bar Lane at the proposed junction is less than the MfS required 5m. This proposed junction layout does not take into account that the sight lines from Dogshead Lane towards the entrance in Bar Lane are substandard. We believe that this would result in road safety implications which would be compounded by the proposed position of the access. This would suggest that there is a need for a rethink of the access arrangements into the site.

3.20 We also believe that the Assessment contains some significant errors:-

- It is stated that Bar Lane is a rural road with minimal active frontages. This may be so, but all of the active frontages are in proximity to the development and some only have on street parking. The report also fails to identify that there are locations of substandard road width which impacts on flow of traffic;
- For The Green/Wales Lane the Assessment states *“There are no parking restrictions and most properties fronting this corridor have off street parking”*. This is simply untrue as there are long sections of road where properties have no offroad parking. This causes a significant impediment to free flow of traffic, especially at the junction of Wales Lane and Main Street;
- In the section on accidents, the Assessment claims there are very, limited records and none in proximity to the development proposed access. The reality is that there have been 4 accidents in which errant vehicles have crashed into and demolished the front wall of 76 The Green in the last 3 years. Residents have been so concerned by actual accidents and near misses in the area of Bar Lane/The Green/Dogshead Lane that they set up a residents’ action group. Staffordshire County Council, as the local highway authority, is currently investigating this junction.

3.21 The Assessment notes that aside from vehicle trips the most significant mode of traffic at 7% is by walking. This may be so, and we welcome the proposals in the illustrative layout for links to the public footpath network, but it seems to ignore the fact that 73% of traffic is by car. The Assessment does not seem to make any provision for attempting to reduce the use of the private car and does not, for example, make any recommendations for the promotion of public transport or indeed for a Travel Plan.

Design and Access Statement

3.22 We appreciate that the applicants have produced an illustrative layout to demonstrate how 70 houses might be accommodated on site. There are some good, constructive ideas here and we applaud their proposals for open space and green corridors, footpath links to the existing public network, the retention of trees and hedgerows, and sustainable drainage. It also appears as though smaller house types are distributed throughout the development rather than harboured in ghettos. Despite the applicants referencing ESBC’s excellent Design Guide we still feel that the layout could be more creative and have more flair. There needs to be a range of house types and design styles and long straight rows of houses need to be avoided.

3.23 We feel that the Design Statement is a good starting point, but we do not wish to dwell too much on this as, in the light of our previous experience, the eventual design is likely to reflect the desires of the future housebuilder rather than the aspirations of the developer.

3.24 Thought should be given, even at this stage, to declaring a group TPO for the site and the protection of hedgerows, so that future purchasers of properties are aware of the importance of their amenity value. In the case of the Causer Road development off Efflinch Lane, TPOs were designated for the boundary trees. As a Parish Council we have submitted comments on many applications for permission to fell or lop branches etc. The lesson from this is that in designing any future layout, more thought and attention needs to be taken of the amenity value of these trees. This may mean ensuring adequate plot sizes and ensuring that buildings do not affect root growth.

3.25 In the Causer Road development off Efflinch Lane, many houses, have lost integral garages to additional residential space and in the process front gardens have been lost to provide additional parking. Plot sizes also perhaps need to take account of the possibility of future rear extensions. Any layout, therefore, needs to be designed in such a way as to reduce the potential for overlooking and surface water run-off.

3.26 We are concerned by the claim that the existing pond fronting Bar Lane will be enhanced for biological net gain. At present, this pond receives run-off from the undeveloped site. The effect of development is such that most of this run-off will be removed resulting in a reduction in water supply such that the pond may dry out. It will also be adversely impacted by the removal of the hedge/margins to accommodate the access visibility splay.

3.27 We also understand from our expert's analysis that the attenuation basins will require to be much larger and foul and surface water pumping stations will be required. It is likely, therefore, that available space for house plots will be reduced and, as a consequence, the number of houses to be accommodated on site could be less than 70.

3.28 We are heartened by para. 137 of the NPPF which indicates that design is integral to development. It states, *"Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicantsshould work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community"*. Whilst we were pleased that the Applicants undertook a brief consultation prior to the submission of this application, we were disappointed that the survey took place obviously after all the accompanying documents had been prepared. There was, therefore, little opportunity for the local community to make any contribution to the design and nature of the proposals, as required by the NPPF. Whilst all of these issues are for another time, we would like to place on record, even at this outline stage, the need to take the issues we have raised into account in any future detailed design.

Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy

3.29 A review of this document has been undertaken by Derek Lord C.ENG, MICE, MCIWEM, a drainage expert with significant experience of reviewing FRAs on behalf of Lead Local Flood Authorities. We set out his full report as an Appendix, and this includes recommendations to ESBC to follow up detailed analysis with the appropriate bodies. For the sake of brevity, we highlight his main conclusions below:-

- This report states that *“This FRA concludes that the proposed development will not lead to the impedance of flood flows and will not increase the risk of flooding on the site itself, adjacent properties or to third parties situated either upstream or downstream of the site.”* but the content and limitations of the assessment’s coverage demonstrate the opposite;
- Severn Trent Water’s response to the applicants’ enquiry states that due to existing surcharge and flooding of the foul/combined sewer network within Barton there is insufficient capacity to accept foul flows from this development. For surface water there is not sufficient capacity to accommodate the flows from the development;
- The proposed surface water drainage strategy will not work and would also discharge surface water into a combined sewer in The Green;
- The proposed foul water strategy confirms that not all of the development can be drained by gravity to the public sewer and that pumping will be required. No land for a pumping station is allocated.

3.30 The main conclusion that we derive is that it is unlikely that the site can be developed in the short term

Reptile Survey, Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Biological Net Gain

3.31 The Applicants have submitted a Reptile Presence/Absence Report. The report detects the presence of the common lizard but no great crested newts. The Parish Council does not have the expertise to challenge the methodology or the expert’s claims. But the conclusion is surprising, as the District Licensing Scheme Map for East Staffordshire, shows that the site lies in a red impact zone which indicates a highly suitable habitat, which are important areas for great crested newts. It may be the case that as the survey was undertaken in April then this was a suboptimal time.

3.32 The report identifies the need for a reptile migration strategy including the translocation of reptiles whether within the development or offsite. No provision appears to have been made either on or offsite.

Summary and Conclusion

4.1 The site is not allocated in the Local Plan which makes provision for the housing needs of the village up to the end of the plan period in 2030. The site is also located outside the settlement boundary of the village and, therefore, is contrary to Policy SP 8 for development in the open countryside. Permitting a site of this size will also be contrary to the development strategy and the settlement hierarchy which directs development to the most sustainable locations.

4.2 We are well aware of the present Government's requirement to boost housing growth but believe that how much housing, and where it is located is best achieved through a review of the Local Plan. We believe that this approach would provide a far more rational and sustainable approach than the approval of ad hoc and opportunistic proposals.

4.3 We disagree with the applicants that Local Plan policies are out of date because of a lack of a five-year supply of housing. ESBC's latest calculations still conclude that there is a five-year supply, and that this also takes into account the additional Government's housing forecasts for the Borough. And even if the supply is reduced somewhat, we do not believe that the applicants have demonstrated why housing should be permitted in this village and on this particular site.

4.4 We regard the applicant's Housing Needs Survey as dealing with Borough wide issues and as lacking the justification for the particular housing needs in Barton.

4.5 We appreciate that the applicants have taken the time to produce a Design Statement which demonstrates how the housing might be accommodated. It puts forward some good ideas, but in the light of our experience on the Causer Road development off Efflinch Lane, we feel that ESBC need to undertake some preparatory groundwork. We request that ESBC protect the existing trees and hedgerows on the site.

4.6 We find it hard to give much credence to the results of the Transport Assessment. We may be wrong, of course, but it bears the analysis of a desk study rather than the reality of everyday life as experienced by the local community.

4.7 As Severn Trent Water has stated that the public sewer network is at capacity and, as we understand it, there is no budget provision being made over the next few years to upgrade the network then we can only conclude that the site must be undeliverable in the short term or indeed within the NPPF specified 5 year delivery period.

We, therefore, object to the application as being contrary to Policy SP 8 for development outside settlement boundaries, and Policies SP 2, 3 and 4 regarding housing provision in the Local Plan and the Settlement Hierarchy.

If ESBC is mindful to approve the proposal?

4.8 The applicants have been previously associated with the Causer Road development site, off Efflinch Lane, which was allocated in the Local Plan. The applicants acted as developers before selling the site on to a house builder. That experience has led us to believe that the situation, in terms of housing numbers, type and design layout may well be subject to considerable change. So, notwithstanding that this is an outline application, we would like to recommend that, if ESBC is mindful to approve, then they impose conditions on any decision which reflects the need for affordable housing to be in accordance with Policy SP 17 i.e. 40% should be affordable and that the type of affordable housing should be proscribed, with a preference for social housing rather than low-cost housing for sale. The developers have already indicated that there is a need for affordable housing and so we assume such a condition would be welcomed.

4.9 Policy SP 16 provides for an appropriate mix of housing types. We would also therefore advocate for a condition for housing types to be in accordance with Table 1 of the Housing Choice SPD March 2023 so that it can accord with Policy SP 16. Again, in view of the applicant's own survey results, we assume that this condition would also be supported.

4.10 As the Transport Assessment has indicated, 73% of traffic in Barton is by private car. This level of use of the private car does not meet sustainable transport objectives. We assume that the developers will want to promote a more sustainable form of development and, therefore, a condition should be attached to any approval, for a Travel Plan to be prepared, with the aim of reducing reliance on the car.

4.11 The Parish Council has been contacted by other Parish Councils, who feel that they may be in a similar situation. We therefore fear that if ESBC were to grant approval, then it could create a precedent for development in other rural locations.

Recommendation

That this report be submitted to East Staffordshire Borough Council as representing the Parish Council's comments on planning application P/2025/00513 for housing development on land off The Green. In particular, the Parish Council objects to the application as being contrary to Local Plan Policies SP 2,3,4 and 8

Appendix

A review of the Applicants' Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy document has been undertaken by Derek Lord C.ENG, MICE, MCIWEM, a drainage expert with significant experience of reviewing FRAs on behalf of Lead Local Flood Authorities.

Detailed comments

Following review by a qualified drainage expert, BPC considers that this report demonstrates that the development drainage is not sustainable and, if implemented, without offsite upgrading of downstream drainage infrastructure, would increase risk of flooding within Barton village.

Surface water

The applicant states that they do not believe the surface water drainage of the site can be drained by infiltration to ground. Based on local knowledge of the underlying strata, the presence of 3 ponds and 2 dry ditches. BPC agrees this is the case.

The applicant proposes to discharge surface water at attenuated flow rates from catchments A and B respectively to the 2 dry ditches. The applicant has shown no curiosity as to the nature, condition or capacity of the ditches downstream of the site and has simply assumed that their proposals will not cause any increased flood risk. BPC has undertaken site inspections and liaised with residents to establish details of the proposed receiving watercourses.

Catchment A is proposed to drain into the normally dry ditch at the western boundary. It can be confirmed that this ditch turns west and is within the boundary of 'Roseleigh'. It follows the boundary before passing under Bar Lane in a culvert. The condition and capacity of the culvert is not known but the resident confirms that Staffordshire County Council (SCC) has carried out repairs in the past and that during rainfall the ditch often overflows into the garden. SCC are currently investigating highway drainage problems on this section of Bar Lane which lead to regular flooding and ponding on the road in the area of the development access. There are also flooding problems at the next highway crossing of Dogshead Lane.

Catchment B is proposed to drain into a pipe at the boundary of the development with 60 The Green. Following inspection and liaison with the residents at 58 and 60 The Green, it can be confirmed that the route of the pipe is via a manhole pipe in 58 The Green to a manhole in 60, outfalling into the road. Since the land on the opposite side of the road is fully developed, there is no land drainage outfall, and it is apparent that the only receiving drainage infrastructure can be the public combined sewer.

The STW developer enquiry response states *"We are unable to permit any SW connections to the existing combined sewer as we do not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the SW flows from your development due to the existing flood and surcharge levels."* As a result, it appears that catchment B has no achievable gravity outfall.

The applicant suggests that if this is the case they would simply pump surface water from catchment B to catchment A. This would require both a pumping station and the attenuation storage. Transfer of flows from one natural catchment to another is not good practice and would need regulatory consent. It would result in significant additional storage requirements in order to protect against flooding in the event of pump failure and also to avoid exacerbating existing flood risk on the ditch receiving catchment A/B flows.

Sizing of the attenuation basins for both catchments is based on an assessment of greenfield runoff, presented in Appendix J. Whilst the methodology is correct, the calculation appears to use a value of 1 Ha for the existing undeveloped catchment compared to 4.5 Ha stated in the application. This suggests that the greenfield runoff of the undeveloped site may be understated.

The drainage strategy states that the attenuation basins have a depth of 1.0 m. In accordance with sewer adoption standards the minimum depth of cover to the incoming pipes is 1.2 m, which would imply the basins are too shallow. It has also not been demonstrated that, given the flat nature of the site, that all areas will be capable of draining to the basins.

In addition, it can be seen from the topographic survey that the ditch's are very shallow, such that a 1 m deep basin will be deeper than the beds. This will prevent a gravity outfall.

In order to provide a gravity outfall, the basin would need to be shallower and thus would require a much greater plan area, also making it more difficult to connect the incoming surface water sewers by gravity.

BPC requests that ESBC request detailed guidance and advice from SCC Lead Local Flood Authority on the Appendix J calculations and the practicality of the attenuation basins.

Foul water

Catchment A is proposed to drain to the combined sewer in Bar Lane, not The Green, as stated. It is stated that not all properties will be able to drain by gravity into the drain and pumped connections will be required. This arrangement is not sustainable, and the properties will be at higher risk of flooding when the pumps fail, for example in a power cut.

In the case of catchment B, it is stated that a gravity connection will be made to the combined sewer in The Green. It is stated, however, that if due to levels this is not achievable and a pumping station will be required.

BPC note that no allowance has been shown in the layout drawing for any pumping stations.

The applicant makes assertions that ESBC should grant outline planning consent for this development and providing this is granted STW are under immediate duty to upgrade the public sewer network to accommodate the foul flows. This is at variance with both what is stated in the STW developer enquiry response and BPC's own understanding of STWs duty.

Given the clear STW statement that the existing capacity of the combined/foul water network is such that there already problems and flows from the development cannot be accommodated, BPC request that ESBC request a formal response from STW confirming their position on impact of development and timescale for delivery of improvements required to provided capacity for the development.