



Appeal Decision

Inquiry opened on 21 April 2026

Site visits made on 20 April and 29 April 2026

by David Cliff BA Hons MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th June 2026

Appeal Ref: 6003090

Land North of Little Horwood Road and Cherry Leas, Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire, MK17 0FU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Croudace Homes Ltd and the Executors of the Estate of John Grainge against the decision of Buckinghamshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/03817/AOP.
 - The development proposed is up to 70 dwellings, including vehicular access, pedestrian and cycle lines, public open space, landscaping, drainage and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and outline planning permission is granted for up to 70 dwellings, including vehicular access, pedestrian and cycle lines, public open space, landscaping, drainage and associated works at land north of Little Horwood Road and Cherry Leas, Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire, MK17 0FU, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 24/03817/AOP and subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary matters

2. The Inquiry sat from 21 to 24 and from 28 to 29 April 2026. I visited the site and surrounds on an unaccompanied basis from public vantage points on 20 April 2026 and on a part accompanied and part unaccompanied basis on 29 April 2026.
3. The application was submitted in outline with access considered in detail at this stage. Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are reserved for future consideration. The application includes a Parameter Plan (Drawing Number 005) which distinguishes between proposed areas of built form and those areas that would be used solely for multi-functional green space. The parties agree that this plan should be enforced via a condition of any permission granted. Therefore, as the location of built development would be bound by this plan, I have taken it into account in considering the effects of the proposed development.
4. The application also includes a Masterplan Framework (Drawing Number 003), the approach to which is explained in the Design and Access Statement. The appellants confirmed that this has been submitted for illustrative purposes and I have considered it on that basis, noting that the general location of built development would be fixed by the Parameter Plan.

5. Whilst heads of terms were agreed in advance, progress on the detailed drafting of a S106 agreement between the main parties continued up to the Inquiry with a final (though unsigned) version of the agreement provided following discussions at the Inquiry. I return to consider the proposed S106 agreement and related matters later in the decision.
6. In addition to those matters considered as main issues below, the Council's reasons for refusal set out in its formal decision notice included matters relating to flooding, biodiversity and the absence of planning obligations to support and mitigate the impact of the development. The Council subsequently withdrew its objection on these matters following the receipt of further relevant information from the appellants (including progress made with the S106 agreement as outlined above) along with the revised Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on the sequential test and surface water flooding.
7. As the proposed development relates to the setting of several listed buildings, I have had special regard to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act').

Main Issues

8. The main issues are:
 - i) whether the location of the site would be appropriate for the proposed residential development with regard to accessibility to shops, services and facilities;
 - ii) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area;
 - iii) The effect of the proposed development on the setting and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including listed buildings in proximity to the site and the Great Horwood Conservation Area ('the Conservation Area');
 - iv) Whether the proposed development would conflict with the Council's spatial strategy for the location of new housing.

Reasons

Accessibility

9. Local Plan policy T1 seeks to deliver sustainable transport based on encouraging modal shift with greater use of more sustainable forms of transport and improving the safety of all road users. The National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') similarly expects significant development to be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. As paragraph 110 of the Framework notes, this can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. It recognises that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas.
10. The village of Great Horwood contains only a few local services including a primary school, village hall (with weekly post office and coffee morning), pub and Parish Church. There are also modest employment opportunities. These services/facilities would be within reasonable walking and cycling distance of the site, enhanced to

some degree by the appellants proposed pedestrian access and road crossing improvements.

11. These services and facilities would provide some accessible provision for the needs of future residents of the proposed development. However, the extent of these facilities is modest, consistent with the classification of the village as a 'medium village' in the Council's spatial strategy. Whilst of little weight given the early stage of preparation of the emerging Local Plan for Buckinghamshire, I also note its classification as a Tier 5 'medium/small village' in the Buckinghamshire Settlement Review (May 2025) which forms part of the evidence base for the emerging plan. There is no doubt that residents would need to travel further afield to access the majority of day to day services and facilities.
12. Although some ten years ago, the Inspector reporting in 2016 on the called-in application for 42 dwellings at land south of Weston Road, Great Horwood¹ concluded that the development of the scale proposed in that case, in addition to that already allocated, would not be located where the need to travel would be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes could be maximised. I also note that the location of the site does not score well using the Governments Connectivity Tool.
13. The nearby small town of Winslow offers a good and reasonably broad range of services and facilities, including numerous shops and a secondary school, though not a larger supermarket. It is located approximately 4km away via the unlit B4033 road that is subject to the national speed limit and has no pedestrian or cycle-way provision. It would not therefore be conveniently or safely accessible by either foot or for the majority of cyclists.
14. There are several existing bus services linking Great Horwood with other settlements, including Winslow. The services to Winslow have been recently improved and offer some opportunity for bus travel though, with several notable gaps, fall short of what could be considered a regular service. The bus service to Buckingham, including a stop at the Tesco supermarket, falls considerably short of a direct regular service, and does not operate at weekends. It would not, for example, offer a realistic opportunity for a weekly supermarket shop by bus, making it highly likely that journeys to this supermarket would be made by car.
15. There is some uncertainty as to the operation and regularity of future bus services, with funding to be reviewed in October 2026. The appellants' bus service contribution of £70,000, to be paid in the event of existing bus services 50 and 70 not being fully funded by other means beyond October 2026, would assist but only to a modest degree, as it is not clear the extent to which £70,000 would secure future services and, in any case, it would only provide support for two years. Whilst there are uncertainties regarding future bus provision, the future opening of the nearby Winslow railway station and the Government's Better Connected Strategy increases the likelihood that bus services similar to current levels would continue. I accept that the level of services provided are unlikely to provide such a level of accessibility and connectivity that would result in a large proportion of journeys from Great Horwood being made by alternative modes to the private car. However, they would provide an alternative to the use of the private car for some journeys.

¹ APP/J0405/V/15/3137967

16. Turning to Winslow railway station, its construction, including the adjacent car park appears to be largely complete and, notwithstanding the current issues delaying opening, it seems inevitable that it will open for passengers in the near future, potentially prior to the first occupation of the proposed development. Given its proximity to Great Horwood, when open it will offer realistic opportunities for use and connectivity to other locations (including urban centres) by future residents of the development. As pointed out in Mr Saunders evidence, due to cost, time and convenience, it is unlikely that residents who own a car would be likely to travel to Milton Keynes for the rail service. However, with the full plans in place for East West Rail, including links to destinations such as the future Universal Studios development at Stewartby along with connections to other destinations including London, it would be likely to cater for and be used by residents of the scheme for some journeys as an alternative to the private car. This is notable in assessing overall accessibility even if that means that residents will drive (or take a taxi for) the short journey to the station car park if a bus is not convenient.
17. For a rural location, despite its limitations, the prospect of such a railway station within reasonable proximity, puts it at an advantage in terms of accessibility to other rural locations where there is no such service. The railway station would provide an enhancement to the accessibility of Great Horwood in comparison to the existing situation.
18. I have also considered the opportunities for on-line shopping and deliveries. Whilst these would often be co-joined with other deliveries, they still require vehicle movements. Given the rural location of the site, these journeys would be typically longer than developments located in more accessible locations. There would also be opportunity for home working though this is not an opportunity that extends to all forms of employment. I also acknowledge that provision would be made through the Building Regulations for electric vehicle charging points within the development, noting that the definition of 'sustainable transport modes' in the Framework includes ultra-low and zero emissions vehicles. The weight I give to this is tempered as there is no indication of the potential future ownership of electric vehicles and their use would not serve to limit the need to travel.
19. I have also considered the amenity and playspace to be provided within the appeal site and therefore in convenient and accessible walking distance of residents, helping to contribute to the health and wellbeing of children and adults. This adds some modest positive weight in considering accessibility.
20. I recognise that the proposals would represent a significant residential development well above the existing housing allocation for the village. Notwithstanding this, it is clear from the previous allocations that this is a location that is suitable for some residential development, albeit not at the level now proposed. It is also relevant that, for a medium village such as Great Horwood, additional residents within convenient walking and cycling distance of the village centre would provide additional support for the existing facilities and potentially may lead to demand for enhanced facilities to be provided. Support would also be provided for existing services in the nearby settlement of Winslow, helping to reduce the need for longer journeys by car.
21. Overall, despite the availability of some limited facilities within the village, the bus service provision and the nearby location of Winslow including the new railway station, the proposal would not achieve the level of sustainable access that it is

expected of significant development. It would be contrary to the accessibility aims of Policy T1 of the Local Plan and the Framework. Taking account of the balance of considerations outlined above and acknowledging that the location would be more sustainable than other rural settlements with lesser accessibility, the harm resulting carries moderate adverse weight in the overall planning balance.

Character and appearance

Landscape and townscape character

22. It is agreed by the main parties that the site does not fall within a 'valued landscape' in the context of paragraph 187 of the Framework. The site is also not located within a designated area of attractive landscape or local landscape area. Nonetheless, Policy NE4 of the Local Plan requires development to consider the characteristics of the landscape character area, including by meeting a range of criteria listed within the policy. The Framework also requires that planning decisions recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
23. The site is located in the countryside, outside yet adjacent to the defined settlement boundary of Great Horwood. It is within the Landscape Character type 4 Undulating Clay Plateau, and within Landscape Character Area 4.8 Horwood Claylands which encompasses much of the land around Great Horwood. Its particular characteristics include its rolling clay landform, shallow valleys and ridges, mixed farmland, water courses draining to Claydon Brook and the irregular field pattern that exists around settlements.
24. Historically Great Horwood has evolved from a linear settlement which principally followed the High Street, Little Horwood Road and Winslow Road. The appeal site would be located to the north of existing relatively recent development along Little Horwood Road, including the smaller Cherry Leas development on the north side and the East Field development on the south side of the road. The existing residential cul-de-sacs comprising Weston Road, The Close and Townsend Cottages are also located on the south side of Little Horwood Road. Both the Cherry Leas and East Field developments have created a new 'gateway' to the village, extending built form beyond the historic settlement.
25. The existing fields comprising the appeal site, located on a valley side within the landscape, contribute positively to the rural agricultural landscape setting of the village. However, their contribution to the character of the approach to and from the east side of the village is tempered by the presence of this existing residential development. That being said, the modest size and scale of the Cherry Leas development along with the inclusion of the adjacent landscaped amenity area maintains a predominantly open character on the north side of the road in comparison to the development on the southern side.
26. The proposed development, notwithstanding the areas shown to be free of built development on the parameter plan, would lead to the urbanisation of the site and the loss of the pastoral fields within in. Even the eastern part of the site proposed for informal amenity, whilst free of built development, would see a change from its existing agricultural landscape character and use.
27. It is unclear as to the extent of any cut and fill that may be required, but it is likely that the overall form of the development, including internal roads, house platforms

and gardens would require some levelling of sections which would be at odds with the existing gradually sloping valley side landform within the site.

28. The size and scale of the proposed development of up to 70 dwellings would lead to considerable harm to the landscape character of the site and its immediate surrounds. Whilst the main built form would not extend further east of Cherry Leas, the development would be of a considerably greater scale than the existing Cherry Leas development and, extending further to the rear from Little Horwood Road, its effects on landscape character would be greater. It would project further to the north, down the valley slope, than the existing residential development along Little Horwood Road, including the Cherry Leas development.
29. The proposed development would also be likely to be of a layout that differs from the prevailing settlement form and pattern of the village, notwithstanding that there has been other residential development that deviates from the historic linear form of the village. This includes the development on and around Spring Lane in the south of the village, that already differs from the historic form as well as the aforementioned recent development adjacent to Little Horwood Road.
30. The village would still clearly retain a rural setting by virtue of the considerable remaining agricultural land around it. However, taking account of its significantly greater scale in comparison to the Cherry Leas and East Field developments, its adverse effects on both landscape character and townscape character would be greater. I deal with effects on the setting of the Conservation Area separately later in the decision.
31. The opportunities for landscaping, including new tree planting, would offer some potential mitigation and the majority of existing hedgerows along existing field boundaries would be able to be retained. This would be of benefit in the long term in terms of reducing the effects, though the overall effects on existing landscape and townscape character would still be considerable.
32. The effects of landscape and townscape character would be localised being mostly limited to the site itself and its immediate surrounds. It is also relevant to consider the effects of existing development along Little Horwood Road as noted above, including the most recent developments at Cherry Leas and East Field. However, taking account of the scale and size of the proposal, the proposal would result in overall moderate adverse effects on the landscape and townscape character of the area.

Visual effects

33. Turning to visual effects, the main parties have agreed the locations of key representative viewpoints. I have visited and considered all these viewpoints whilst also considering the need to consider all visual effects and not just those from the representative viewpoints.
34. The visual effects in views along Little Horwood Road would be mostly apparent from locations close to the appeal site. In considering these visual effects it is pertinent that the proposed dwellings would be set back from the road edge and the dwellings would be less pronounced in these views the further into the site they are positioned due to the sloping site. The existing landscaped recreation area would also provide a visual buffer in views from the road. Furthermore, the existing development at Cherry Leas, in addition to the existing development on the

opposite side of the road, has already created a somewhat urbanised approach to the village as noted above. Given the proximity to the development, the visual effects from the landscaped recreational area itself would be significant with views of the open fields replaced by housing. The adverse visual effects from these immediately adjacent viewpoints would therefore be considerable. In views from further to the east (e.g. Viewpoints 7 and 8) the visual effects would not be significant given the relationship of the scheme with existing built development.

35. In terms of effects from within the village, any effects on viewpoints 11 and 12, and similar viewpoints on Little Horwood Road, would be modest given the existing hedge screening on Little Horwood Road (which can reasonably be expected to be retained) and the set back of the proposed development along with the funnelling effect of existing development within the village along the road.
36. Further afield, the proposed development would be visible from some points along the public footpath to the east of the site running north from Little Horwood Road to the A421. Whilst the views of the development would be seen in the context of the recent development at Cherry Leas and the existing main edge of the village, the addition of urban development of the scale proposed on the sloping site, would have modest to moderate adverse visual effects.
37. Further adverse visual effects would result from the rear of the existing properties of Cherry Leas and also from the rear gardens of properties on the north and north east side of Little Horwood Road to the south and south west of the appeal site. In terms of the latter, the adverse visual effects would be fairly minor due to the proposed set back of the built development area as shown on the parameter plan. Subject to detailed layout and design (including on the part of the appeal site to the rear of Cherry Leas), there are no cases where unacceptable visual or overbearing effects would result for the occupiers of existing residential properties.

Conclusion on character and appearance

38. Concluding on the above, whilst the appeal site is not within a locally or nationally protected landscape, it would have an adverse effect, in particular on the landscape character and rural setting of Great Horwood, as well as having some materially adverse visual effects. Although the extent of built development shown on the parameter plan would provide for a landscaped setting for the proposed development with no development proposed to the east of Cherry Leas and in spite of the opportunities for new tree planting, the adverse effects would still be material. The effects would be localised but nonetheless, overall, the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the character and visual appearance of the area. The proposals would be contrary to the landscape, character and appearance aims of Policy NE4 of the Local Plan and the Framework (including paragraph 135(c)). Taking account of all the reasoning above, including that the site is not within a designated landscape, this harm carries moderate negative weight to take forward to the planning balance.

Heritage

39. The Council's decision notice records harm in relation to the significance of the Great Horwood Conservation Area ('the Conservation Area') and to other designated heritage assets, although it does not specify to which other designated heritage assets it considers harm would occur. The matter is clarified in the Council's relevant proof of evidence and heritage Statement of Common Ground

which sets out both the designated and non-designated heritage assets to which the Council considers harm would occur. The main parties agree the Grade II* Church of St James needs to be considered though the parties concur that there would be no material adverse effect on the setting and significance of the Church.

17-19 Little Horwood Road

40. This Grade II listed building comprises a pair of modest, cruck-framed, two storey houses dating to the 15th century. It is located on the north side of Little Horwood Road with the appeal site adjoining the rear boundary of the gardens to the houses. Its significance, insofar as it relates to this appeal, primarily relates to the architectural and historic interest of this 15th century residential property within the historic rural village, its methods of construction and evolving patterns of use.
41. The main components of the building's setting comprise its front and rear curtilage/garden areas, adjacent buildings and the immediate part of Great Horwood Road in which the asset is primarily experienced. Whilst it has no clear historic functional relationship and noting the rather limited visibility between the site and the rear of the building, the agricultural land (forming part of the appeal site) adjacent to its rear boundary also forms part of its setting. It makes a modest contribution to the significance of the listed building including its proximity and contribution to the understanding of the medieval rural origins of the building. Notwithstanding the buffer zone shown on the parameter plan, the replacement of the agricultural land with the urbanised residential development would result in a small degree of harm to its overall setting and significance. In the context of paragraphs 213 to 215 of the Framework, this would amount to less than substantial harm, at the lower end of the range.

15 Little Horwood Road

42. This is a 17th century Grade II listed dwelling, constructed with historic materials and construction methods, located to the south west of the site. Its significance, insofar as it relates to this appeal, primarily relates to the architectural and historic interest of this 17th century residential property. Its historic plot and association with former strip fields to the north illustrate the agricultural origins and development of Great Horwood as a rural settlement.
43. As well as its curtilage and immediate surrounds on Little Horwood Road, the site forms part of its setting and contributes to its significance through its contribution to the understanding of the agricultural associations and setting. Similarly to 17-19 Little Horwood Road, the replacement of the agricultural land within the site with residential development would result in a small degree of harm to its overall setting and significance. This would be less than substantial harm at the lower end of the scale.

Manor Farmhouse

44. This Grade II* listed 17th century farmhouse is located to the north west of the appeal site. Its significance is primarily derived from its architectural and historic importance. It played a central role in the administrative life and rural economy of the medieval village of Great Horwood. The farmhouse has a historic association with much of its agricultural landscape setting due to their shared historic ownership by New College Oxford. It also appears that the tenant of the farm complex worked the land forming the appeal site.

45. The listed building itself is not visible from the appeal site. However, its wider setting includes the surrounding agricultural land which contains the appeal site. Given the historic agricultural association, the site as agricultural land contributes modestly to its overall significance. The development of the site would extend the built settlement of the village into the historic farmland and erode the historic association between the agricultural land and the farmhouse. Taking account of the separation from the site to the farmhouse, the resulting harm to the significance of the listed building would be modest and therefore less than substantial at the lower end of the range.

Church of St James

46. The Grade II* listed church dates from the 14th century. It is centrally located and a key landmark within the village. Its significance, insofar as it relates to this appeal, primarily relates to its historic and architectural value as an important religious and community building within the village and surrounding area. Its setting includes its immediate surrounds within the centre of the village and also further afield taking account of the visibility of the church tower as an important landmark through the centuries.
47. There are no views of the church from within the site, although it does form a peripheral part of long distance views towards the church. The existing development at Cherry Leas and development to the south of Little Horwood Road has already altered the approach to the village from the east. Taking account of the distance between the church and the site along with the existing intervening development, the site makes only a negligible contribution to the significance of the church. Despite the introduction of built development on the site, being of an expected two storey form, taking account of the existing built form, the proposed development would not have any adverse effect on the setting and significance of the church.

Great Horwood Conservation Area

48. The site is located outside of but adjacent to the boundary of the Conservation Area. The Great Horwood Conservation Area Appraisal (GHCAA) was published by the Council in 2012. The GHCAA identifies the Little Horwood Road Identity Area within the Conservation Area, this being the closest part of it to the appeal site.
49. The Conservation Area evidences the historic origins of a medieval rural settlement and its subsequent historical development. The GHCAA identifies the historic plan form as a defining feature of the settlement. Despite more recent development away from the centre of the village, there remains a strong feeling of regularity within the settlement, including plots along the High Street of similar width and length. The numerous historic, including listed, buildings contribute to both the historic and architectural significance of the Conservation Area. As noted by the Council's witness, the Conservation Area also has archaeological potential to reveal evidence of early activity and the development of the medieval settlement.
50. The northern, eastern and western sides of the Conservation Area are generally bounded by agricultural land which makes a strong contribution to its setting. 20th century residential development on Spring Lane and Greenway has extended the built form of the village to the south beyond the Conservation Area. Residential development to the south of Little Horwood Road is also located outside of the Conservation Area. It differs from the grain and architectural quality of much of the

development within the Conservation Area and extends the built form beyond the linear form of Little Horwood Road.

51. The agricultural landscape around the village, including the appeal site, contains examples of retained ridge and furrow earthworks created by medieval farming practices. The site contributes to the understanding of the relationship between the historic village and its agricultural surroundings, therefore contributing positively to the significance of the Conservation Area.
52. In spite of the panoramic viewpoint included in the GHCAA (at a point on Little Horwood Road adjacent to the south west corner of the site), taking account of the enclosed form of Great Horwood Road and existing hedge screening at this viewpoint, views of the appeal site from the Conservation Area would be largely restricted. This is particularly the case from public vantage points, though clearer views are possible from the rear of nearby properties on the north side of Little Horwood Road. There are other views outside of the Conservation Area where the relationship between the agricultural land and the historic settlement can be understood, including the public amenity area created as part of the Cherry Leas development.
53. The proposals, involving built and associated development, would transform the nature and form of the appeal site on the valley side at the edge of the village. Whilst noting the appellants aims for the development on the western part of the site to be of a distinct character area complimenting the Conservation Area, the proposals would be likely to be of a grain, layout and form that contrasts with the historic form of the village. The proposals would weaken the relationship between the historic settlement within the Conservation Area and its relationship with the surrounding agricultural land. To a degree this has already occurred within the Cherry Leas development but the separation of that scheme from the Conservation Area boundary and its smaller scale means that its effect on the setting of the Conservation Area is less pronounced. The appeal scheme would create further harm to the setting of the Conservation Area due to the larger size and scale of the appeal site and proposals upon it and its proximity to the historic settlement, including listed building and non-designated heritage assets within it.
54. The village would still retain its overall agricultural setting, both from the other peripheral areas of the settlement not impacted by the proposed development and by the creation of a new edge to the village that would be created by the proposed development. Although in the latter case, the intervening modern development would contrast with the existing situation where historic built form within the Conservation Area is immediately adjacent to the agricultural land. The proposals would therefore result in some harm to the setting and significance of the Conservation Area, primarily through its effect on the agricultural rural setting. This would include cumulative harm along with the effects of existing recent development.
55. In terms of the level of harm to significance, the proposals are not located within the Conservation Area and so do not physically alter any part of it. As noted above, the public views of the site from within the Conservation Area are limited. The central core of the historic settlement around The Green, including views to and from it, would not be directly affected. The harm to significance would therefore be less than substantial and towards the lower end of the scale.

Non-designated heritage assets

56. The main parties agree that the buildings needing to be considered as non-designated heritage assets are nos.21-23 and 25-27 Little Horwood Road, both of which are located close to the southwest corner of the appeal site.
57. Nos. 21 to 23 now comprise a single dwelling whilst 25-27 comprises two semi-detached dwellings, both of the 19th century. They both have some architectural and historic interest contributing positively to the streetscene and Conservation Area, evidencing the development of the historic settlement. In helping to illustrate their rural context, the site makes a modest contribution to their setting and significance, particular so for Nos. 25-27 which adjoins the site on two sides.
58. The residential development of the site would erode the rural context and setting of these buildings. The Cherry Leas development has reduced the importance of No. 25-27 as a 'gateway' dwelling being the first of the village on the north side of Little Horwood Road. It is also noteworthy in this respect however that the parameter plan would ensure that the proposed built form would not be adjacent to the building. The resulting harm to its overall significance from the proposed development within its setting would be minor. Nos.21 to 23 are less prominent from the appeal site and therefore the resulting harmful effects on its setting and significance would be very modest.
59. Though effects on degraded ridge and furrow earthworks within the site was raised as an issue, the main parties agree that this can be appropriately managed through an archaeological condition.

Conclusion on heritage matters

60. I have therefore found that less than substantial harm would result upon the setting and significance of listed buildings and upon the setting and significance of the Conservation Area as set out above. In each case for the designated assets the harm would be less than substantial and at or towards the lower end of the scale. The proposals would result in, at worst, minor adverse effects on two non-designated heritage assets. I go on to consider these harms in the overall heritage and planning balance later in this decision, including in relation to Local Plan Policy BE1 and the Framework.

Spatial strategy

61. Policy S1 of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 ('the Local Plan') seeks to ensure that proposals comply with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the Framework (noting that the Framework has been updated several times since adoption of this policy) and including the consideration of the range of considerations as set out in the policy. Whilst noting the harms I have identified in my consideration of matters considered above, I will return to conclude against this policy in the planning balance below given its overarching requirement to consider sustainable development in the round.
62. Local Plan Policy S2 sets out the spatial strategy for growth, the aim being for strategic growth and investment to be concentrated in sustainable locations. Great Horwood is classified as a 'medium village' described as having some provision of key services and facilities, making them moderately sustainable locations for development which should be at a scale in keeping with the local character and

setting. Policy S2 includes a requirement of 81 dwellings for Great Horwood over the plan period which have already been reached through completions and commitments.

63. No housing allocations are made for Great Horwood within the Local Plan and the allocations within the Great Horwood Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031 ('NP') have been completed. Furthermore, notwithstanding the exceedance of the 81 dwellings for Great Horwood, taking account of my findings on character and appearance above, I do not consider that the proposed development is at a scale in keeping with the local character and setting. The proposals would therefore be in conflict with Policy S2 of the Local Plan.
64. Policy S3 of the Local Plan, as well as reconfirming the need to accord with the settlement hierarchy, site allocation policies and the requirements of Policy S1, seeks to generally avoid new development in the countryside especially where it would compromise the character of the countryside between settlements and result in a negative impact on the identities of neighbouring settlements or communities, leading to coalescence. Located outside of the settlement boundary, the proposal would conflict with this policy. Whilst the development would not lead to a risk of coalescence of settlements or communities, as outlined and with the limitations set out above, it would compromise the character of the countryside in and adjacent to the appeal site to the detriment of the identity of the settlement of Great Horwood.
65. Taking account of the site's location outside of the settlement boundary, the harm I have identified on character and appearance, along with the harm to the historic environment, the proposal would conflict with Policy D3 of the Local Plan. It would also conflict with Policy 1 of the NP that seeks to generally resist development outside of the settlement boundary.
66. Therefore, the proposal would not accord with the Council's spatial strategy for new residential development. The weight given to the conflict with these policies is considered later in my decision.

Other Matters

Housing

67. The Council maintains it has a 3.73 year housing land supply whilst the appellant considers there to be a 2.56 year supply. These positions represent a dwelling shortfall of between -1,988 and -3,835 units. This is based on the current position that the housing supply calculation under the Framework is carried out using the adopted Local Plan figures. Both sets of figures represent a substantial shortfall of particular significance, noting that neither of the main parties suggests that the difference between the two housing land supply estimations is determinative to the outcome of the appeal.
68. The position would change after September 2026 when the Standard Method of calculation would apply and the land supply position will be calculated for the Council as a whole. The main parties agree in the Housing SoCG that the current Standard Method calculation of local housing need for the Council (as of May 2025) would equate to 4,332 dwellings per annum. Despite the early stage of preparation of the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire, it is indicative that the housing land supply position is likely to worsen rather than improve.

69. In this context, bearing in mind the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, even adopting the Council's supply position of 3.73 years, I consider that substantial weight should be given to the delivery of market housing. Whether the housing could be provided in a different location does not materially reduce this weight in this case, particularly in the context of the housing land supply position based on the adopted Local Plan. It is also relevant that the Local Plan recognises that, in designating Great Horwood as a medium village, it is a moderately sustainable location for development, notwithstanding that the housing numbers it provides for have already been implemented.
70. The proposal includes provision for 35% affordable housing. This is an additional 10% above the minimum 25% requirement of Policy H1 of the Local Plan and in accordance with the 35% requirement sought by Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan (notwithstanding the overall non-compliance with this policy). Even taking into account that there are more acute affordability pressures elsewhere in the Council area, including in areas falling within the London commuter belt, there still appears to be a clear need for affordable housing across the entire area, including the former Vale of Aylesbury area. It is an important consideration and I consider that the provision of affordable housing, potentially amounting to some 24 units, carries substantial weight. For the same reasons as for market housing. I do not consider that the location of the site in this case materially lessens the weight given to the provision for affordable housing.

Other benefits

71. As agreed by the main parties, taking account of the predicted 45% increase in habitat units, 16.6% in hedgerow units and 10.5% in watercourse units, the provision for a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain carries moderate positive weight. The main parties also agree that the economic benefits arising from the creation of jobs through construction and related supplies should carry moderate positive weight. I see no reason to disagree.
72. The scheme would provide for public open space including an equipped play area in the eastern part of the site along with other informal play provision distributed throughout the development, secured through the proposed planning S106 agreement. The master plan indicates that this would include informal footpaths, playspace, a trim trail and amenity grass land. This provision would primarily meet the needs of the new residents of the scheme. It would also be available for use by other residents in the village. Its position at the periphery of the village and the location of the majority of the open space and playspace in the eastern part of the site would constrain its usage and accessibility. Nevertheless, it would be likely to be used by those residents living nearby, including use of the equipped play space and open space by children, with consequent benefits for health and wellbeing. The Council's officer report recognises the lack of play facilities in this part of the village. It carries moderate positive weight.
73. The provision of local highway improvements would be of benefit to existing village residents as well as for the future residents of the proposed development and therefore carries a little positive weight.
74. Although the appellant considers that moderate positive weight should be given to supporting a modal shift in transport use, I have given, overall, moderate negative weight on the issue of accessibility to services as set out above. I have also not

given any positive weight to proposed landscape enhancements given the overall harm I found would result to the character and appearance of the area.

Furthermore, the appellant considers that moderate positive weight should be given to a high quality residential development with good place making. However, notwithstanding the harm I have already found to result in respect of character and appearance, these are general policy requirements in any case and would be considered as part of the reserved matters submissions. This does not therefore carry any positive weight.

75. Policy S8 of the Local Plan primarily relates to the monitoring and review of the Local Plan. Whilst it considers circumstances where alternative sustainable sites may need to be brought forward, relevant matters are considered through the issues of this appeal. It does not therefore add any additional positive weight.

Planning obligations

76. The main parties have agreed the detailed content of a proposed s106 agreement. Despite the final version before me being agreed, it is yet to be signed due to issues regarding probate. The parties have agreed that, in this case, there are circumstances to justify the imposition of a positively worded condition to secure the completion of the S106 agreement prior to the development being commenced. I consider this further in my consideration of the suggested planning conditions below and go on here to consider the merits of the agreed proposed S106 agreement.
77. The S106 agreement would include provision for 35% of the dwellings to be delivered as affordable housing, sport and leisure, secondary education and primary healthcare contributions, open space provision, highway works (including pedestrian and bus stop enhancements) and a bus service contribution.
78. From the evidence before me, including the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation Compliance Statement, I am satisfied that the obligations in the proposed S106 agreement are necessary to make the development acceptable, are directly related to the development and are fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Therefore, they would accord with the three tests set out in paragraph 58 of the Framework and Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010.

Other issues

79. With regard to potential flooding effects, as agreed by the main parties and in accordance with the latest Planning Practice Guidance, a Sequential Test is not required, with the small areas of the site at risk of surface water flooding being able to be mitigated.
80. The scheme would include a self-contained sustainable drainage system, required to be approved by condition, including attenuation bays that would be discharged at a controlled green field rate to the watercourse. In relation to foul water, Anglian Water has confirmed there is capacity within the foul sewer network and receiving treatment works. As now agreed between the main parties, I am satisfied that significant flooding and drainage issues are likely to arise from the proposed development.

81. In terms of biodiversity, following the submission of additional ecological assessment (including breeding bird habitats) information by the appellants, the main parties now agreed that the proposals would comply with Local Plan Policy NE1. The large majority of hedgerows within the site would be able to be retained and the amenity area on the east part of the site offers good opportunity to contribute to the overall provision of green infrastructure. I am satisfied that appropriate assessment has been carried out and that detailed biodiversity protection and enhancement (including net gain) can be secured through conditions.
82. Whilst layout and external appearance are reserved matters, taking account of the parameter plan and indicative masterplan, I am satisfied that sufficient separation from existing residential properties is capable of being provided to prevent any unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of existing residents in respect of privacy, day/sun light and outlook.
83. Concern has been expressed in respect of effects on horses at the existing stables, associated grazing land and menage to the rear of 15 Little Horwood Road. Taking account of the parameter plan which would be secured by condition, I am satisfied that there would be sufficient separation from the built development, including its construction, to the western boundary of the site to prevent unacceptable impacts on horses and riders. Condition 9 (with minor amendments to the suggested wording) relating to construction and traffic management, also includes the requirement for details of construction compounds, loading and unloading of materials, construction hours and boundary enclosure to be approved prior to construction, to serve to minimise effects on adjacent land uses and users during construction.
84. Taking account of the level of traffic expected to arise from the proposed development, the adequacy of the vehicular access, including visibility splays, the existing highway conditions I observed on Little Horwood Road and the proposed highway/pedestrian works, I am satisfied that there would be no unacceptable impacts on highway/pedestrian safety and no severe traffic impacts on the road network.
85. The main parties agree that the site does not comprise the best and most versatile agricultural land. Whilst it is still suitable for agricultural use, taking account of the limited area of land affected in the context of the surrounding agricultural land, no materially harmful effects would arise from its loss as agricultural land.
86. I have considered and taken account of all appeal decisions put before me as part of the appeal. Whilst there are some similarities with the issues being considered as part of this appeal, I have come to the conclusions in this case based on the particular circumstance and the evidence before me. I also do not have full details of the evidence and issues considered by the Inspectors in the case of each of the other appeal decisions.

Planning balance

87. The proposal would conflict with the spatial strategy for the area as set out in policies S2, S3 and D3 of the Local Plan and Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. These policies include some matters and criteria that are not dissimilar from the aims of the Framework, including to promote sustainable development, be sympathetic to local character and history and to recognise the intrinsic character

and beauty of the countryside. However, the housing land supply position indicates that the spatial strategy is not currently providing the number of homes needed, indeed the shortfall is substantial. Therefore, the conflict with these policies carries moderate negative weight in this case.

88. There would be breach of Local Plan Policy T1 regarding accessibility to services, carrying moderate negative weight. The harm to the character and appearance of the area, including the setting and settlement pattern of the existing village, would be contrary to Policy NE4, also carrying moderate negative weight.
89. There would be harm to the setting and significance of listed buildings, the setting and significance of the Conservation Area and that of non-designated heritage assets as set out earlier in this decision. The Framework requires that great weight should be given to a designated heritage asset's conservation. I must also give considerable importance and weight to the harms to the setting of each listed building.
90. The harm to the significance of each designated asset would be less than substantial in each case at or towards the lower end of the scale. Taking account of the very considerable public benefits arising from the proposal as set out above (including housing, affordable housing, open/play space provision, BNG, and economic), the harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets, both individually and cumulatively, would be outweighed by the public benefits. The harm to the non-designated heritage assets would also be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme. Therefore, despite the heritage harm, the proposal would not conflict overall with Local Plan BE1 which includes consideration of the relevant heritage balancing exercises.
91. However, given the overall conflict with the development plan as set out above, I consider that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole.
92. Turning to paragraph 11 of the Framework, taking account of the heritage balance above, the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance do not provide a strong reason for refusing the proposed development. Given that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, in the context of paragraph 11(d) of the Framework, this is a case where the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date. The 'tilted balance' is therefore applicable.
93. I have had particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations. I have found moderate harm in respect of accessibility to services for the reason set out earlier this decision. This recognises that the site does have weaknesses in this regard whilst recognising that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas. Paragraph 83 of the Framework says that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It is also relevant that the additional housing, whilst well above the spatial strategy allocation, would provide support for and be of benefit to local services and facilities, albeit that those within Great Horwood itself are limited in number.
94. The moderate harm to the character and appearance of the area would be contrary to the aims of the requirements of the Framework to recognise the intrinsic

character and beauty of the countryside and to be sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. Notwithstanding the heritage balance, there would be the harms to the setting and significance of the listed buildings referenced above and the Conservation Area. There would also be minor harm to the setting and significance of designated heritage assets.

95. Against this harm, the proposal would result in very considerable benefits arising from the provision of 70 new homes in the context of a substantial housing land supply shortfall, of which 35% would provide for affordable housing. Both benefits carry substantial positive weight. Further noteworthy economic, biodiversity and public open space/playspace benefits each of moderate positive weight would also arise along with minor highway/pedestrian benefits.
96. Overall, the adverse impacts would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Given this conclusion and taking into consideration the criteria set out in this policy, whilst it relates to an older (2012) version of the Framework, there would be no breach of Policy S1 of the Local Plan that would make any material difference to my decision.
97. Despite the conflict with the development plan, material considerations, including the Framework, lead to the conclusion that planning permission should be granted for the proposed development.

Conditions

98. The main parties submitted an agreed set of suggested conditions for consideration at the Inquiry. Further to discussion at a round table session during the Inquiry, an agreed updated list of the conditions was then provided. I have considered these bearing in mind the tests in paragraph 57 of the Framework. Other than as described below, I have made some amendments to the wording of some of the suggested conditions for precision and clarity, but without changing the substance of any particular condition. Several of the conditions are pre-commencement conditions for which there is clear justification as the early approval of the respective matters and the implementation of the particular actions required are necessary prior to commencement in order to prevent the possibility of adverse environmental, amenity or highway related effects that might otherwise occur.
99. Condition 1 sets out the reserved matters requiring future approval, whilst 2 and 3 provides the timescales for their submission for approval and for the commencement of development. Condition 4 is required to provide certainty on what has been approved. Condition 5 is necessary as compliance with the parameter plan is important in reducing the effects of the proposed development, including with regard to character, appearance and heritage assets. I have simplified the wording of this suggested condition and removed the reference to 'substantially in accordance' for precision. The 'tailpiece' part is also not necessary as any application for variation would be covered in any event under the relevant legislation.
100. As referred to above, due to matters relating to the Grant of Probate in the estate of John Grainge it is not yet possible for the executors to enter into the proposed S106 agreement. The appellants and the Council have therefore agreed a draft condition to the effect that the development may not commence until the s106 agreement has been signed by those with an interest in the land.

101. The Planning Practice Guidance² advises that a negatively worded condition limiting the development that can take place until a planning obligation has been entered into is unlikely to be appropriate in the majority of cases. It also says that ensuring that any planning obligation or other agreement is entered into prior to granting planning permission is the best way to deliver sufficient certainty for all parties about what is being agreed. It goes on to say that in exceptional circumstances such a negatively worded condition may be appropriate where there is clear evidence that the delivery of the development would otherwise be at serious risk. It is relevant in this case, that the detailed content of the proposed S106 agreement has been agreed by the main parties, the draft and final versions have been included within the Examination Library and it was discussed in some detail at the Inquiry.
102. I have concluded above in respect of the proposed S106 that the relevant tests are met and I am satisfied that there are no issues regarding transparency. Without the planning obligation in place the development would be unacceptable given the importance of the provisions included within it, including but not limited to the provision of affordable housing. Therefore, without it the delivery of the development would be at serious risk, at least in the short term, given that permission could not be granted, resulting in a potential delay in the delivery of much needed housing. Consequently, given the particular and exceptional circumstances in this case, I consider that condition 6 is necessary in this case and that all the six tests are met.
103. Condition 7 is necessary to ensure that appropriate landscaping details are submitted in the interests of good design and to safeguard, as far as possible, the character and appearance of the area. Condition 8 is required to maximise energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. Condition 9, as amended, is necessary to minimise disruption during construction. Conditions 10, 11 and 13 are necessary to make provision for BNG, to provide for appropriate protection of existing biodiversity including the effects of lighting on bats. Condition 12 also provides for safeguarding of biodiversity during construction.
104. Condition 14 is necessary to evaluate and, as necessary, safeguard archaeological assets including provision for an archaeological programme of work. Conditions 15, 16 and 17 are necessary to provide for sustainable drainage including verification and maintenance. Conditions 18 and 19 are necessary to provide for the approved access to and within the site. Tree protection in the interests of the character and appearance of the area and good design is provided by condition 20. Condition 21 is necessary to promote sustainable forms of transport. Lastly, condition 22 is required to provide for suitable accessibility within the dwellings.

Conclusion

105. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

David Cliff

INSPECTOR

² Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 21a-010-20190723

Schedule of conditions

1. Details of the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, (hereinafter referred to as “the reserved matters”) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any development begins and the development shall be carried out as approved.
2. Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority no later than two years from the date of this permission.
3. The development hereby permitted shall commence no later than two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.
4. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Site Location Plan, drawing no. 1481-001-D.
 - Site Access Arrangement, drawing no. 2404020-01-B.
5. Applications for the approval of the reserved matters shall accord with the Parameter Plan drawing no. 1481-005 and shall not exceed or conflict with the parameters identified therein.
6. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until all parties with any legal or equitable interest in the land edged red shown on the Site Location Plan reference 1481/001/Rev D have entered into an agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (and other appropriate powers) binding such interest with the obligations contained within the unsigned Section 106 agreement (submitted at the Inquiry as Document ID 17) and title to such area of land has been deduced to the Council.
7. The landscape details to be submitted pursuant to condition 2 above shall include the following:
 - a) a scaled plan showing all existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be retained, including crown spreads and trees and plants to be planted.
 - b) location, type and materials to be used for hard landscaping including specifications, where applicable for:
 - i. permeable paving
 - ii. soil volume calculations for new trees
 - iii. tree pit design
 - iv. underground modular systems
 - v. sustainable urban drainage integration
 - vi. use within tree Root Protection Areas (RPAs);
 - c) a schedule detailing species, sizes and numbers/densities of all proposed trees/plants; including support measures, guards or other protective measures; biosecurity procedures including best working practices to reduce the spread of pests and disease.
 - d) specifications for operations associated with plant establishment and maintenance that are compliant with best practice; methods to improve the rooting environment for retained and proposed trees and landscaping including watering, weed control, pruning, etc.

e) types and dimensions of all boundary treatments.

8. An energy statement / natural resources strategy demonstrating how the energy hierarchy has been applied and how the development minimises the use of natural resources shall be submitted prior to or at the same time as the first reserved matters application for the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority. It shall address / consider the following:
- a. How energy use is reduced / minimised, in particular through the use of sustainable design and construction methods.
 - b. How water efficiency and minimisation of water use are to be encouraged.
 - c. Measures to promote waste minimisation and recycling.
 - d. Provision of an efficient energy supply, with priority to decentralised supplies.
 - e. Making use of renewable energy.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved strategy.

9. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a construction and traffic management plan (CTMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CTMP shall provide for the following:
- a) The routing of construction vehicles.
 - b) Construction access details.
 - c) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors.
 - d) Loading and unloading of plant and materials storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development.
 - e) Locations and details of construction compounds within the site.
 - f) Construction hours.
 - g) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding and boundary enclosure during construction, including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate.
 - h) Wheel washing facilities.
 - i) Before and after construction condition surveys of the highway and a commitment to fund the repair of any damage caused.

The approved CTMP shall be adhered to throughout the construction period unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

10. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a revised Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report and associated Biodiversity Metric demonstrating how a minimum of 10% BNG will be achieved, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The BNG Report should include:
- a) Baseline conditions of the site including; important ecological features and their influence on deliverability of BNG, baseline metric calculations and justifying evidence, and a baseline habitat plan that clearly shows each habitat type and the areas in hectares.
 - b) Justification of how each of the BNG Good Practice Principles has been applied.
 - c) Proposed design to include a proposed habitat plan and details of what will be created. The plan should clearly show what existing habitat is being

retained and what new habitat will be created. It should identify the different habitat types and show the areas in hectares of each habitat or habitat parcel.

- d) Biodiversity Metric spreadsheet, submitted in excel form that can be cross referenced with the appropriate plans.

The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

- 11. The development hereby permitted shall not commence unless and until a Habitat Management Monitoring Plan (HMMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the HMMP shall include the following.

- a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
- b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
- c) Aims and objectives of management which will (without limitation) include the provision of biodiversity net gain within the Site as shown within the BNG Report.
- d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- e) Prescriptions for management actions.
- f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a thirty-year period).
- g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
- h) Species specific measures proposed including locations and specifications.
- i) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The HMMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body or bodies responsible for its delivery. The plan shall be for no less than 30 years. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the HMMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed, and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

- 12. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following.

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.

- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP (Biodiversity) shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

13. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) Identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging.
- b) Show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the strategy and shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the strategy.

14. a) The development hereby permitted shall not commence until an archaeological evaluation, comprising geophysical survey and trial trenching that has been carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

b) Where the evaluation confirms the presence of significant archaeological remains, these shall be subject to further assessment and, where appropriate, preserved in situ, in accordance with details to be approved under Condition 2.

c) Where significant archaeological remains are confirmed and the local planning authority determines that they warrant preservation in situ, no development shall take place until a methodology for their preservation in situ has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved methodology.

d) Where archaeological remains are identified but are not of sufficient significance to warrant preservation in situ, no development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work, including post-excavation analysis and publication where appropriate, has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation submitted to and approved in writing by the local

planning authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved WSI.

15. The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro-geological context of the development as set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (December 2024), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include:

- a) Assessment of Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) components as outlined within the CIRIA SuDS Manual (C753) with justification for exclusion if necessary.
- b) Water quality assessment demonstrating that the total pollution mitigation index equals or exceeds the pollution hazard index; priority should be given to above ground SuDS components.
- c) Existing and proposed discharge rates and volumes.
- d) Full construction details of all SuDS and drainage components.
- e) Detailed drainage layout with pipe numbers, gradients and pipe sizes complete, together with storage volumes of all SuDS components.
- f) Calculations to demonstrate that the proposed drainage system can contain up to the 1 in 30 storm event without flooding. Any onsite flooding between the 1 in 30 and the 1 in 100 plus climate change storm event should be safely contained on site.
- g) Details of proposed overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance or failure, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants, or to adjacent or downstream sites.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

16. Prior to the occupation of any dwelling, a verification report carried out by a qualified drainage engineer must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate that the Sustainable Drainage System has been constructed in accordance with the approved scheme.
17. No dwelling shall be occupied until a whole-life maintenance plan for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall set out how and when the full drainage system will be maintained (e.g. a maintenance schedule for each drainage/SuDS component), with details of who is to be responsible for carrying out the maintenance. The drainage system shall subsequently be maintained in accordance with the approved details.
18. No dwelling shall be occupied until the vehicular access has been provided in accordance with Site Access Arrangement, drawing no. 2404020-01-B.
19. No dwelling shall be occupied until the estate roads within the development which provide access to it from the existing highway to that specific dwelling have been laid out in accordance with the details to be approved pursuant to condition 1 above.

20. a) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan prepared in accordance with British Standard BS 5837, as contained within Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and Preliminary Method Statement dated November 2024 hereby approved.
- b) All tree protection measures, including protective fencing and any ground protection, shall be installed prior to the commencement of any works or development on the site (including, for the avoidance of doubt, demolition and site clearance) and shall be retained and maintained for the duration of construction works. No works, storage of materials, plant, or machinery shall take place within the protected areas unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.
- c) The development shall thereafter be implemented and completed in full accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.
21. Notwithstanding the travel plan submitted with the outline application, prior to any occupation of the development hereby permitted, a further travel plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This should include a Travel Information Pack to be provided to residents. The measures contained in the approved Travel Plan pursuant to this condition shall be implemented thereafter.
22. The dwellings within the development hereby approved shall be designed to provide an appropriate level of accessibility and adaptability, with all dwellings compliant with Category 2 (Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations and 15% of the affordable units compliant with Category 3 (Part M4(3)(2)a of the Building Regulations), unless demonstrated, by a report approved by local planning authority, that it would be unviable to do so.

End of conditions

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANTS:

Christopher Boyle KC	Instructed by Croudace Homes Ltd
Simon Maiden-Brooks BSc (Hons) MSc CEng MCIWEM C. WEMM GMICE	Director, EPS
Derek Finnie CEnv MEnvSc MCIEEM	Managing Director, Derek Finnie Associates
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David Neame BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI	Director, Neame Sutton Ltd
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Mike Derbyshire BA (Hons) MRTPI	Senior Equity Partner, Bidwells
Simon Boakes BA (Hons)	Company Solicitor, Croudace Homes
Robert Love BA (Hons) MRTPI	Senior Associate, Bidwells

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Flora Curtis	Instructed by Katherine Stubbs, Senior Solicitor, Buckinghamshire Council Legal Services
Zenab Hearn MRTPI MRICS	Principal Planner, Buckinghamshire Council
Louise Anderson MRTPI	Principal Planning Policy Officer, Buckinghamshire Council
Andrew Cooper CMILT	Principal Highways Development Management Officer, Buckinghamshire Council
Matthew Raven	Senior Highways Development Management Officer, Buckinghamshire Council
Kate Graham MA (Hons) MA PG Dip Cons AA	Director, The Heritage Practice
Simon Neesam CMLI	Director, The Landscape Partnership

Katherine Stubbs

Senior Solicitor, Buckinghamshire Council

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Mr D Saunders

Local resident representing Great Horwood Parish Council

Mrs Saunders

Local resident

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED AT THE INQUIRY

- 1) List of appearances for the appellants
- 2) East West Rail consultation 2026 brochure extracted pages
- 3) East West Rail consultation 2026 (full document)
- 4) Appellants probate note
- 5) Appellants opening statement
- 6) Council's opening statement
- 7) Mr Saunders submission on behalf of Great Horwood Parish Council
- 8) Mr Saunders submission – Bus route 60A
- 9) Mr Saunders submission – Bus route 50 and 70
- 10) Mr Saunders submission – Commuting to Milton Keynes
- 11) Draft S106 agreement
- 12) Officers delegated report for Cherry Leas development
- 13) Updated list of planning conditions (23 April 2026)
- 14) CIL Regulation 122 table
- 15) S106 summary note
- 16) Updated list of planning conditions (27 April 2026)
- 17) Unsigned S106 agreement (28 April 2026)
- 18) Council's closing submissions
- 19) Appellants closing submissions