1 SUMMARY

1.1 The application is presented to Planning Committee on the grounds that it is a major planning application which has been advertised as a Departure from policy. The application site is within the Parish of Reydon, but located beyond the defined settlement limit. The application proposes 23 affordable housing units immediately abutting a Market Town as defined in Policy CS01.
1.2 The layout, design, appearance, mix and density of the development is considered acceptable having due regard to the character of the area and the sensitive landscape designations. The proposed development would yield much needed affordable housing in a sustainable location close to services and facilities required to support additional residential development. The application is recommended for approval subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site is located in the northern part of the village of Reydon to the north of Green Lane. The development site is 0.94 hectares and consists of part of a much larger field in agricultural use. There are no trees or buildings on the site. The site has a road frontage of 147 m. It is level but rises slightly to the north west. There is arable land to the north and west of the site, the garden to a dwelling to the east and residential properties across the road to the south of the site consisting of bungalows and either detached or short terraces of houses.

2.2 The roadside boundary (south) has a 3m high mature hedge with a narrow grass verge but no pavement. There is a pavement on the other side of the road. There is a dwelling to the eastern side, with a mature 2.5m hedge to the boundary with the site. Whilst the west boundary of the field has a mature hedge of 1.5m high, the proposed development would be located 22m from it.

2.3 There are bus stops adjacent to the junction of Windsor Rod which is opposite the site.

2.4 The site is located with the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It lies outside of the physical limits of Reydon.

3 PROPOSAL

3.1 The application proposes 23 dwellings all of which will be provided as affordable housing. The housing mix consists of 17 dwellings for affordable rent and 6 dwellings of shared ownership.

3.2 The affordable rent would consist of -

   4 x 1 Bed Flats - 48m2
   2 x 1 Bed Houses - 52m2
   4 x 2 Bed Bungalows - 66.5m2
   4 x 2 Bed Houses - 74m2
   2 x 3 Bed Houses - 86m2
   1 x 4 Bed House - 102m2

3.3 The Shared Ownership would consist of

   4 x 2 Bed Houses - 74m2
   2 x 3 Bed Houses - 86m2

3.4 The development would provide a density of 25 dwellings per hectare.
3.5 Parking would be provided on plot where possible on the following basis:

- 300% for 4 bedroom houses
- 200% for 2 & 3 bedroom houses
- 100% for 1 bedroom houses & flats
- Nine parking spaces for visitors

3.6 The proposed layout allows for one parking space per flat or one bed house, two parking spaces for two and three bed houses, and three parking spaces for the four bed house. In addition, seven visitor parking spaces are proposed.

3.7 The site would be served by a central access road to be positioned centrally between the two junctions opposite the application site. A footpath would be provided alongside Green lane. A hedge would be sited alongside the footpath which would incorporate visibility splays.

3.8 The dwellings would be located to the North West and east of the site with 1,400m² of public open space central to the site backing onto Green Lane. This would be surrounded by a low hedge and knee rails.

3.9 All dwellings would have private amenity areas at the rear of each property and each of the four apartments would benefit from a private garden. Each garden would have a shed for cycle storage. The dwellings would have higher hedges to mark their curtilage boundaries along with 1.8m high close boarded fencing. A 1.8m high chain link fence with a hedge to be planted alongside would mark the northern boundary of the site. A 1.8m high boundary wall would mark the boundary to plots 15, 22 and 23 where they face the public domain.

3.10 Access is provided to all rear gardens. Refuse bins and bikes will be stored at the rear of each property.

3.11 The proposed buildings would be mostly semi-detached with one short terrace of three houses. The bungalows would be positioned at the centre of the site of the site, behind the public open space. The buildings would be of traditional appearance finished in brick and render with pan tile roofs.

3.12 The buildings would be designed to limit loss of energy through escaping heat. All lighting would be LED lighting with water consumption minimised by water efficient taps and cisterns. Sufficient space would be provided to incorporate waste and recycling refuse facilities.

4 CONSULTATIONS/COMMENTS

4.1 Neighbour consultation / representations

One letter of comment, one letter of support, three letters of objection and a petition containing 11 signatures against the development was received which has raised the following points (the full details are on the Council’s website);

- This development would set a precedent in an AONB which is outside of the physical limits of the village
• Developers were only attracted to this site because it was under valued as it had no development value
• Increase in traffic on a blind bend resulting in danger to other highway users
• Gates show an intention to develop land to the north
• Other more appropriate sites are available for the development which are not greenfield
• All current or proposed social housing is located in the east with none in the west
• Position of access road is unacceptable with traffic shining lights into nearby residential dwellings opposite and increase in amount of traffic in this location resulting in loss of amenity
• Inadequate provision of car parking on the site resulting in increase in traffic parked on adjacent grass verges which is already a problem
• Concerns have not been taken into account by any party and this is a tick box exercise

4.2 Parish/Town Council Comments: Reydon PC recommended acceptance to the following: DC/17/2537/FUL Orbit Homes, Green Lane - with the following observations. Concerns have been raised on the position of the entrance regarding visibility turning onto Green Lane and residents feel that it would be better to have the entrance opposite Windsor Road, Highways are to have a site meeting to look into this. The PC also feels that there will not be enough parking spaces. They also would like to be assured that the sewage infrastructure will be sufficient and that any upgrade necessary should be put in place.

4.3 Southwold And Reydon Society: supported the application subject to the development fulfils the requirement for a rural exception site and does not set a precedent and that occupation is restricted to accommodation for people with local connections in perpetuity to be secured by a S106 agreement.

4.3 Suffolk County Council Section 106 Officer: comments that pre-application advice was provided. Infrastructure projects would be covered by CIL payments.

4.4 WDC Environmental Health - Contaminated Land: comment whether the submitted contamination report is suitable to support the application and further demonstration is required which would be subject to Environmental Health conditions if the findings were considered acceptable.

4.5 Waveney Norse - Property And Facilities: No comments received

4.6 Police - Alan Keely Crime Reduction Beccles Police Station: comments that an application for Secured by Design should be made. Whilst the comments are general, specifically there should only be one access to the public footpath, there should be more windows on plots 19 and 20 to survey the parking area, a trellis top should be provided to fencing, lighting levels should be general across the development and gates should be as close to the building line as possible and not set too far back as shown at present.

4.7 SCC Flooding Authority: recommends approval subject to conditions following their initial holding objection.

4.8 NHS Great Yarmouth And Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group: No comments received
4.9 **Suffolk County - Highways Department:** are satisfied with the proposals subject to agreement with the Floods Team and subject to planning conditions.

4.10 **Suffolk Coasts And Heaths Project:** comment that the LPA will need to consider whether or not the proposed development would have a significant impact upon, or harm the statutory purpose of the AONB designation. We are concerned that a decision to permit development on this particular site could set a precedent for further proposals outside of the settlement boundary and consider that the justification for development here must be robust in terms of what it offers both in terms of community benefits, but also in terms of conservation and enhancement of the AONB within which it is located. The decision should be subject to conditions.

4.11 **Suffolk Wildlife Trust:** no objection to the application subject to a condition to ensure that the recommendations made in the ecology report are carried out in full. A condition to this respect is suggested and agreed by the applicant. The SWT also request that Natural England are consulted and this has been undertaken.

4.12 **Suffolk County Archaeological Unit** have advised that the site lies in an area of known archaeological evaluation of medieval date. Planning conditions are suggested.

4.13 **Natural England:** No comments received to date. Consultation was undertaken on 19 September 2017 and any response received prior to the Committee meeting will be verbally updated to members.

4.14 **Suffolk Fire And Rescue Service:** No comments received.

4.15 **Anglian Water** comment that there is available capacity for foul drainage from the site in the catchment area of Southwold.

5 **PUBLICITY**

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Published</th>
<th>Expiry</th>
<th>Publication</th>
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<tr>
<td>Major Application</td>
<td>23.06.2017</td>
<td>13.07.2017</td>
<td>Beccles and Bungay Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Application</td>
<td>23.06.2017</td>
<td>13.07.2017</td>
<td>Lowestoft Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Departure</td>
<td>22.06.2017</td>
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6 **SITE NOTICES**

The following site notices have been displayed:

General Site Notice  
Reason for site notice: Major Application, Date posted 27.06.2017 Expiry date 17.07.2017

Reason for site notice: Departure and Major Application. Posted 22.09.2017
7 RELATED APPLICATIONS

7.1 There is no relevant planning history associated with this application

8 PLANNING POLICY

8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 states that application should be determined in accordance with the development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the development plan for the purpose of this application is the Core Strategy (2009), the Adopted Development Management Policies (2011) and the Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing (2012). The National Planning Policy Framework, ministerial statements are material considerations.

8.2 Waveney District Council – Adopted Core Strategy (January 2009)

CS01 Spatial Strategy
CS02 High Quality and Sustainable Design
CS11 Housing
CS16 Natural Environment
CS17 Built and Historic Environment

8.3 Waveney District Council – Adopted Development Management Policies (January 2011)

DM01 Physical Limits
DM02 Design Principles
DM16 Housing Density
DM17 Housing Type and Mix
DM18 Affordable Housing
DM22 Housing Development in the Countryside
DM27 Protection of Landscape Character
DM29 Protection of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
DM31 Archaeological Sites

8.4 Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (May 2012)

9 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The key issues associated with this development are:

- Principle of development
- Design, Layout and Visual Appearance (including highways)
- Landscape

Principle of Development

9.2 The provision of a site for 100% affordable housing delivery outside a defined settlement boundary is acknowledged in Policy DM22 (and supporting text paragraph 7.50) and the SPD on affordable housing as an exception to the normal policy of restraint which restricts new residential development in the countryside. In instances where there are insufficient sites to deliver such within existing communities, it is accepted that the Council will look at
the delivery of sites which are well related to and located on the edge of existing settlements for such delivery.

9.3 The Affordable Housing SPD states that exceptions sites could be permitted on the edge of the market towns, which includes Southwold and Reydon (paragraph 7.10). However paragraph 7.4 of the SPD also requires that in general exceptions sites should in general be no more than 10 units, although the number of units and the scale of development be dependent on the size of the village and the level of services and facilities available to the community. The application seeks the development of 23 dwellings, and whilst this is greater than the general size listed in the SPD, there is no limit detailed in either local policy or the NPPF.

9.4 The National Planning Policy Framework does not specify the number of dwellings permitted on an exceptions site. In addition the wording of paragraph 7.4 of the SPD does allow some flexibility about the acceptable size of an exceptions site. A development of the size proposed would be too large for a small village, however Reydon (together with Southwold) is a Market Town, with a high level of services and facilities to support additional development. Reydon has around 1400 homes and an adult population of just over 2100, (according to the 2010 Waveney electoral roll). It has an active and engaged community, with many local sports and social clubs as well as other interest groups and activities. There are thriving local shops, a fine hotel/restaurant/pub, a primary school, sports fields, play areas, allotments and a much-used village hall. A new health centre has recently opened (relocating from Southwold), along with a new village green.

9.5 A Local Needs Survey of Reydon was undertaken in 2016, and is up-to-date evidence base for housing needs in the village. The report acknowledges that the greatest demand is for one and two bedroom, although there is also a need for larger dwellings. The application proposes 6x1 bed, 12x2 bed, 4x3 bed and 1x4 bed. Officers are of the view that the mix proposed in this application complies with the identified housing need and is therefore acceptable.

9.6 It is proposed that the S106 will include a local lettings clause to ensure that people with a connection to Southwold and Reydon will be given priority for the dwellings. The local lettings clause would apply to both initial and all subsequent lettings, i.e. in perpetuity.

9.7 Your officers are of the opinion that the proposal complies with adopted policies for the delivery of an exception site and would secure a mix of housing numbers which is in line with the current demand in Reydon. The scheme is being promoted by an registered social landlord and therefore Members can have a high degree of certainty of its delivery. The site is well related to the main settlement, within easy reach of key services and facilities required to support additional residential development, whether that be market or affordable, and is of a size and scale well related to the size of the settlement to which it relates.

9.8 Members will note that concern has been raised that should be application be approved it will set a precedent in the AONB which is outside of the physical limits. All applications
need to be determined on their own merits having due regard to established planning policies. There is in this instance appropriate justification to set aside the normal policy of restraint which would not apply if the description or mix of development was different.

**Design, Layout and Visual Appearance (including highways)**

9.9 The site is accessed off one 5.5m wide access with 2.4m x 70m visibility splays in both an easterly and westerly direction. The proposed 23 dwellings would be a mix of single and two-storey dwellings with each of the dwellings having either on plot or courtyard parking well related to the dwelling, and at a level which is compliant with County Council parking standards. In addition five visitor spaces would be provided. The layout plan shows a public footpath running along the boundary of the site to the highway. Members are advised that Suffolk County Council Highways Authority have no objection to the application, in terms of the principle or technical matters, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

9.10 The scheme shows a 1030sqm area of public space located to the front of the site, which is naturally surveilled by existing and proposed dwellings. This open space would be for the benefit of both established and new residents and is of a sufficient size to meet the requirements of the residents whilst also providing a setting to the dwellings. A condition is proposed to agree a maintenance plan to ensure that all public areas, hard and soft landscaped, are appropriately managed in perpetuity.

9.11 The density of development equates to 32 dwellings per hectare, which complies with paragraph 4.9 of the Affordable Housing SPD which advises that such schemes should maximise the efficient use of the land and be at a minimum of 30dph. The plans submitted with this application clearly demonstrate that the scheme is well laid out and does not give rise to the appearance of over-development. Each of the units has sufficient levels of private amenity space to meet their functional requirements and has required levels of parking. The density and layout proposed is not dissimilar to the established residential area opposite the application site. The design and appearance of the individual dwellings is considered to be of a high quality using a palate of materials that respects the character of the surrounding area.

9.12 No concerns are raised in regard to impact on residential amenity in terms of the internal relationships or relationship to established properties. The closest established properties to the site are on the opposite side of Green Lane and given that the proposed dwellings are orientated E-W along the frontage, there would be no direct views to those properties. It is unfortunate that these properties do not provide an active frontage to Green Lane, however the layout does seek to ensure that there is no direct overlooking of those established properties. Within the site, although some of the distance separations are tight, most notably the relationship of plots 22 and 23 to plots 21 and 21 on the eastern side of the site. Although this relationship is not ideal, and could be improved with the bungalows and housing being switched, officers do not believe that the level of overlooking and possible loss of amenity is not in the opinion of officers to a level sufficient enough to withhold the grant of permission when considering the site as a whole and the benefits arising.

9.13 In terms of the detailed layout and appearance, officers are of the opinion that on balance the development complies with the criterial laid out in Policy DM02 of the Development Management Policies DPD.
Landscape Matters

9.14 Members are advised that the Council’s Landscape Manager has reviewed the application and raises no objection in terms of the impact of the development at a local level or the wider AONB, and the inclusion of the site within the AONB. The scheme includes sufficient space for appropriate landscaping, and a new hedge is proposed along the site’s frontage. A condition is proposed to seek appropriate landscaping of the site to ensure that the development is assimilated appropriately into the landscape setting. This includes importantly boundary treatment to the proposed dwellings along the northern, western and eastern boundaries.

9.15 Subject to an appropriate landscaping scheme and maintenance programme, this proposal is considered by officers to not have a significant impact on the landscape setting. Whilst the development will affect the views from those properties on the southern side of Green Lane, loss of a private view is not a material planning consideration to which due regard can be had.

Ecology

9.16 A formal consultation response is awaited from Natural England and the recommendation is therefore Authority to approve subject to a satisfactory response. Should this not be the case then the item will be referred back to the Planning Committee for determination. Included in this process is a Habitats Regulation Assessment, which will be considered by Natural England and the Council.

Conclusion

9.17 Should Members be minded to grant planning permission the scheme will deliver a high quality scheme which ensures delivery of a level and range of affordable dwellings which meets the identified needs expressed in the Housing Needs Study. The location and relationship to the settlement of Reydon is such that officers consider there is compliance with the exceptions tests to housing development and your officers are confident that approval of such will not set a precedent for other non compliant schemes. The density, design and layout is acceptable and complies with policy DM02 of the Local Plan. There are no technical objections to the application and subject to a satisfactory consultation response from Natural England then the development is considered acceptable.

9.18 The application is generally in keeping with policy requirement, and will deliver much needed affordable housing. Therefore the application is positively recommended to the Planning Committee.

RECOMMENDATION – AUTHORITY to APPROVE subject to:

- Expiry of the consultation period and no new material planning issues raised which have not been dealt with in this report
- No objections from Natural England and satisfactory completion of a Habitats Regulation Assessment.
- A S106 to deal with the delivery of affordable housing in perpetuity
And the following conditions:

1. Standard time limit
2. Details in accordance with approved plans
3. Materials as proposed
4. Highways conditions as proposed by the County Council
5. Drainage Conditions
6. Archaeology conditions
7. Construction Management Plan
8. Maintenance Plan
9. Landscaping details and management thereof
10. Ecology reports recommendations being carried out in full
11. Provision of fire hydrants within the site

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:  See application ref: DC/17/2537/FUL at www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access

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