

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE DATE: 3rd June 2026

APPLICATION REF. NO:	25/01397/RM1
STATUTORY DECISION DATE:	12 June 2026
WARD/PARISH:	Brinkburn And Faverdale
LOCATION:	Ice Flower Court, Site At Mount Pleasant Farm And Stag House Farm, Newton Lane Darlington
DESCRIPTION:	Application for reserved matters approval relating to access, layout, scale, appearance & landscaping attached to outline planning permission 15/00450/OUT dated 31/10/2018 (Outline application for residential development comprising approximately 1200 dwellings, residential and link roads, public open space, landscaping and drainage works together with education and playing fields) for the erection of 24 no. residential apartments with associated landscaping and infrastructure
APPLICANT:	Bussey and Armstong Projects Ltd

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT RESERVED MATTERS PURSUANT TO CONDITIONS

Application documents including application forms, submitted plans, supporting technical information, consultations responses and representations received, and other background papers are available on the Darlington Borough Council website via the following link:

<https://publicaccess.darlington.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=T7IH8TFPIXO00>

APPLICATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

1. Outline planning permission (ref no: 15/00450/OUT) was granted in 2018 for residential development of up to 1200 dwellings at Mount Pleasant and Stag House Farms. The

development is under construction, being brought forward in phases by different developers as part of the expansion of West Park.

2. The application site is located within the northern part of the West Park development and forms part of phases known as MP8(south) and MP9 which are being built by the applicant, Bussey and Armstong Projects Ltd.
3. Reserved matters approval has previously been granted (ref no: 21/01111/RM1) to construct 72 dwellings on MP9 and the southern part of MP8 and fourteen of the properties have been built or are under construction (Plots 1 to 14).
4. An application (ref no: 21/01288/CON) was submitted to discharge planning conditions attached to the outline permission in relation to layout for Phases MP8 (south) and MP9 that was approved under 21/01111/RM1. The conditions relating to the internal highway layout, a vehicle swept path analysis for the internal highways, parking and cycle parking provision have been discharged.
5. This revised reserved matters application has been submitted in order to remove eleven dwellings that were approved under 21/01111/RM1 and to replace them with a two and three storey apartment building comprising 24 units set out below:
 - Ground Floor – six, two bed apartments and four, one bed apartments
 - First Floor – eight, two bed apartments and two, one bed apartments
 - Second Floor – two, two bed apartments and two, one bed apartments
6. The previously approved layout was designed with an expectation that an existing electricity tower would be removed with the overhead lines placed underground. However, this has not occurred and there is no confirmed timeframe for or if such works will occur and therefore the revised layout includes the retention of the tower and the overhead lines, resulting in the loss of eleven dwellings. The applicant considers that an apartment building is a more appropriate form of development in these circumstances and in this location.
7. This submission is a reserved matters application solely to consider those matters relating to appearance, landscaping, layout, access and scale. The principle of development is not for consideration.
8. The apartment building would be positioned within landscaped grounds with fourteen parking spaces located directly off Juniper Grove and a further twenty two spaces within a parking area accessed off Gentian Grove which has been constructed as part of the 21/01111/RM1 approval.
9. The apartment building would be located within the residential development that forms the remaining part of phases MP8 (south) and MP9. West Auckland Road (A68) forms the northern boundary of the site and dwellings which have been built on Phase MP6

(under planning approval 20/00364/RM1) are located to the south (Juniper Avenue, Mortimer Wheeler Drive and Black Poplar Avenue).

10. A separate application (ref no: 25/01206/FUL) to amend the site boundary for 21/01111/RM1, to facilitate this development, and to substitute and add house types within MP8 (south) and MP9 forms part of this Agenda.
11. A separate application will need to be submitted to discharge those planning conditions attached to outline planning permission 15/00450/OUT which are relevant and appropriate to the redevelopment of Phases MP8(south) and MP9. Although the issues covered by some of the planning conditions are clearly interrelated to this proposal, the separate mechanism to agree the technical details subject of the other planning conditions, is not for specific consideration as part of this reserved matters submission. The need to discharge the planning conditions does not prevent the approval of the reserved matters submission which deals solely with matters of access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.
12. As the overall number of dwellings within Phase MP8 (south) and MP9 would reduce to sixty-six, a separate Non Material Amendment application (ref no: 25/01198/NMA) has been submitted to update the description of planning approval 21/01111/RM1. The application will be determined following a decision being made on this planning application.

MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

13. The application site is within the development limits for the urban area and therefore the proposed residential development can be supported, in principle, subject to compliance with national and local development plan policies (Policy H3 of the Local Plan). The proposal has been further established as the application site forms part of outline planning permission 15/00450/OUT for up to 1200 dwellings. In terms of the main planning issues for consideration, they relate only to the reserved matters which are:
 - a) Access (secondary)
 - b) Layout
 - c) Scale
 - d) Appearance
 - e) Landscaping
14. Interrelated with the above issues is the following considerations.
 - f) Residential Amenity
 - g) Flood Risk and Drainage
 - h) Nutrient Neutrality

PLANNING POLICIES

15. The following policies within the Darlington Local Plan 2016 – 2036 are relevant:

SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SH1: Settlement Hierarchy
DC1: Sustainable Design Principles and Climate Change
DC2: Flood Risk & Water Management
DC3: Health & Wellbeing
DC4: Safeguarding Amenity
H1: Housing Requirement
H2: Housing Allocations
H3: Development Limits
H4: Housing Mix
ENV3: Local Landscape Character
ENV4: Green & Blue Infrastructure
ENV5: Green Infrastructure Standards
ENV7: Biodiversity & Geodiversity & Development
ENV8: Assessing a Development's Impact on Biodiversity
IN1: Delivering a Sustainable Transport Network
IN2: Improving Access and Accessibility
IN4: Parking Provision including Electric Vehicle Charging

16. The Council's adopted Design SPD (2011) is also relevant.

RESULTS OF TECHNICAL CONSULTATION

17. The Council's Environmental Health Officer, Highways Engineer and Ecology Officer have raised no objections to the planning application

18. Northumbrian Water have raised no objections to the planning application

19. Durham County Council Archaeology Team have raised no objections to the planning application

RESULTS OF PUBLICITY AND NOTIFICATION

20. Following the Council's notification and publicity exercises, three letters of objection have been received from residents of Black Poplar Avenue, and the comments can be summarised as follows:

- *Highway safety concerns when entering Juniper Avenue*
- *Increase in residential density*
- *Increase in bedroom numbers*
- *Increase in car ownership*
- *Increase in traffic generation*
- *Overspill parking into surrounding streets*

- *Obstruction of carriageways*
- *Increased pressure on existing parking provision*
- *Estate was not designed for increase in density and parking demand*
- *Existing carriageways are too narrow*
- *Obstruction to emergency vehicles*
- *Impact on refuse and service vehicle manoeuvrability*
- *Reduced effective carriageway width*
- *Daily congestion at bends and junctions*

PLANNING ISSUES/ANALYSIS

a) Access (secondary)

21. The primary access arrangements and traffic generation associated with the wider development were considered and addressed under the outline planning application 15/00450/OUT. These arrangements remain unchanged by this planning application, and it is noted that the proposal does not result in any increase of the overall quantum of development approved under 15/00450/OUT. Traffic generation changes between the previously consented reserved matters and this new application is de minimis and does not present any evidence of intensification of use. Whilst some development phases have already been consented, significant headroom remains available under the outline consent. The revised proposal does not demonstrate traffic levels which exceed those already agreed under the outline permission and for this reason, traffic generation is not a consideration under this new application as the principle has been accepted as part of the outline consent with required mitigation secured at this time.
22. The internal road and footpath layout for Phases MP8(south) and MP9 has been approved under the previous reserved matters submission (ref no: 21/01111/RM1) and application 21/01288/CON and they remain unchanged by this planning application. Access to phases MP8 (south) and MP9 would be via Mortimer Wheeler Drive and Juniper Avenue (Phase MP6) which were approved under 20/00364/RM1 and 21/00440/CON. The wider development is compliant with the Tees Valley Design Guidance for adoptable highways. This ensures that developments are safe and accessible for all modes of transport including pedestrians and cyclists. The design standards within local guidance are derived from the nationally recognised Manual for Streets (MfS) which is DfT document. Full design appraisal and technical approval has been undertaken as part of earlier RM submissions and post planning highways technical approval. Black Poplar Avenue and Mortimer Wheeler Drive are 6.7m wide as they are designed to enable a future bus service to enter the development as well as accommodating the access and servicing requirements of both residential development cells and the future education facility included within the wider masterplan. Swept path analysis was used to prove that road geometry was suitable for refuse vehicles and busses. MfS allows residential estates road to be constructed to a width of 4.8m. The 6.7m carriageway width is therefore resilient and reflects the wider scale and mix of the development.

23. The proposal includes thirty six parking spaces, including accessible and electric vehicle charging spaces. This equates to 1.5 spaces per unit which meets the Tees Valley Design Guide (TVDG) standards for this form of flatted accommodation. Where parking standards are fully met, overspill parking is unlikely to occur and thus present a highway safety or residential amenity concern. As TVDG standards are met, the development is in accordance with Local Plan policy and as such there are no such grounds on which to refuse the application on parking provision.
24. The accessible parking spaces are located next to the link footways which gives most direct access to the entrance doors of the apartments. Bin storage and cycle parking is also provided, and the precise details would be agreed under a separate discharge of condition process.
25. The proposed development would accord with policies DC1, IN1, IN2 and IN4 of the Local Plan in this regard.

b) Layout

26. The apartment building and its associated parking areas and landscaped grounds would replace a row of eight dwellings which fronted onto Juniper Avenue and three terraced properties located to the rear off Gentian Grove. The proposed building would front onto Juniper Avenue to ensure that an active street frontage is retained and two of the three pedestrian entrances into the building would be from Juniper Avenue. The proposed layout of the amended scheme is acceptable and ensures that the development continues to have a high-quality layout which responds appropriately to the character of Phases MP6, MP8 (south) and MP9 as it continues to be brought forward. The proposal would be in accordance with policies DC1 and ENV3 of the Local Plan.
27. The overall unit numbers for the West Park development as a whole are governed by the outline permission 15/00450/OUT, which consented up to 1,200 dwellings. There remain approximately 300 plots to be delivered before the outline quantum is reached and there are Phases within the wider development which are still yet to be subject to full reserved matters approval (MP7, the remaining section of MP8(north) and MP10).
28. The variation from eleven dwellings to twenty four apartments within the application site is not material to the overall consented density and sits comfortably within the parameters of the outline planning permission. The acceptability of each reserved matters application must be assessed on its own merits against the outline permission, and the fact that it differs from the previous RM approval (ref no 21/01111/RM1) for the same part of the site is not a reason to refuse this planning application.

c) Scale

29. The majority of the dwellings on Phases MP8 (south) and MP9 and approved under the previous reserved matters submission (ref no: 21/01111/RM1) are two storey

properties but there are two, three storey properties on corner plots (Yarm House Type) within the development. This is also the case for the residential development on Phase MP6 to the south of the application site which were approved under reserved matters application 20/00364/RM1. As a result, the scale of the proposed apartment building, which is a mix of two and three storeys, would be keeping with the local area and built environment. The proposed development would accord with Policy DC1 of the Local Plan in this regard.

d) Appearance

30. The elevations of the apartment building are inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th Century which is a common theme for the parts of West Park that have been constructed by Bussey and Armstong Projects Ltd, including Phases MP6, MP8 and MP9. The development incorporates large, sloping roof forms, strong gables, projecting gables and bay windows with a variation of roof heights and window opening sizes to create visual interest and to reduce the overall scale of the development.
31. The boundary treatment on with West Auckland Road (A68) would be a post and rail fence along with the existing mature hedge.
32. The palette of materials would be red roof tiles, red facing brick and cement panel sandstone panels. The palette of materials is accepted, in principle, but a condition has been imposed to secure the precise details.
33. The development would remain of a high quality, designed to be reflective of, and sympathetic to, the design and character of the dwellings to be built within Phases MP8 and MP9 which also take references from the Arts and Crafts movement. The staggered nature of the elevations and roof lines create interest and when viewed from within the application site and also from West Auckland Road (A68). The building would not be visually dominant or an overbearing addition to the street due to its proposed design and scale. The development continues to promote a high-quality, cohesive design that responds appropriately to the character of the area in accordance with policies DC1 and ENV3 of the Local Plan.

e) Landscaping

34. The visual impact of the parking areas located directly off Juniper Avenue would be softened by tree planting within the bays and hedging which runs along the rear of the bays. Hedge planting would occur around the edge of the car park off Gentian Grove and the existing hedge on the boundary with West Auckland Road would be retained. The landscaping scheme also involves tree planting to support existing trees to be retained would be managed by a private management company. The landscaping scheme would accord with policies DC1, ENV3, ENV4 and ENV5 of the Local Plan.

35. To accord with comments made by the Council's Ecology Officer, the design of the building includes swift boxes and bat boxes on appropriate elevations in accordance with policies ENV7 and ENV8 of the Local Plan.

f) Residential Amenity

36. A two storey, terrace comprising four properties (plots 19 to 22) will front onto the north west elevation of the apartment building. The section of the apartment building nearest to these dwellings is also two storeys in height and the separation distance between them is 21m which accords with the requirements set out in the Council's Design SPD. There is also tree planting being proposed which will provide some screening between the buildings.
37. The dwellings to the south west, in the opposite side of Juniper Avenue are approximately 27m from the proposed apartment building and this proximity distance would accord with the requirements of the Design SPD. The dwellings to the south east would be separated from the apartment building by the car parking area and they would be 28m and 37m away from the proposed building. The presence of the parking area would not raise significant adverse amenity impacts on the dwellings to the south east. Appropriate privacy distances for all occupants would be secured and safeguarded.
38. Due to the design of the building and the proximity distances, the proposed building would not have an adverse impact on the outlook of the neighbouring properties.
39. Matters relating to land contamination and construction impacts will be dealt with by the separate mechanism of the discharge of condition process.
40. The proposed development is considered to comply with policies DC3 and DC4 of the Local Plan.

g) Flood Risk and Drainage

41. Conditions 14 and 16 attached to outline planning permission 15/00450/OUT relate to foul and surface water drainage and an application to discharge these conditions will be submitted separately. However, the proposed surface water drainage scheme has been considered on a site wide basis and the surface water from the application site will be attenuated in the SUDs infrastructure to be constructed on the Mount Pleasant farm site (MP7) under planning permission 20/00033/RM1. There construction works are presently being carried out. The development would accord with policy DC2 of the Local Plan.

h) Nutrient Neutrality

42. This application is a reserved matters application following an outline permission (15/00450/OUT) and various discharge of condition applications (20/00440/CON and

21/00690/CON) including conditions 14 & 16 which relate to drainage. The outline permission and discharge of conditions were issued prior to the requirement for development proposals of overnight accommodation to demonstrate nutrient neutrality in the Darlington Borough so could therefore continue to be implemented without having to demonstrate and achieve nutrient neutrality. This proposal will not amend foul drainage details already implemented which will discharge to the main drainage infrastructure approved under previous planning permissions (15/00450/OUT, 20/00440/CON and 21/00690/CON). Considering these factors, it can be concluded there would be no increase in nutrient impact above the already implemented drainage strategy. Therefore, it can be ruled that this proposal will not have a likely significant effect on the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA/Ramsar and an appropriate assessment does not need to be undertaken. As this proposal has been screened out for nutrient neutrality purposes, Natural England do not need to be consulted.

THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

43. In considering this application the Local Planning Authority has complied with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which places a statutory duty on public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The parking provision includes disabled parking spaces close to the entrances of the apartment building and the ground floor units are accessible. The application would accord with Policy IN2 of the Local Plan in this regard.

SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

44. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

45. There are no residential amenity issues, and the design and layout of the apartment building will ensure that a high quality development will be brought forward. The road and footpath arrangements are as per those approved under the previous applications (ref no: 21/01111/RM1 and 21/01288/CON) for these phases and remain unchanged by this planning application. The parking requirements for the development accord with the Tees Valley Design Guide and there are no highway objections.
46. Matters relating to land contamination, drainage, ecology, archaeology etc will be considered in detail as part of a separate discharge of condition process. However, this

reserved matters submission accords with the appropriate local development plan policies.

GRANT APPROVAL SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING PLANNING CONDITIONS:

1. Unless otherwise confirmed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the development hereby approved should be carried out in accordance with the following plans:
 - a) Drawing Number 21-001 A005 P5 – Site Plan
 - b) Drawing Number 21-001 A015 P2 – Landscape and Boundary Strategy
 - c) Drawing Number 21-001 A200 P7 – Proposed Ground Floor
 - d) Drawing Number 21-001 A201 P7 – Proposed First Floor
 - e) Drawing Number 21-001 A202 P7 – Proposed Second Floor
 - f) Drawing Number 21-001 A203 P2 – Proposed Roof Plan
 - g) Drawing Number 21-001 A300 P5 – South East and West Elevation
 - h) Drawing Number 21-001 A301 P5 – North West and East Elevation
 - i) Drawing Number 21-001 A001 P3 – Location Plan

REASON - To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the planning approval.

2. The building hereby approved shall not be constructed above damp proof course until precise details of all external materials to be used in the construction of the building have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved details

REASON – In the interests of the visual appearance of the development