

## Planning & Environment

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>19 December 2023</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Reserve Site C – P23/S2269/RM – Amendment No.2</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer</b>

### Background

1. In September 2021, Outline planning application [P21/S0917/O](#), was granted permission to resolve the matter of access for this 5.86ha site. Due to the requirement of the TNP and Local Plan policies, a number of matters to be demonstrated at Reserved Matters stage or as issues to be resolved through pre-commencement planning conditions were established. Three relevant plans were also approved through the permission, that covered the site parameters, the site's access and the cycle route arrangement along the northern boundary with Wenman Road.
2. Application [P23/S2269/RM](#), which took these matters into account, was considered by Full Council on 8 August 2023. The Town Council objected on the following grounds:

Contrary to Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) policies:

- HA7 – Reserve Site C - Allocation for 57 residential dwellings
- H8 – Provide Affordable Housing
- H10 – Provide a Thame-Specific Affordable Housing and Dwelling Mix Strategy
- ESDQ23 – Streets within new development must be designed as pleasant places to be

Contrary to Local Plan 2035 (LP 2035) policies:

- DES1 – Delivering High Quality Development
- DES3 – Design and Access Statements
- DES4 – Masterplans for Allocated sites
- H9 – Affordable Housing
- H11 – Housing Mix

3. Significant improvements were made to the proposal through the first amendments. The Town Council continued to object on the following grounds:
  - Contrary to Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) policies:
    - H8 – Provide Affordable Housing; and
    - H10 – Provide a Thame-Specific Affordable Housing and Dwelling Mix Strategy
  - Contrary to Local Plan 2035 (LP 2035) policies:
    - H9 – Affordable Housing; and
    - H11 – Housing Mix.

### Proposed Development

4. The application has been amended again to address concerns raised by other formal consultees. Most of the modifications are minor. Changes have been made, for example to ensure adequate visibility splays. While this has reduced the number of street trees at some junctions, there has been a proposed increase in their number throughout the wider development.

## Former Town Council objections

5. **Housing mix.** Members will recall that the mix of affordable housing had already been prescribed through the Outline Planning Permission's S106 agreement, leaving only the market housing. This should be considered against the latest evidence on housing mix within the 2022 Thame Housing Needs Assessment, HNA.
6. This report investigated the mix suitable for both affordable and market housing. Within Table 5-9, it proposes a housing mix and declares it is applicable to both affordable and market tenures, meaning it should be applied to each tenure in turn.
7. The mix of market homes is now proposed as:

No. of bedrooms	Proposed number	@ Proposed mix		2022 Thame HNA recommended mix
		Old	New	
1	0	0	0	1.6%
2	2	6%	6%	9.5%
3	12	28.5%	34%	53.5%
4	8	28.5%	23%	13%
5	13	37%	37%	22.6%

8. When compared against the last proposed mix, the numbers of 3-bedroom homes have increased by 2 units, and the numbers of 4-bedroom homes decreased by the same amount.
9. A good distance remains between the proposed and recommended mix of homes. Given that the 2022 Thame HNA was not considered across the whole site at the Outline application stage Members should consider if they wish to maintain this objection. An alternative would be to remove our objection, subject to no further objection from District Council officers.
10. **Affordable housing must be visually indistinguishable.** LP2035 Policy H9 and TNP Policy H8 require affordable housing to be visually indistinguishable from the market housing on site. The policy test is that affordable housing should be indistinguishable from market housing. "Indistinguishable" should be understood in its plain-English context, i.e., there should be no discernible difference between them.
11. The differences between affordable and market homes that perform a similar function remains. The Town Council has consistently objected on this ground and it is considered appropriate to continue with that objection.

## Other matters

12. **The eastern boundary.** Some embayed parking has been placed within the eastern green corridor, which is regrettable. It is claimed this change was made in response to Highways seeking minimal reversing distances. A positive outcome, however, is that the originally positioned bays have been replaced with green planting.

## Recommendation:

13. It is recommended that Thame Town Council object to this amendment on the above reduced grounds.