



**Quantum  
Golf**

Planning for Golf

DLA Ref: 22/035

August 2023

## Planning Statement

Outline Planning Application

Erection of 14 dwellings and new access to Golf Club Road

The Paddock, Brookmans Park Golf Club, Hatfield AL9 7AT



# Golf Club Potential

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1.0 Background

1.1.1 This report relates to an outline planning application for the erection of 14 dwellings on land comprising the Paddock at Brookmans Park Golf Club, Hatfield. Other than access, all matters are reserved.

### 1.2.0 Scope

1.2.1 This document comprises an overarching Planning Report. Sections 2 to 4 consider the physical, economic, social and historical context of the site, identifying the relevant local, regional and national planning policy framework; Section 5 sets out the details of the proposal. All these sections inform the evaluation of the proposal in Section 6 against the identified planning policy framework. The overall conclusions are set out in Section 7, and which are summarised below at paragraph 1.3.0.

1.2.2 This report provides an overview of the proposal and should be read in conjunction with the following documents.

Report	Author	Date
Arboricultural Survey	DCCLA	August 2023
Transport Statement	Milestone Transport Planning Ltd	August 2023
Reptile Survey	Cherryfield Ecology	September 2022
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	James Blake Associates	August 2023

### 1.3.0 Summary

- The site is allocated by Welwyn Hatfield in their Emerging Local Plan as a housing site. The site is therefore considered suitable for residential development by the Council.
- There is a clear District-wide need for and in the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the planning balance shifts in favour of the grant of permission for residential development, with permission to be refused only if any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The benefits noted in recent appeal decision within Welwyn Hatfield as being given "*very substantial weight*" given the "*bleak*" position of the WHBC housing land supply.
- The proposal would result in 14 dwellings of an attractive design that would be appropriate to the character of the area. The dwellings would comply with local plan policies and supplementary design guidance, and would create a good standard of accommodation.
- There will be no loss of amenity to surrounding residents. A spacious setting and gardens would be provided for the proposed dwellings.



- There would be no detrimental impact upon landscape features as a result of development on the site.
- The proposed access would meet County Council requirements and adequate parking provision would be made.



## 2.0 SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

### 2.1.0 Location

2.1.1 Brookmans Park Golf Club is located on the western side of Golf Club Road to the north and east of Brookmans Park on the northern edge of the settlement boundary. The land subject to this report (as shown in Figure 1) lies on the edge of the golf course, within the Golf Club ownership, but does not form part of the course. It fronts Golf Course Road to its eastern boundary; the Golf Course to the west and north and the rear gardens of houses in Brookmans Avenue to the south.

### 2.2.0 Application Site

2.2.1 The site itself is a broadly triangular parcel of land, some 0.65ha in area. It is a level piece of land that is laid to grass and has a substantial tree belt (within the site boundaries) separating it from the 'active' golf course. The site is allocated (HS21) in the Welwyn Hatfield Draft Local Plan.

### 2.3.0 Context

2.3.1 The site lies on the edge of the urban area of Brookmans Park and abuts houses in Brookmans Avenue, a residential street of suburban character to the south. To the north and west are the Golf Club buildings and the Golf Course land. To the east of Golf Club Road are the buildings and playing fields of Chancellor's School.

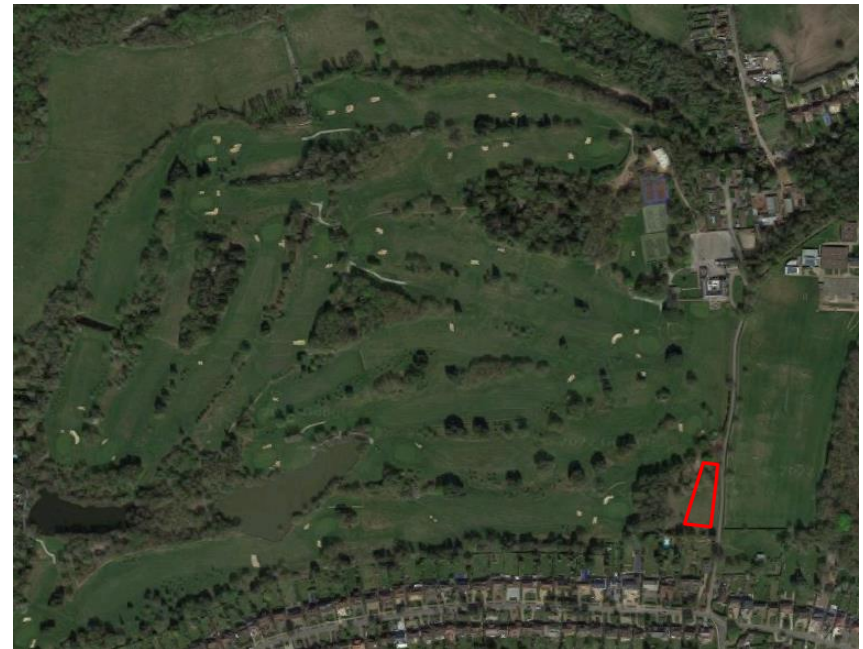


Figure 1: Site Location as shown in the wider context of the Golf Club

2.4.0 **Proposals Map Notation**

2.4.1 The LPA’s extract from the adopted Policies Map (Figure 2 below) is annotated to identify the site in red. The site falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt and within a Landscape Character Area. The site has no other land designations, is not within flood zones 2 or 3, nor does it have any listed buildings on or adjacent to the site.

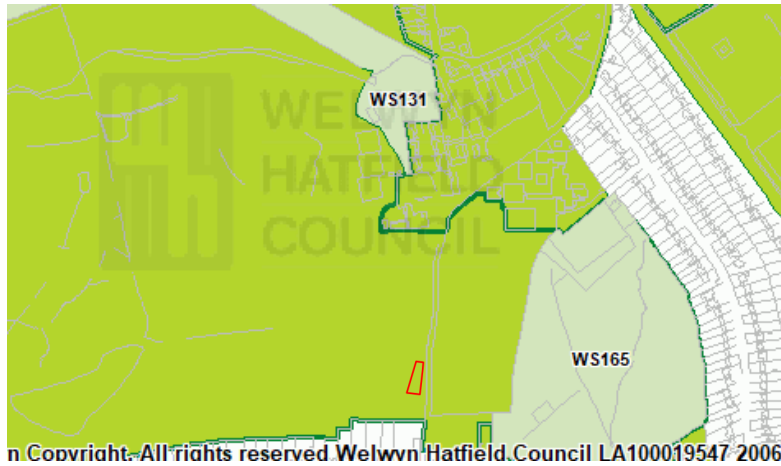


Figure 2: Annotated extract from the adopted Policies Map

2.4.2 Brookmans Park is identified in the Local Plan 2005 as a ‘*Specified Settlement*’, with such settlements limited to “*development that is compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of their character and the maintenance of their Green Belt boundaries*”. Brookmans Park is also characterised as a large village, served well

by facilities and rail links. As such, although the application site is situated outside of the settlement boundary of Brookmans Park, it lays adjacent to the northern edge of the boundary, thus is still accessible to these essential facilities and transport links.

2.4.3 Reference is also made to the Welwyn Hatfield Draft Local Plan. The proposed submission version dated August 2016 identifies the application site as allocated for development (HS21) with a proposed yield of 14 units.

2.5.0 **Local Services & Accessibility**

2.5.1 The site abuts the urban area to the south, which is primarily residential at this point. The area is well served by public transport, shops and services. The table on the following page sets out the distances between the report site and these facilities. This shows that shops, public transport and schools are all within a 2km walking distance. Brookmans Park Train Station is on the East Coast Main Line and provides services to Moorgate. Sports facilities at Brookmans Park Golf and Tennis Club are also very close to the application site. The sites’ proximity to major roads such as the A1000 Great North Road, A1(M) and the M25 gives good accessibility to and from the area.



Local Provisions Table 1

Type	Local Provision	Distance from site (km)	Approx. Journey time (mins)	
			walking	cycling
<b>Retail</b>	Co-op Food Brookmans Park	0.9	13	4
<b>Education</b>	Brookmans Park Primary School	1.7	17	5
	Chancellor's School	0.9	11	3
<b>Medical</b>	Welham Green Dental Surgery	2.2	34	10
	Potterells Medical Centre	1.4	20	4
	Jhoots Pharmacy	1.1	10	2
<b>Leisure</b>	Miller & Carter Brookmans Park	1.2	15	5
	Brookmans Park Tennis Club	0.6	7	2
	Brookmans Park Golf Club	0.4	6	1



### 3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

#### 3.1.0 Application Site

3.1.1 There is no planning history directly relating to The Paddock itself. The relevant history of the wider Golf Club site is summarised in Figure 3.1.0 below.

LPA Ref	Proposal	Outcome
6/2022/2409/OUTLINE	Outline permission for the erection of 9 dwellings, with all matters reserved except for access.	Withdrawn – March 2023
6/2021/0129/FULL	Erection of building comprising a technology-based driving range, pro-shop and trolley storage area; and an enclosed netted structure, following removal of existing timber building (trolley store), practice nets and pro-shop	Granted – December 2021

6/2018/1482/FULL	Erection of building comprising a swing studio, trolley store and practice nets, following demolition of existing trolley store building and practice nets	Granted – October 2018
S6/1986/0172/FP	Single storey extension to clubhouse	Granted – May 1986
S6/1986/0375/FP	Single storey extensions to locker rooms and double garage	Granted – June 1986
S6/1981/0704/	Twin bay golf clinic	Granted – February 1982

#### 3.2.0 **6/2022/2409/OUTLINE (outline permission for the erection of 9 dwellings, with all matters reserved except for access) withdrawn application**

3.2.1 Following some Highway concerns as raised by the Council, as well as the proposals not meeting their full number of dwellings as per the allocation, the decision was taken to withdraw the application.





3.3.0 **Other Relevant Sites**

3.3.1 The following permission relates to the adjoining property at No.101 Brookmans Avenue.

LPA Ref	Proposal	Outcome
6/2019/2313/FULL	Erection of six dwellings following demolition of existing buildings	Granted – December 2019

3.2.2 The application site at No.101 was not allocated in the Local Plan, thus coming forward as a windfall site, not contained within the green belt. However, what this decision highlights, is that the local area of Brookmans Park has the existing infrastructure to absorb development proposals of this scale and nature.



## 4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

### 4.1.0 National Policy / Guidance

4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021, sets out the Government’s planning policies for England. The following sections are considered directly relevant:

- Chapter 2 (Achieving Sustainable Development)
- Chapter 5 (Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes)
- Chapter 11 (Making Effective Use of Land)
- Chapter 12 (Achieving Well Designed Places)
- Chapter 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land)
- Chapter 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment)

4.1.2 The National Planning Policy Guidance contains detailed guidance on the application of the NPPF and is a material consideration in the decision-making process.

### 4.2.0 Development Plan

4.2.1 This comprises of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan which was adopted in 2005. The following saved policies are considered directly relevant:

Policy No.	Title
SD1	Sustainable Development
GBSP1	Definition of Green Belt
GBSP2	Towns and Specified Settlements
R3	Energy Efficiency
D1	Quality of Design
D2	Character and Context
D8	Landscaping
M14	Parking Standards for New Development
R11	Protected Species
R17	Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

### 4.3.0 Welwyn Hatfield Draft Local Plan 2016

4.3.1 The Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission 2016 was submitted for examination on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and an Inspector was appointed by the Secretary of State to carry out an independent examination. The examination has undergone several stages - the most recent being Stage 9 Hearing Sessions held during February and March 2021. At present time, the examination remains ongoing and given the ongoing delays and uncertainty still



surrounding the emerging Local Plan, it is considered that the emerging policies carry limited weight.

#### 4.4.0 **Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents**

- Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards and Garage Sizes 2014
- Supplementary Parking Guidance 2004
- Supplementary Design Guidance 2005



## 5.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1.0 Use

5.1.1 Outline planning permission is sought for the erection of 14 dwellings with all matters reserved, except for access. The residential development is proposed to subsidise the improvements the Golf Club needs in order to secure its future. This is discussed in the following section.

### 5.2.0 Layout

5.2.1 Layout is a reserved matter; however, an indicative layout is provided in Figure 3 below. It is proposed that the dwelling mix would comprise of larger dwellings to the south of the site, with smaller dwellings to the north of the site. The development occupies most of the site, taking into account the semi mature woodland on the western and northern boundaries.

5.2.2 Two new accesses are proposed off Golf Club Road, with the southerly access for plots 1 - 9 and the northerly access for plots 10-14.



Figure 3: Indicative site layout



5.3.0 **Appearance & Scale**

5.3.1 Whilst these are reserved matters, it is envisaged that properties 1-9 would be detached, and properties 10-14 would take the form of a 1 bedroom coach house and x4, 2 bedroom flats, and would not exceed 2-storeys in height. It is anticipated that the dwellings will be of a coherent, but varied design, to include variation in ridge and eaves lines and facing materials.

5.4.0 **Landscaping**

5.4.1 The existing trees on site will remain largely unaffected by the proposed development. New indicative planting is shown throughout the site, and the illustrative landscape strategy plan which accompanies this submission, places an emphasis on using native species along the site boundaries to ensure appropriate transition from the surrounding golf course.

5.5.0 **Access & Parking**

5.5.1 As detailed in the Transport Statement, vehicles will access the site from Golf Club Road, which will remain a shared surface as there are low levels of traffic. However, due to vehicle speeds exceeding a safe limit on Golf Club Road, speed calming measures in the form of speed humps are proposed to be installed at 60m intervals. This also includes a raised table feature adjacent to the site's access.

5.5.2 A 2m wide footway is proposed along the site's frontage to ensure safe movement of pedestrians around the proposed traffic calming measures.

5.5.3 Golf Club Road will be clearly marked as a shared surface road with signage showing speed restrictions of 20mph that will be put into place.

5.5.4 Policy M14 of the District Plan and the Parking Standards SPG use maximum standards that are not consistent with the Framework and are therefore afforded less weight. Considering this, the Council have produced an Interim Policy for Car Parking Standards that states that parking provision will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the existing maximum parking standards within the SPG should be taken as guidance only.

5.5.5 The Council's car parking guidance for dwellings with four or more bedrooms in this location is three spaces per dwelling. It is anticipated that this standard will be applied to the layout in respect to the schedule of housing proposed.

5.5.6 It is anticipated that cycle parking will be provided within the curtilages of the individual properties in sheds or other secure stores.



## 6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

Based on the analysis set out in Sections 2 to 5, I consider that the application proposal raises the following issues, which I will consider in turn below:

1. Principle
2. Housing Mix & Affordable Housing
3. Layout & Design
4. Landscaping
5. Highway Safety & Access
6. Ecology



## 6.1.0 **Issue No 1: Principle**

### 6.1.1 **Proposal Context**

6.1.2 Brookmans Park Golf Club, as stewards to the land within its control, acts to ensure that all associated land is well maintained, and stays respective of its land designations, including the purposes of the Green Belt. The last 5-10 years have seen fierce competition between neighbouring golf clubs, less time on the course by individuals and following the Covid-19 pandemic, financial losses have soared. Now more so than ever, adaptation is vital to ensure the Club can continue to operate successfully.

6.1.3 The Club currently benefits from an extant planning permission LPA ref: 6/2021/0129/FULL for a technology-based driving range, pro-shop and trolley storage area. This permission incorporates the latest golf tracking technology benefiting both pros and leisure golfers. This scheme is the first step to adaption and will provide a valuable source of income. However, this alone will not be enough to ensure the future of the Club, and other adaption methods are a necessity.

6.1.4 The golf club has been in existence on this site since the 1930's and has utilised the current clubhouse building for all of those years. Weddings, christenings and other private functions can be a good source of income; however, facilities need to be suitable.

The clubhouse building is large, but the internal spaces restrict its use for anything more than a basic clubhouse as it has a difficult layout with small spaces and corridors. The underinvestment in facilities, due to falling subs and the building being impractical for income generation, is beginning to come to a head. The cost of refurbishment and extension of the clubhouse to bring it up to modern standards is substantial. The residential proposals will subsidise the improvements the Golf Club needs in order to secure its future.

### 6.1.5 **Green Belt Harm**

6.1.6 The site is set within the Green Belt where national policy restricts development unless very special circumstances exist. The approach set out in the NPPF requires an assessment of the harm – Green Belt and other harm – and then an assessment of the benefits to establish whether other considerations clearly outweigh the harm (paragraph 148 of the NPPF).

6.1.7 The LPA's position, as set out in the Submission of the Draft Local Plan, is that this site is appropriate for residential development and necessarily required to meet the borough's housing needs over the plan period, hence its designation under ref: HS21, Policy SADM 31. It is considered that the inclusion of the site in the Draft Local Plan constitutes an acknowledgement of very special circumstances as to why an exception to normal Green



Belt policy is justified in this instance. Those special circumstances comprise of the following and are discussed in turn below:

- **The site is identified as suitable for residential development in the Council’s assessment**

The Council’s own assessment of the site in the SHLAA study and by inclusion as an allocated site in the SDLP (Submission Draft Local Plan) under designation HS21 (Policy SADM 31).

- **The need for housing in Brookmans Park**

The SDLP only identifies sufficient land to meet the objectively assessed need (OAN) for housing in Brookmans Park, based on the development of this site. Therefore, the Report Site is strategic and necessary for the Borough to meet its housing needs in the near future (0-5years).

- **The sustainability of the report site for residential development**

Brookmans Park is a sustainable location well served by public transport.

- **The impact on the five stated purposes of the Green Belt**

The application site is assessed, by the Council, as making a limited contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. Therefore, its inclusion within the settlement boundary of Brookmans Park and its redevelopment for residential development would not harm the relevant purposes of

including land in the Green Belt. It is well linked to the existing development and distinct from the open countryside to the north due to the tree screening, such that the site is not required in order to keep the Green Belt permanently open. The site has a landscape sensitivity rating of medium, such that it can accommodate new development without any undue visual harm to the landscape and Green Belt.

The Council’s assessment of and intentions for this site are clear. It is a site that contributes little to the Green Belt, it a suitable and sustainable site for residential development, and its redevelopment forms an integral part of the Council’s strategy to meet its future housing needs.

6.1.7 It is considered that the above constitutes exceptional circumstances that would overcome the Green Belt Policy objection to development on the report site, and the grant of permission would not undermine the aims and objectives of the Emerging Local Plan or the Council’s future development strategy.

6.1.8 **Presumption in favour of sustainable development**

6.1.9 With regard to national policy, the presumption in favour of sustainable development remains at the heart of the updated NPPF 2021 (paragraph 10). In support of this, the Framework identifies 3 ‘overarching objectives’: economic; social; and environmental. Paragraph 9 states as follows in this respect:





*“These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.”*

6.1.10 The implications of the presumption in favour of sustainable development for decision making are set out at paragraph 11 of the Framework. This requires that proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies however - or the relevant policies are out-of-date - it requires that permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

6.1.11 In considering the implications for residential development, the footnote to paragraph 11 states that this includes situations where the LPA cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, with the appropriate buffer, as required by paragraph 74 of the Framework, which states in part as follows: *“Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide*

*a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies , or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old”.*

6.1.12 The recent Annual Monitoring Report (2020/21) indicates the current position of the five-year housing land supply in the Borough. A supply of 2.46 years was identified which therefore Council now accepts that for Development Management Purposes, that it cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and indeed, with a supply of only 2.46 years, falls significantly below this requirement.

6.1.13 A recent appeal decision, reference APP/C1590/W/22/3294860, allowed an appeal within Welwyn Hatfield. This appeal is shown in Appendix 1. Upon allowing the appeal, the Inspector stated that *“The Council and the appellant agree that the housing land supply in the Borough is currently in the range of 1.75-2.46 years and the most recent Housing Delivery Test has been failed by a substantial margin. The Council is persistently failing to provide the number of homes needed in the area and there is currently no firm plan to rectify that situation.*

*73. The emerging LP has progressed at an exceptionally slow pace and there remain significant uncertainties as to whether or when it will be adopted, with fundamental questions outstanding surrounding how the housing requirement identified by the*



*Examining Inspector will be met. Meanwhile, the housing requirement contained in the WHDP is hopelessly out of date and inadequate. In this context, the provision of market and affordable housing attracts substantial weight.”*

6.1.14 Appendix 2 of this report also shows another appeal decision within the Borough, reference APP/B1930/W/20/3265925. This appeal decision also cited concerns regarding the Councils housing land supply, with the Inspector stating, *“Even taking the Councils supply positions of WHBC 2.58 years and SADC at 2.4 years, the position is a bleak one and the shortfall in both local authorities is considerable and significant....I afford very substantial weight to the provision of market housing which would make a positive contribution to the supply of market housing in both local authority areas.”*

6.1.15 There is therefore a clear District-wide need for additional housing sites to come forward and in the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the planning balance shifts in favour of the grant of permission for residential development, with permission to be refused only if any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The benefits themselves are also cited as per the above appeal decisions as being given *“very substantial weight”* given the *“bleak”* position of the WHBC housing land supply. There would

be no such adverse impacts on this occasion as is demonstrated elsewhere in this statement.

6.1.16 The proposal comprises sustainable development and meets the sustainable development objectives as set out in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF. It will result in an economic boost through the addition of market housing, offer affordable housing in line with the borough’s needs, and bring social benefit through reducing the overall housing need in the district and is in a sustainable location with easy access to public transport and services and facilities, as outlined in 2.5.0 above.



## 6.2.0 Issue No 2: Housing Mix & Affordable Housing

6.2.1 The Council's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) describes housing completions in 2020/21 as "overwhelmingly" flats, with 76% of the 352 homes completed being apartments. There were around 50 4-bed plus houses completed in 2020/21. As such, there is an implied need for larger properties (3 and 4+ beds) standing at 62% as detailed in paragraph 5.12 of the AMR.

6.2.2 As detailed in the submitted Housing Statement the Council's own evidence submitted in respect to the very recent approved appeal scheme for 289 dwellings at BioPark, Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City (PI Ref: APP/ C1950/W/22/3294860) accepted the need for dwellings of all sizes. Paragraph 33 of the Inspector's decision letter stated thus:

*"The latest evidence is contained in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update (2017) and the Welwyn Hatfield Technical OAN Paper (2019). It can be readily seen from this evidence that the greatest need is for three bed properties but there is a need for all sizes, from one bed to 4+ beds."*

6.2.3 The Inspector noted that the vast majority of housing completions have been for smaller properties, largely one and two bed flats,

but reflected that there remains a need for housing of all sizes nonetheless.

6.2.4 In accordance with the findings of the Housing Statement, the overall (market and affordable) housing mix of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 bedroom is therefore justified, with the focus on larger units not inappropriate.

6.2.5 Given the site's wooded character, the proposals maximise the available developable area, whilst ensuring the green setting of the site is maintained.

6.2.6 The proposals therefore contribute to the implied need within the district whilst ensuring it harmonises with the context of the surrounding area and limiting the overall harm to the green belt.

### 6.2.7 Affordable Housing

6.2.8 As noted elsewhere, the affordable housing proposals will provide 35% Affordable Housing, so as to be in excess of the 30% sought through the adopted Local Plan.



### 6.3.0 **Issue No 3: Layout & Design**

#### 6.3.1 **Character & Appearance**

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF advises that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Likewise, paragraph 130 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history; and establish or maintain a strong sense of place.

6.3.2 Saved policy D1 requires high quality development and policy D2 requires development to respect and relate to the character and context of the area. The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Supplementary Design Guidance (SDG) supplements the policies contained in the District Plan.

6.3.3 The proposal would provide an attractive design and layout appropriate to the locality and site circumstances as set out in detail below.

6.3.4 The site abuts the urban area, which at this point comprises a primarily residential area of a suburban character. It has a mixture of dwelling types and plot sizes. Traditional designs and materials – brick and tile - characterise the area. By contrast Golf Club Road itself is semi-rural in character. It largely open but has a sense of formality about the open space and boundaries which are managed as part of the institutional and recreational uses the open space serves.

6.3.5 With the site abutting the residential area, and even more so now with the development of 101 Brookmans Avenue, which sees 3 detached units with access from Golf Club Road, it is considered that the proposals would conform to the immediate locality due to the establishment of a building line on this side of Golf Club Road.

#### 6.3.6 **Materials**

The predominant materials used in the area are brick and tile finishes, with examples including Chancellor’s School and the Golf Club buildings. The proposed materials would be in keeping with those of surrounding buildings in terms of brick and tile finishes.



**6.3.7 Amenity Space**

The Council do not apply standard numerical requirements for garden sizes. The requirements are that *“the design and layout of the garden in relation to the built environment should ensure that the garden is functional and usable in terms of its orientation, width, depth and shape.”*

6.3.8 The proposals will provide sufficient amenity space comprising rear and front lawns. Further, the wooded copse to the rear of the dwellings provides an attractive outlook and backdrop for the development.

6.3.9 In light of the above, it is considered that the dwellings would be reflective of the general pattern of development within the wider setting of Brookmans Park. The dwellings would be contained within generously sized plots and acceptable spacing distances between shared boundaries would be achieved to ensure that the site would not be overdeveloped. The site will be well contained by retained mature landscaping and reinforced by new planting. This will assist in softening the visual impact of the development and ensuring that the setting of the dwellings is appropriate and pleasant.

6.3.10 It is therefore considered that the proposal would represent an acceptable standard of design which would maintain the

character and appearance of the area, and of which would be in accordance with local and national policies.



#### 6.4.0 **Issue No 4: Landscaping**

- 6.4.1 Policy D8 and R17 of the District Plan outlines that the retention of existing key landscape features, including but not limited to trees, will be expected where feasible. Policy SADM16 of the Emerging Local Plan explains that proposals will be expected to help conserve and enhance the borough's natural historic landscape and sit comfortably within the wider landscape setting.
- 6.4.2 Proposals will also be assessed on their impact on landscape features to ensure that they conserve or improve the prevailing landscape quality, character and condition. This is reflected in Policy RA10 of the District Plan. These policies are broadly consistent with the heart of the NPPF which has a presumption in favour of sustainable development through net gains across economic, social and environmental objectives. The environmental objective includes protecting and enhancing the natural environment.
- 6.4.3 The NPPF also expresses that decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character, including its landscape setting.
- 6.4.4 This application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment. The AIA concludes that *"The development is therefore acceptable in arboricultural terms and should receive planning consent."*
- 6.4.5 As set out in the LVIA, the Site is well contained within the wider landscape and visual effects are localised. In landscape terms

there are no overriding landscape or visual effects that should prevent the development of the site as proposed.



**6.5.0 Issue No 5: Highway Safety & Access**

6.5.1 The Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004) provides details on the parking standards that should be applied for developments for both car and cycle parking. The Council's standards require 1.25 spaces for 1 bedroom dwellings, 1.5 spaces for 2 bedroom dwellings, and 2.25 and 3 spaces for 3 bedroom and 4-5 bedroom dwellings respectively. Although the proposed site layout is indicative, it is envisaged that the size of the site would allow for these parking standards to comfortably be met.

6.5.2 To accompany this application a Transport Statement has been prepared. The conclusions of this report stated that *"In the context of the guidelines within paragraph 111 of the NPPF it is considered that there are no residual cumulative impacts in terms of highway safety or the operational capacity of the surrounding transport network and therefore planning permission should not be withheld on transport planning and highway grounds."*



6.6.0 **Issue No 6: Ecology**

6.6.1 Following a Stage 1 Ecological Appraisal which was conducted in 2018, a full set of reptile surveys was recommended. As such, these surveys showed that no reptiles are present on the site.





## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

### 7.1.0 Background

7.1.1 This report relates to a planning application for the erection of 14 dwellings at The Paddock, Brookmans Park Golf Club. The proposal is promoted in the following circumstances:

- The site is allocated by Welwyn Hatfield in their Emerging Local Plan as a housing site. The site is therefore considered suitable for residential development by the Council.
- There is a clear District-wide need for and in the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the planning balance shifts in favour of the grant of permission for residential development, with permission to be refused only if any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The benefits noted in recent appeal decision within Welwyn Hatfield as being given "*very substantial weight*" given the "*bleak*" position of the WHBC housing land supply.
- The proposal would result in 14 dwellings of an attractive design that would be appropriate to the street scene. The dwellings would comply with local plan policies and supplementary design guidance and would create a good standard of accommodation.
- There will be no loss of amenity to surrounding residents. A spacious setting and gardens would be provided for the proposed dwellings.
- There would be no detrimental impact upon landscape features as a result of development on the site.
- The proposed access would meet County Council requirements and adequate parking provision would be made.



