

22/00956/OP – Land south of Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, Hertfordshire

Written Update

1. Neighbour Representations

One further neighbour representation has been received since the publication of the committee report objecting to the application. The comments are summarised as follows:

- *Impact of increased demand for water from the new dwellings especially given the recent issue of having very little rainfall.*
- *Concerns around air quality specifically in relation to dust and air pollution and pollution generated by traffic from the new development.*
- *Concerns around heat that would be generated by the new dwellings adding to the carbon footprint.*

The full copy of the response is available to view on the Council's website.

2. Wymondley Parish Council – letter dated 03 August 2026

A further letter of representation has been received from Wymondley Parish Council since the publication of the committee report. The comments are summarised as follows:

- *Concerns around assumptions that have been made in relation to the deliverability of the eastern connection to the site to/from Tower Close which would utilise land owned by the Parish Council.*
- *Any such agreement to the above should resolve other concerns about the development, specifically in relation to the recreation ground and providing access to additional parking on the development site to mitigate additional traffic up Tower Close as a result of the increased use of the sports facilities generated by the development.*
- *Given the above, the eastern access to the site should be considered on the basis that access on this side of the site would be from the existing access/public footpath adjacent to the tennis courts and this should be reflected in the recently submitted Technical Note.*
- *Pedestrian access to the site from Stevenage Road by Ashwater is also used as a vehicle access to properties.*
- *The applicant's proposals are considered not achievable or consented by the landowner.*

The full copy of the response is available to view on the Council's website.

In relation to the proposed eastern connection to the site to/from Tower Close adjacent to the existing Tower Close playground, this provides an optimal location for the main active travel route entering/exiting the eastern side of the site. This would be located outside the red line boundary of the site on land owned by the Parish Council. Initial details are set out in the masterplan drawings, and it is proposed to include a

best endeavours clause within the S106 agreement to give the connection the best prospect of being delivered. It is for the applicant or future developer of the site to engage with the Parish Council to discuss and resolve any issues around the delivery of this link to/from the site. If for whatever reason the link cannot be delivered, the eastern link to/from the site can be achieved at the point where the existing public right of way enters/existing the site adjacent to the existing tennis courts.

Regarding the northern central active travel connection to/from the site from Stevenage Road, this access and lane is included within the red line boundary of the application submission. The applicant has confirmed separately that the access and lane are within their ownership and that Ashwater House benefits from a right only to utilise the lane for access to this property.

3. Wymondley Parish Council – letter dated 10 August 2026 and accompanying document titled ‘Review of Officer’s Report and Request for Deferral’

A further letter and accompanying document have been received from Wymondley Parish Council since the publication of the committee report.

The executive summary from the document sets out the following:

- *This paper has been prepared following a detailed review of the Officer's Report, the applicant's supporting documents, statutory consultation responses and the adopted Development Plan.*
- *It is not intended to repeat the many planning objections already submitted by residents and the Parish Council, nor does it seek to revisit the principle of allocating Land South of Stevenage Road (WY1) within the adopted Local Plan.*
- *Instead, it addresses a narrower but fundamental question...*
- *Has the applicant demonstrated, on the evidence presently before the Planning Control Committee, that this proposal satisfies the specific requirements of Policy WY1 and constitutes sustainable development, or have too many matters central to that conclusion been left unresolved and deferred to future planning conditions, legal agreements and technical approvals?*
- *The purpose of this paper is therefore to assist Members in determining whether they currently possess sufficient evidence to make a fully informed planning decision.*
- *Following a review of the available documentation, it is respectfully submitted that the Officer's Report consistently reaches conclusions that are more certain than the present evidence base justifies.*
- *Across transport, flood risk, sustainable drainage, active travel, engineering, legal agreements and long-term infrastructure management, the report frequently concludes that impacts are acceptable because matters will be agreed, will be secured, will be designed or will be delivered at a later stage.*
- *Whilst planning conditions are an essential part of the planning system, there comes a point where the cumulative number of unresolved matters becomes*

material to whether Members can properly conclude that Policy WY1 has been satisfied before granting outline planning permission.

- *If the view is taken that this is only an outline application with all matters other than access reserved, then at least access should be dealt with very robustly but it is not:*
 - *The eastern access is overland not owned;*
 - *The central access is shared with cars a point not mentioned;*
 - *The main access is subject to flooding;*
 - *The emergency access is not proven to take all the traffic in these of loss of use of the main Stevenage Road access.*
- *Therefore, even if you take a narrow view of the application it fails to robustly deliver.*
- *Accordingly, this paper respectfully requests that Members consider whether determination should be deferred until the outstanding matters identified within this submission have been resolved or more fully explained. It would also give members an opportunity to have a formally arranged viewing of the site, the village and the roads around to draw their own conclusions on the key point of whether this is a sustainable development.*

The full copy of the letter and accompanying document are available to view on the Council's website.

This is an allocated site in the Local Plan, meaning that the principle of housing development on this site is acceptable.

This is an outline planning application, meaning that the application is not complete of all the detail. This is normal for an outline planning application, which was submitted by a land promoter. The promoter will not build out the site; it will be sold to a housebuilder who will then look to build the site within the permission given with its associated conditions and legal agreement.

Regarding further detail on drainage, highways etc, this is a normal process for applicants and outline planning permission. All consultees have the opportunity to review the information and statutory consultees like the Highways Authority and LLFA have the technical expertise to assess that part of the application. The conditions related to drainage for example are normal, proportionate and logical reflecting the stages and requirements of the planning process.

Regarding long term management, these issues are appreciated, however we do not yet know the future housebuilder and so conditions and obligations are included to ensure this is addressed at the appropriate time of the delivery of the site. These aspects are secured through s106 agreement and will not be affected by the Housing Estates Bill as it is not yet in effect.

Regarding the s106 legal agreement, it is general practice to wait for a resolution by Planning Control Committee before instructing solicitors to commence negotiations on the detailed wording, however the heads of terms table is agreed with the applicant and included at paragraph 5.16.4 and Table 3 of the committee report to

demonstrate that the proposals mitigate the impact of development. The s106 carries with the land so when it is sold the new owner/housebuilder will need to comply with it.

Regarding community financial contributions, funding has been secured for the following projects:

- Contribution towards allotments and community garden to the rear of Siccut Road in Little Wymondley.
- Contribution towards upgrading and refurbishing existing play equipment, renewal of associated fencing and gates, installation of safe play bases and the addition of some outdoor gym equipment.
- Contribution towards improvement of the existing football pitches at Little Wymondley playing fields and improving the existing sports pavilion and/or towards a new community hub on site.
- Contribution towards community hub project at Little Wymondley playing fields via the Sports Halls contribution.
- Contribution towards installing sports lighting at the existing tennis courts at Little Wymondley playing fields.

Full details are set out in the heads of terms table at paragraph 5.16.4 and Table 3 of the committee report.

Regarding a member site visit, members of the PCC are advised to undertake a site visit in their own time. There was no opportunity to arrange a formal member site visit due to summer holiday period. A member briefing on this application did however take place in March 2026 online on Teams.

Regarding deferral, officers do not recommend deferring the application for the above reasons; issues have been sufficiently considered in the report to committee.

4. St Ippolyts Parish Council

A letter of representation has been received from St Ippolyts Parish Council since the publication of the committee report. The comments are summarised as follows:

- *Concerns raised around the introduction of traffic lights in St Ippolyts Parish and the Green Belt as part of the scheme.*
- *Concerns around the effect additional journeys generated by the new development would have on the existing junction where Stevenage Road joins the A602. It is recommended that this entire junction is upgraded to a new roundabout.*

For clarity, no traffic lights are proposed at the Blakemore End Road access to the site, and this would be an emergency access only. All vehicular access to/from the site would be via the proposed main vehicular access from Stevenage Road. Furthermore, the proposed package of off-site highways improvements does not propose any form of upgrades to the junction of Stevenage Road and the A602 to the west of Little Wymondley.

5. Technical Note produced by WSP (dated 24 July 2026)

The applicant submitted a Technical Note on 24 July 2026 relating to the proposed trigger points for the delivery of the different elements of the off-site highway improvement works and a technical reconsultation was undertaken with the Highways Authority. This was addressed in paragraph 5.5.18 of the committee report and the details of the different elements of the proposed off-site works are set out at paragraph 5.5.17 of the committee report.

Subsequently, the Highways Authority have responded indicating they do not agree to the trigger points proposed in relation to the 'Central Connection', the 'Eastern Connections' and the 'A1 Junction 8 Works'. Further negotiations are therefore required between the applicant and the Highways Authority to resolve this matter. Currently, proposed condition 33 of the committee report requires all elements of the off-site highway improvement works to be completed prior to first occupation of the development. It is anticipated that the wording of this condition is likely to be updated following the outcome of the negotiations between the applicant and the Highways Authority. This is considered the most suitable course of action in this instance, and the recommendation at paragraph 9.1 of the committee report provides delegated powers to the Development and Conservation Manager to update any conditions as required.

The full copy of the Technical Note produced by WSP is available to view on the Council's website.

6. Errors identified and further points of clarification within the committee report

With reference to the Heads of Terms for s106 Agreement at paragraph 5.16.4 (Table 3), the wording of the following elements are revised with the highlighted text below:

- Primary Education – should state 'Indicative £3,870,000 index linked to BCIS 4Q2024 **and BCIS Regional Factor** towards the expansion of Wymondley JMI school by 0.5FE and/or provision serving the development'.
- Secondary Education – should state 'Indicative £2,927,410 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024 **and BCIS Regional Factor**'.
- Childcare Service 0-2 years – currently states 'Towards increasing the capacity of 0-2 year old childcare facilities at a new Community Hall in Little Wymondley **or Knebworth** and/or provision serving the development'. The highlighted reference to Knebworth is an error and should be removed.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – should state 'Indicative £512,985 index linked to BCIS 1Q2024 **and BCIS Regional Factor**'.
- HCC Monitoring Fees – should state '£420 (**adjusted for inflation against RPI January 2024**) for each distinct trigger point'.

For the avoidance of doubt, none of the financial contributions agreed and set out within the table have changed.