Rob,

Following our meeting I set out below my response to the issues raised in your letter of 5th November 2015

**Principle**
You kindly confirmed the view expressed by Mike Townsend at our meeting with him on 11th March that the proposals were an acceptable exception to Policy C4 as an enabling development to ensure the long term future of Bishopswood Golf Course an import local recreational facility and having regard to the lack of a five year supply of deliverable housing land. In this regard it was noted that a Care Home often releases unoccupied family housing back into the supply chain and as such the care home can be help off-set the current shortfall. We would be happy to consider an obligation or planning condition linking the development to the club’s future in some form so as to justify the exceptions argument.
In terms of ‘target audience’ on average residents are in their mid-80’s, are frail, often suffering from dementia, and are in need of nursing care. The majority come from the local area or have family living in the area. In terms of the Care Needs Assessment a 5 mile radius is the norm based on research and adopted by practitioners throughout the country. It is also noted that the need is recognised by Adult Social Services who support the scheme.
In terms of a site evaluation it was explained that as this is an enabling development consideration of other sites is not applicable in this instance.

**Sustainability**
As explained many of the staff are drawn from the local area therefore not only benefitting the local economy but also providing opportunities for walking, cycling and car sharing (particularly appropriate with shift patterns). The Care Home will also operate a mini-bus for staff and patient transport locally.
We are currently reviewing the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan in respect of the sustainability issue.

**Design and Landscape**
See addendum to DAS attached

Regarding the Landscape Officer’s comments the relevant documents are;
- The Landscape and Visual Appraisal - Influence 26/06/15 and submitted as part of the planning application;
The key points from the officers comments are listed below and then responded to accordingly:

- The proposal will have adverse impact on visual amenity and landscape character;
- The submitted information is insufficient and there is no assessment of impacts on the local landscape character and visual amenity;
- There is no assessment on the impact on the Strategic Gap as identified in the emerging policy;
- The proposed development would erode a significant area of countryside and have an adverse impact on the gap between the two settlements;
- There would be an adverse and significant impact on the verdant character that exists on site;
- There would be an urbanising effect on the area due to the removal of existing vegetation particularly along Bishopswood Road.

**Impact on visual amenity and landscape character**

As stated in paragraph 1.10 of the submitted LVA the purpose of the report is to provide a preliminary analysis of the character of the landscape surrounding the application site; identify potential sensitive visual receptors within it and outline recommended mitigation measures. As stated at paragraph 1.9 the format of the LVA is based on the principles set out in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition*.

It is considered that the Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment is the most up to date and relevant descriptor of the landscape character of the site and context. The application site falls within Pamber and Tadley Plantations and Heath Landscape. The key features of this landscape are described as having:

- An inward looking landscape with medium to short range views contained by vegetation and topography;
- Although its predominantly rural in nature this is disrupted in western parts by the urban influence of Tadley;
- Adjacent to urban areas land has been used for recreational purposes such as Bishopswood Golf Club to the south of Tadley.

The site itself is on the northern edge of the golf club and is read as part of the overall golf complex. It is directly adjacent to the suburban residential edge of Tadley and is well screened by existing mature trees within the site (redline) itself, the golf course vegetation and mature boundaries associated with the surrounding rural roads and field patterns.

**Impact on Highways**

A detailed report will follow shortly

**Impact on Trees**

**Tree removals -**
With the exception of B grade English oak trees T3 and T5, the better quality trees, and those which make the greatest contribution to the character and appearance of Bishopswood Lane, will all be retained, as noted at 6.4 of the QW Report.

Sections 6.5 and 6.6 of the report discuss the impact that the proposed tree removals will have on the landscape, but to summarize: due to the retention of T1, T7, T11 and T12 the impact on views to users of Bishopswood Lane and those properties to the north will be minimal and the proposed removals will only affect a short section of Bishopswood Lane, visible only to users of the road when positioned immediately adjacent (west) to the proposed access.

The five tree groups central to the site (G17, G19, G20, G21 and G23) are to be partially removed if the site is to be at all developed. G19 includes some semi-mature birch, G21 includes a semi-mature birch and a semi-mature cherry and G22 some older willow. Most trees growing within these groups are young with stem diameters below 150mm and although not occurring as individual specimens (BS5837 4.5.10) have not been considered for retention as they pose a significant constraint on development. Although a number of these trees could be considered for relocation elsewhere within the site?

There is scope for replacement planting both internal to and along the site boundaries to mitigate the proposed tree removals.

**RPA Incursion**

English oak T1 is to be retained but with some incursion into its RPA from the proposed access road. Due to its proximity to the road I cannot discount that some rooting under the road is probable, although I do agree that rooting will be biased into the site. The method statement included at Appendix H of the QW Report identifies the requirement for Arboriculturally sympathetic methods within the RPA of T1 during the construction of the access road to enable the correct pruning of roots, and it is likely that a detailed method statement and on-site Arboricultural supervision will be conditioned.

The proposed cross-over is 7.5m from the edge of the trunk and falls within the existing ditch, and therefore no significant excavation will be required for bank stabilisation. The footprint of the access road is no closer than 11m from the trunk of T1 and can be mechanically excavated. The extended area of excavation closer to the tree required to grade the bank for stability purposes is unlikely to extend beyond the drip line 6.5m from the trunk. This allows 4.5m for bank stabilisation. QW and the Site Engineer can produce a detailed method statement to submit for approval and QW will supervise these works.

The off-site area between the existing road to the east and existing track to the west provides more than sufficient compensatory rooting space which will remain undisturbed and is to be protected from construction activities using site hoarding.

On the basis of the above, I am still satisfied that the proposed access road can be constructed without causing any significant harm or compromise to T1’s structural integrity nor will the loss of assimilative root mass cause any significant long-term harm.

Should Alan or the Tree Team have any further queries, Becki Gawthorpe <Becki@quaife-woodlands.co.uk> is more than happy for him/them to contact me directly.

**Impact on Biodiversity**
In respect of Phil Allen’s comments our response is in red.

A DNA analysis of the ponds cited in the Habitat Survey to ascertain the presence/absence of Great Crested Newts. Should presence be confirmed, a phase 2 survey and mitigation proposals written by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist should be submitted. Results were negative and we are not recommending further surveys as other ponds in close proximity to the site are not suitable for GCN.

A bat suitability assessment of the (approx. 6) specimen trees that are proposed to be felled written by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist. Should presence be assessed as more than negligible, a phase 2 survey and mitigation proposals should be submitted. We are re-surveying these trees in the week or so and results and recommendations will be included in our report. Static bat detector surveys have been undertaken and the results will be added to the report.

A bird protection and mitigation plan written by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist. This was touched on in our initial Phase I report but we will expand on this further in our final report.

A reptile survey and (if required) a protection and mitigation plan written by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist. Reptile survey has been undertaken with a peak of 14 slow worm recorded. No other species were found. From reviewing the initial plans there seems to be sufficient habitat to create an on-site receptor but we will review the final design and include a reptile mitigation plan in our report.

If the above information cannot be supplied, refusal is recommended for the following reasons:

- There is insufficient information to be able to adequately assess the impacts on biodiversity in accordance with policy E7. Further information is required from the applicant in order to comply with the council’s duty to discharge its statutory obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 with regards to European Protected Species.

Comments:

All of the above requirements are recommendations made by the Habitat Survey by Corylus Ecology, which is a thorough report. In particular, two types of European Protected Species may utilise the site, and their presence must be confirmed or discounted as negligible. If great crested newts are found on site, or within 500m, mitigation proposals will need to be submitted prior to determination. Likewise if bat roosts are confirmed in any of the trees designated for felling, mitigation proposals will need to be submitted prior to determination.

The Design and Access Statement, and the Landscape documents do not contain any detail that backs up the requirement for biodiversity enhancements, and this could be addressed in order to exhibit a joined up overall approach. We will include ecological enhancements in our report and will discuss these through with the landscape team.

Finally I confirm I have no objection to a further extension of time for the determination of the application.

Kind regards

John Montgomery
John Montgomery
Director
FRICS MRTPI

Telephone: 01202 430348
Mobile: 07977422028
Fax: 01202 421131

Town Planning Consultants
4 Beresford Road
Southbourne
Bournemouth
Dorset
BH6 5AA
planners@tanner-tilley.co.uk
www.tanner-tilley.co.uk