



A meeting of the **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in **THE CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **MONDAY, 14 APRIL 2025** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

## **AGENDA**

**PLEASE NOTE THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA MAY CHANGE**

### **APOLOGIES**

#### **1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 8)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2025.

#### **2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable interests in relation to any Agenda item. See Notes below.

#### **3. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - OTHER APPLICATIONS**

To consider reports by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management).

##### **(a) St Neots - 24/80112/COND (Pages 9 - 56)**

Details pursuant to Condition 8 attached to planning permission 17/02308/OUT for Tier 2 approval of Key Phase 2 framework comprising Boundary Plan, Design Code, Regulatory Plan, Foul and Surface Water Management Strategy and Ecological Management Plan, together with supporting information - Wintringham Park, Cambridge Road, St Neots.

##### **(b) Abbotsley - 24/00295/FUL (Pages 57 - 92)**

Installation and operation of a renewable energy generation and storage station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with battery storage containers, inverter/transformer units, control house, substations, onsite grid

connection equipment, storage containers, site access, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancement - Land at North Weald Farm, Croxton, St Neots.

#### **4. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - DEFERRED ITEM**

To consider a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management).

##### **(a) Holywell-cum-Needlingworth - 23/01002/OUT (Pages 93 - 136)**

Proposed development of up to affordable 30 dwellings to include public open space, landscaping, access and associated works. Approval sought for Access to Overcote Lane only at this stage with Layout, Landscaping, Scale and Appearance as reserved matters. - Land North of Lodel Farm, Overcote Lane, Needlingworth.

#### **5. APPLICATION REQUIRING REFERENCE TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

To consider a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management).

##### **(a) St Neots - 24/02228/FUL (Pages 137 - 172)**

Erection of two-bedroom barn-style property & associated works - Land at 516 Great North Road Eaton Ford.

#### **6. APPEAL DECISIONS (Pages 173 - 174)**

To consider a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management).

#### **LATE REPRESENTATIONS**

2 day of April 2025

***Michelle Sacks***

Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

#### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registrable and Non-Registrable Interests**

Further information on [Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registrable and Non-Registrable Interests](#) is available in the Council's Constitution

#### **Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings**

This meeting will be filmed for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's YouTube site. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are

confidential or exempt items. If you make a representation to the meeting you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed. By entering the meeting you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If you have any queries regarding the streaming of Council meetings, please contact Democratic Services on 01480 388169.

The District Council also permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with [guidelines](#) agreed by the Council.

**Please contact Anthony Roberts, Democratic Services, Tel: 01480 388015 / email [Anthony.Roberts@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Anthony.Roberts@huntingdonshire.gov.uk) if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee.**

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the [District Council's website](#).

#### **Emergency Procedure**

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

This page is intentionally left blank



## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held in THE CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Monday, 17 March 2025

PRESENT: Councillor D L Mickelburgh – Chair.

Councillors R J Brereton, E R Butler, J Clarke, S J Corney, K P Gulson, P A Jordan, S R McAdam, J Neish, B M Pitt, T D Sanderson, R A Slade, C H Tevlin and S Wakeford.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors D B Dew and S Mokbul.

### 42 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th February 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 43 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor S Corney declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 44 (c) by virtue of the fact that the application relates to the Division he represents as a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor S Corney also declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 44 (e) by virtue of the fact that the application relates to the Division he represents as a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor J Neish declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 44 (b) by virtue of the facts that the application relates to the Ward he represents and that he is a Member of Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council.

Councillor S McAdam declared a Non-Registrable Interest in Minute No 44 (e) by virtue of the fact that the application relates to the Ward he represents.

Councillor T Sanderson declared a Non-Registrable Interest in Minute No 44 (e) by virtue of the fact that the application relates to the Ward he represents.

Councillor S Wakeford declared a Non-Registrable Interest in Minute No 44 (e) by virtue of the fact that he is the Executive Councillor with responsibility for Economy, Regeneration and Housing but has not had any involvement in the application.

### 44 APPLICATIONS REQUIRING REFERENCE TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Planning Service Manager (Development Management) submitted reports (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book) on applications for development to be determined by the Committee. Members were advised of

further representations, which had been received since the reports had been prepared. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- a) **Retrospective change of use of land from equestrian use (Sui Generis) to a mixed use of equestrian and gypsy/traveller residential use (Sui Generis) creating 1 pitch comprising 1 mobile home with associated parking and amenity - Tower Farm and Stables, Toseland Road, Yelling - 24/00938/FUL**

*(Councillor K Davies, Yelling Parish Council, Councillor L Mullan, Toseland Parish Council, Councillor J Catmur, Ward Member, Councillor S Ferguson, Cambridgeshire County Council, K Hutchinson, on behalf of an objector, and T Brown, applicant, addressed the Committee on the application).*

that the application be approved subject to conditions to be determined by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) to include those listed in paragraph 8 of the report now submitted together with an additional condition relating to access.

At 8.00 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 8.07 pm the meeting resumed.

- b) **Proposed development of up to affordable 30 dwellings to include public open space, landscaping, access and associated works. Approval sought for Access to Overcote Lane only at this stage with Layout, Landscaping, Scale and Appearance as reserved matters - Land North of Lodel Farm, Overcote Lane, Needingworth - 23/01002/OUT**

*(Councillor A Whyte, Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council, N Stanford, on behalf of an objector, and A Brand, agent, addressed the Committee on the application).*

See Minute No 43 for Members' interests.

that the application be deferred to enable further information to be obtained from the Environmental Health Officer on the odour impact of the proposed development.

At 9.20 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 9.25 pm the meeting resumed.

- c) **Full Permission for erection of two self-build dwellings and garages - Land at 64A Bottels Road, Warboys - 24/02258/FUL**

*(Councillor G Willis, Warboys Parish Council, and P Townsend, objector, addressed the Committee on the application).*

See Minute No 43 for Members's interests.

that the application be approved subject to conditions to be determined by the Planning Policy Manager (Development Management) to include those listed in paragraph 8 of the report now submitted.

At 10.00 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 10.03 pm the meeting resumed.

**d) Outline Permission (all matters reserved) for erection of self-build dwelling and garage - Land Rear of 8 Church Street, Alwalton - 24/01867/OUT**

*(Councillor A Briant, Alwalton Parish Council, addressed the Committee on the application).*

that the application be approved subject to conditions to be determined by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) to include those listed in paragraph 8 of the report now submitted.

**e) Removal of conditions 3 (Holiday accommodation only in C and H) and 4 (Register) of 18/00719/FUL - Pringle Farm, Pringle Way, Little Stukeley - 23/02319/S73**

*(T Slater, agent, addressed the Committee on the application).*

See Minute No 43 for Members' interests.

that the application be approved subject to conditions to be determined by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) to include those listed in paragraph 8 of the report now submitted together additional conditions relating to highways works and residual contamination.

## **45 APPEAL DECISIONS**

The Committee received and noted a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management), which contained details of five recent decisions by the Planning Inspectorate. A copy of the report is appended in the Minute Book.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 14 April 2025

**Case No:** 24/80112/COND  
**Proposal:** Details pursuant to Condition 8 attached to planning permission 17/02308/OUT for Tier 2 approval of Key Phase 2 framework comprising Boundary Plan, Design Code, Regulatory Plan, Foul and Surface Water Management Strategy and Ecological Management Plan, together with supporting information.  
**Location:** Wintringham Park, Cambridge Road, St Neots  
**Applicant:** Mr Joe Dawson – Urban & Civic plc and Wintringham Partners LLP  
**Grid Ref:** (E) 519875 (N) 259612  
**Date of Registration:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
**Parish:** St Neots

---

### RECOMMENDATION –

**Delegated powers to APPROVE the Design Code in accordance with condition 8 (part b) and subject to Officer support of all other parts of condition 8.**

**This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) at the request of the Chief Planning Officer to seek approval of the Design Code in accordance with condition 8 part (b) of the outline consent and its subsequent use as a material consideration in the determination of reserved matters applications.**

#### **1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION**

- 1.1 This site relates to an area at Wintringham Park, which has outline consent under application reference 17/02308/OUT which was subject to a S106 agreement and various planning conditions, and is allocated within the Development Plan under policy SEL2 (St Neots East). Development at Wintringham is subject to site wide parameter plans (approved as part of the outline consent) that set the overall framework of the development.
- 1.2 The Wintringham development is supported by a sequence of submissions structured into three 'tiers', to provide a progressive layering of increasingly detailed information, from the over-arching and site-wide (Tier 1), through substantive key phases (Tier 2) to detailed

Reserved Matters submissions within sub-phases and on individual development sites or 'Reserved Matters areas' (Tier 3).

- 1.3 In respect of Tier 1 (site wide planning) the outline element of the Hybrid Planning Permission approved the broad quantum and disposition of land uses as defined by the Development Specification, Parameter Plan and the design principles within the Design and Access Statement. Site-wide strategies on Surface and Foul Water, Remediation, Archaeology, Construction, Green infrastructure and Biodiversity supplement the parameters set by the outline permission.
- 1.4 In relation to Tier 2 (Key Phase Planning) the Key Phase tier requires an additional level of detail to be submitted to and approved by the Council. Outline Condition 8 requires approval of documentation to set the definition of and provide a framework for each Key Phase. At this tier a greater level of detail is provided; this technical information informs and establishes a base against which Reserved Matters Applications within the Key Phase area can be assessed.
- 1.5 For Tier 3 (Reserved Matters) the hybrid planning permission provides outline planning permission, including means of access, for the development of the site as a whole. Matters relating to layout, scale, appearance and landscaping were reserved for subsequent approval. Accordingly, detailed approval in respect of the Reserved Matters is needed before development can commence.
- 1.6 This submission seeks approval of Key Phase 2 Tier 2 details, pursuant to condition 8 of the hybrid planning permission. Condition 8 reads as:

#### Key Phases

All applications for a Key Phase, other than Key Phase 1 (as defined by drawing ref: WIN001/011) should be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Submissions for a Key Phase should be accompanied by the following:

- a) a plan defining the extent of the Key Phase;
  - b) a Design Code covering the full extent of the area defined in (a) and in accordance with the scope set out in APPENDIX 1;
- Each submission for a Key Phase should also be accompanied by a written statement which addresses the following:
- c) a schedule identifying the broad disposition of uses and an indicative quantum of development having regard to the relevant trigger events as set out in the S106 Agreement;
  - d) demonstration of conformity with approved Parameter Plan, Development Specification and the Site Wide Strategies identified in Conditions 5 and 6; and
  - e) a specific statement identifying how foul and surface water will be managed in the Key Phase.

Reason: To ensure the details of the development are acceptable to the Local Planning Authority in view of the nature and scale of the development proposed, and to clarify how the site is to be phased to assist with the determination of subsequent reserved matters applications.

- 1.7 In relation to part a of Condition 8, Key Phase 2 will comprise the central section of the wider Wintringham site, located between Wintringham Brook to the north, Hen Brook to the south, the East Coast Mainline to the west and the existing A428(T) to the east. It encompasses 49.64ha of land, which is approximately 31% of the overall Wintringham site. It is currently vacant and cleared land with areas of retained tree and shrub cover in the areas associated with the former Railway Field in the south west part of the Key Phase, along Wintringham and Hen Brooks and in the central part of the Key Phase. There are four Public Rights of Way (PROWs) that run through the site; footpaths 194/52, 194/53, 194/54 and 194/55. These all run east-west across the site, connecting the town of St Neots to the countryside to the east side of the A428.
- 1.8 Key Phase 2 provides for the ongoing delivery of Wintringham as a committed development and part of the established growth strategy for the area. This application unlocks the next Key Phase comprising circa 900 new homes, a new 2 form entry primary school, new local facilities, circa 22ha of new open space, sport and recreation facilities, and a network of new footways, cycleways and bridleways.
- 1.9 In relation to part c of condition 8, Key Phase 2 (KP2) incorporates the following land uses:

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Quantum – Area (hectares)/ Dwellings / Floorspace</b>
Residential	Up to 21.78ha, up to 938 dwellings
Formal Open Space	Up to 8.78ha, including 4.9ha Sports Hub
Informal Open Space	Up to 12.90ha
Play Space	4 LAPs, 1 LEAP and 1 NEAP
Education	2.3ha Primary School 2 – 2FE (with 3FE core) 0.7ha Land for Future Consideration / Additional FE Land
Local Facilities comprising Commercial, Business and Service; and/or Local Community Uses)	Up to 500m2

- 1.10 The Key Phase 2 submission comprises the following:
1. KP2 Boundary Plan;
  2. KP2 Design Code, incorporating:
    - Regulatory Plan; and
    - Illustrative Masterplan;
  3. KP2 Foul and Surface Water Management Strategy;
  4. KP2 Ecological Management Plan; and
  5. KP2 Compliance Statement, incorporating:
    - Schedule of Uses providing an indicative quantum of development having regard to S106 trigger events; and
    - A statement of conformity with approved Parameter Plan, Development Specification and the Site Wide Strategies.

- 1.11 The submission of a Design Code is required by condition 8 (b) of the outline permission to be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of each phase of the development. **It is only the Design Code element of the condition discharge submission which is for Members consideration; all other matters for the condition discharge are to be delegated to Officers.** The Design Code is large document containing 204 pages. It is available to view on the Council's Public Access website under reference 24/80112/COND at the link below. Plans attached to this agenda item relate to a limited number of pages within the Design Code, the Boundary Plan and the Regulatory Plan.

Public Access - <https://publicaccess.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/online-applications/>

### **What is a Design Code?**

- 1.12 Design Codes are a set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should be proportionate and build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area. Their content should also be informed by the 10 characteristics of good places set out in the National Design Guide. (PPG Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 26-001-20191001). These 10 characteristics are:-
- Context – enhances the surroundings;
  - Identity – attractive and distinctive;
  - Built form – a coherent pattern of development;
  - Movement – accessible and easy to move around;
  - Nature – enhanced and optimised;
  - Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive;
  - Uses – mixed and integrated;
  - Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable;
  - Resources – efficient and resilient;
  - Lifespan – made to last.
- 1.13 Paragraph 134 of NPPF 2024 states that “Whoever prepares them, all guides and codes should be based on effective community engagement and reflect local aspirations for the development of their area, taking into account the guidance contained in the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code.”
- 1.14 The aim of a Design Code is to provide clarity over what constitutes acceptable design quality for a particular site or area; Design Codes should however not hinder deliverability of the development and must also be flexible enough to ensure that they remain appropriate throughout the construction period of the development, and beyond.
- 1.15 Design Codes are not new to Huntingdonshire, with Alconbury Weald, Brampton Park, Bearscroft, Loves Farm 1, Loves Farm 2 and Ermine Street South all having Design Code(s) for their respective development.
- 1.16 The Design Code has been prepared by master developer Urban & Civic in consultation with the District Council's Urban Design Officer and aims to achieve a high-quality development by setting phase-wide design requirements that each subsequent reserved matters submission should



comply with. These design requirements are derived from the principles set out in the outline planning permission as part of the Design and Access Statement and inform the detailed design of each parcel that will come forward as 'reserved matters' submissions, having regard to the adopted Huntingdonshire Design Guide and current national and local policy. By bridging the 'gap', the Design Code gives certainty as to how this Key Phase will be developed, helping avoid potentially uncoordinated piecemeal and fragmented consideration and delivery of the development which could occur without a Design Code.

1.17 It is a requirement of condition 8 of the outline planning permission to submit a Design Code defining the extent of the Key Phase and, as per Appendix 1 on the decision notice of the outline planning permission, to include the following:

a) A regulatory plan that establishes the framework for development within each Key Phase.

The regulatory plan is the key plan associated with the Design Code and the content of the plan and its associated key will inform the structure of the Design Code.

b) The character, mix of uses and density established through the parameter plans at the outline stage to include the block principles and the structure of public spaces;

c) The street hierarchy, including the principles of adopting highway infrastructure, and typical street cross-sections;

d) How the design of the streets and spaces takes into account mobility and visually impaired users;

e) Block principles to establish use, density and building typologies. In addition, design principles including primary frontages, pedestrian access points, fronts and backs and perimeter of building definition;

f) Key groupings and other key buildings including information about height, scale, form, level of enclosure, building materials and design features;

g) The conceptual design and approach to the treatment of the public realm

h) Approach to incorporation of ancillary infrastructure such as pipes, flues, vents, meter boxes, fibres, wires and cables required by statutory undertakers as part of building design;

i) Details of the approach to vehicular parking;

j) Details of the approach to cycle parking for all uses and for each building type, including the distribution (resident/visitor parking and location in the development), type of rack, spacing and any secure or non-secure structures associated with the storage of cycles.

k) Demonstration of conformity to the principles of the site-wide biodiversity strategy.

l) The approach to the character and treatment of landscape features and the structural planting to the development areas;

m) The approach to the treatment of any hedge or footpath corridors and retained trees and woodlands;

n) The conceptual design and approach to sustainable drainage management and how this is being applied to the built-up area to control both water volume and water quality including specification of palette of sustainable drainage features to be used, and planting strategies to enhance biodiversity and improve water quality as much as possible before discharge into ponds and basins;

o) The conceptual design and approach of the public realm to include public art, materials, signage, utilities and any other street furniture.

- p) The conceptual design and approach to the lighting strategy and how this will be applied to different areas of the development with different lighting needs, so as to maximise energy efficiency, minimise light pollution and avoid street clutter;
- q) Details of waste and recycling provision for all building types and underground recycling points.
- r) Measures to demonstrate how opportunities to maximise resource efficiency and climate change adaptation in the design of the development will be achieved through external, passive means, such as landscaping, orientation, massing, and external building features;
- s) Details of measures to measures to minimise opportunities for crime;
- t) Details of Design Code review procedure and of circumstances where a review shall be implemented.

- 1.18 The Design Code takes the form of a written document with illustrations, specific mandatory 'Coding Principles' elements and discretionary design guidance on these matters that future development should adhere to.
- 1.19 The Design Code includes all elements of the built environment including:
  - spatial components that take up land, including Green Infrastructure (open spaces and landscaping), Movement and Access (roads, paths and cycle routes) and Residential Built Form (the buildings).
  - non spatial components including elements such as architectural detailing, building materials, surfacing materials, street furniture, boundary treatment, public art and tree planting, and technical guidance on matters including parking provision, bin and cycle storage, water management and ecological enhancement.
- 1.20 A Design Code Compliance Checklist is included within the Design Code. Applicants will be required to submit this alongside each Reserved Matters Applications for the site. Future proposals will be expected to demonstrate full compliance with the Design Code unless an explanatory statement which details the planning and place making benefits associated with the scheme can justify non-compliance.

## 2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE AND POLICY AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) sets out the three economic, social and environmental objectives of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF confirms that 'So sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development...' (para. 10). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for, amongst other things:
  - delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
  - achieving well-designed places;
  - conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
  - conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

- 2.2 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and the National Design Guide 2019 (NDG) are also relevant and a material consideration.
- 2.3 For full details visit the government website [National Guidance](#).
- 2.4 Relevant Legislation;
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
  - Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
  - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
  - Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

### **3. LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES**

3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019):

- LP2 Strategy for Development
- LP3 Green Infrastructure
- LP7 Spatial Planning Areas
- LP11 Design Context
- LP12 Design Implementation
- LP12 Design Implementation
- LP13 Placemaking
- LP14 Amenity
- LP17 Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP31 Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
- SEL2 St Neots East

3.2 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan (2016)

St Neots Neighbourhood Plan was made on 24 February 2016 and forms part of the development plan. The following policies are relevant to the proposal:

- Policy A2: Development on the edge of St. Neots
- Policy A3: Designed to a high quality
- Policy A4: Landscape Backdrops
- Policy PT1: Sustainable modes of Transport
- Policy PT2: Vehicle Parking
- Policy P2: Open Spaces
- Policy P4: SUDs
- Policy SS3: Community facilities

3.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

- The St. Neots Urban Design Framework (UDF) (2011)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment – Adopted 2022
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide – Adopted 2017
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted 2017
- RECAP Waste Management Design Guide (CCC SPD) – Adopted 2012
- Developer Contributions – Adopted 2011 (Costs updated annually)

3.4 For full details visit the Council's website [Local policies](#).

## **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

### **4.1 17/02308/OUT - Hybrid planning application comprising:**

1) Application for outline planning permission for development of a mixed use urban extension to include: residential development of up to 2,800 dwellings (C3), up to 63,500 sqm of employment development (B1-B8), District Centre including shops, services, community and health uses (A1-A5, D1 & D2), Local Centre (A1-A5), Temporary Primary School, Two Permanent Primary Schools, open space, play areas, recreation facilities and landscaping, strategic access improvements including new access points from Cambridge Road & A428, associated ground works and infrastructure. All matters reserved with the exception of means of access: and

2) Application for full planning permission for the construction of new roads, hard & soft landscaping, creation of SUDS and all associated infrastructure and engineering works including creation of haul routes.

Approved 06.11.2018.

### **4.2 24/01315/NMA - Non-material amendment of 17/02308/OUT comprising update to the approved Parameter Plan in relation to development extents in Key Phase 2 – Consent 02.04.2025.**

## **5. CONSULTATIONS**

*Officer Note – The following summarised consultations as set out only include those relevant to the Design Code. Matters relating to other requirements under condition 8 are not included.*

- 5.1 St Neots Town Council (23.04.2024) (copy attached) – Supports the proposals, noting that the layout and scale are satisfactory.
- 5.2 St Neots Town Council (17.09.2024) (copy attached) – Noted the proposals, stating that the Council does not have the sufficient technical expertise to comment on the application and will be guided by the comments of technical consultees and officers.
- 5.3 St Neots Town Council (14.01.2025) (copy attached) – Supports the proposals, requesting that the developments include temporary pipes as part of managing water run-off from the site into Hen Brok until the attenuation ponds are effective; that consideration is given to the British Horse Society concerns over suitability of materials used as part of bridleways and that the developers are encouraged to engage with the Town Council when design codes for developments of this size come forward.
- 5.4 HDC Urban Design – Following receipt of amendments, considers the Design Code to be acceptable.

- 5.5 HDC Landscaping – Following receipt of amendments, considers the Design Code to be acceptable.
- 5.6 HDC Conservation Officer – No objections, noting that the proposals do not impact on any heritage asset.
- 5.7 British Horse Society – Whilst appreciative of the leisure and rights of way provision at Wintringham, concerns are raised regarding the ambiguity that has crept into the wording of the DC. The bridleway should comprise the whole of the path (grassed section and other surface route) and every user should be able to use the whole route. It is noted that tarmac is not a suitable surface for a bridleway. Comments note that the BHS have been advised that the multi-user routes will be available to equestrians; amended wording to the Code is therefore sought to avoid any future ambiguity. *Officer note: an amended Design Code has since been submitted which states that the multi-user active travel route will include a suitable surface including for equestrian use; therefore these comments have been addressed.*
- 5.8 Environmental Health – No comments.
- 5.9 Cambridgeshire County Council – Highways – Following receipt of amendments, considers the Design Code to be acceptable
- 5.10 Cambridgeshire County Council – Highways Transport Assessment Team – Following receipt of amendments, considers the Design Code to be acceptable.
- 5.11 Cambridgeshire County Council – Rights of Way – No objections, but requests amendment to DC on page 105 for the ‘Function’ to include equestrians as well as pedestrians and cyclists for clarity on who can use the active travel routes. *Officer note: an amended Design Code has since been submitted which now provides this clarity for equestrians.*
- 5.12 Cambridgeshire County Council – Archaeology – No objections.
- 5.13 Environment Agency – No objections.
- 5.14 Huntingdonshire Ramblers Association – No objections.
- 5.15 Cambridgeshire Police – No comments.
- 5.16 Network Rail – No objections.
- 5.17 Sport England – No objections.
- 5.18 Health and Safety Executive – No objections.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 No other representations received.

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 A Design Code has been prepared to set the design principles for Key Phase 2 at Wintringham.
- 7.2 The Design Code is set out in six chapters plus appendices. Officers have approached the assessment below on the basis of those chapters. The Design Code is also accompanied by a Regulatory Plan that establishes the framework for development within Key Phase 2, which includes residential development parcels, a new primary school, new parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green space and outdoor sports pitches and courts across the KP2 site.
- 7.3 The main issue to consider in the determination of this application is whether the submitted Design Code accords with the broad principles in the Design and Access Statement and the coding matters as required in Appendix 1 of 17/02308/OUT.

### **Introduction, Context & Site Wide Strategies**

- 7.4 The Outline Planning Permission (OPP) established a set of design principles used to support design quality across the development, which will underpin the more detailed designs as the development progresses, and which will support the development of the vision for each phase. Within the introductory sections of the Design Code is the context of the Code itself, providing guidance on how it is to be used and the design vision for this phase of the development. The first two sections also provide context for the development itself, in terms of its local and regional position and surrounding character, having regard to earlier phases and how the site as a whole is progressing.
- 7.5 The Design Code sets out a number of mandatory requirements (identified through use of “must” and/or “must not”), and recommendations (identified through use of “should”) in order to guide and direct built development. All Reserved Matters Applications will be required to set out how they have accorded with these requirements. In the event that it is not possible to accord with a mandatory requirement there is an opportunity for an applicant to demonstrate why that is not possible, and such justification will be considered on its merits.
- 7.6 A number of site wide strategies underpin Wintringham as a whole, setting out the approach to technical matters, as well as management and maintenance of infrastructure within the site. Where addendums are needed to the site wide strategies these are also submitted as part of other conditional requirements, but reference is made within the Design Code as appropriate to ensure any design requirements are integrated. In particular, a number of sustainable building design requirements are necessary, both to meet the requirements of other conditions, and due to changes in building regulations. While these are not before members as part of this agenda item it is highlighted that they have formed part of the consideration of the wider conditional requirements and the design implications are integrated into the Design Code.
- 7.7 The context section of the Design Code also highlights how KP2 fits together with the earlier phase (KP1), and how it is intended to provide connection to future phases, particularly in respect of public open space,

ecological corridors and movement and access arrangements. It also provides indicative delivery areas, noting the nature of the master developer approach within this site, in that Urban & Civic deliver the infrastructure, with housebuilders developing individual parcels.

- 7.8 On the whole, the Introduction and Context & Site Wide Strategy sections of the Design Code are considered to provide a robust contextual setting for the development and clearly identifies how the Design Code should be used.

### **Key Groupings**

- 7.9 This section of the Design Code identifies three areas within KP2 that are distinct nodes where built form, movement and public realm interweave. They are likely to be destination points and prominent areas of the site that will see large amounts of activity and so require a more bespoke approach to ensure these represent the highest design quality.
- 7.10 The first Key Grouping is the Eastern Gateway, which marks the main residential gateway for KP2. Similar to the Western Gateway, the residential marker buildings, SuDS features, pedestrian and cycle routes and increased landscaped verge will together form an integral set piece for the Key Phase creating an attractive and safe arrival space for residents and visitors alike. The convergence of routes at this point will need to come together seamlessly allowing pedestrians to move safely along the brook corridor and beyond.
- 7.11 The second Key Grouping is the Western Gateway, which marks the arrival into KP2 when approached from the western primary route and District Centre established in KP1.
- 7.12 The third Key Grouping is the Civic Green, which is situated at the heart of KP2 and forms an important central destination for the entire Wintringham development. The second primary school is a defining landmark within this location sitting upon the central green space forming part of the east-west community link. The school along with the residential marker buildings will form an important built form set piece and a key destination along the primary street.
- 7.13 This section of the Design Code also highlights a small number of requirements for the future primary school. While these will be matters led by the County Council as education authority, they are highlighted in order to ensure the design approaches do not undermine their position as key destinations and ensure they are developed to be legible and responsive to their surroundings.
- 7.14 Officers consider the Key Grouping chapter of the Design Code suitably identifies the key areas of the phase that require specific design responses, having regard to their position as key destinations and transitional spaces.

### **Landscape & Public Realm**

- 7.15 This chapter sets out the strategy and approach to green infrastructure within KP2, including formal and informal open space, planting,

biodiversity and ecological corridors, and future parks. The overarching strategy is a landscape led, 'nature first' approach to delivering green infrastructure, developing a mosaic of interdependent typologies and uses linking water, woodland and grasslands across the phase and out into the wide landscape.

- 7.16 There are three core design principles which underpin the framework of Green Infrastructure in KP2; embracing the vales (which includes creating a mosaic of wetland habitats comprising wet grasslands, open water and wet woodlands and enriching existing linear watercourses, enhancing their landscape and biodiversity value), interconnected parklands (which includes creating north / south parkland linkages between the 'Green Vales' and the Loves Farm development and creating strong east / west parkland linkages from the Sports Hub and Railway Fields, through to the eastern greenway) and integrated green ways (which includes introducing a perimeter greenway that defines the development edge and provides safe green links from St Neots, through Wintringham, and out to the open countryside and strengthening vegetation cover along the site's edges, particularly along the railway line and A428).
- 7.17 The Code explains that Key Phase 2 will incorporate the following minimum standards of green infrastructure and sports provision (as was defined in the S106 that formed part of the outline planning permission):
- 0.99ha of Parks and Gardens;
  - 0.47ha of Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space;
  - 2.24ha of Amenity Green Space which is to include casual informal play facilities of 1.13ha, and equipped children's play spaces of 0.51ha;
  - 0.66ha of Allotments and Community Gardens (including Orchards); and
  - 8.75ha of Formal Open Space which is to include Outdoor Sports Pitches and Courts.
- 7.18 Within KP2 the Code notes that the sport and recreation strategy must provide both formal outdoor sports facilities and informal open spaces, which will include the following:
- Formal Sports Hub - a multi-sports facility that will include a range of sports pitches, appropriate lighting, pavilion building, parking etc.
  - The Meadows - sports pitches available for community use
  - 'Court Sports' - smaller scale, multi-use facilities for the community. Typically Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGA's), tennis courts etc, but with the potential to accommodate a range of sports and activities.
  - Informal opportunities – parklands that offer opportunities for active recreation - typically running, cycling etc. via the Exercise Trail.
- 7.19 The final layout of the formal sports hub facilities (pitches, buildings, parking etc) will be subject to design development at detailed application stage.
- 7.20 The Code also includes details of wayfinding, which aims to help people to discover their surroundings and create meaningful connections.
- 7.21 The Code explains that the provision of orchards, community gardens and the integration of edible environments into public spaces offers ways



to engage the community, encourage people to be active outdoors, and provide access to fresh and sustainable food.

- 7.22 In relation to play provision the Code explains that the KP2 Regulatory Plan includes one combined Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) / Local Equipment Area for Play (LEAP) located within The Green to provide a 'destination' play area at the heart of the site, which is supported by four Local Areas of Plan (LAPs), three located in pocket parks within residential development parcels and one to the perimeter of parcel 2. The pocket parks will be a focal point for the immediate neighbourhood with good natural surveillance from surrounding properties. Additionally, an informal play on the way space is to be implemented within the north-south green link corridor through Parcel 2 to connect the LAP play space with the NEAP-LEAP within The Green. The Code explains that inspiration for the play space theme will be influenced by archaeological findings discovered on site, particularly focused on findings within The Green area.
- 7.23 The Code explains that the Community Gardens Greenway forms a key component of the productive landscape provision within KP2 helping to promote doorstep community growing (seeding, foraging and harvesting); it will provide a key east-west pedestrian connection from the Sports Hub to the School through to the Eastern Greenway.
- 7.24 There will also be Primary Greenway Corridors, which will provide a continuation of the 'Green Spine' that runs north to south through the development, providing a key movement corridor for people, wildlife and water. The Greenway alignment, width and arrangement varies throughout as it responds to site conditions with a focus on creating 'rooms' along its length at intervals, which will incorporate play-on-the-way, activity and 'rest' opportunities.
- 7.25 The Eastern Greenway runs along the eastern boundary of KP2. This is proposed as a continuation in character and function of the A428 eastern green corridor implemented through KP1; the Eastern Greenway will provide amenity buffering, as well as providing a leisure route and habitat connections to the Brook corridors.
- 7.26 Hen Brook Corridor defines the southern edge of KP2; this will be a focus for a diverse range of flora and fauna and will be retained and managed with a focus on ecology and biodiversity. The corridor is classed as floodplain with restrictions on development, but will be compatible with a range of complementary initiatives as part of an informal 'park' and recreation resource.
- 7.27 Wintringham Brook corridor defines the northern edge of KP2; this corridor will also be a focus for a diverse range of flora and fauna and will be retained and managed with a focus on biodiversity. A proportion of the corridor is classified as floodplain with restrictions on development, but will be compatible with a range of complementary initiatives as part of an informal 'park' resource.
- 7.28 Butterfly Meadows at the southern end of KP2 is proposed to act as a transition point between housing to the north and the wider Hen Brook corridor which will form a key strategic area of open space. Butterfly Meadows and its parkland will establish principles for additional open space opportunities to be taken forward beyond KP2; this will be a

grassland meadow parkland with a strong focus on ecology and biodiversity.

- 7.29 Railway Fields (along the west boundary) is to be retained and enhanced as a nature-rich, ecology-focused area to support a range of birds, mammals, reptiles and invertebrates. Existing grassland and tree planting are to be retained where appropriate and enhanced to create an ecologically focused landscape that also functions as an important amenity for residents and visitors.
- 7.30 This chapter also provides details of landscape proposals within parcels and appropriate planting species, promoting integrated planting designs utilising primarily native species. It is acknowledged that any species will need to have regard to climate change and the threat of disease, such that single species or water demanding species will be generally avoided to promote longevity of planting.
- 7.31 Principles of street furniture and hardstanding are set out within this chapter of the Design Code. While the final specification of these elements will fall to detailed assessment stages, the general principles seek to establish a consistent and reliable source that will be readily capable of being maintained and will not undermine design quality through clutter or inappropriate designs that do not reflect the position within the site, intended users or the intensity of likely use.
- 7.32 On the whole, it is considered the chapter on Landscape and Public Realm suitably provides for the significant variation in typologies of landscape within the site, accommodating the substantial number of uses that such spaces will need to fill without being prescriptive.

### **Movement & Access**

- 7.33 This chapter sets out the site wide approach to movement across all modes, including how utilities and infrastructure will be utilised to support the movement network, and the tiering of different movement corridors to promote their purpose and role in the overall network. Details are provided which cover themes including active travel routes, access for all, public transport, electric vehicles and alternative sustainable modes of transport. This chapter also contains specific technical standards, having regard to County adoptable road requirements, to support long term maintenance proposals.
- 7.34 In respect of roads, there are four types, ranging from the primary street that acts as the principle through route for the entire Wintringham site to tertiary streets which are the smallest cross parcel routes that are primarily to provide access for residents through the site.
- 7.35 A lighting strategy is also detailed within the Code, which covers pedestrian and cycle networks, commercial areas, residential development parcels, open spaces, formal sports areas and ecologically sensitive areas. The Code also provides details of site-wide infrastructure including substations, gas governors and utility boxes.
- 7.36 Much of the road design is driven by the technical requirements led by the County Council adoptable road specifications in terms of dimensions, visibility requirements, radii, speeds and associated

footway/cycleway provisions. Given the variation in the road requirements, each street type is accompanied by a range of illustrative sections and plan views that set out how the roads will function and relate to their adjacent areas. The details of each road type also set out how street landscaping will be accommodated, including verge details and planting. These will be appropriate to the nature and scale of the roads but are considered to be suitably shown to support the design principles.

## **Built Form**

- 7.37 This chapter sets out the parameters for built form for the residential element of KP2, ranging from details of the density and heights to the layout and architectural approaches to individual plots and details of the elements that will make up those plots. The chapter also includes overarching comments around terminology and accompanying descriptions and illustrations to explain and support use of the Code.
- 7.38 The approach taken reflects the previous Key Phase 1 Design Code, making use of character areas (for KP2 there are two; the western village character area and the eastern village character area) that set different parameters across the site in response to surrounding features. The character areas comprise parcel edge frontage characters, which relate to the boundaries of each parcel as the more prominent, visually dominant areas of built form, and the parcel interiors, where there is generally more flexibility on approach to enable a responsive design while acknowledging the lesser level of visual prominence and likely public access.
- 7.39 The character areas are broken down into a number of detailed design arrangements, setting out the approaches to details in respect of the building line alignment, spacing between buildings, orientation and position of the buildings, landscaping / planting, boundary treatments, dwelling typologies, parking arrangements and materials. Each of these are accompanied by illustrations that set out an indication of how these parcel frontages might be development into a detailed design stage.
- 7.40 In respect to the frontage characters, these consist of five areas; these frontages have been grouped into three categories in terms of their formality. Some examples of each of the codes requirements for these have been appended, but the following provides an overview of the intended form of each of these areas:
- Primary Street – Semi-detached and link-detached houses with a consistent, nearly continuous formal building line, with a limited range of typologies to create a sense of rhythm along a tree-lined street.
  - Central Green – A stepped but strong building line characterised by a range of (limited) terraces and narrow gable-fronted detached and semi-detached dwellings arranged in clear groupings.
  - Village Street – A stepped but strong building line characterised by a range of (limited) terraces and narrow gable-fronted detached and semi-detached dwelling arranged in clear groupings.
  - Green Streets – A constant building line with a consistent frontage, characterised by a high degree of enclosure.
  - Landscape Edge - Low density frontages with staggered groupings of large detached family homes along generous plots which face outward onto the key landscaped brook corridors.

Frontages to have large setbacks and gaps between dwellings to create visual breaks in the building line and to allow views of the surrounding landscape to permeate between homes. Parcel edges to be planted with a species of varying height and depth to reinforce the landscape character of the streets.

- 7.41 In respect of parcel interiors, the approach adopted is less prescriptive as these areas are less utilised by anyone not directly occupying the dwellings within the parcel. They generally seek to reinforce and reflect the styles of the parcel edge characters, combining these where there are multiple such frontages. The following sets out a brief summary of each of the character areas:
- Eastern village – Lower density village setting with more informal setbacks and larger private amenity spaces with parking typically provided on-plot.
  - Western village – Groups of houses which form a denser (mid density) urban grain.
- 7.42 In addition to the areas at 7.40 above, two additional residential interfaces are also identified in the Code; the western interface with the sports hub and the interface with the southern boundary of the primary school.
- 7.43 Following the details on how to approach the design of each area there are a number of illustrations and descriptions that show Urban Design Principles across all parcels and how these should be accommodated. These must be adhered to and all reserved matters applications will be required to demonstrate how they have accorded with these Principles as well as other requirements of the Code. Similarly, the Code also sets out specific architectural requirements, including detailing the location of rainwater goods, the architectural approach to balconies and chimneys, fenestration, porches and eaves and verges, amongst other requirements.
- 7.44 This section of the Design Code also details technical space requirements, including garden sizes for residential units, and space requirement for cycle and bin stores. Technical standards also set approaches to renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, and how these are to be integrated into dwellings to prevent them detracting from the overall appearance of dwellings. These standards have had regard to the future homes standard and updated building regulations to try and ensure they are fit for long term use across the phase.
- 7.45 Noting the significant amount of residential development within this phase and balancing the need to control the design process without being proscriptive such that it would make the development unable to attract housebuilders, officers consider the Design Code has provided a suitable framework to promote a high quality of design.

## Other Matters

- 7.46 A copy of the Design Code Compliance Checklist is provided within the Appendices to the Code. This follows the standard approach adopted in KP1 and is an informative list to be submitted with all Reserved Matters applications to ensure the requirements of the Code are adhered to, or that justification is submitted where there are proposals that do not meet the Code. A copy of the Sustainability Checklist is similarly set out, detailing the specific requirements that proposals will need to accord with.

## 8. Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 8.1 Taken as a whole, the Design Code shows the key components of creating a high-quality development that supports the Key Phase 2 element of the wider Wintringham development. It is considered to provide a suitable framework to create a sense of place through the appropriate balance of mandatory Coding Principles and discretionary design elements, based on an understanding of the context of the site and its surroundings, and how this phase of the site will relate to and support a cohesive development within the wider site.
- 8.2 Coding and design guidance is provided on all the relevant matters within Appendix 1 of the decision notice and the broad principles of the Design and Access Statement of the Outline Planning Permission (17/02308/OUT), and has had appropriate regard to current guidance and policy. It is considered the Design Code is compliant with these elements, and in broad general accordance with the Parameter Plan that accompanies the Outline Planning Permission.
- 8.3 Officers are satisfied the Design Code will contribute to simplifying the process of achieving a high-quality development in support of Key Phase 2 at Wintringham. It will give more certainty and avoid piecemeal or fragmented delivery, and aid in the efficient determination of Reserved Matters applications by the Local Planning Authority.

## 9. **RECOMMENDATION - Delegated powers to APPROVE the Design Code in accordance with condition 8 (part b) and subject to Officer support of all other parts of condition 8.**

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

## CONTACT OFFICER:

Enquiries about this report to **Laura Fisher, Senior Development Management Officer** [laura.fisher@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:laura.fisher@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

Planning application documents and comments can be viewed by visiting Huntingdonshire District Council's Public Access Planning Portal.  
<https://publicaccess.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/online-applications> Page 1 of 2

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
All other applications				
S6	24/80112/COND	<b>[REDACTED] - Urban&amp; Civic plc and Wintringham Partners LLP</b> <b>Wintringham Park Cambridge Road St Neots</b> Details pursuant to Condition 8 attached to planning permission 17/02308/OUT for Tier 2 approval of Key Phase 2 framework comprising Boundary Plan, Design Code, Regulatory Plan, Foul and Surface Water Management Strategy and Ecological Management Plan, together with supporting information.	<b>SUPPORT</b>	Satisfactory proposal in terms of layout and scale.
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Chairperson

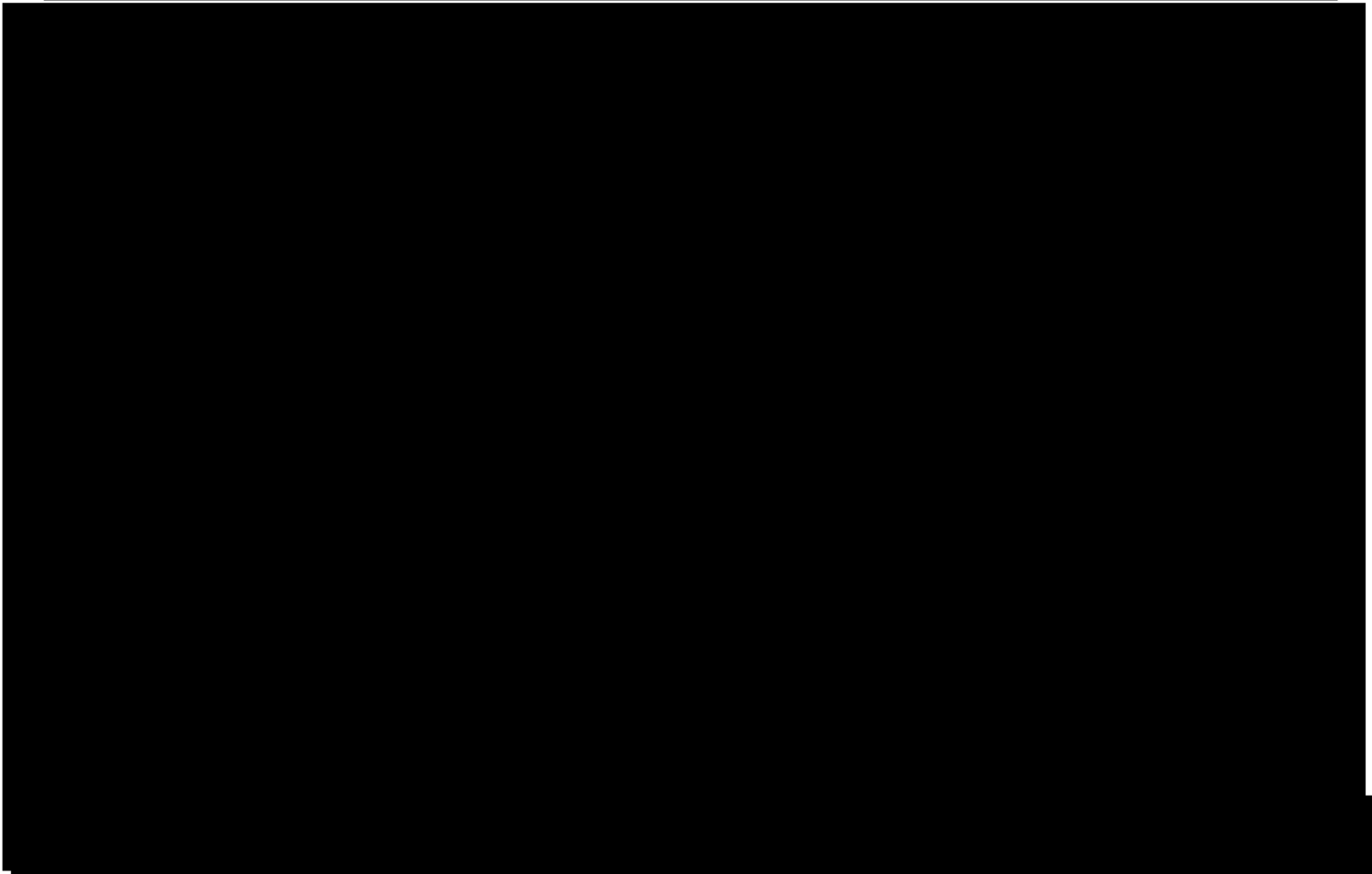
## Schedule of Planning Applications – 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
<b>S8</b>	24/80112/COND	<b>Joe Dawson - Urban &amp; Civic plc and Wintringham Partners LLP</b> <b>Wintringham Park Cambridge Road St Neots</b> Details pursuant to Condition 8 attached to planning permission 17/02308/OUT for Tier 2 approval of Key Phase 2 framework comprising Boundary Plan, Design Code, Regulatory Plan, Foul and Surface Water Management Strategy and Ecological Management Plan, together with supporting information.	<b>Noted</b>	The Council does not have the sufficient technical expertise to comment on the application and will be guided by the comments of technical consultees and officers.
<b>S9</b>	23/00652/REM	<b>Urban and Civic on behalf of Wintringham Partnership LLP</b> <b>Wintringham Park Cambridge Road St Neots</b> Application for Reserved Matters Approval relating to 17/02308/OUT for grey, green and blue infrastructure to include: the construction of extensions to the Western and Eastern Primary Routes, the creation of attenuation ponds, hard and soft landscaping, the creation and upgrade of footways and cycleways, the installation of a pumping station and rising main, and all ancillary works, associated infrastructure and engineering works. Includes works outside of the defined Key Phase 1 boundary.	<b>Noted</b>	



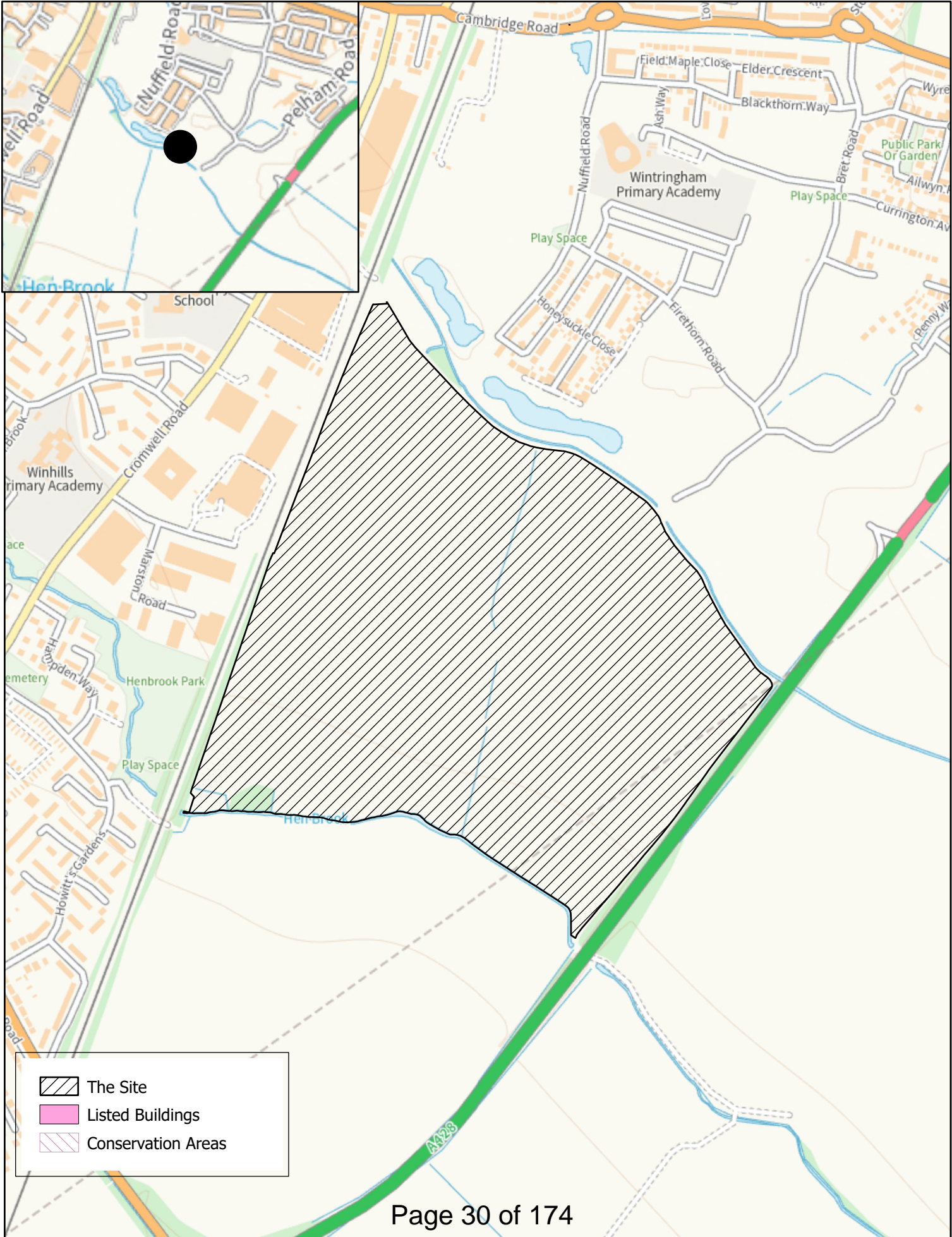
# Schedule of Planning Applications –14<sup>th</sup> January 2025

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
-----	-----------	-------------	---------------	-------



S10	24/80112/COND	<b>Urban&amp; Civic plc and Wintringham Partners LLP</b> <b>Wintringham Park Cambridge Road St Neots</b> Details pursuant to Condition 8 attached to planning permission 17/02308/OUT for Tier 2 approval of Key Phase 2 framework comprising Boundary Plan, Design Code, Regulatory Plan, Foul and Surface Water Management Strategy and Ecological Management Plan, together with supporting information.	<b>SUPPORT</b>	<p>The Town Council support the application but make the following comments;</p> <p>That the developers include temporary gripes as part of managing and water run-off from the site into Henbrook until the attenuation ponds are effective.</p> <p>That consideration is given to the British Horse Society concerns over suitability of materials used as part of bridleways.</p> <p>That developers are encouraged to engage with the Town Council when design codes for developments of this size come forward.</p>
-----	---------------	---	----------------	--









Loves Farm

- Wintringham Key Phase 2 Boundary
- Wintringham Site Boundary

B1428

A428

St Neots

Eynesbury

A428

Wintringham Brook

Hen Brook

A428

B1046

Rev	Description	Date
All information is copyright protected and may not be used or reproduced without prior permission. Do not scale.		
© Crown copyright and database right 2022. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100059809		
Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.		
Notes:		
This drawing is for information purposes only. It should not be relied upon for legal nor title purposes. Do NOT scale from this drawing or use in construction. Proper advice should be sought from relevant qualified entities regarding legal and construction issues. Any discrepancies should be immediately reported to the originator of the drawing.		
Client:		

Wintringham

Key Phase 2 Boundary Plan

Scale@A3:  
1:7,500

Drawn:  
CE

Designed:  
-

Approved:  
AD

0

300 m

Drawing Number:  
WIN012-001

Revision:  
A

Date:  
07/03/2022

50 North Thirteenth Street, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3BP  
01908 666276

mail@davidlock.com

davidlock.com

DAVID LOCK ASSOCIATES





Notes

Do not scale from this drawing.  
All contractors must visit the site and be responsible for taking and checking dimensions.  
All construction information should be taken from figured dimensions only.  
Any discrepancies between drawings, specifications and site conditions must be brought to the attention of the supervising officer.  
This drawing & the works depicted are the copyright of JTP.

This drawing is prepared for the specific project stage in the Drawing Status section below and it is not intended to be used for any other purpose. Whilst all reasonable efforts are used to ensure drawings are accurate, JTP accept no liability for any reliance placed on, or use made of, this plan by anyone for purposes other than those stated in the Drawing Status below.

- 2. CONTEXT & SITE WIDE STRATEGIES**
- Wintringham Outline Planning Application Boundary
  - Key Phase 2 Planning Application Boundary
  - Current Alignment of Overhead Powerline Pylons
  - Land Development Subject to Pylon Diversion
- Land Uses**
- Residential
  - Land for Future Consideration
  - Primary School
- 3. KEY GROUPINGS**
- Key Groupings
  - Indicative Location of Local Facilities
  - Local Facilities Blue Badge Parking
- 4. LANDSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM DESIGN**
- SuDS Features (Indicative)
  - Informal Space: Allotments and Community Gardens, including Orchards
  - Formal Open Space: Outdoor Sports Pitch and Courts
  - Informal Space: Amenity Green Space
  - Informal Space: Natural/Semi Natural Green Space
  - Informal Space: Parks and Gardens
  - Pocket Parks: minimum of 1200sqm
  - Central Civic Space
  - Pumping Station
  - Indicative Location of Sports/Toilet Facilities & Associated Infrastructure & Parking
  - Sports Pavilion - Indicative Location
  - NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play)
  - LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play)
  - Green Link
- 5. MOVEMENT & ACCESS**
- Primary Site Access Points
  - Indicative Pedestrian/Cycle Site Access Points
  - Proposed Public Bridleway
  - Indicative Multi User Active Travel Route
  - Indicative Bus Stop Location
  - Indicative Parcel Access Point
  - Traffic Calming Intervention
  - Indicative Car Parking Location
- Street Hierarchy**
- Primary Road - Type A1
  - Primary Road - Type A2
  - Primary Road - Village Street - Type A3
  - Secondary Street - Civic
  - Indicative Cross-parcel Permeability
- 6. BUILT FORM**
- Important Views/Vistas
  - Marker Buildings
  - Indicative School Building Location
  - Indicative Location of School Plaza/Main Entrance
- Frontage Characters**
- Primary Street
  - Central Green
  - Village Street
  - Green Street
  - Landscape Edge
  - Landscape Edge (Subject to Pylon Diversion)
  - Sports Hub Interface
  - School Interface

P4 28.02.25 Post Consultation Revision MG EA

Rev	Date	Description	Drawn	Chkd
-----	------	-------------	-------	------

Drawing Status

Planning

Client  
Urban&Civic



Project  
Wintringham Key Phase 2

Drawing Title  
Regulatory Plan

Scale @A1 As indicated Job Ref. 01372F

Drawing No. MP\_RP\_01 Revision P4

Scale Bar  
0 20 40 60 80 100 m

Sheet Code  
01372F\_JTP\_MP\_RP\_01\_Regulatory Plan\_P4



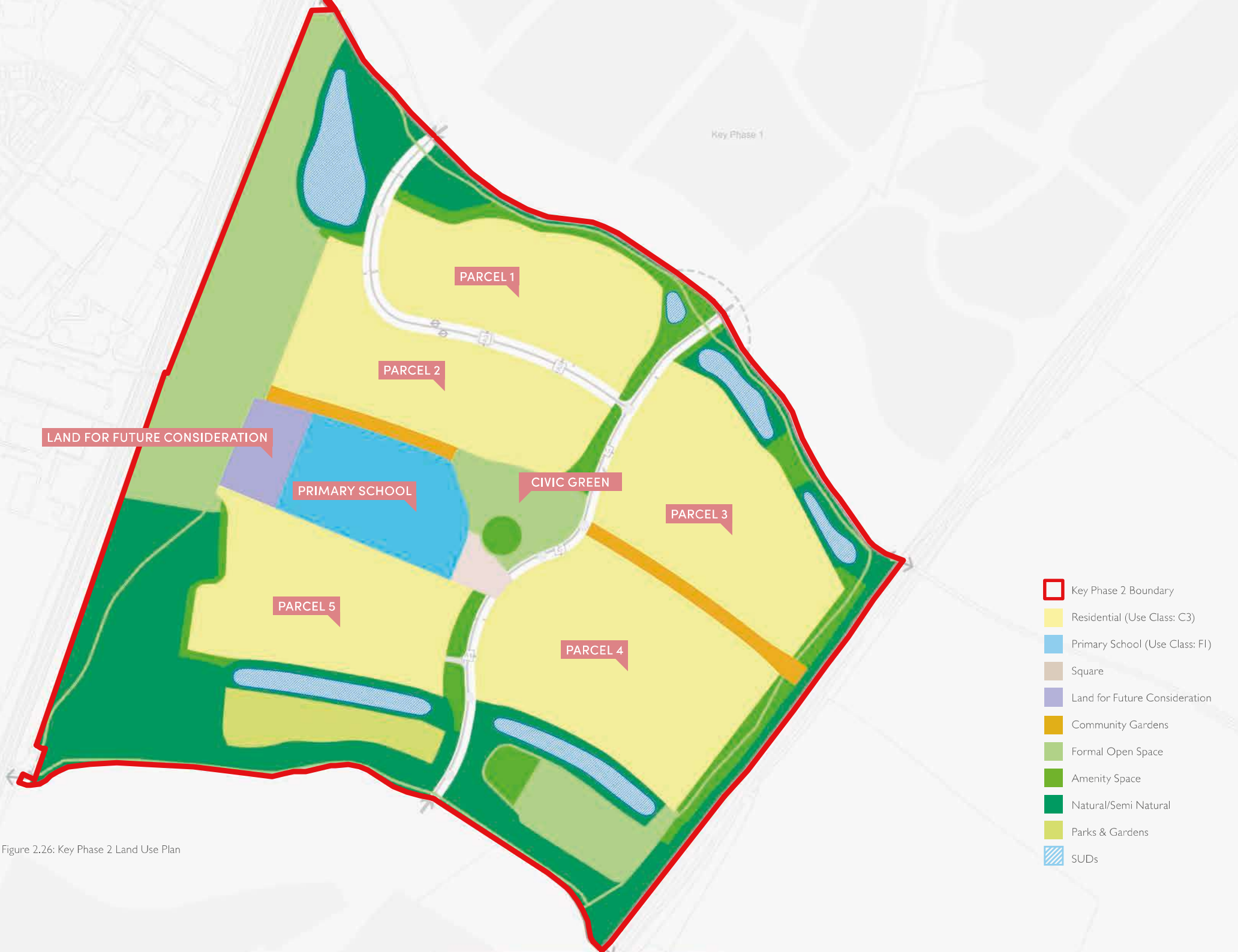


Figure 2.26: Key Phase 2 Land Use Plan

## 2. Context & Site Wide Strategies

### 2.5 Green Infrastructure

A connected Green Infrastructure network **must** be provided across the Wintringham development and **must** be composed of a range of complementary open space typologies.

The Regulatory Plan identifies important structural components of existing Green Infrastructure that **must** be incorporated into the development. These include, Hen Brook, Wintringham Brook, existing vegetation within Railway Fields and significant vegetation to the perimeter of the Site.

Hen Brook and Wintringham Brook are existing assets of significance. These key corridors **must** be celebrated and enhanced and **must** be connected via green links which extend into the proposed development providing continuous movement routes throughout the site.

Public squares and open spaces linked by key green routes **must** provide new points of community focus and activity and create a distinct impression of the high quality, pedestrian focused, vibrant place that the Wintringham development will be.

Existing trees and hedgerows **must** be retained where appropriate, especially where there is significant contribution to the Green Infrastructure network.

New parklands and green corridors **must** have a focus on wildlife through the creation of a various landscape and habitat types.

Refer to the Wintringham Site Wide Green Infrastructure Strategy for a detailed summary of proposed measures that **must** be reflected and accommodated within proposals.



Figure 2.31: Wintringham Site Wide Green Infrastructure Opportunities



## 2. Context & Site Wide Strategies

### 2.7 Movement & Access

The overarching objective of the movement strategy is to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, reducing the use of cars. Fundamental to this is ensuring the site is easy to navigate and well connected through a network of pedestrian and cycle routes and a public transport spine that will run through the centre of the site providing a strategic connection to St Neots and the wider context.

For KP2, the opportunities and connections of key cycle and walking routes is a defining factor; providing safe and direct, off-road connections to on site facilities, key leisure amenities, as well as the wider context.

#### 2.7.1 WIDER CONNECTIONS

The main vehicular entrance to the site will be through KPI, via two vehicular and pedestrian/cycle crossing points across Wintringham Brook. A future phase of development will deliver a road connection from KP2 southwards linking to Potton Road.

#### 2.7.2 BUS PROVISION

The overall bus strategy envisages the introduction of new routes through the site connecting Wintringham to St Neots and beyond and to future phases of the development. The bus routes will be provided along primary routes through the site, serving both KPI and KP2.

The routing and frequency of the bus route through the site, along with the size of buses, will be reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the build programme with the aim of ensuring that the bus service provision meets the needs of the development.

Bus stops will be located at key locations throughout Wintringham with the objective that no home **should** be more than around 400m from a bus stop as stated within the Development Specification and Spatial Principles. The bus stops will be constructed to be accessible and will include shelters to the appropriate standard.

The bus service will serve the school and local facilities. An appropriate temporary bus turnaround facility will be provided within the local facilities public realm, to allow services to terminate at the local facilities prior to extension of the service into KP3.

#### 2.7.3 ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES

Active Travel Routes or Non-motorised User (NMU) Routes are a fundamental part of this phase. They provide ample space for cyclists and walkers, and some will include provision for horse riders to pass safely with a 3m hard surface and 2m grass surface running alongside. The routes also support wheelchair users and buggies.

A circular active travel route runs around the perimeter of KP2 connecting into KPI. A network of routes connect north-south and east-west across the centre of the development allowing the on-site amenities to be easily accessed.

U&C will continue to work to support residents in making active travel choices including:

- Bike hire
- Bike confidence classes
- Bike repair shop
- E Scooters / E Transport
- Car share schemes
- Bespoke travel advice

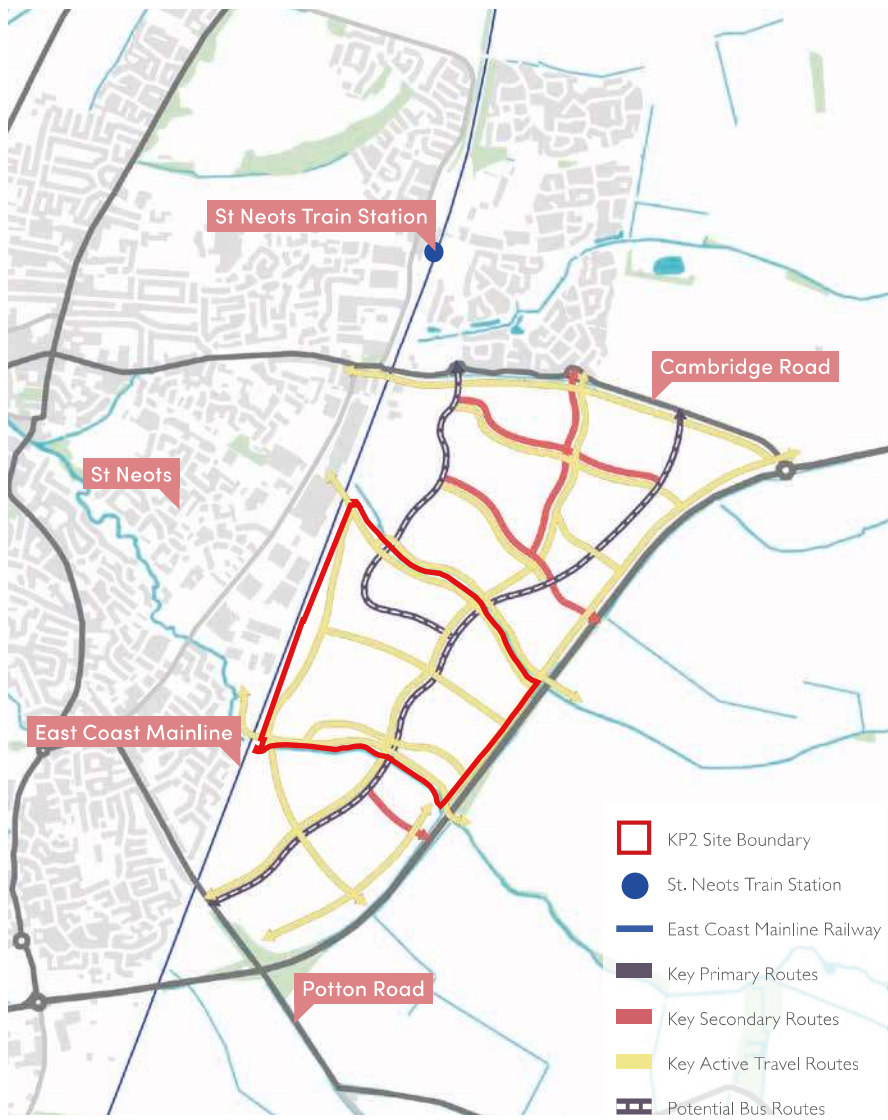


Figure 2.33: Wintringham Wider Movement Strategy

## 2. Context & Site Wide Strategies

### 2.8 Key Groupings

As further explored in the Key Grouping Chapters in Part 3, the following key destinations are highlighted across KP2 and the wider Wintringham site:

- District Centre
- Northern Gateway
- Eastern Gateway
- East-West Junction
- A428 Junction
- Western Gateway (KP2)
- Eastern Gateway (KP2)
- Civic Green

The Civic Green is the amalgamation of the Primary School, local amenities, key active travel routes and central green space therefore is a distinctive feature within KP2 around which views, destinations and vistas have been framed. The school has been located at the heart so there is the opportunity for the school building to be celebrated as a focal point at the heart of the community.

The two northern vehicular entrances to KP2 form key gateway locations into the development, as they mark the crossing of Wintringham Brook and connect the two key phases. The gateways will have distinctive landscape features to mark the arrival into KP2 and reflect the character of Wintringham Brook.

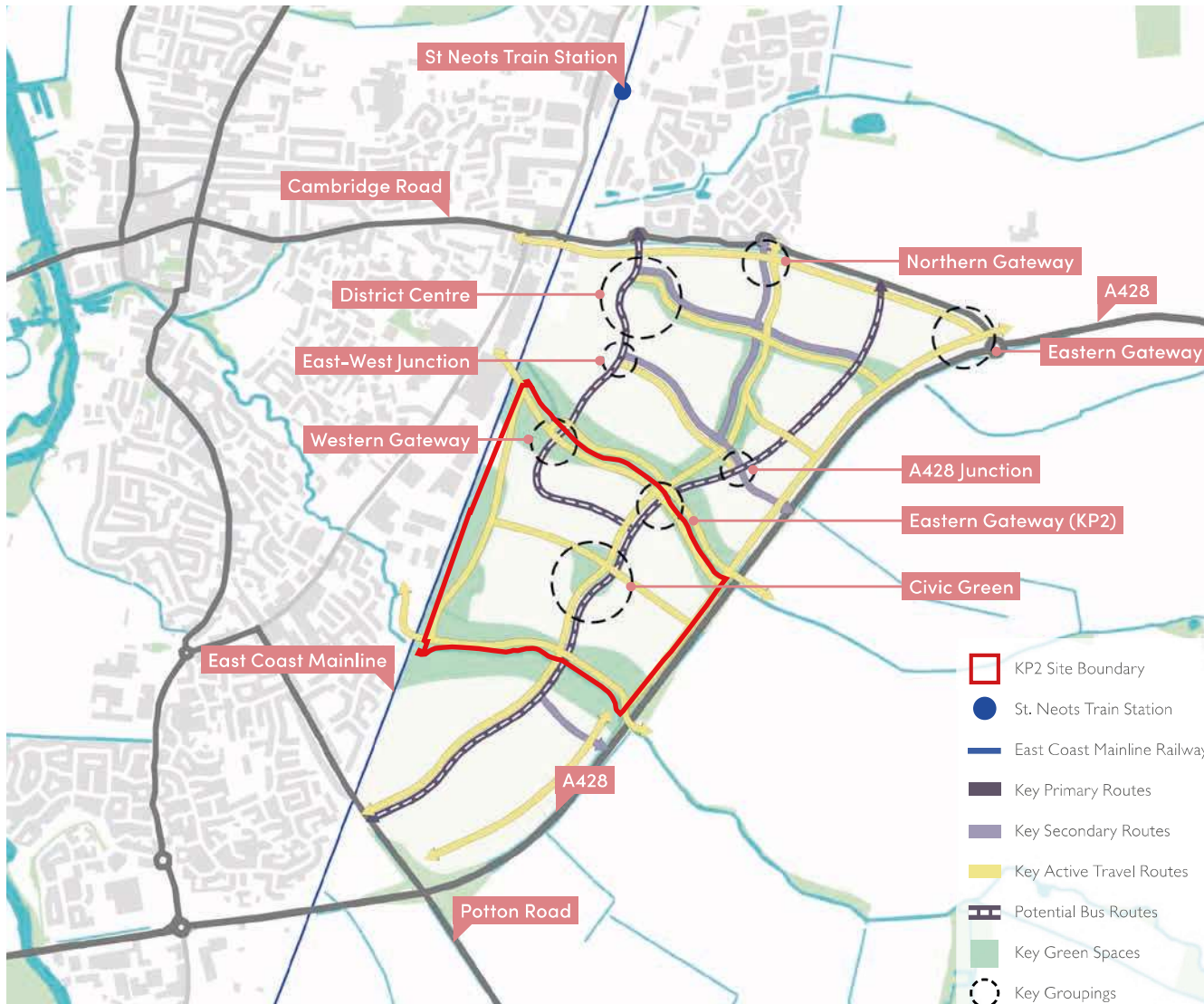


Figure 2.34: Wintringham Key Groupings



### 3. Key Groupings

## 3.1 KP2 Key Groupings

#### 3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

KP2 marks the next chapter in the continued development of Wintringham, bringing communities in St Neots and in Key Phase 1 new landmarks and spaces to enjoy.

The Key Groupings represent some of these principal destinations and reflect distinct nodes within the site where the built form, movement and public realm interweave and assimilate to forge a distinct urban set piece for people and activity to congregate in one place.

Enhanced design guidance is therefore provided for these Key Groupings to ensure future proposals deliver the level of design quality that is expected in these placemaking anchors of the site.

Three Key Groupings have been identified and proposals **must** adhere to the design principles set out in this chapter, using the illustrations as guidance for detailed design. The locations of these key groupings are shown on the adjacent plan.

#### Key Groupings

- Eastern Gateway
- Western Gateway
- Civic Green



Figure 3.1: Illustrative plan extract showing location of identified Key Groupings

## 4. Landscape & Public Realm Design

### 4.1 Strategy

#### 4.1.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The provision of open space and recreation **should** be in accordance with Huntingdonshire's 'Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011)'.

With regards to Green Space, the document clearly explains that contributions will be required in a number of forms such as Informal Green Space, Formal Green Space, Children's Play, Allotments and Community Gardens, and Outdoor Sports Provision. Specifically, the document also sets out how the provision of each form is calculated and **should** be achieved.

Based on the Huntingdonshire District Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - the minimum provision that **must** be incorporated cumulatively within Key Phase 2 is set out below.

Proposals **must** reflect the quantum and disposition of these typologies and if deviations are proposed they **must** clearly demonstrate how and where the provision will be maintained at the requisite level of quality to meet the needs of the community.

Key Phase 2 **must** incorporate the following minimum standards of provision:

- 0.99ha of Parks and Gardens.
- 0.47ha of Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space.
- 2.24ha of Amenity Green Space which is to include casual informal play facilities of 1.13ha, and equipped childrens play spaces of 0.51ha.
- 0.66ha of Allotments and Community Gardens (including Orchards).
- 8.75ha of Formal Open Space which is to include Outdoor Sports Pitches and Courts.

Tree planting adjacent to highway (including PROW) **should** consider tree pits & sub-surface construction. Detail design **must** respond to Housing Estate Road Construction Specification; Appendix 25 and 26.



# 4. Landscape & Public Realm Design

## 4.1 Strategy

### 4.1.6 SPORTS PROVISION

The sport and recreation strategy **must** provide both formal outdoor sports facilities and informal open spaces to deliver a range of multi-generational experiences that accommodate all abilities whilst promoting social interaction and healthier communities. A mix of formal and community pitches **must** be provided to meet the varied needs of the community.

Sport falls under the Land Budget Category 'Formal Open Space'. Key Phase 2 **must** provide 8.75ha of Formal Open Space, distributed as shown on the Regulatory Plan.



## 5. Movement & Access

### 5.2 Active Travel Routes

#### 5.2.1 FOOTPATH, CYCLEWAY & BRIDLEWAY HIERARCHY

A comprehensive network of sustainable routes for pedestrians and cyclists **must** be provided to facilitate ease of movement by walking and cycling. Active travel is therefore expected to be the primary mode of transport at KP2. Active travel routes **should** be designed within a green setting and relate to open space areas.

The Regulatory Plan is informed and structured by strategic links that **must** be incorporated into detailed proposals. The indicative connections on the Regulatory Plan identify key desire lines and leisure routes. Whilst their alignment, width and surface materials are subject to detail design the points of connection identified on the Regulatory Plan **should** be adhered to.

Where a route is proposed to be a formal bridleway - catering for walkers, cyclists and horse riders - it **must** follow the relevant specification on the adjacent page.

Existing PROW Nos. 52, 53, 54 and 55 are existing within the KP2 site area. Central PROWs (53&54) will be extinguished in combination with creation of a new circular bridleway to include retained and improved PROW routes along Wintringham Brook and Hen Brook. This will be subject to separate consultation and formal PROW processes and detailed approvals.

The following sections of bridleway will be adopted and therefore required to have a minimum 4m grassed route adjacent to a minimum 3m footway/cycleway.

- Between the Village Street and the northern railway underpass; and
- Equestrian road crossings across the Primary Street.

Where a route is proposed to be a Multi-User Active Travel route it **should** be developed with due reference to current best practice advice, including the British Horse Society (BHS) document 'Advice on Non-motorised user routes in England and Wales'. These off-road leisure routes **must** connect with the comprehensive network

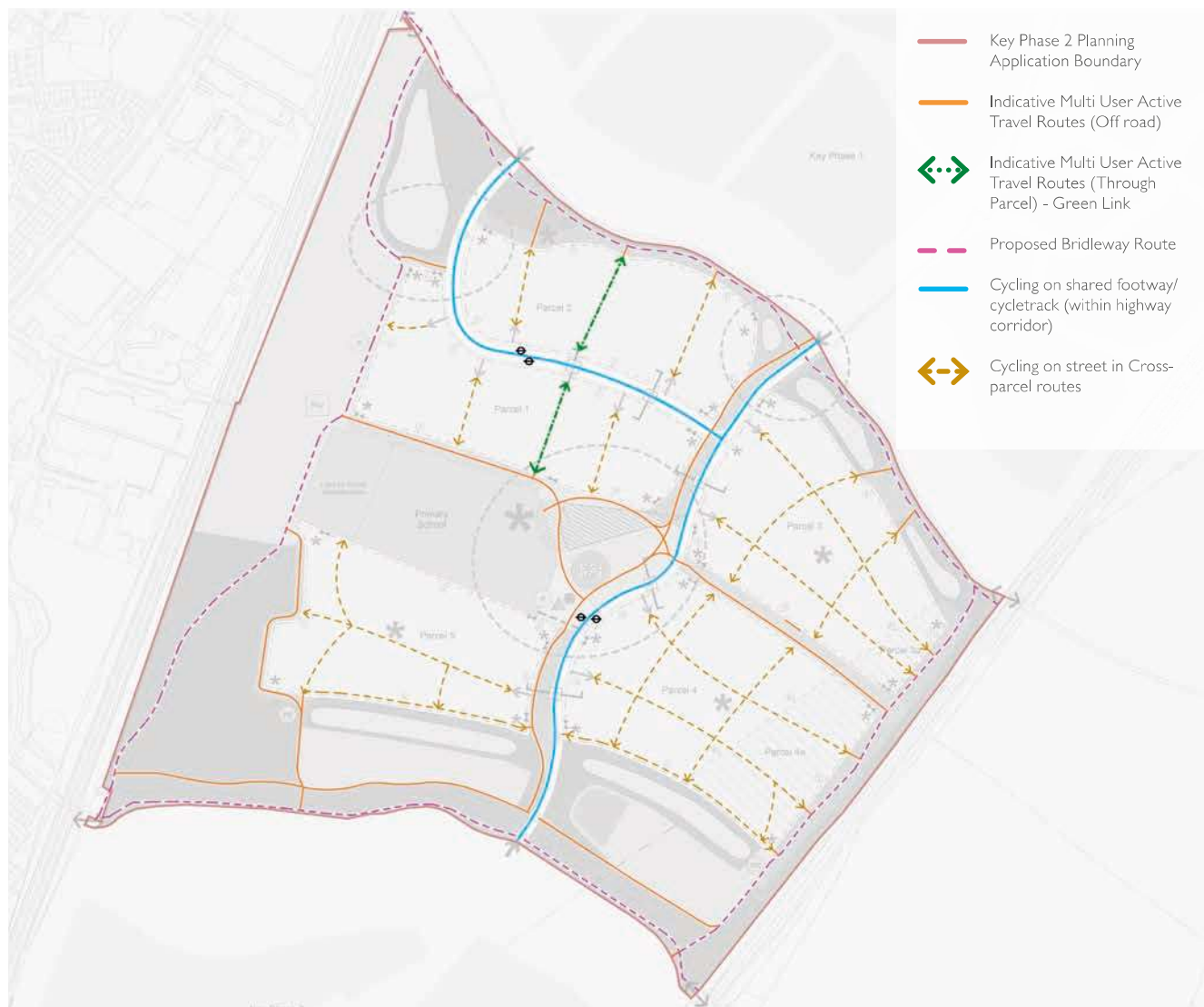


Figure 5.2: Cycleways, Footpaths & Bridleway Hierarchy Plan



# 4. Landscape & Public Realm Design

## 4.1 Strategy

### 4.1.10 PLAY PROVISION

#### Overview

The Key Phase 2 Regulatory Plan includes one combined NEAP-LEAP located within The Well to provide a 'destination' play area at the heart of the Site.

This is supported by four LAPs, three located in pocket parks within residential development parcels and one to the perimeter of a parcel. Additionally, an informal play on the way space **must** be implemented within the north-south green link corridor through Parcel 2 to connect the LAP play space with the NEAP-LEAP within The Green.

Beyond formal provision, landscape proposals **must** approach the Site as a 'playable' environment, with opportunities for use of landform, planting and other features provided throughout the public realm.

Play **must** be provided in a creative way that interacts with existing and proposed landscape elements whilst offering a mix of designated play spaces and informal play opportunities.

Play areas **must** be designed to have a distinct character - with the potential to draw from the surrounding context or derived from a particular heritage theme - to ensure distinctiveness and a sense of place is built into the proposals.

Design proposals for the play spaces **should** consider themes that take inspiration from archaeological findings discovered on-site, particularly the 'destination' LEAP-NEAP play space. Design proposals **should** consider ways in which children can explore and use their imagination, with opportunity to incorporate archaeological material components as material within the play space.



- Key Phase Boundaries
- LAP & 100m walking distance
- LEAP & 400m walking distance
- NEAP & 1000m walking distance (Walking distance covers KP2 Site)
- Informal play on the way (Indicative location)
- Informal imaginative play (Indicative location)
- Key Leisure Route (Indicative location)



# 5. Movement & Access

## 5.7 Streets & Junctions

### 5.7.1 STREET HIERARCHY

Streets in combination with green infrastructure, provide the framework for development parcels within the KP2 Design Code area. The streets are arranged to facilitate ease of movement and access into development plots and parcels and these streets are ordered in the following street hierarchy, as illustrated in Figure 5.12. The Street Hierarchy Plan.

Design guidance for each street type is provided with tables that provide design details and technical requirements, and accompanying street section drawings that illustrate the form of the street.



Figure 5.12: Streets and Junctions Hierarchy Plan

## 6. Built Form

### 6.1 Building Heights

The adjacent plan overlays the Building Heights Parameter Plan onto KP2. It illustrates the gradual decrease in heights as the development moves east towards the A428 with the principle of allowing additional height on the western edge along the landscape buffer and railway line.

- 2-4 Storeys, Maximum Height of 15m above Ground Level, 4 storeys should only be used in key locations where appropriate
- 2-3 Storeys, Maximum Height of 12m, with Occasional 4 Storeys to 15m, above Ground Level
- 2 Storey, Maximum Heights of 9m, with Occasional 2.5 & 3 Storey to 12m, above Ground Level

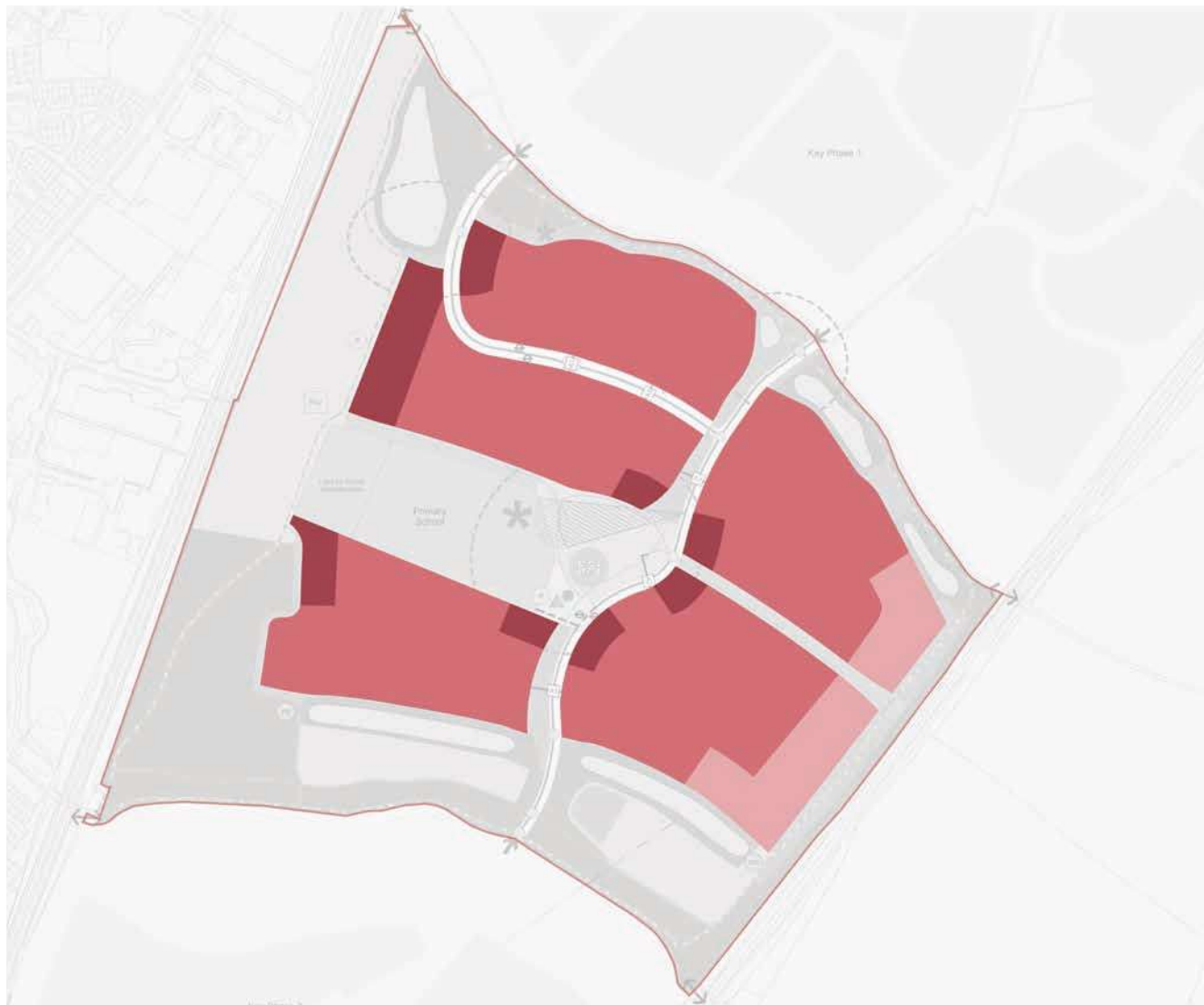


Figure 6.1: Building Heights

## 6. Built Form

### 6.2 Density

Building upon the heights plan, the density plan shows an increase in density in the north west and surrounding the central green space. Parcels to the east and along with southern brook corridor will have the lowest density.

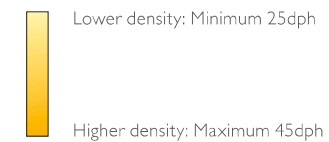
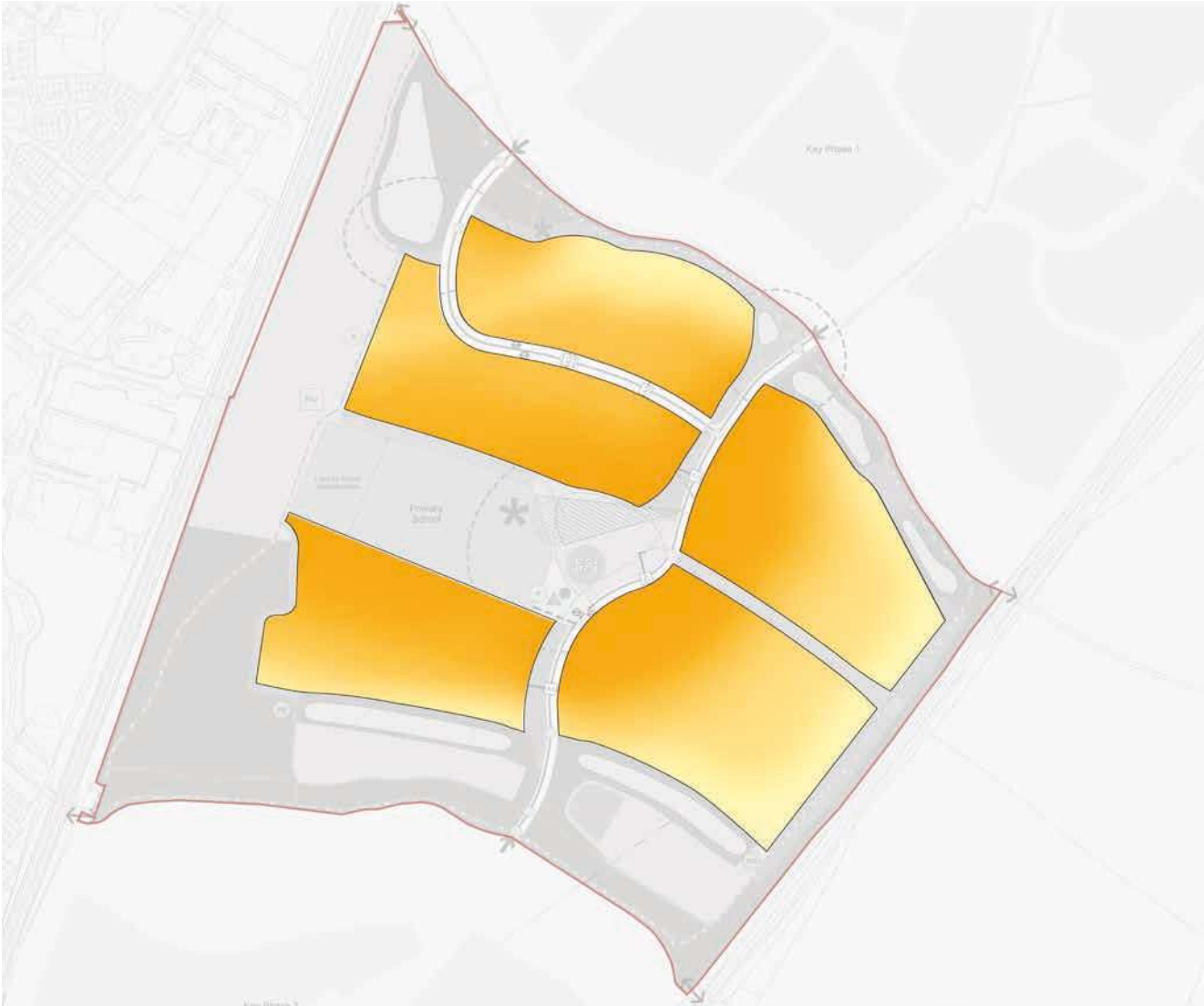


Figure 6.2: Density



## 6. Built Form

### 6.3 Character Areas

#### 6.3.1 USE OF CHARACTER AREAS

Wintringham KP2 consists of two distinct character areas, each defined by their contextual setting within the neighbourhood. The look and feel of these areas will be characterised by subtle urban design changes within the interior of each parcel and are reflected in changes in: building typology and density; parking arrangements; boundary treatments; building setbacks; materiality and differing urban arrangements along tertiary streets.

Whilst emphasis is placed on the frontage characters of each parcel applicants **must** demonstrate a rationale regarding how the internal areas of parcels relate to their respective character area.

This section of the code sets out the design principles pertaining to each internal parcel character area over a two page spread including an annotated illustration and a table containing guidance on the prevailing features for the character area described.

The character areas are covered in the respective key groupings sections of the code.

A clear design rationale demonstrating the relationship between the internal areas and the edges of each parcel **must** be provided by applicants which **should** cover house types, boundary treatments and material application.

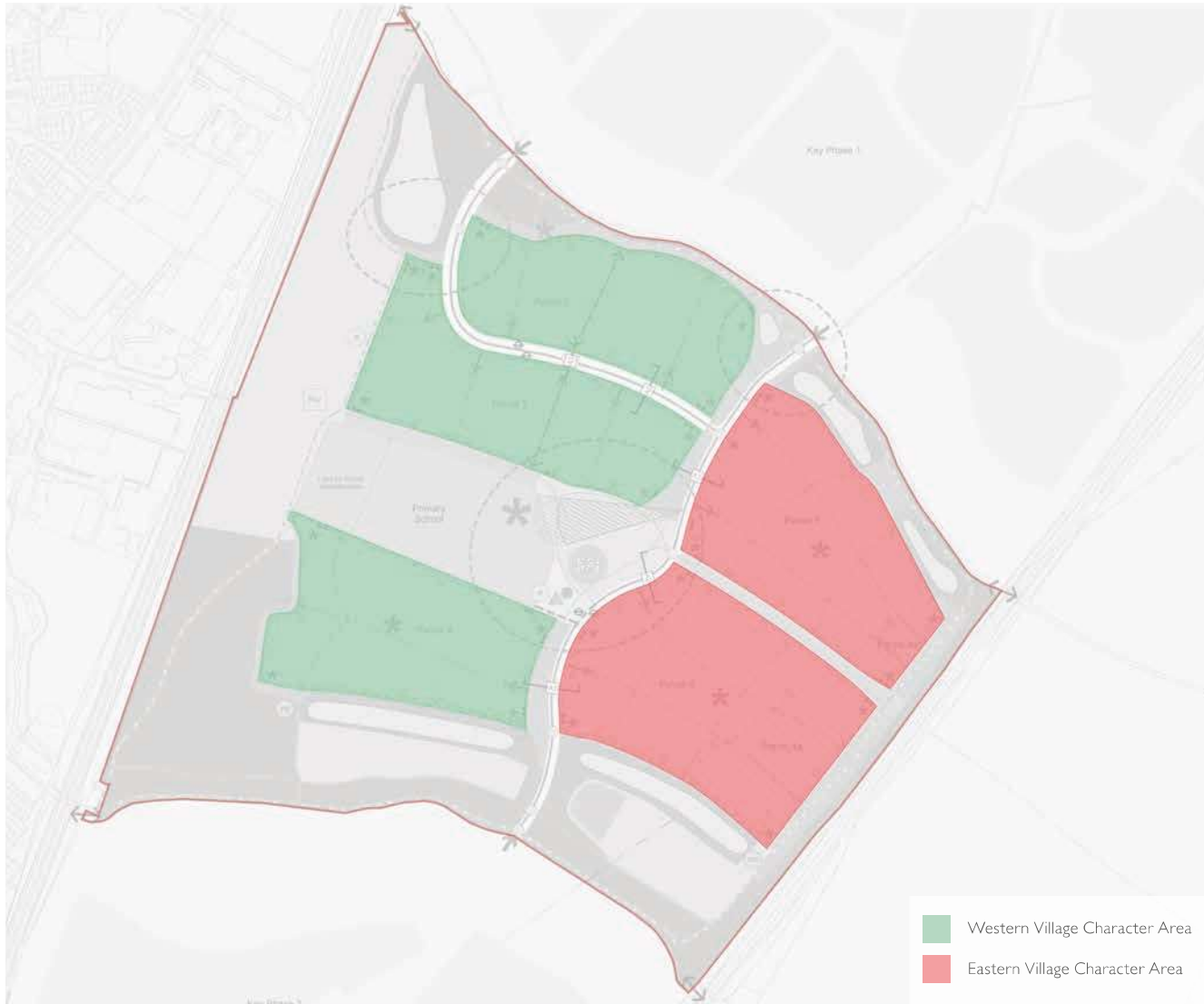


Figure 6.4: Character Area Plan

# 6. Built Form

## 6.3 Character Areas

### 6.3.2 WESTERN VILLAGE

#### Key Principles

- > Parcels within the Western Village character area will be of mid-density, typically characterised by a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings.
- > Parcels within this character area **should** be more orthogonal in nature with formally arranged internal streets and residential courtyard spaces.
- > The parcel interiors **should** comprise of groups of houses which form a denser urban grain.
- > Apartments and key buildings **should** address the gateways and key landscaped spaces giving order and regularity to the street scene.
- > The Western Village **must** include an eclectic palette of contextual materials; responding to the adjacent KPI parcels, context of St Neots and proposed frontage characters. The character area **should** include housing built from red and multi-brick combinations as well as the use of dark timber cladding.
- > A range of boundary treatments can be used throughout the interior of the parcel however these **must** be consistent along the frontage. For parcel edge boundary treatments please refer to the relevant Frontage Character section of the Design Code.
- > Where character areas meet at the southern gateway to KP2, marker buildings **must** have a consistent architectural character and respond each other.



Figure 6.5: Location of Western Village Character Area

Design Feature	Character Area Approach
Density	Up to 45dph
Uses	Residential
Height	Typically 2-3 storeys with occasional 4 storeys
Urban Grain	Formal
Building Typology	Apartments, terraced, semi-detached, detached
Building Set Back	1.5 - 2m* *Setbacks which are less than 1.5m are not permitted except for shared surface streets where the B7 Planted Zone boundary treatment is proposed.
Roof Form	Pitched, a mix of gable & eaves frontage
Parking	On-plot, rear parking courts, mews
Materials	Materials <b>must</b> respond to adjacent frontage characters

This table presents guidance on the design approach for the character area described. Whilst there is expected to be a predominance of the items outlined in the table, it is not exhaustive and therefore there is allowance for design flexibility and well considered design variety. However where an alternative approach is proposed there **must** be strong justification and design rationale.



Figure 6.6: Goldsmith Street, Norwich. Representative Example of Approach to Materiality



Figure 6.7: Abode, Great Kneighton, Cambridge. Representative Example of the intended Approach to Density, Built Form & Street Grain

## 6. Built Form

### 6.3 Character Areas

#### 6.3.3 EASTERN VILLAGE

- > Parcels within the Eastern Village character area will be of low density, typically characterised by a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings lining more sinuous streets and incidental residential courtyard spaces.
- > Internal parcel layouts in these areas **should** exhibit characteristics of a low density village setting with more informal setbacks and larger private amenity spaces with parking typically provided on-plot.
- > The Eastern Village **must** encompass an informal street pattern, including sinuous and meandering streets. Key buildings **should** terminate views along the street or mark the frontage onto green spaces.
- > There **should** be clear vistas to the brook corridors allowing the countryside to permeate through the character area.
- > The Eastern Village **must** include an eclectic palette of contextual materials; responding to the adjacent KPI Parcels and proposed frontage characters. Red and white brick combinations with dark timber cladding **should** be incorporated in streets along with buff brick.
- > A range of boundary treatments can be used throughout the interior of the parcel however these **must** be consistent along the frontage. For parcel edge boundary treatments please refer to the relevant Frontage Character section of the Design Code.
- > Where character areas meet at the southern gateway to KP2, marker buildings **must** have a consistent architectural character and respond each other.



Eastern Village

Figure 6.8: Location of Eastern Village Character Area

Design Feature	Character Area Approach
Density	Up to 40dph
Uses	Residential
Height	Typically 2 storeys with occasional 2.5/3
Urban Grain	Sinuous / Informal
Building Typology	Apartments, terraced, coach houses, semi-detached, detached, linked detached
Building Set Back	1.5 - 2m* *Setbacks which are less than 1.5m are not permitted except for shared surface streets where the B7 Planted Zone boundary treatment is proposed.
Roof Form	Pitched, a mix of gable & eaves frontage
Parking	On-plot, rear parking courts only serving apartments
Materials	Materials <b>must</b> respond to adjacent frontage characters

This table presents guidance on the design approach for the character area described. Whilst there is expected to be a predominance of the items outlined in the table, it is not exhaustive and therefore there is allowance for design flexibility and well considered design variety. However where an alternative approach is proposed there **must** be strong justification and design rationale.



Figure 6.9: Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon. Representative Example of the intended Approach to Density, Built Form & Street Grain



Figure 6.10: Channels, Chelmsford. Representative Example of Approach to Materiality





Figure 6.11: Frontage Characters Plan

## 6. Built Form

# 6.4 Parcel Edge Frontage Characters

### 6.4.4 PRIMARY STREET

Street frontages along the main movement corridor **should** be characterised by largely semi-detached and link-detached houses with a consistent, nearly continuous formal building line. A limited range of typologies **should** be used to create a sense of rhythm along a tree-lined street. Stepped frontages used in limited instances where access is via a shared driveway.

#### Key Principles

- > Built frontages **must** provide a high degree of enclosure along the Primary Street with short setbacks. Frontages **should** largely be consistent with limited steps permitted where vehicular access is via a shared driveway.
- > Buildings **must** be arranged to act as vista stoppers at the end of access routes.
- > Landscaped verges along the eastern edge of the Primary Street **should** be consistent.
- > Shared driveway access **must** not occur on both sides of the street at any one time to minimise the frontage to frontage distance between buildings and create enclosure.
- > Shared driveways on the western side **should** be accessed from the tertiary road within the development parcel so the landscaped verge and north-south green link is not interrupted.
- > Direct plot access **must** only occur on the eastern side of the street.

Primary Street Frontages



Figure 6.13: Location of Primary Street Frontages

#### ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF PRIMARY STREET FRONTAGE



## 6. Built Form

### 6.4 Parcel Edge Frontage Characters

#### 6.4.5 CENTRAL GREEN

The Central Green interface **should** have a stepped but strong building line characterised by a range of (limited) terraces and narrow gable-fronted detached and semi-detached dwellings arranged in clear groupings to create a cohesive sense of order and formality in the street scene.

##### Key Principles

- > Built frontages along the Central Green **must** be typically characterised by semi-detached dwellings with occasional runs of short terraces (no more than 4 units per terrace grouping).
- > Detached corner turning dwellings **must** address key corners that interface with green corridors.
- > Built frontages **should** provide a high degree of enclosure along with short setbacks.
- > Access routes to shared private drives from the Village Street **must** be centred on built form to terminate the view.
- > Building frontages **must** run parallel to the road following the road alignment.
- > Dwellings located along the northern edge of the Central Green **must** be accessed from the rear due to its location to the school.
- > Additional height **should** be located at prominent corners addressing the public realm.

Central Green Frontages

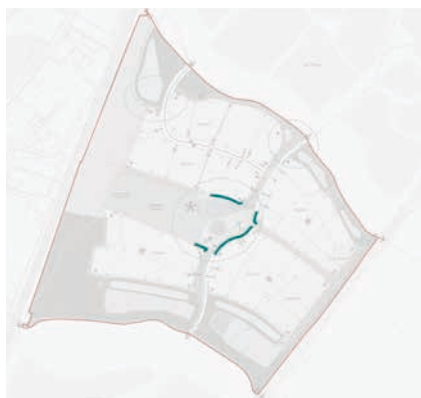


Figure 6.14: Location of Village Street Frontages

#### ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF CENTRAL GREEN FRONTAGE





## 6. Built Form

# 6.4 Parcel Edge Frontage Characters

### 6.4.6 VILLAGE STREET

Village Street frontages **should** have a stepped but strong building line characterised by a range of (limited) terraces and narrow gable-fronted detached and semi-detached dwelling arranged in clear groupings to create a clear sense of order and formality in the street scene.

#### Key Principles

- > Built frontages along the Village Street **must** be typically characterised by semi-detached dwellings with occasional runs of short terraces (no more than 4 units per terrace grouping).
- > Detached corner turning dwellings **must** address key corners that interface with green corridors.
- > Built frontages **should** provide a high degree of enclosure along the Village Street with short setbacks. Frontages **should** largely be consistent with limited steps permitted where access is via a shared driveway.
- > Access routes to shared, private drive from the Village Street **must** be centred on built form to terminate the view.
- > Direct plot access is only permitted on one side of the street at any one instance.
- > A range of parking typologies **should** also be considered to minimise the number of interruptions along the landscaped verge. (eg grouped private drives, shared rear parking courts, mews etc.)
- > Building frontages **must** run parallel to the road following the road alignment.

Village Street Frontages

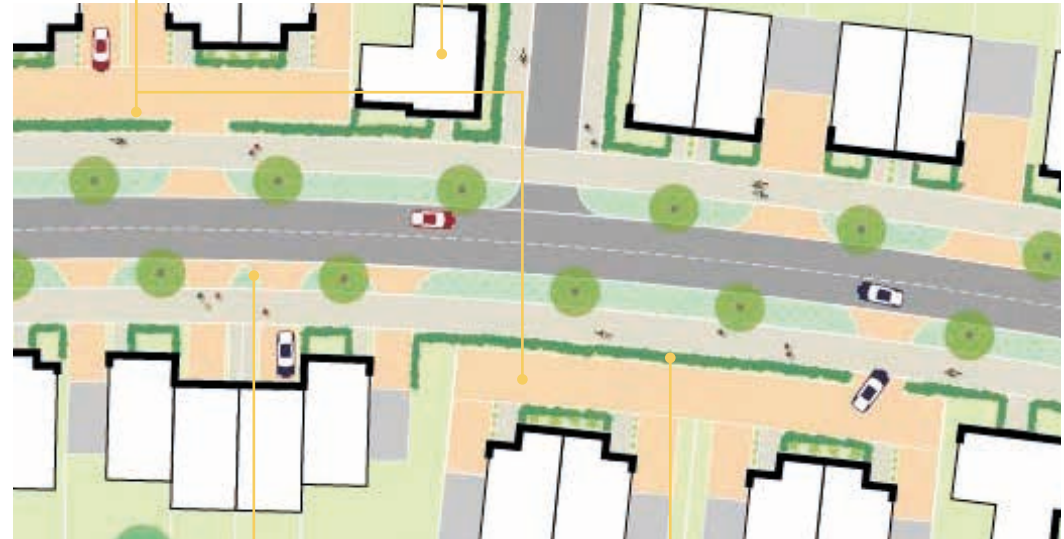


Figure 6.15: Location of Village Street Frontages

#### ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF VILLAGE STREET FRONTAGE

Shared driveways parallel to the Village Street **must** only occur on one side of the corridor at any one instance to maintain a sense of enclosure.

Corner-turning dwellings to be handed at junctions.



Direct Access **must** only occur on one side of the street at any one instance.

1.5m minimum verge with hedge to separate shared driveway and back of footpath/cycleway. Minimum 0.5m to be delivered within development parcel.

## 6. Built Form

# 6.4 Parcel Edge Frontage Characters

### 6.4.7 GREEN STREETS

The Green Streets frontage overlooks the Community Gardens located within the east-west green link. These frontages **should** have a constant building lines with a consistent frontage, characterised by a high degree of enclosure. Pedestrian and cyclist movement is prioritised within the Community Gardens therefore vehicles are only permitted on shared private drives.

#### Key Principles

- > Large detached dwellings **should** define corner plots.
- > All other non-corner dwellings **must** have a consistent setback and include some symmetrical groupings.
- > A maximum of three house types **must** be used in each grouping.
- > Building spacing and setbacks **must** be consistent and set out so as to achieve enclosure and rhythm, along the frontage. Stepped building line **should** be achieved through the use of link-detached typologies.
- > Windows or bays at ground and first floor level **must** be included on flank walls alongside driveways.
- > Access roads **must** be designed to minimise their impact along the Community Gardens edge, with private driveways used where appropriate.
- > A strong, consistent building line **must** be achieved with a high degree of enclosure to respond to the Community Gardens.

Green Street Frontages



Figure 6.16: Location of Green Street Frontages

#### ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF GREEN STREETS FRONTAGE





## 6. Built Form

# 6.4 Parcel Edge Frontage Characters

### 6.4.8 LANDSCAPE EDGE

The Landscaped Edges are low density frontages that are characterised by informally staggered groupings of large detached family homes along generous plots which face outward onto the key landscaped brook corridors to the north and south of the development. These frontages **should** have large setbacks and gaps between dwellings to create frequent visual breaks in the building line, and to allow views of the surrounding landscape to permeate between homes. Parcel edges along these Landscape Edges **should** be planted with a species of varying height and depth to reinforce the landscape character of the brooks. Frontages facing east and west will have a staggered frontage however these edges should still have a clear building line.

-  Landscape Edge Frontages
-  Landscape Edge (Option B) Frontages



Figure 6.17: Location of Landscape Edge Frontages

#### Key Principles

- > Dwellings **must** create an informal building line using subtle angle deviations in orientation.
- > High-quality surface finishes **must** be applied to shared private drives that abut the public realm.
- > Cycle/pedestrian access to the wider active travel network **must** be provided from the end of turning heads.
- > Key buildings and frontages that positively address the public realm **must** be utilised on all corners where the roads connect to the parcel edge.
- > Windows or bays at ground and first floor **must** be included on flank walls alongside driveways.
- > Dwellings **must** consist of a range of predominantly detached homes. Both wide and narrow detached dwellings are permitted but the arrangement of dwellings **must** form identifiable groupings to establish a rhythm along the street.
- > Access roads **must** be designed to minimise their visual impact along the landscape edge, with private driveways used where appropriate.
- > Clusters of planting/trees to be positioned at intervals along the parcel edge within the parcel boundary - with perimeter roads and driveways following sinuous alignments to accommodate these clusters, thereby not tracking the parcel boundary directly
- > Marker buildings adjacent to the Primary Street at the southern gateway **must** have a consistent architectural character and respond each other.

#### ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF LANDSCAPE EDGE FRONTAGE



## 6. Built Form

# 6.5 Additional Residential Interfaces

### 6.5.1 SPORTS HUB INTERFACE

The Sports Hub interface is located on the western edge of Parcel 2 overlooking the Formal Open Space and Sports Pavilion.

The location of the Sports Pavilion is indicative and will be resolved at detailed design stage to relate to the uses within the Formal Open Space and the underground utilities.

Due to the close proximity of the Formal Open Space there are a number of requirements as set out in the adjacent diagram.

All other elements of the frontage **should** follow the principles set out in section 6.3.8 Landscape Edge.

#### Key Principles

- > Dwellings **must** be located a minimum of 30m from sports pitch provision in accordance with Sport England guidance.
- > Parking provision for the sports pavilion **must** be located a minimum of 5m from the sports pitch.
- > A landscape buffer **must** be included along the edge of the interface to soften and obscure the parking.
- > All other aspects of the frontage **must** follow the principles set out in section 6.3.8 Landscape Edge.
- > If the sports pavilion comes forward ahead of Parcel 1 a temporary road **must** be implemented to access the sports hub.

— Sports Hub Interface



Figure 6.18: Location of Sports Hub Interface

#### ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF SPORTS HUB INTERFACE



## 6. Built Form

## 6.5 Additional Residential Interfaces

## 6.5.2 SCHOOL INTERFACE

The southern boundary of the school abuts the residential parcel. Therefore the adjacent diagram details the key principles that **should** be adhered to.

## Key Principles

- > Boundary treatments separating school grounds and residential property **should** ensure privacy through the design of the fence or wall and/or through structural planting.
- > Homes **should** back or side onto the school boundary so the primary aspect is away from the Primary School.
- > Dwellings that side onto the school boundary **must** have a minimum distance of 6m.
- > Dwellings that back onto the school boundary **must** have a minimum distance of 10m.
- > Courtyard typologies as shown adjacent **should** be included with dwelling arranged to terminate views from the tertiary streets and focusing vistas south to the brook.
- > Windows **must** not be located directly opposite in adjacent dwellings closer than 18m.
- > No frontage access along this boundary.

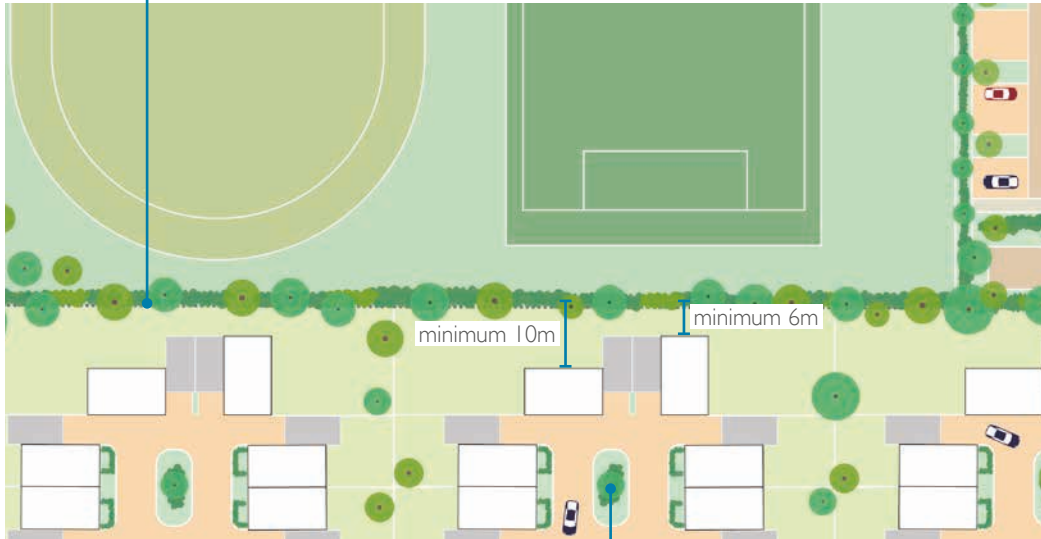
School Interface



Figure 6.19: Location of School Interface

## ILLUSTRATIVE VIEW OF SCHOOL BOUNDARY

Structural planting **should** soften and obscure boundary.



Courtyards **must** be softened with landscape and planting.

This page is intentionally left blank

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 15 April 2025

**Case No:** 24/00295/FUL

**Proposal:** Installation and operation of a renewable energy generation and storage station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with battery storage containers, inverter/transformer units, control house, substations, onsite grid connection equipment, storage containers, site access, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancement.

**Location:** Land North East of Weald Farm, Cambridge Road, Eynesbury

**Applicant:** Voltalia Ltd

**Grid Ref:** 523802 (E) 260079 (N)

**Date of Registration:** 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Parish:** Abbotsley

---

### RECOMMENDATION –

**Powers be delegated to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection to APPROVE with appropriate planning conditions.**

**This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) because Abbotsley and Croxton (South Cambs) Parish Councils have objected contrary to the Officer recommendation of approval.**

#### **1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION**

- 1.1 The Site measures 78.45 hectares (ha) in area and comprises arable farmland with fields broken up by ditches, intermittent hedgerows or tree lines, and small waterbodies. There are no dwellings located within the Site boundary, however North Farm and North Farm Barn are located immediately south of the parcel of land to the north of Cambridge Road. Elisley Manor Nursing Home is located to the south of Cambridge Road, directly adjacent

to the southern parcel of the Site. The nearest settlement is the village of Croxton, located approximately 500m east of the Site.

- 1.2 The Site is formed of three main parcels of land, the two largest are bisected by the Cambridge Road (A428). The proposed areas of solar arrays are located both to the north and south of Cambridge Road with the southern parcel being separated by a proposed archaeological exclusion area and existing PROW. In addition to this, a smaller parcel of land, approximately 800 metres to the north east of the Site, is proposed to be used as the location for the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and contains the agreed Point of Connection to the National Grid. The proposed BESS Site will be separated from the remainder of the Site by the new proposed Black Cat to Croxton dual carriageway.
- 1.3 The Site has a predominantly flat topography and is well contained by existing vegetation which is proposed to be further enhanced through additional planting. The Site comprises agricultural land, with pockets of woodland and existing vegetation. Other land uses nearby include several isolated residential properties and commercial/ light industrial use at Whitehall Farm Units
- 1.4 Whilst there are no designated heritage assets within the Site, there are a number of heritage assets within proximity to the Site. Namely, the Scheduled Monument of the Deserted Village (site of) Weald located immediately to the west of the Site. Other heritage assets within proximity to the Site include the Grade II Listed North Farmhouse referred to above and Croxton Park and registered Gardens, approx. 500m from the site also, but within the administrative boundary of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 1.5 The Site is located within Flood Zone 1, meaning that it is at low probability of flooding.
- 1.6 A public footpath runs through the southern parcel of the Site travelling from Weald in the west to Croxton in the east (Abbotsley Footpath No.8). Abbotsley Bridleway No.12 and No.7 run close to the western boundary of the Site.
- 1.7 The Site and its surroundings are not subject to any other statutory or non-statutory ecological, environmental or planning based designations.
- 1.8 The application seeks planning permission for the construction of a series of solar arrays with an export capacity of up to 49.9MW. In addition to the solar arrays, the Proposed Development will include a BESS system of approximately 50MW and associated infrastructure including security fencing and security gates, cabling, inverters and transformers, control house, containers, weather station, CCTV, Customer substation and DNO substation,

temporary construction compound, and enhanced vegetation and planting.

- 1.9 The PV panels will be supported by metal frame posts which will be driven into the ground at an approximate depth of 1.5m. The distance between arrays may vary due to topography but will typically be between 3-4m. The top of the arrays will measure up to a maximum of 3.4 metres in height.
- 1.10 Access to the northern solar field is proposed to be taken from the existing unadopted single track road to the west of Weald Cottages and access to the southern fields is from the existing track to the west of Eltisley Manor, both taken from the existing A428 Cambridge Road. The BESS will be accessed from Toseland Road. Vehicular movements relating to the solar farm and BESS will be very minimal once operational and will generally consist of transit van-type vehicles assessing and managing the Site an average of twice a month for maintenance purposes.
- 1.11 The proposed development is for temporary structures proposed for a period of 35 years. Following this period, the Site will be restored to its present condition, with a commitment to closely replicate its current use, enhanced by the proposed landscaping improvements which would be retained. The decommissioning of the solar farm would be subject to a reasonably worded planning condition, as is common across the solar industry.
- 1.12 It must be noted that the site is bisected by a proposed highway improvement scheme, this is the development of a new dual carriageway which is now well under construction.
- 1.13 The route is located immediately to the south of the proposed BESS area. The Proposed Development and plans have been the subject of discussions with National Highways to understand any potential for conflicts between the two developments, in particular in relation to the proposed cable crossing. The proposed crossing points and cabling arrangements along Toseland Road have been agreed in principle with National Highways.
- 1.14 The cable route exits the site on Cambridge Road and will follow that highway until Toseland Road, then go north to the BESS site area, for connection. This small area of cabling crosses into, and then out of, the administrative boundary of South Cambridge District Council. A separate application will be made to SCDC for this development.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE AND POLICY AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework Dec 2024 (NPPF) sets out the three economic, social and environmental objectives of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.



The NPPF confirms that 'So sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development...' (para. 10). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for, amongst other things:

- delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- achieving well-designed places;
- conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
- conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

- 2.2 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the National Design Guide 2019 (NDG) and the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) are also relevant and a material consideration.
- 2.3 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1 (2023 – in force Jan 2024)
- 2.4 National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN3) (2023 – in force Jan 2024)
- 2.5 Officer note – National Policy Statements: those relevant to this application are set out in paras 2.3 and 2.4 and are primarily produced to support the National Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) regime. However, both publications identify that they may be material planning considerations in standard planning applications, but it is for the decision maker to consider the level of weight that should be attributed to them in each circumstance. Noting the scale of development that they are specifically produced to support; officers consider, that in this instance, the adopted local plan policies should take primacy.
- 2.6 For full details visit the government website [National Guidance](#).
- 2.7 Relevant Legislation;
  - Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
  - Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
  - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
  - Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

### **3. LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)
  - LP1 Amount of Development
  - LP2 Strategy for Development
  - LP3 Green Infrastructure
  - LP4 Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
  - LP5 Flood risk
  - LP10 The Countryside
  - LP11 Design Context
  - LP12 Design Implementation
  - LP14 Amenity
  - LP15 Surface Water
  - LP16 Sustainable Travel
  - LP17 Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
  - LP19 Rural Economy
  - LP29 Health Impact Assessment
  - LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity



- LP31 Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
  - LP34 Heritage Assets and their Settings
  - LP35 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
  - LP36 Air Quality
  - LP37 Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution
- 3.2 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment – Adopted 2022
  - Huntingdonshire Design Guide – Adopted 2017
  - Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted 2017
  - RECAP Waste Management Design Guide (CCC SPD) – Adopted 2012
  - Developer Contributions – Adopted 2011 (Costs updated annually)

For full details visit the Council's website [Local policies](#).

## **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 Application Ref: 21/70087/SCRE - EIA Screening Opinion for the development currently proposed. An EIA Screening Opinion was issued in November 2021. Confirmed EIA not required.

## **5. CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 Abbotsley Parish Council (copies attached) – recommend refusal of the application on the following grounds:
- The proposal would result in the loss of valuable agricultural land
  - Other lower grade land could be used for this purpose.
  - Panels should be sited on roofs of buildings
  - Solar Farms are inefficient in harnessing and transmitted power.
  - Raised concern about the length of connection that the site would need, underground cables to almost reach Wisbech. There would be transmission loss due to the large distance between generation and connection.
  - The PC is concerned about the cumulative impact of solar farms in this area, this application being one of them
  - The proposal would result in negative visual impact on countryside
  - The site is surrounding a well used public footpath which links Abbotsley with Croxton – it is currently tranquil and picturesque and that will change irrevocably.
  - Loss of Countryside
- 5.2 Croxton Parish Council – South Cambs District (copy attached) – Recommend refusal of the application on the following grounds:
- Loss of high grade (Class 2 & 3a) agricultural land that would be detrimental to the food security of the region and ultimately the country.
  - Proposed development will have a detrimental effect on the local transitory ecology entering and leaving the parish.
  - Archaeological investigations have only been focused on half the proposed site and, therefore, the applicant has not fully discharged this duty in order to proceed with seeking planning permission.
  - The existing visual amenity of the open countryside will be ruined

- The wellbeing of the community and visitors, particularly as the development straddles the only foot path/ right of way out of Croxton.
- 5.3 CCC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) – No objection in principle and conditions are recommended requiring the submission of the full detailed design of the drainage scheme, requiring details for its long term maintenance and requiring details of how surface water runoff will be managed during construction.
  - 5.4 CCC Definitive Maps Team – No objection. Conditions have been recommended on the following, details of a PRoW scheme to include construction details, maintenance, confirmation of surfacing, temporary fencing and a dilapidation survey of the PRoW No.8 that will form part of the final details of the access.
  - 5.5 CCC Historic Environment Team (CHET) – No objections to development progressing in the location but recommend that the following be secured by planning conditions – submission of a further WSI to implement a programme of archaeological works and the submission of an Archaeological Management Plan.
  - 5.6 CCC Local Highway Authority (LHA) - No objections. Following receipt of amended plans - Recommend conditions restricting the provision of fences and gates, requiring provision and retention of visibility splays, that the width, depth, material, and form of accesses and their construction accords with specific requirements and County specification, that internal parking and manoeuvring areas are retained, that details of any temporary construction facilities to be submitted and that a Construction Traffic Management Plan is submitted.
  - 5.7 HDC Landscape Officer – Following the discussion and submission of revised plans – recommends determination and a planning condition to finalise the BESS landscaping details.
  - 5.8 HDC Ecology Officer - Continuing concern relating to the provision of mitigation for Skylarks – recommends continuing discussion on the Mitigation strategy and plan. Revised plan and document received from applicant and planning conditions required to secure implementation.
  - 5.9 HDC Environmental Health Officer (EHO) – No objection in principle subject to the imposition of a planning condition relating the submission of a CEMP.
  - 5.10 HDC Tree Officer – No objection in principle subject to a condition relating to the submission of a Tree Protection Plan.
  - 5.11 South Cambs District Council (adjacent Authority) – Object - Making a number of observations and comments with regards to harmful impact on Heritage Assets, visual impact on countryside and PRoW.
  - 5.12 Natural England – Raise no objection as it is considered that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on any statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.
  - 5.13 Active Travel England – No comment to make

- 5.14 Gardens Trust – Objection to the development on negative impact to Heritage Assets in the locality.
- 5.15 Ramblers Association – No objection
- 5.16 CPRE – Objection – Loss of high grade agricultural land and the impact of the develops on the wider countryside and landscape in terms of cumulative impact. Share the concerns raised by Historic England on the impact on the scheduled monument of the deserted village – Weald and note the concerns of Croxton Park.
- 5.17 Historic England – Amendments received from applicant have given comfort and removed previous serious concern with detrimental impact on the scheduled monument, archaeology needs more work but no significant objection.
- 5.18 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue - No objection in principle subject to a planning condition relating to fire hydrants.
- 5.19 National Highways - No objection to the proposed development.
- 5.20 East West Rail Ltd – Recommend no objection subject to an agreed condition in relation to crossing points of the safeguarded land.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 26 public representations have been made on the proposal; of which 9 letters have been received in support from 9 separate properties and 17 letters have been received in objection from 13 separate properties. They are summarised as follows: -

### **In Objection:**

- \* Detrimental damage to the Heritage setting of the area
- \* Panels should go on all new builds, public buildings in industrial areas.
- \* The loss of good arable farmland
- \* Panels are ugly
- \* Applicant is cynical and placed development over 2 authority boundaries. Croxton will be most impacted
- \* Company have no regard for rural life.
- \* Proposed development has not considered the important ecological and historic parish of Croxton.
- \* Detrimental impact on the setting of a Listed Building
- \* Detrimental impact on the Public Right of Way
- \* The public benefits of the scheme would not outweigh the substantial harm caused to Heritage assets.
- \* Detrimental impact on the scheduled monument – Medieval village of Weald.
- \* Impact on the loss of Best and Most Versatile and no other sites have been sequentially tested to show this is considered the appropriate location and loss on BMV could be avoided.
- \* Intrusive in the wider landscape.
- \* No benefit to residents of Croxton – each household should benefit from lower energy bills.

### **In Support;**

- \* Very supportive, need more renewable energy generation.

- \* The more facilities for solar and wind the better planet we leave for the future generations.
- \* Appropriate location near the newly constructed dual carriageway.
- \* Support the location in terms of use of arable land and no loss to BNG, as the application supports an increase in landscaping.

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Principle of Development
- Landscape and Countryside Character
- Highway and Transport Impacts, including Public Rights of Way and East West Rail safeguarding.
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Drainage and Flood Risk
- Heritage Impacts
- Impacts to Neighbouring Amenities
- Land Contamination and Air Quality
- Contamination Risks and Pollution
- Other Matters

7.2 The starting point for proposals, in accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is that developments shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### **Principle Of Development**

7.3 This section is concerned with the broad principle of development for a renewable or low carbon energy generating scheme in the open countryside. More detailed, site-specific matters are considered elsewhere in the report.

7.4 The application site is located outside the built-up area and is therefore considered to be within the countryside for planning purposes. In such a location development is restricted under policy LP10 to those that are provided for in other policies within the Local Plan. The supporting text to that policy notes that this is in order to balance support for a thriving rural economy and land-based business, while protecting the character and beauty of the countryside.

7.5 Of particular relevance in this instance is policy LP35 which states that “a proposal for a renewable or low carbon energy generating scheme, other than wind energy, will be supported where it is demonstrated that all potential adverse impacts including cumulative impacts are or can be made acceptable”.

7.6 As stated above, LP35 provides support in principle for renewable and low carbon energy generation and is therefore considered by Officers to be one of the specific opportunities for development in the countryside supported in the local plan, subject to a detailed assessment of the proposal and its impacts. In terms of the countryside location, and notwithstanding further assessment in respect of the use of agricultural land, it is therefore considered there is an in-principle policy support for the proposal in this location.

- 7.7 As demonstrated by the Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended 2019), associated Carbon Budget and British Energy Security Strategy 2022, it is clear that solar energy is a key component of the government's legally binding commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.
- 7.8 The NPPF 2024 at para. 161 sets out that “The planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050...” which updates previous wording to “support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate”. Para 163 of the NPPF 2024 is a new paragraph and states that “the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change should also be considered in preparing and assessing planning applications, taking into account the full range of potential climate change impacts”. The guidance continues (para. 168) that LPAs should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, that they should give significant weight to the benefits associated and the contribution to a net zero future, and recognise that small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions.
- 7.9 The British Energy Security Strategy states that the government expects a five-fold increase in combined ground and rooftop solar deployment by 2035. The government expects solar, together with wind, to be the predominant source of energy generation by 2050.
- 7.10 The delivery of this proposed scheme would generate up to 49.9MW and would contribute towards government targets for renewable energy and Huntingdonshire’s Climate Strategy.
- 7.11 The applicant has confirmed that a connection to the national grid has been secured with UK Power Networks and it is anticipated that the solar farm would be constructed and connected to the grid by Autumn 2026. The proposal will therefore make a significant and early contribution towards the delivery of additional solar generated electricity nationally.
- 7.12 With respect to use, the application site currently comprises approximately 75.5ha of agricultural land. Policy LP10, (reflecting para 187b of the NPPF), seeks to protect Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, classified as Grades 1, 2 and 3a from irreversible development.
- 7.13 Natural England have raised no objections to the proposal, and consider that, subject to conditions requiring details of decommissioning and safeguarding of the land quality, there would be no loss of BMV land.
- 7.14 A few objections have been received namely from Abbotsley Parish Council, Croxton Parish Council and local residents on the grounds that the land is fertile, good quality agricultural land that should be retained for food production.
- 7.15 This is relevant as the National Planning Policy Framework defines BMV land as ALC Grade 1-3a [inclusive] only. In the case of this Site, the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Grade was not known, and it was necessary to determine this through examination.

- 7.16 The submitted ALC Report confirms that “Much of the Site is classified as a mixture of subgrade 3a (54%) and a of Subgrade 3b (13%) and Grade 2 (31%), so would fall within the category of BMV Land.
- 7.17 While the quality of land at the Site appears important in a national context, at local level it is less so, as subgrade 3a and b is common in Cambridgeshire. In addition, sub-grade 3a/b constitutes some of the least fertile land in the county, where Grade 1 and Grade 2 land are predominant. It is therefore likely that some development will necessarily need to occur on BMV land in the region.
- 7.18 The proposed location of the development is therefore consistent with the key policy objective, in that it represents an efficient use of some of the less versatile, and less resilient land in the region.
- 7.19 The proposed development will only result in the temporary cessation of arable production on 9% of the farm’s land but agricultural production can continue in the form of grazing. The proposed development also has the potential to deliver significant wider environmental benefits, such as improvements to soil structure and health, carbon sequestration and habitat and biodiversity enhancements.
- 7.20 The use of Grade 3b land for development is supported under policy LP10, as it is not BMV land. Policy LP10 is clear that development should seek to avoid irreversible loss of BMV land. The development that covers this land includes swales, an access track, fencing, solar panels and inverter/transformer cabins. Of these elements and having regard to a potential ‘worst-case’ scenario, the access track and the inverter/transformer cabins would require some hardstanding and are likely to be more permanent fixtures, though the access track is of limited depth and officers do consider it highly likely this could be removed without any notable impact. The drainage swales, fencing and solar panels are either relatively straightforward earthworks or temporary ground mounted structures that could be readily removed from the site once their use has ceased.
- 7.21 The remaining elements identified, the access track and inverter/transformer cabin hardstanding, would be minor in their scale at approximately 0.1ha, limited to a small area and the periphery of the field. A condition is recommended in accordance with LP35 that, prior to decommissioning, a plan is submitted to the LPA that sets out the approach for removal of the equipment, and that seeks to revert the land to its former status in accordance with that agreed plan as well as a condition will also be required that imposes a temporary time limit on the development. Subject to those conditions and the wholly minimal area of land where development is unlikely to be reversed, it is considered there would not be any permanent material loss of best and most versatile agricultural land. The development is therefore considered not to represent the “irreversible and permanent loss” of BMV land.
- 7.22 On the whole, therefore, and subject to the conditions identified above, it is considered the principle of the development is acceptable, in terms of its use and location, and in accordance with policies LP10 and LP35. and paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

### **Landscape and Countryside Character**

- 7.23 The Council's Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document 2022 (LTSPD) notes that this site sits within the South East Clayland Landscape Character Area.
- 7.24 Much of the topography has been shaped by water with the River Great Ouse creating a wide shallow valley to the north and west of the area. Tributary streams flow from higher land to the south west to the Great Ouse forming a gently undulating landscape in the central part of the character area.
- 7.25 The South East Claylands include large areas of high quality landscape with a varied and typically gently undulating landform, established hedgerows and woodland and the historic settlement patterns which are reflected through the route of the Roman Ermine Street, medieval green lanes and abandoned settlements and field patterns arising from 18th and 19th century enclosures.
- 7.26 In respect to this application, the LTSPD particularly notes that all new development proposals should promote increased planting and soft landscaping around the edges of the towns to screen visually intrusive development (particularly through planting of tree and woodland belts), avoid ribbon development to conserve the form of historic villages, ensure preservation and interpretation of historic features remaining within the landscape and protect tall hedgerows and hedgerow trees as these are a distinctive feature of the central area.
- 7.27 Towards the south of the area, where the application site is located, woodland cover increases. Heavy clay soils predominate in the area supporting cereal crops and arable farming. Villages are sparse and the connecting network of lanes are often narrow. Higher hedges with numerous trees are wider found, particularly in the southern part of the area. The relative lack of settlement in the area combined with the mature vegetation creates an intimate and tranquil feel to the landscape. In those parts more affected by agricultural change and amalgamated fields, the scale of the landscape becomes larger and this sense is lost.
- 7.28 The Site boundary encompasses arable land with the Site split into three distinct parcels, northern, northeastern and southern respectively.
- The northern parcel encloses a small rectangular field and the southeastern portion of a large arable field, the Site extends to include an access track off Cambridge Road to the south west;
  - The northeastern parcel comprises the northwestern corner of a small arable field located off Toseland Road, with access off Toseland Road to the west; and
  - The southern parcel comprises approximately 40% of a large arable field – within which lies a field pond enclosed by mature vegetation, and a medium sized arable field, with the Site extending to include an access track off Cambridge Road to the northwest.
- 7.29 The arable fields that make up the Site are for the majority bound by existing mature hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees located in gently undulating landform. The Site measures approximately 78.45 hectares (ha) in size, with existing access obtained via field gateways / tracks. The Site and immediate setting are located on gently undulating landform, with the Site lying at between approximately 50-55m AOD.

- 7.30 The application has been accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which has concluded that any effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be contained and classed as 'Medium'.
- 7.31 The LVIA has also been accompanied by viewpoints and assessment of the scale of change that would arise in the context of this development at various points. In general, it has concluded large scale effects would arise within the site and immediately adjacent, but that any effects beyond the site perimeter, would be limited by surrounding mature vegetation to a localised area surrounding the site. As a result, any effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be extremely contained.
- 7.32 The Landscape Officer has reviewed the application, the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and the Landscape Strategy Plan contained within it.
- 7.33 While the Landscape Officer considers the sensitivity of the landscape within this area to be a localised impact in terms of the sensitive receptors of the local dwellings, care home and footpaths, they have agreed in principle with the conclusions that the landscape has the capacity to accommodate the solar array at this scale without significant material harm. They raise no objections to the proposed development, and recommend a condition is imposed that requires a full soft planting scheme to be provided in relation to the BESS area; the submitted planting details for the remainder of the site are considered to be acceptable.
- 7.34 Officers have considered the details submitted from all parties in the context of the adopted LTSPD. It is considered that the landscape does have the ability to accept the development, and that in terms of principle landscape matters its impact can be mitigated.
- 7.35 Officers note the viewpoints submitted as part of the LVIA and which were subject to discussion with the Landscape Officer in terms of location. Viewpoints that have been included in the applicant's LVIA are taken from positions that are considered sufficient to provide an understanding of the visual impact at these viewpoints and the locality.
- 7.36 Officers welcome the comments in respect of the planting scheme, in that it will offer screening to the development. It is not considered that total screening of the development would be reasonable, nor that it is a realistic or appropriate goal of a planting scheme for a development of this nature and scale. Such a planting scheme should aim to mitigate for the impacts of the solar farm by offering selective screening where the impacts are harmful such that it is warranted, but in general officers consider the aim of this planting proposal should be to introduce planting in a manner that otherwise breaks up continuous views of the development.
- 7.37 The use of high hedgerows would provide significant screening from views close to the site, especially at the points of existing dwellings and the care home, where the highest magnitude of change is considered likely to be experienced. In longer views, the use of clustered tree planting, using the trees indicated within the submitted mixes, are



considered likely to have a substantial impact in breaking up views of the solar panels and reflect the landscape character identified with the LTSPD. This will give the eastern boundary (towards Croxton) planting a greater opportunity to extend beyond the overall height of the solar panels, having regard to topographical changes, and while it is not considered likely to be able to achieve that across the entirety of all views, officers consider the most impacted views from the east will be afforded a sufficient level of mitigation, albeit that this level of mitigation will not provide immediate screening.

- 7.38 Overall, in terms of impacts on public views, officers consider those at the immediate edges of the site, and in close proximity are likely to experience a high level of change. Most of these would be from the road (A428), lanes (Toseland Road) or Public Rights of Way and therefore views of the proposed development would be either at speed or would only form a small part of the overall experience of the landscape.
- 7.39 The boundary planting is considered sufficient to mitigate for views from non-motorised users, in particular along the PRoW (Public Right of Way). For views at longer distances, particularly when using the new dual carriage way at the A428 and along the existing Cambridge Road, Officers consider that the distance, coupled with the proposed planting scheme, will break up the views of solar panels sufficiently to limit their visual dominance in the landscape.
- 7.40 It is considered that the proposals respond positively and appropriately to the published landscape character guidelines, to increase planting and soft landscaping, particularly planting of trees and woodland belts that are within the proposed landscape strategy and will form part of the mitigation to help screen the built aspects of the proposals and reduce the adverse effects of the development from the outset.
- 7.41 On this basis, the Site is considered to have the capacity to accommodate the Proposed Development without long-term unacceptable effects on landscape character and visual amenity, whilst the proposed landscape enhancements are deemed to have the potential for some long-term beneficial effects through establishing proposed species rich wildflower grassland and reinforcing hedgerows and reestablishing those that have previously been lost as a result of field amalgamation.
- 7.42 On the whole, and subject to conditions requiring a detailed planting scheme for the BESS area and a landscaping management scheme, to be submitted, officers consider the proposal has demonstrated the proposed development would not result in a materially harmful impact to the landscape as a resource and could suitably integrate itself into the topography and character. The proposal would therefore accord with policies LP 10, LP 11, LP 12 and LP 35 in this regard.

### **Highway and Transport Impacts, including PRoW and East West Rail Safeguarding**

The application Site comprises three parcels of land as follows:

- to the north of the A428;
- to the south of the A428; and
- to the east of Toseland Road.

- 7.43 The Northern Parcel of Land will be accessed via an existing agricultural access on the A428. This will operate as a left-in/left-out junction to improve the safety of the junction. The access will require some slight widening, and vegetation maintenance. The access to the southern parcel of land will also utilise an existing agricultural access on the A428.
- 7.44 The access will be widened slightly to accommodate HGVs associated with the construction of the Site. This will also operate as a left-in/left-out junction to improve the safety of the junction. Again, the access will require the removal of vegetation to the east and west.
- 7.45 Access to the BESS Site will utilise the existing agricultural access from Toseland Road. The access will require widening to accommodate construction traffic.
- 7.46 The application has been accompanied by a draft construction traffic management plan (CTMP), contained within the Transport Assessment. It estimates approximately 983 construction deliveries across the build stage, with approximately 131 additional movements from contractors parking at the BESS site. Once operational, the development is expected to require approximately 50 maintenance visits over the course of a year, equating to one every week. As the site would be monitored offsite, it is unlikely there would be any significant additional vehicle movements once the development is operational.
- 7.47 The Local Highway Authority have reviewed the submitted information and raised no objections in principle, subject to conditions relating to the construction and maintenance of the access, construction compound and appropriate control of construction traffic.
- 7.48 On the whole, and subject to conditions, the development is therefore considered not to represent an adverse impact to highway safety or the capacity of the transport network and would therefore accord with policies LP16 and LP17.
- 7.49 The County Rights of Way Team have raised no objection to the proposal, subject to a condition requiring precise details of the alignment and materials, and conditions requiring offsets from PROWs for fencing and planting.
- 7.50 They comment that "Public Footpath No. 8, Abbotsley runs through the site and then continues westwards ending at the junction with Public Byway No. 7, Abbotsley and Public Bridleway No. 12, Abbotsley. In addition, Public Footpath No. 4, Croxton continues the PROW access from the eastern boundary of the site towards Croxton.
- 7.51 A proposed maintenance track crosses Public Footpath No. 8 Abbotsley. Officers have reviewed the further details provided regarding the proposed changes to the surface of the public footpath and we have received the completed authorisation form. The Definitive Map team's previous objection regarding the change of surface proposal is withdrawn, subject to the inclusion of a planning condition."
- 7.52 As no formal PROW's would be lost through the proposal, and the development would result in a temporary, albeit long-term, improvement to the PROW network, officers consider that, subject to conditions identified, the proposal would accord with policy LP16.

- 7.53 As of November 2024 – the Government issued a directive that all proposals which may have a significant impact on any safeguarded land to accommodate the proposed East West Rail, will be formally consulted on. The application Site falls within the safeguarded land. East West Rail have responded that the solar array area is of no impact but would like further clarification on the proposed line of the cable and connection to the BESS.
- 7.54 The applicant has consulted directly with East West Rail. Following discussions, they have now satisfied EWR that safeguarded land will not be compromised, a planning condition has been agreed that will be attached to any planning approval, to agree a Construction Method statement.

### **Ecology and Biodiversity**

- 7.55 The application has been accompanied by Ecological Reports, a Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan and detailed calculations of Biodiversity Net Gain. These set out the potential areas of ecological value within the site and its surroundings that may be of ecological significance and considers the potential mitigation and enhancement proposals to ensure the development does not result in adverse impacts to ecology and biodiversity.
- 7.56 HDC Ecology Officer has reviewed all the report, strategies and plans and following amendments and clarification, raise no objection in principle – concern is still held with regard to Mitigation for Skylarks and the final details will be subject to the discharge of a planning condition.
- 7.57 Officers have noted that the reports follow best practice and consider these have established an accurate representation of ecological baseline of the site. They note that the submitted Net Gain Calculations appear to be optimistic, but that even if elements were considered to provide a low overall increase in biodiversity units - the development would still deliver a significant increase in habitat units and therefore a high level of net gain. The site will deliver the mandatory 10% in uplift and this satisfies Officers. A planning condition would be attached to any approval to oblige implementation.
- 7.58 A District Wide Newt License had been applied for and will also be conditioned to be completed. On all other ecological aspects the submitted Primary Ecological Appraisal Report (BSG March 2024) outlines that mitigation on the site can be delivered with a landscaping strategy and carefully thought out development layout, avoiding sensitive ecological areas.
- 7.59 On the whole, therefore, and subject to conditions identified above, as well as a condition requiring a finalised landscape management plan, Officers consider the proposal would protect existing ecological features and achieve measurable enhancement in biodiversity terms. It is therefore considered to accord with policies LP30 and LP31.

### **Drainage and Flood Risk**

- 7.60 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, at the lowest risk of flooding.

- 7.61 After receiving updates and amended plans, no objections have been received from the LLFA as the statutory consultee for surface water. They have recommended standard conditions seeking the fully detailed design should be submitted if the application is approved, details of its long term management and details of how surface water will be managed during the construction process. Similarly, no objections have been received from the Environment Agency in respect of flood risk from river sources, subject to securing the mitigation in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).
- 7.62 The application proposes to manage surface flows predominantly through a mix permeable paving, swales and filter strips. This would both control the rate of discharge and provide water quality treatment. The LLFA have confirmed this would restrict rates of discharge to below greenfield levels. They state that the submitted documentation shows that the development can be managed through the use of swales, filter drains, a detention basin and restricting the waters flows to 15.8l/s with a 75mm orifice so as not to increase the risk of a blockage.
- 7.63 While the solar panels themselves are not permeable, the development does not create substantial levels of hardstanding compared to, for example, a residential development. Water would reach the ground, and there would be some level of infiltration drainage naturally occurring, though as this is likely to be more focused into runs, the profile of how water runs along the ground is likely to change.
- 7.64 The proposed swales and filter strips would serve to slow water flow and create attenuation features that would hold the water while it discharges, and officers consider there is plenty of available land that can accommodate these features. While the final length and position of swales will fall to detailed design stage, this significant increase above baseline is considered sufficient to be satisfied there is adequate space to accommodate the required drainage measures.
- 7.65 Officers note the relevant test in this instance would be that the situation is not materially worse than present. While the fully detailed design would be submitted at a later stage, the level of restriction indicated and the proposed mitigation measures that have been suitably demonstrated to be achievable are sufficient for officers to consider an acceptable drainage arrangement would be readily achievable.
- 7.66 In terms of flooding from river sources, the whole site is located in Flood Zone 1, at the lowest risk of flooding. As a solar farm, the development is classified as "Essential Infrastructure" in accordance with Annex 3 of the NPPF. As the development is located outside the flood zones there is no impact to the existing functional flood plain through a reduction in that area, and the development has demonstrated it can adequately accommodate the storage and release of surface water into the brook to less than greenfield rates such that there would be no material impact beyond current runoff rates, in real terms this offers a betterment to the current situation.
- 7.67 Subject to conditions, therefore, officers consider the proposal would not give rise to any adverse impacts to drainage through surface water or river sources. The proposal would therefore accord with policies LP5 and LP15.

## **Heritage Impacts**

- 7.68 Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require that special regard is had to the desirability of preserving particular features of Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas and great weight should be afforded to the assets conservation. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 protects the archaeological heritage of Great Britain by making provision for the investigation, preservation and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest.
- 7.69 HDC's Conservation Officer has not made any comment on the grounds of harm to heritage assets, due to the lack of any designated heritage assets in the application area, such that the proposal is not considered to be within the setting that contributes to their significance, loss or harm.
- 7.70 The County Historic Environment Team (CHET), after consultation and discussion resulting in amended plans, have also now raised no objections. They consider that the development would not significantly impact any remaining archaeological deposits, so recommend approval subject to the imposition of a number of planning conditions.
- 7.71 A number of local representations and consultations from CPRE, Gardens Trust and Croxton PC have raised objection to the development due to a detrimental impact on the setting of Heritage Assets.
- 7.72 The proposed development site is not a historic landscape character type such that it possesses any heritage significance in its own right. The site has no meaningful historical association with Croxton Park, an asset of acknowledged heritage significance.
- 7.73 It has therefore been considered by officers and concluded that the proposed development site lies a considerable distance (over 500m) from Croxton Park and at this distance any potential intervisibility would be entirely incidental and certainly not a change that could manifest any detrimental harm to heritage significance.
- 7.74 It is also considered that the comments raised by Gardens Trust that "the impact of ancillary elements of the development may have, such as substations and onsite grid connections. These have the potential to be seen from Croxton Park. We note that overhead cabling has not been addressed, which has the potential to be the most visually intrusive, given the flat and open topography. Relying on existing trees and hedges will not be sufficient to screen overhead cables and are not permanent screens for substantial infrastructure."
- 7.75 Officers note the comments from The Garden Trust and also local residents to these concerns but have assessed that the solar infrastructure, such as transformer stations and cabling will not be visible to Croxton Park – even on the periphery. Apart from the solar panels themselves – substations and infrastructure paraphernalia are to be located at the farthest points away from Croxton Park and Gardens, at its maximum approx. 1.1km and at the closest 800m. Notwithstanding the land topography and existing built form and hedging, trees and screening – it would be difficult to claim that the infrastructure would

have a harmful impact on Croxton Park and its setting, in terms of visual intrusion.

- 7.76 Historic England have been satisfied by the additional work submitted by the applicant. "We welcome the proposed enhancements relating to the SM. We recognise that these enhancements would deliver public benefit. However, HE consider that it is for the LPA to consider whether they, along with any other public benefit of the proposed development, outweigh the level of 'less than substantial harm' that would arise to the significance of the SM, as required by Para 208 of the NPPF.
- 7.77 They now remove their objection and conclude that "the proposed developed would result in a change to the rural character and setting of the SSAM (Weald). This change would result in some harm to the significance of the Scheduled Monument by negatively affecting the manner in which the heritage asset can be appreciated. Historic England considers that the level of harm would equate to 'less than substantial harm' as defined in the NPPF. "
- 7.78 HE encourages the LPA to continue discussing with CHET, to seek planning conditions to further explore the archaeological investigations relating to the non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest at the application site, in accordance with NPPF Para 209.
- 7.79 In accordance with policy LP34 and the relevant NPPF legislation, great weight should be afforded the protection of heritage assets. Any harm should be considered in accordance with para 215 of the NPPF, and a development that gives rise to harm will need to be balanced against any public benefits of the proposal.
- 7.80 CHET have raised no objections, and do not consider the proposal would result in any material harm. Officers consider that weight should be afforded to these consultees given their expertise.
- 7.81 The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with policy LP34 and the relevant provisions of the NPPF in respect to impact to heritage assets.

### **Impacts to Neighbouring Amenity**

- 7.82 While the site is distant from the majority of residential dwellings in the area, a number that are close by and have been carefully considered. Those on Cambridge Road, notably Eltisley Manor (a care home) Weald Cottages, North Farm and North Farm Barn.
- 7.83 Amendments have been made throughout the planning assessments and taken into consideration the existing amenities of the local residents. Additional buffers, planting and increased separation distances from existing dwellings have been added in.
- 7.84 The distances are now considered sufficient to protect the amenity of surrounding occupants from overshadowing or overbearing impacts, notwithstanding that the solar panels and associated structures are not of such a height that they would be considered likely to give rise to harmful levels of overbearing or overshadowing. The development layout plan and landscaping strategy have now been carefully considered and assessed, to take these amenities into account.

- 7.85 Officers have noted the concerns raised by Croxton Parish Council and residents of the village of Croxton with regards to detrimental impact on the local residents well-being, landscape and the PRow. Officers conclude that within the report it is clearly set out that the concerns are not significant enough to uphold a refusal on these grounds.
- 7.86 On the whole, and subject to the conditions identified, officers consider the proposal would accord with policy LP14.

#### **Land Contamination and Air Quality**

- 7.87 The Council's Environmental Health Officer has raised no objection on the basis of contamination risks or air pollution. Natural England have raised no concerns subject to conditions to ensure that there would be no ground contamination, and the LLFA have noted the proposed drainage mitigation measures are acceptable.
- 7.88 In terms of existing contamination, officers consider it likely that the active agricultural use of the site would have required some form of chemical use that could result in contamination, though it is not considered highly likely there would be any contaminants within the site. There are no notable brownfield uses within or surrounding the site that would give rise to concerns in terms of contamination, or any significant evidence of past uses that would indicate previous contaminative uses on or adjoining the site.
- 7.89 As a solar farm, the development's operational aspect would not give rise to emissions that would result in materially adverse impacts to air quality. While there would be some level of emissions during construction, the short length of the construction time (approx. 20 weeks) as such that it is considered these would be marginal, and not at a level that would be considered harmful.
- 7.90 While officers consider there is likely to be some chemical use as part of maintenance of the site, both in cleaning solar panels as needed and as part of biodiversity management to limit the possible impact of inappropriate plant species, the level of use is considered to be low, having regard to the amount of maintenance visits likely to be carried out throughout the lifetime of the development. It is noted that any consideration should be made against a likely starting point that some chemical use would form part of standard agricultural practice use of the site, albeit in a materially different context.
- 7.91 Overall, and particularly having regard to the mitigation that will form part of the drainage scheme, officers consider the proposed development is unlikely to lead to any materially harmful impact to water sources within and surrounding the site.
- 7.92 There are no other sources likely to result in ground contamination particularly arising as a result of the development, the development is considered sufficiently remediated through the drainage proposals, it is considered this is sufficient to limit the impact of any possible chemical use.

- 7.93 On the whole, the proposal is considered to accord with policies LP36 and LP37 in respect to ground and water pollution and air quality.

### **Health Impact Assessment**

- 7.94 As confirmed in LP 29 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan – for large scale new developments the importance of creating an environment that facilitates safe, healthy and inclusive communities is paramount.
- 7.95 The submitted HIA confirms that the proposed development will enhance those parts of the bullet point criteria contained in LP 29 – including access to open countryside, crime reduction, air quality, noise and neighbourhood amenity, these are shown as already established and not will not be negatively diminished by the development.
- 7.96 There will be benefits in terms of accessibility to the countryside and improved connection of the PRoW. The HIA also notes that disturbance to neighbour amenity is most likely to be experienced during the construction and decommissioning phases owing to increased traffic, but this will be short term. Crime and antisocial behaviour will be discouraged by the perimeter fencing and CCTV surveillance at entrances gates.
- 7.97 It is also noted that access to work and training opportunities will be enhanced during the construction phase for local employers and employees.
- 7.98 On the whole, the proposal is considered to accord with policy LP 29, in respect that it identifies the relevant positive and negative health impacts, demonstrates consideration of how such impacts may be enhanced or mitigated, and identifies what impact this consideration has had on the development proposal.

### **Other Matters**

- 7.99 Although no comments have raised concerns that the proposal would lead to an increase in risk of crime, the Cambridgeshire Police have noted that solar farm installations themselves can be vulnerable to crime but have not made any comment that there is likely to be an increase in crime beyond the site itself. As set out previously, lighting and CCTV would be required as part of the development, and details of that will be secured by condition. The site would also require fencing, and the final details of that would be required by condition to ensure it meets appropriate safety standards without adversely impacting character, PRoW use, or undermining ecological corridors. This accords with the comments of the Police and officers consider this is sufficient to limit the threat of any crime that might arise, sufficient to ensure there would be no materially increased risk either to the site or its surroundings. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policy LP14 in terms of risk of crime.
- 7.100 Abbotsley and Croxton Parish Council, along with local residents have objected on the basis that there is no assessment of alternative sites provided that demonstrates the development must be in this location and the impact of cumulative developments of solar provision in this area.



- 7.101 This is not a requirement of adopted policy, and regardless of any identification of alternative sites the application as submitted must still be assessed on its own merits. Sequential testing and assessment of alternative sites would normally be sought only where there were significant harms identified, in order to demonstrate there were no other alternatives such that the location should outweigh those harms. In this instance no significant detrimental harm has been identified, there is no adopted policy requirement, and no other reason has been put forward as to why an assessment of alternative sites should be formally carried out. It is therefore not considered a necessary or reasonable requirement to seek further assessment of alternative sites in this instance.
- 7.102 Cumulatively, it is acknowledged that this area has seen an increase in the number of solar applications however this site offers no intervisibility with that development recently approved in the locality, at Abbotsley.

## **8. Planning Balance and Conclusions**

- 8.1 The application must be considered in accordance with the statutory tests in s.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, namely, in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.2 Officers have reviewed the detail submitted, along with representations from Parish/Town Councils, and technical and non-technical consultee responses. It has been identified that the proposed development would accord with national and local policy, having regard to the controls that are available to the Local Planning Authority, particularly conditions as set out in the recommendation below. While it is noted that there will be some immediate impacts, particularly in relation to landscape and highways, these are not considered to be materially harmful in the context of the development as a whole, having regard to the timescales of such impacts throughout the lifetime of the development. In any event these limited impacts are considered to be significantly outweighed by the significant material benefits of renewable energy generation and biodiversity net gain that would arise from the development.
- 8.3 On balance and subject to appropriate conditions, it is considered the proposal accords with adopted national and local policy, and no material considerations have been identified that would indicate the application should otherwise be refused.

## **9. RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL subject to conditions relating to the following;**

- 3-year time limit to implement
- Accordance with approved plans
- 35-year temporary permission
- Decommissioning plan to be submitted.
- PV Panels to be no higher than 3.4m (as shown on plans)
- Agricultural land and soil management plan to be submitted.
- Detail drainage scheme to be submitted.

- Securing the mitigation in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)
- Long-term management and maintenance details of drainage scheme to be submitted.
- Management scheme for surface water discharge during construction to be submitted.
- Final details of hard and soft landscaping to be submitted for the BESS area and including offset details to PRow.
- Tree Protection Plan to be submitted.
- Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) to be submitted.
- Ecological Species mitigation to be submitted. (skylarks)
- Secure District Level Newt License.
- Archaeological Management Plan for the construction phase and a WSI.
- Details of CCTV locations and fields of view to be submitted.
- Details of any lighting to be submitted.
- Public Rights of Way / Permissive Path details to be submitted.
- Construction Environment and Traffic Management Plan to be submitted. To include traffic routing plan and good practice construction environmental methods. (CEMP)
- Details of fencing/gates to be submitted.
- Access to be a minimum of 7.3m in for 17m in length.
- Access to be constructed to CCC Specification where they adjoin the adopted highway.
- Parking and manoeuvring space to be provided within the site for the duration of construction.
- Visibility splays to be provided and maintained.
- Access kerbs to be 15m radius
- No surface water to discharge onto the highway from the accesses.
- Access to be a metalled surface.
- Construction method statement for elements which cross East West Rail safeguarded land.

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

## **CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to **Hannah Guy, Principal Development Management Officer**  
[Hannah.guy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Hannah.guy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

# ABBOTSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council

Email:

Telephone:

Hannah Guy  
Development Control  
Huntingdonshire District Council

14<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Dear Hannah

**24/00295/FUL - Installation and operation of a renewable energy generation and storage station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with battery storage containers, inverter/transformer units, control house, substations, onsite grid connection equipment, storage containers, site access, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancement**

**Additional information submitted**

**Land north east of Weald Farm, Cambridge Road, Eynesbury**

Abbotsley Parish Council considered the additional information submitted for this application at its meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024. All members of the Parish Council present voted unanimously to recommend **refusal**.

Councillors considered Stantec's response to Abbotsley Parish Council's comments made on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024, as contained with their Planning Statement Addendum (section 7.2). The Parish Council accepted the clarification on the connection point. It was agreed that the response does not negate the Parish Council's comments of 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 nor address their concerns. This is particularly the case relating to paragraph 7.2.9 regarding intervisibility. For clarity, Councillors would state that intervisibility is not of relevance to the Parish Council's concern. What is of major concern is the impact that this solar farm and associated infrastructure would have in this rural location, and the cumulative effect that this would have adjacent to two further solar farms in this locality both being within the planning system, on the change in character of the area, and on the loss of the quality crop-producing agricultural land, and the countryside.

Councillors stand by what they previously submitted and continue to assert that this proposal is not appropriate and recommend refusal.

Yours sincerely



Clerk to Abbotsley Parish Council



Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street  
Huntingdon. PE29 3TN  
Developmentcontrol@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

01480 388424  
www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Head of Planning Services  
Pathfinder House  
St. Mary's Street  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire PE 29 3TN

Application Number: 24/00295/FUL Case Officer Hannah Guy

**Proposal:** Installation and operation of a renewable energy generation and storage station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with battery storage containers, inverter/transformer units, control house, substations, onsite grid connection equipment, storage containers, site access, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancement.

**Location:** Land North East Of Weald Farm Cambridge Road Eynesbury

**Observations of Abbotsley Town/Parish Council.**

Please ✓ box as appropriate

☐ Recommend **approval** because .....(please give relevant planning reasons in space below)

☒ Recommend **refusal** because...(please give relevant planning reasons in space below)

Please see separate letter.

☐ No observations either in favour or against the proposal

Abbotsley Parish Council Clerk to Abbotsley ~~Town~~/Parish Council. (For GDPR purposes please do not sign)

Date: 21st May 2024

Failure to return this form within the time indicated will be taken as an indication that the Town or Parish Council do not express any opinion either for or against the application.

Please send response to email address below:-

[Development.control@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Development.control@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

(Development Management)

## ABBOTSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council: Katie Bates, Bridge House, 27 Church Street, Buckden, St Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 5TP  
Email: [clerk@abbotsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@abbotsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk) Telephone: 07588 267140 [www.abbotsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.abbotsleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Hannah Guy  
Development Control  
Huntingdonshire District Council

21<sup>st</sup> May 2024

Dear Hannah

**24/00295/FUL - Installation and operation of a renewable energy generation and storage station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with battery storage containers, inverter/transformer units, control house, substations, onsite grid connection equipment, storage containers, site access, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancement  
Land north east of Weald Farm, Cambridge Road, Eynesbury**

Abbotsley Parish Council considered this application at its meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024. All members of the Parish Council voted unanimously to recommend **refusal**, citing the following reasons:

- The Parish Council was concerned with the potential loss of good and very good graded agricultural land. Concern was expressed that high grade farmland should be retained to produce food and reduce the reliance on imported food. This should be a key factor in achieving sustainable living.
- Councillors agreed that where solar farms are a necessity they should be concentrated on lower grade farmland.
- The view was expressed that solar panels should be sited on the roofs of buildings.
- Solar farms are inefficient in harnessing and transmitting power.
- Concerns were raised at the length of connection that this site would require, needing underground cables to reach the connection location at almost Wisbech, making it vulnerable to failure. There would be transmission loss due to the large distance between generation and connection to the grid.
- The proposal would have a negative visual impact on the countryside.
- The site is located over a well-used public footpath which links Abbotsley with Croxton. Currently, it is a tranquil, picturesque route and this would be irrevocably changed.
- It is a particular concern that this proposal would result in the loss of countryside.

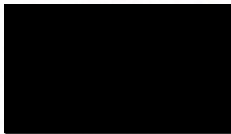


- Councillors expressed great concern at the amount of development proposed for Abbotsley. There is already a solar farm on the outskirts of Abbotsley which has approval for more than doubling in size; another solar farm is proposed within Abbotsley (23/01507/FUL); there is the construction of the new A428; and this is the third solar farm proposed within Abbotsley.

The Parish Council strongly believes that a relevant policy document and plans should be put in place and adopted by the Local Authority, as a formal process to locate suitable sites for solar farms. Councillors are concerned by the current apparently ad hoc proposed siting which is currently at the instigation of private companies for profit.

Overall, it was felt that this proposal is not appropriate and therefore, it was agreed to recommend refusal.

Yours sincerely



Clerk to Abbotsley Parish Council

**CROXTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**(South Cambridgeshire)**

Hannah Guy  
Development Control  
Huntingdonshire District Council

24th May 2024

Dear Hannah,

**24/00295/FUL - Installation and operation of a renewable energy generation and storage station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with battery storage containers, inverter/transformer units, control house, substations, onsite grid connection equipment, storage containers, site access, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancement  
Land north east of Weald Farm, Cambridge Road, Eynesbury.**

We, Croxton Parish Council have, in careful consideration and upon listening to representations and opinions expressed by members of the local community and the rich level of biodiversity and higher tier stewardship land that we have tirelessly defended, unanimously voted **against** this application.

- We feel that such loss of high grade (Class 2 & 3a) agricultural land that would facilitate the development would be detrimental to the food security of the region and ultimately the country.
- We feel that the proposed development will have a detrimental effect on the local transitory ecology entering and leaving the parish.
- We feel that the existing extent of the archaeological investigations have only been focused on half the proposed site and, therefore, the applicant has not fully discharged this duty in order to proceed with seeking planning permission.
- We feel that the existing visual amenity of the open countryside will be ruined and in turn will be detrimental to the well being of the community and visitors. Particularly as the development straddles the only foot path/ right of way out of Croxton.
- We feel the proposed ‘enhanced’ planting to the periphery of the site does not go far enough to provide suitable habitats for existing wildlife nor provide sufficient green corridors between what will become isolated patches of woodland

**We would request that HDC refuse this application and legitimately reject this proposal.**

**In the absence of a permanent Clerk all correspondence to**

[REDACTED]



**Further we would also request HDC to consider the following, in light of the governments blocking of a smaller sized development within West Northamptonshire.**

The National Grid has forecast that East Anglia will soon have enough overcapacity to export its off shore North Sea wind generated electricity to the of the country, again making this proposed developments purpose redundant.

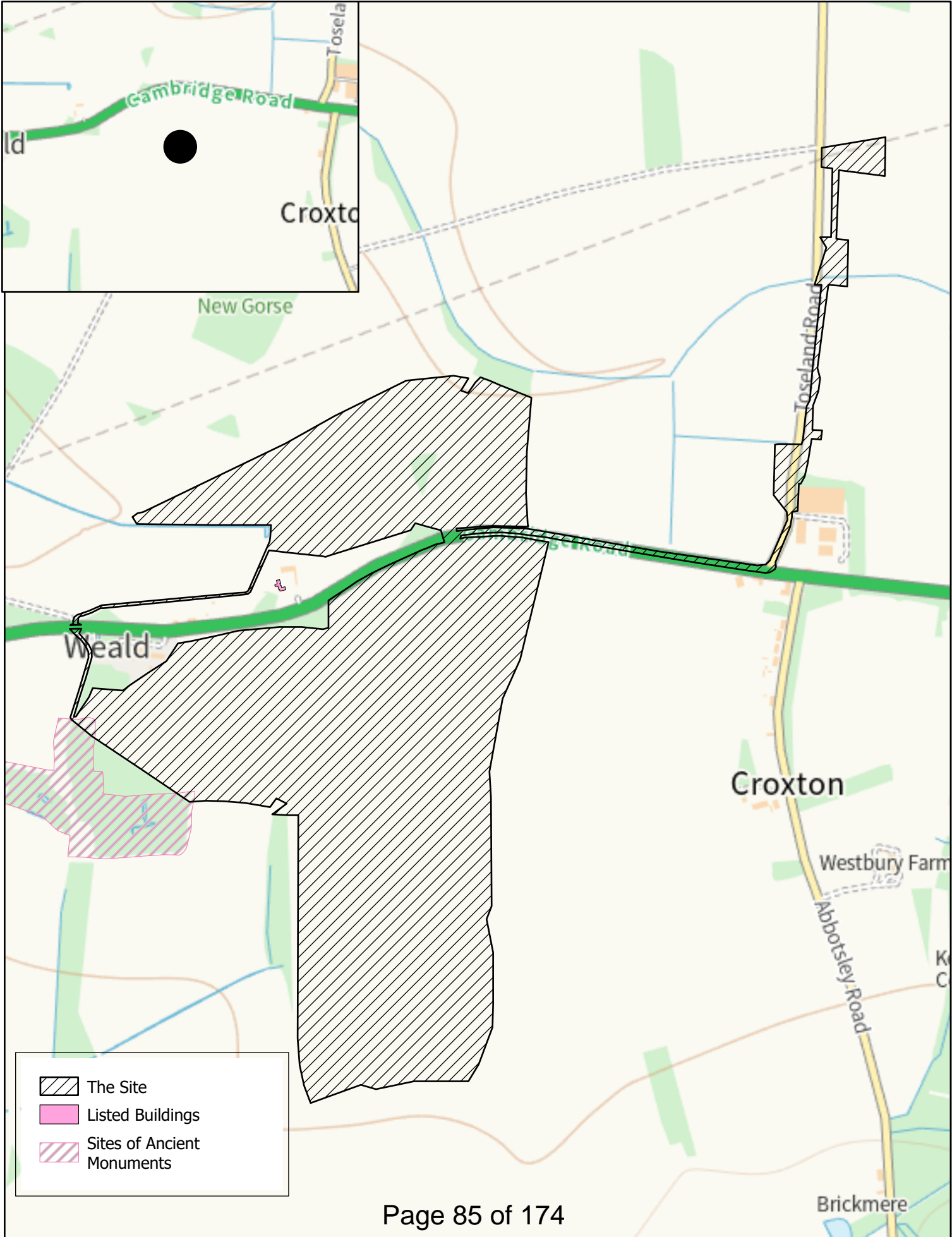
Evidence of the above is borne out from the governments own figures. It is reported that electricity demand and ,therefore, the carbon footprint created through electricity generation by fossil fuels has steadily fallen since 2005. This reduction has been solely driven by consumer habits and energy efficient appliances. In 2005 the UK's overall generating capacity was circa 83,000 MW and recent figures suggest that the current generating capacity is circa 103,000 MW including wind and solar. Again, and by the governments own admission, it seems that any additional solar generation is adding to the current level of over capacity and therefore the additional capacity afforded by this development is not required.

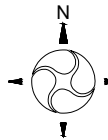
Yours Sincerely



Chair Croxton Parish Council



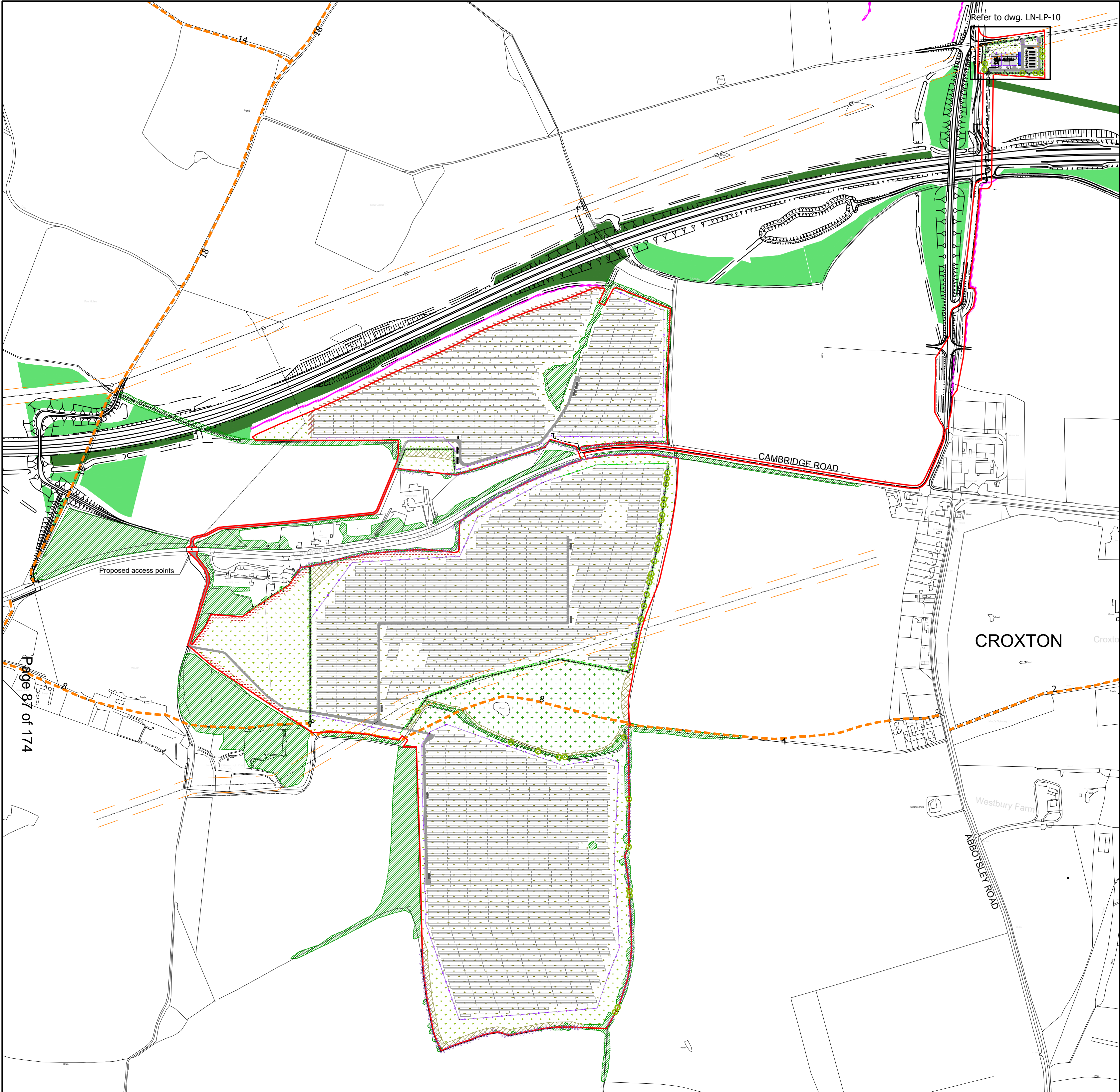




- Key:**
- Power Control System
  - Battery Container
  - MV Transformer
  - Storage Container
  - DAM Container
  - Firewater Storage (228m3)
  - Control House
  - PV Modules
  - Inverter - Transformer
  - CCTV
  - Security Fence
  - Gate
  - Customer Delivery Station
  - 132 kV DNO Substation
  - Customer Substation
  - DNO Substation
  - Access Track (Outside of Security Fence)
  - Access Track (Inside of Security Fence)
  - Temporary Construction Compound
  - Site Boundary
  - 132kV Cable
  - 33kV Cable
  - Archaeology Exclusion Areas
  - Existing Vegetation
  - Existing Public Footpath
  - OS Map
  - Existing Transmission Post
  - Existing Overhead 11 kV Power Line
  - Existing Overhead 33 kV Power Line
  - 33kV Cable (duct)
  - Timber Closed Form Fence

10	Amended cable route and red line boundary	Amah Abungari	Richard Spurr	Richard Spurr	05.02.2024
09	Amended substation area southern fence line and western fence line in solar park	Amah Abungari	Richard Spurr	Richard Spurr	02.12.2024
08	Amended substation/BEES compound	Amah Abungari	Richard Spurr	Richard Spurr	12.11.2024
07	RLB adjusted near PUC for transport sweep path	Richard Spurr	-	-	31.07.2024
06	Track routed to avoid archaeology and closed form fence added - glit and glare mitigation	Richard Spurr	-	-	04.07.2024
05	Scale updated, infrastructure re-sized and future A428 labelled	Richard Spurr	-	-	25.03.2024
04	Cable route updated and red line boundary based highways permanent land ownership	Richard Spurr	-	-	01.02.2024
VERSION	PURPOSE	DRAWN	VERIFIED	APPROVED	DATE
PROJECT: North Weald PV Farm		DRAWING DESIGNATION: Site Plan		ISSUED BY: CSE	
SITE: Cambridgeshire, England, UK		DRAWING CODE: NOR01-0V-EL-DRA-GEN_IMP-07-02		SUB-CONTRACTOR	
CLIENT: -		SERVICE: Electrical		SCALE: 1:5000	
PROJECT N°: NOR01		STAGE: Development		FORMAT: A1	





Native Woodland Mix (plant at 1 plants/m <sup>2</sup> in single species groups of 3-5 plants)						
Abbrev	Species Name	Common Name	Height	General Specification	% Mix	Quantity
Ac ca	Acer campestre	Field Maple	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	10%	1056
Be pe	Betula pendula	Silver Birch	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	10%	1056
Be pu	Betula pubescens	Downy Birch	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	10%	1056
Ca be	Carpinus betulus	Hornbeam	150-175cm	2x; Feathered; 3 breaks B	5%	527
Co av	Corylus avellana	Common Hazel	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	15%	1584
Ma sy	Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	80-100cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: B	5%	527
Pr av	Prunus avium	Wild Cherry	150-175cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	10%	1056
Qu pe	Quercus petraea	Sessile Oak	80-100cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: B	5%	527
Qu ro	Quercus robur	English Oak	80-100cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: B	10%	1056
Qu ro(f)	Quercus robur	English Oak	150-175cm	2x; Feathered; 3 breaks B	5%	527
So au	Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	10%	1056
Ti co	Tilia cordata	Small-Leaved Lime	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	5%	527

Hedgerow Mix (plant in a double-staggered row, at 5 per linear m in single species groups of 3-7 plants)							
Abbrev	Species Name	Common Name	Group	Height	General Specification	% Mix	Quantity
Co av	Corylus avellana	Common Hazel	Shrub	80-100cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 4 brks: B	10	268
Co sa	Cornus sanguinea	Dogwood	Shrub	40-60cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	5	134
Cr mo	Crataegus monogyna	Common Hawthorn	Shrub	80-100cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: 4 brks: B	25	671
Eu eu	Euonymus europaeus	Spindle	Shrub	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	10	268
Pr sp	Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	Shrub	80-100cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	25	671
Ro ca	Rosa canina	Dog Rose	Shrub	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	5	134
Sa ni	Sambucus nigra	Common Elder	Shrub	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	5	134
Vi op	Viburnum opulus	Gelder Rose	Shrub	80-100cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	5	134
Ac ca	Acer campestre	Field Maple	Tree	120-150cm	2x; Feathered; 3 breaks	5	134
Ma sy	Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	Tree	120-150cm	2x; Feathered; 3 breaks	5	134

Hedgerow Trees (plant in groups of 1-3 of same species, at locations indicated on plan)						
Abbrev	Species Name	Common Name	Height	General Specification	% Mix	Quantity
Ac ca	Acer campestre	Field Maple	250-300cm	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	25%	8
Ma sy	Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	80-100cm	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	5%	2
Pr av	Prunus avium	Wild Cherry	150-175cm	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	5%	2
Qu pe	Quercus petraea	Sessile Oak	250-300cm	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	5%	2
Qu ro	Quercus robur	English Oak	250-300cm	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	60%	19

Long Term Management Plan

- Pruning generally**
- All dead, damaged or diseased tree branches shall be removed and arisings removed from site. Shrubs shall be pruned in the appropriate season (see hedgerows, below) to maintain health and vigour and encroachment on access route/storage areas, etc. Avoid cutting operations from March to August (inclusive) to prevent disturbance of breeding birds.
- Hedgerows**
- Hedgerows shall be pruned on one side per year, alternating on a 2 or 3 year rotation in February, and maintained a minimum height of 2 - 3m (otherwise stated on the plan) to promote bushy growth while providing continued habitat and foraging opportunities for wildlife. Hedgerow trees shall be encouraged to develop to full maturity.
- Wildflower Meadow Grassland**
- Meadow grassland within the inner section of the fields (under and around the solar arrays) to be cut as frequently; areas away from the solar panels to be cut annually, as a summer hay cut, with arisings removed; and the boundaries of the field to be cut on a rotational three-year cycle.
- Scrub & Brook Corridor**
- Areas to be thinned and trimmed to a height of between 1 and 3 meters on a 3 year rotational basis.
- Woodland**
- Carry out selective thinning and coppicing of approximately 30% of plants in Year 5. Leave deadwood and brush piles in situ.
- General**
- All soft and hard landscaping shall be inspected annually by the Landscape Contractor and an approved arboriculturist and tree works carried out as necessary to ensure the continued health and safety of the trees. Regular weed control and litter picking operations will be required.

LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PLAN  
Establishment and Maintenance Period (Years 1-5)

- Pruning generally**
- All dead, damaged or diseased tree branches shall be removed and arisings removed from site. Trees and shrubs shall be pruned in the appropriate season to maintain health and vigour and to prevent encroachment on access route/storage areas, etc. The removal of vegetation will be timed for outside of the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive) to prevent disturbance of breeding birds. If this is not possible, a check for active nests will first be undertaken by an ecologist. If a nest is found, an appropriate buffer will be left undisturbed until any chicks have fledged, as confirmed by an ecologist.
- Existing & Proposed Hedgerows**
- Hedgerows shall be pruned on one side per year alternating on a 2 or 3 year rotation in February, aiming to maintain a minimum height of 2.5 - 3m to promote bushy growth while providing continued habitat and foraging opportunities for wildlife. Hedgerow trees shall be retained and encouraged to develop to full maturity where not likely to cause overshadowing of panels.
- Scrub & Brook Corridor**
- Areas to be thinned and trimmed to a height of between 1 and 3 meters on a 3 year rotational basis.
- Woodland**
- Re-mulch planting area during years 1-3 to minimise competition from weeds and grasses.
- Wildflower Meadow Grassland**
- EM2 and EM3 to be established and maintained as follows:
    - In the first year, cut in early August. Arisings should be removed from site. The meadow can then be cut relatively frequently through the remainder of the growing season to 50mm.
    - In subsequent years EM2 and EM3 should be cut in early spring (March) and then again in late August/early September, with a 'hay cut'. They hay should be left to dry and shed seed for 1-7 days and then removed from site. The meadow should then be mowed through autumn and winter to 50mm.
    - The spring cut will help to manage the height of the meadow, especially within inner sections of fields to prevent shading and to provide access. Cutting in the summer (between the spring cut and the hay cut) should not be permitted, as this will prevent the meadow from flowering and setting seed.
    - Competitive weeds should be dug out or removed using spot treatment twice annually.
  - EM10 to be established and maintained as follows:
    - In the first year, EM10 should be cut in early August, with risings being removed from the site following the cut. Perennial weeds, such as docks and brambles, should be dug out/spot treated using a suitable non-residual herbicide. The tussocky grassland can then be maintained at 50mm until March the following year.
    - EM10 should then be cut on a rotational basis every 2-3 years between October and February.
- Semi-improved grass field margins to be retained where possible
  - Proposed planting of field margins, in areas indicated on a rotation, with wild bird seed mix and some biennial plants such as kale and stubble turnips, to provide a continual seed resource.
- General**
- All areas of planting and grass shall be maintained, to include:
    - Ample irrigation
    - Weed control (herbicide application or hand weeding)
    - Litter picking
    - Topping up of mulch
    - Checking condition of tree stakes and ties
  - All stakes and ties shall be inspected during the growing season and adjusted as necessary to ensure that they are secure and firm and that the ties are not chaffing the stem of the trees. Stakes and ties shall be removed and disposed of when plants become self supporting or at the end of the year 5 establishment period.
  - Planting which fails to thrive or dies during the 5-year establishment period shall be replaced within the next suitable planting season.

PLANTING NOTES

- General**
- Plant material to conform to the National Plant Specification. Plant handling and planting operations to be in accordance with HTA 'Handling and Establishing Landscape Plants', Parts I-III.
  - Imported topsoil (if required) to BS 3882 Low Fertility Grade and from an approved source. Existing topsoil shall have a maximum 35% clay content and minimum 5% organic content, pH 5.5-8.5 and be free of perennial weeds, weed seeds and contamination. Maximum stone content 20% (>20mm particle size), maximum size of stones 50mm in any direction. Existing topsoil to be ameliorated and/or screened if necessary to achieve this specification.
  - Soil conditioner: Sanitized and stabilised compost to BST PAS 100. Apply 75mm depth even coverage and incorporate into topsoil during cultivation operations, to a minimum depth of 150mm. Compost to be Compost Association certified, or conforming to the specification from an approved supplier.
  - Mulch planting beds with matured coniferous bark, with an even particle size between 5-35mm, to 75mm minimum depth over weed-free soil after completion of planting and watering operations.
- Existing Field Margins**
- Retained grassland - any bare patches arising from installation works to be seeded with an agricultural grassland seed mix.

- Hedgerows**
- For existing hedgerows, plant bare root transplants at 0.5m centres on the back of the existing hedgerows and fill any gaps larger than 0.5m. Hand dig with care in proximity to existing hedgerows and do not sever any roots larger than 2.5cm in diameter.
  - Transplants to be notch planted, ensuring the original root collar is at ground level after backfilling and firming in.
  - Hedgerow plants to be installed with rabbit protection, as follows:
    - Transplants, cuttings and seedlings: Biodegradable tube guards 0.6m high x 50mm diameter or greater to suit girth of shrub/tree, supported by 900mm bamboo cane inserted 300mm below ground level.
- Ensure protection methods do not restrict natural movement or growth.

- Tree and Scrub Planting**
- Plants to be installed with rabbit protection, in the same method as hedgerow plants.
  - Notch plant bare root transplants in rows on a 1.0m grid. Hand dig with care in proximity to existing trees and do not sever any roots larger than 2.5cm in diameter.

- Wildflower Meadow Grassland**
- Existing arable land to be harrowed in areas indicated for meadow grassland. Do not cultivate within tree root protection areas or within the existing hedgerow but cut manually to 30-50mm during autumn preceding and following seeding. Sow meadow grassland seed mixes into newly harrowed soil in areas indicated, in accordance with supplier's recommendations, in autumn to reduce competition.
  - All meadows to be sown with a nurse of cornfield annuals.
  - Extra attention is required in terms of seed bed preparation to encourage good establishment and to cultivate when soil moisture allows breakdown of the soil aggregates into a medium tilth.

- Planting seasons**
- Deciduous trees and shrubs: Late October to late March
  - Conifers and evergreens: September/October or April/May
  - Grass seedling: August/September

The scaling of this drawing cannot be assured				
Revision	Date	Drm	Ckd	
L	Addition of Cable Route and Duct	26.02.25	ML	MF

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Huntingdonshire District Council / South Cambridge District Council Boundary
- Existing Woodlands, Copses and Tree Belts
- Existing Water Courses and Features
- Existing Public Right of Way
- Proposed Woodland Planting  
10m width at southern / south-western boundary  
5m near PROW 8
- Existing Hedgerow to be Retained and gapped up  
(to a minimum height of 2.5 - 3m)
- Proposed Hedgerow  
(to a minimum height of 2.5 - 3m)
- Proposed Hedgerow Tree
- Proposed Wildflower Meadow Tussock Mixture Emorsgate EM10  
(to be cut every 3 years)
- Proposed Special General Purpose Meadow Mixture Emorsgate EM3  
(to be cut annually or more frequently to prevent shading as required)
- Proposed Standard General Purpose Meadow Mixture Emorsgate EM2, Existing field margins to be retained where possible  
(to be cut annually)
- Proposed Field Margin Planting Zones  
To be planted with FS10/FCB 1 Year Wild Bird Seed Mix - Finch and Corn Bunting (AB9), or similar, with additional bennial plants
- Existing Overhead Power Line with 30m Easement
- Proposed 3.5m Closed Board Fencing
- Proposed Security Fencing
- Proposed Security Fencing with Screening Mesh
- Proposed Solar Panels
- Proposed Firewater Storage Tank
- Proposed Cable Route
- Proposed Cable Duct under Highway
- A428 Road Improvements Proposed Landscaping
- Proposed Native Woodland
- Proposed Linear Belt of Shrubs and Trees
- Proposed Native Species Hedgerow

FIGURE 8a  
Project  
North Weald Solar

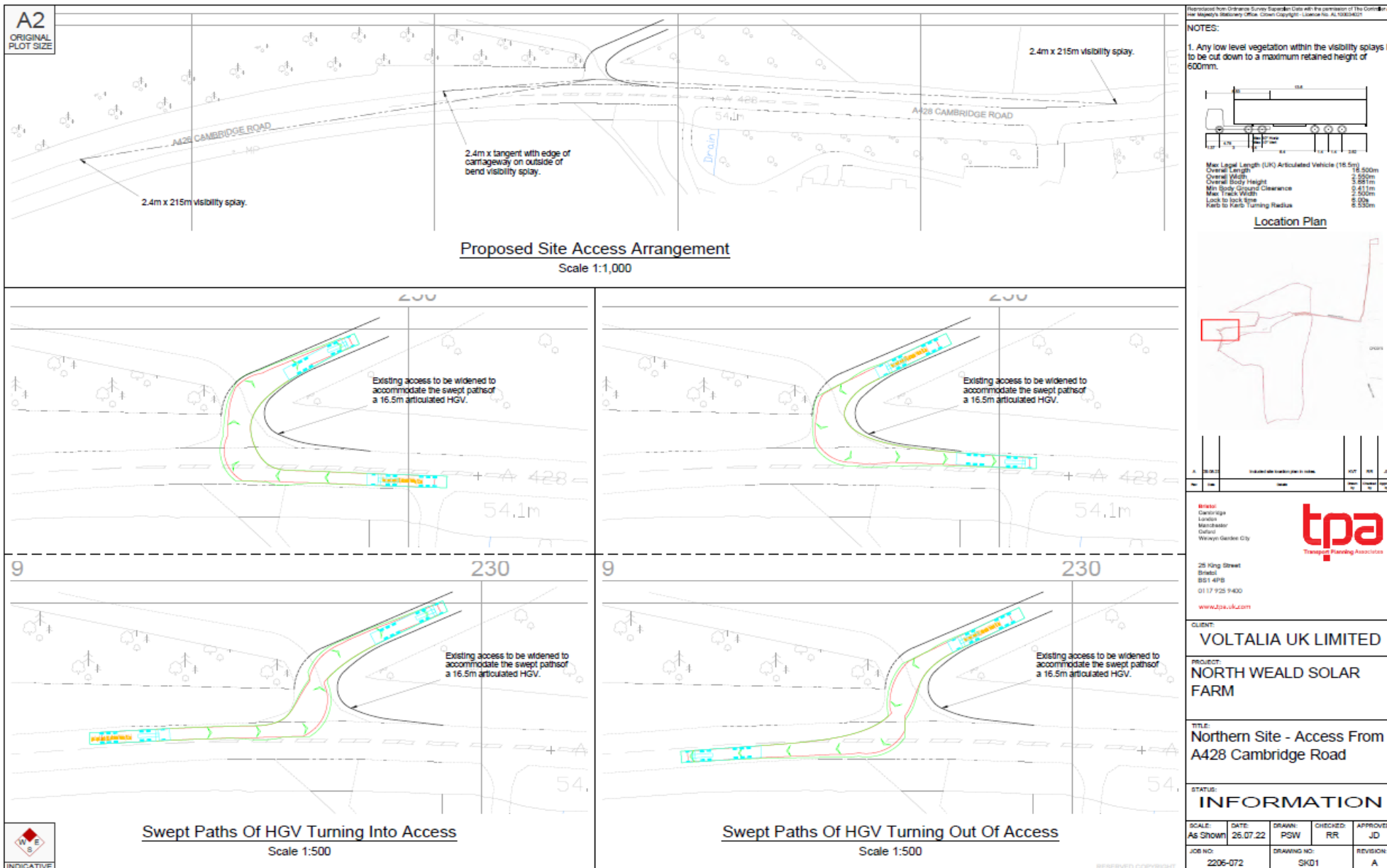
Drawing Title  
Landscape Strategy Plan

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
26.01.2024	1:5,000 @A1 1:10,000 @A3	ML/CK	MF
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
34381	LN-LP-09	L	

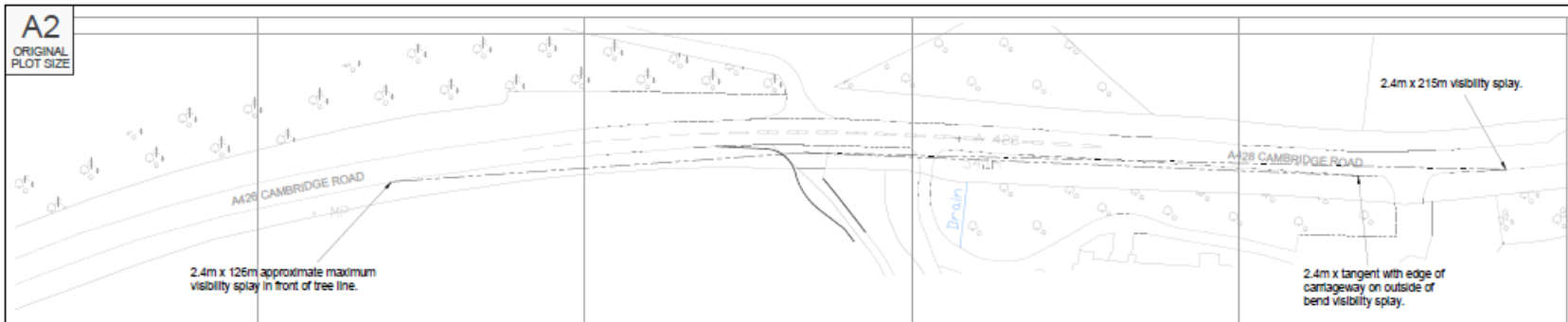
Stantec UK Limited  
7 Soho Square  
London  
W1D 3QB  
T: 020 7446 6888

stantec.com\uk

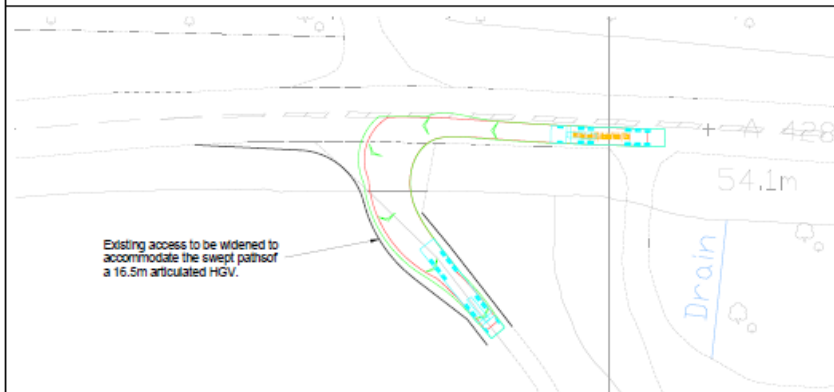




A2  
ORIGINAL  
PLOT SIZE



**Proposed Site Access Arrangement**  
Scale 1:1,000



**Swept Paths Of HGV Turning Into Access**  
Scale 1:500



**Swept Paths Of HGV Turning Out Of Access**  
Scale 1:500



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Supermap Data with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 1083421

**NOTES:**

- Any low level vegetation within the visibility splays is to be cut down to a maximum retained height of 600mm.



Max Legal Length (UK) Articulated Vehicle (18.5m)	18.500m
Overall Length	2.500m
Overall Width	2.500m
Overall Body Height	3.000m
Min Body Ground Clearance	0.400m
Max Track Width	2.500m
Lock to lock time	0.00s
Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius	0.00m

**Location Plan**



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

**tpa**  
Transport Planning Associates

25 King Street  
Bristol  
BS1 4PB  
0117 925 9400  
www.tpa.co.uk

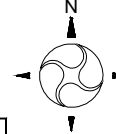
**CLIENT:**  
VOLTALIA UK LIMITED

**PROJECT:**  
NORTH WEALD SOLAR FARM

**TITLE:**  
Southern Site - Access From A428 Cambridge Road

**STATUS:**  
INFORMATION

SCALE:	DATE:	DRAWN:	CHECKED:	APPROVED:
As Shown	26.07.22	PSW	RR	JD
JOB NO:	DRAWING NO:	REVISION:		
2206-072	SK02	A		



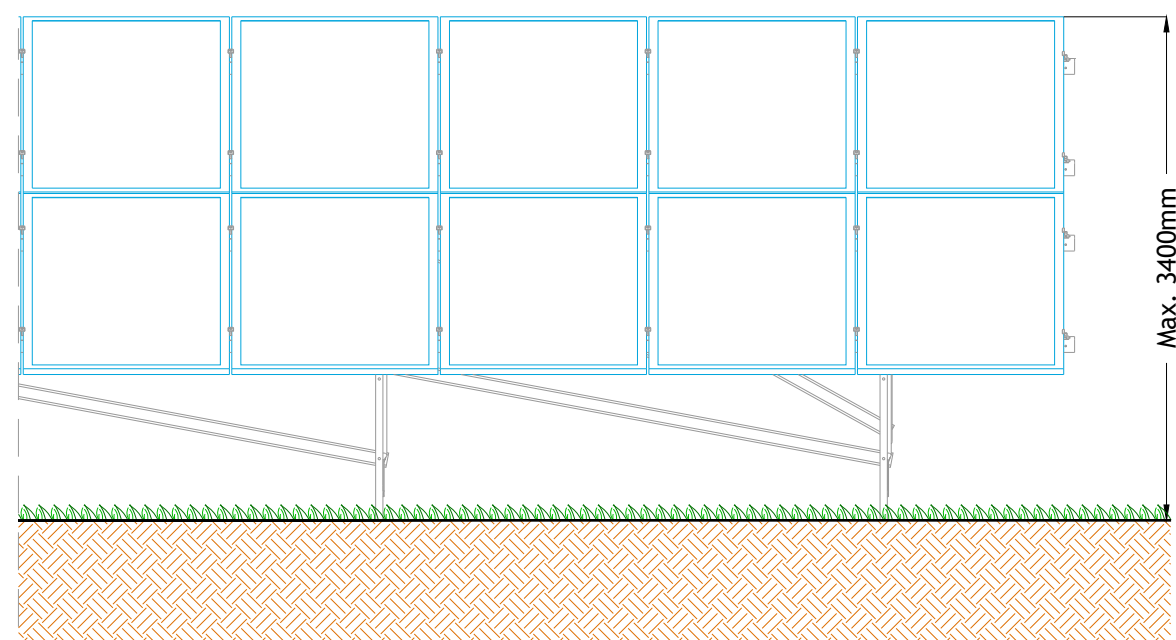
NOTES

Site Area: 78.84 ha

Key:  
— OS Map  
— Site Boundary  
— Local Authority Land Boundary

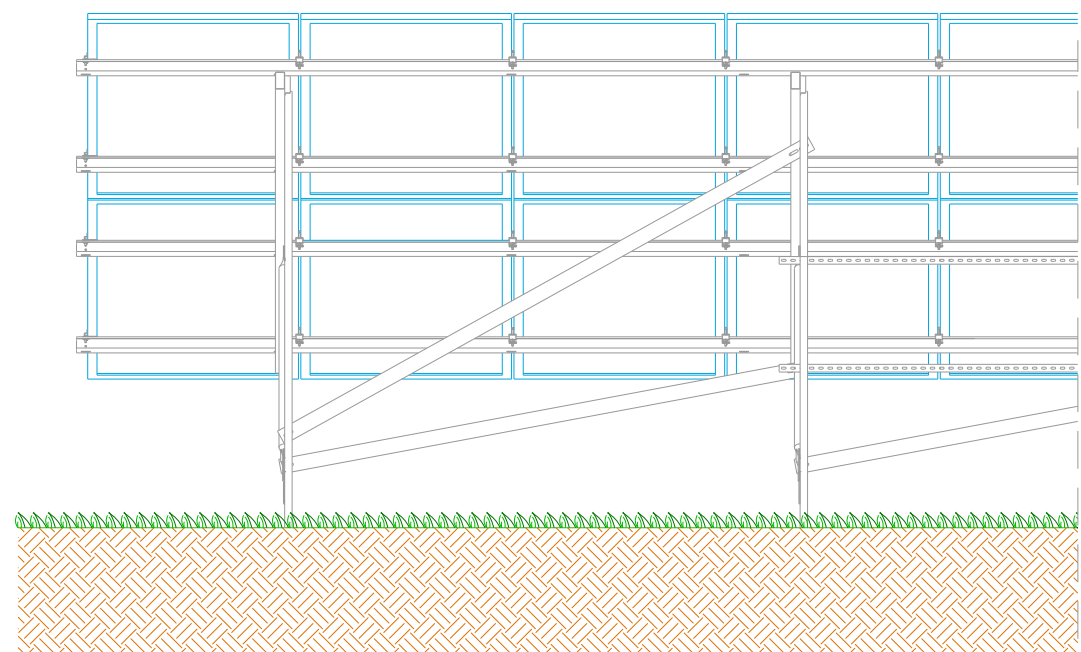
07	Amended Red Line Boundary	Amish Akungisi	Richard Spurr	Richard Spurr	05.02.2023
06	RLB adjusted near PNC for transport sweep path	Richard Spurr	-	-	31.07.2024
05	RLB Minor Adjustments	Richard Spurr	-	-	05.07.2024
04	Scale updated	Richard Spurr	-	-	25.03.2024
03	Cable route updated and red line boundary based Highways permanent land ownership	Richard Spurr	-	-	01.02.2024
02	Added Permanent Possession	Amish Akungisi	-	-	30.01.2024
01	First Issue	Richard Spurr	-	-	05.12.2023
VERSION	PURPOSE	DRAWN	VERIFIED	APPROVED	DATE
PROJECT: North Weald PV Farm		DRAWING DESIGNATION: Site Location Plan			
SITE: Cambridgeshire, England, UK		ISSUED BY: CSE SUB-COORDINATOR			
CLIENT: -	DRAWING CODE: NOR01-0V-EL-CRAJLOC_PLAN-07-01	volitalia			
PROJECT N°: NOR01	STAGE: Development	SERVICE: Electrical	SCALE: 1:5000	FORMAT: A1	



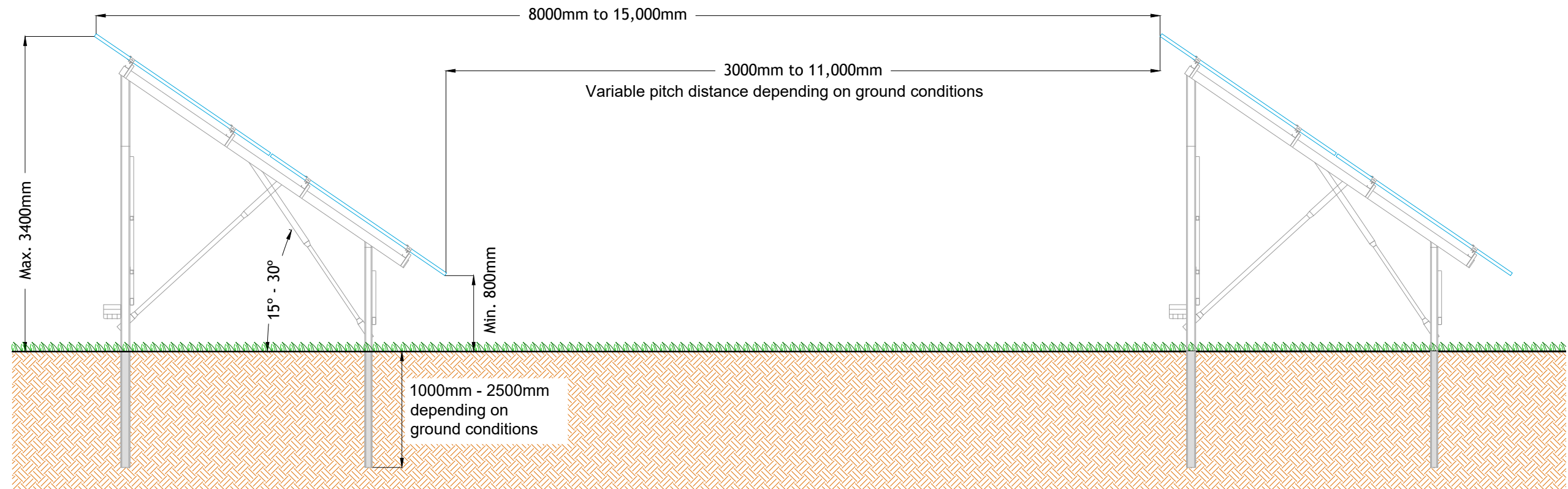


FRONT ELEVATION

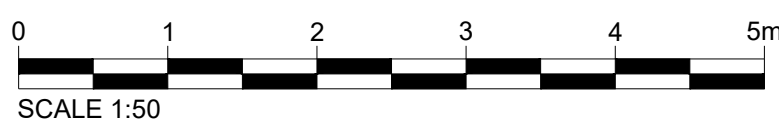
Variable with tilt  
and panel configuration




REAR ELEVATION



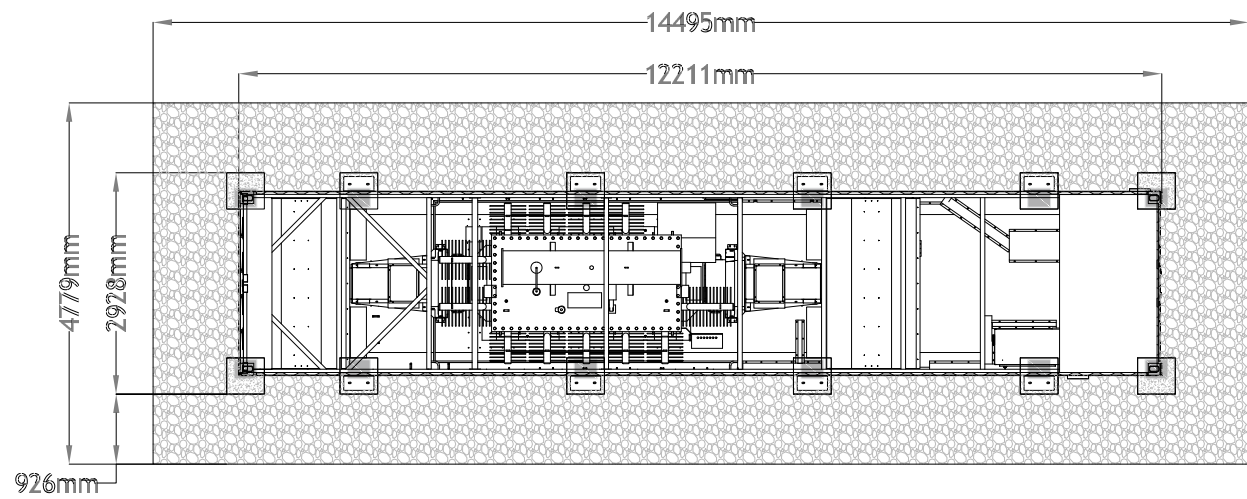
SIDE ELEVATION



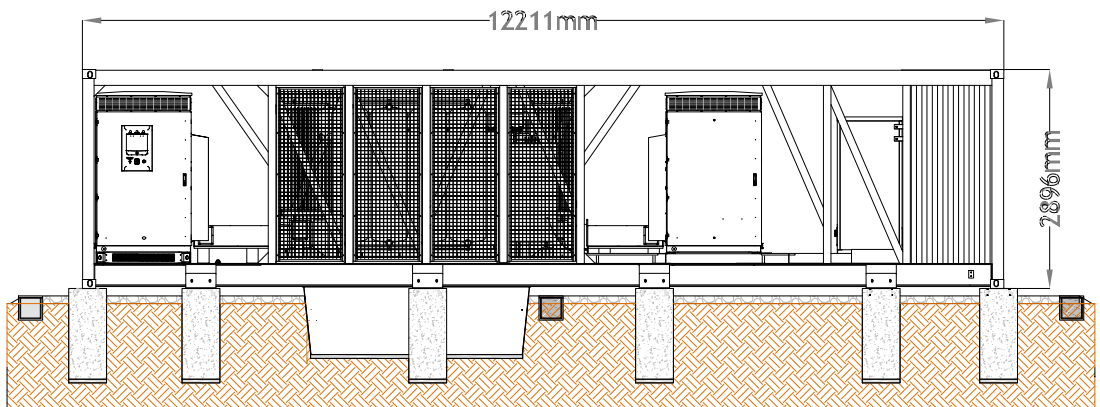
02	PV PANEL NOW SHOWING WORST CASE 3.4m AT APPROX TILT of 35D				R Spurr			04/04/2024
VERSION	PURPOSE				DRAWN	VERIFIED	APPROVED	DATE
PROJECT: NORTH WEALD PV FARM				DRAWING DESIGNATION: Structure Array Details				<div> SUB-CONTRACTOR:</div>
SITE: Cambridgeshire, United Kingdom								
CLIENT: VOLTALIA				ISSUED BY: COE				
PROJECT N°: NOR01				DRAWING CODE: NTW01-SD-13				
STAGE: Development				SCALE: 1:50				
SERVICE: Civil and Structures				FORMAT: A3				



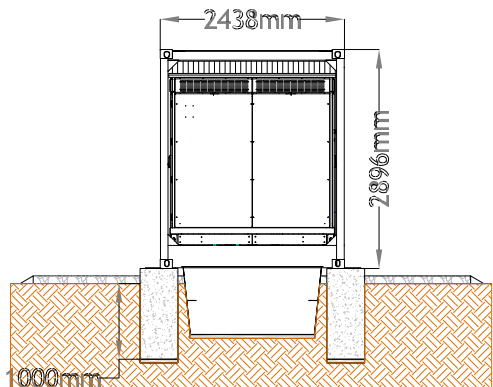
CCD-TEM-001-02-AA-EN | This drawing is property of Voltaia SA and may not be reproduced, disclosed or copied in whole or in part without permission. All rights reserved by law.



PLAN VIEW




FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



02	RESIZED TO SCALE				MR	-	R SPURR	03.04.2024	
VERSION	PURPOSE				DRAWN	VERIFIED	APPROVED	DATE	
PROJECT: North Weald					DRAWING DESIGNATION: Inverter/Transformer Details			<div> SUB-CONTRACTOR:</div>	
SITE: Cambridgeshire, England, UK									
CLIENT: -					DRAWING CODE: NTW01-SD-07				
PROJECT N°: NOR01		STAGE: Development			SERVICE: Electrical		SCALE: 1:100		FORMAT: A3

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**Case No:** 23/01002/OUT

**Proposal:** Proposed development of up to affordable 30 dwellings to include public open space, landscaping, access and associated works. Approval sought for Access to Overcote Lane only at this stage with Layout, Landscaping, Scale and Appearance as reserved matters.

**Location:** Land North Of Lodel Farm, Overcote Lane, Needingworth

**Applicant:** Mr Mark Hudson

**Grid Ref:** 534680 271818

**Date of Registration:** 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023

**Parish:** HOLYWELL-CUM-NEEDINGWORTH

---

### RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE

Application 23/01002/OUT was deferred by Members from Development Management Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to enable HDC's Environmental Health Officer to attend and provide clarification to Members on odour related matters.

#### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the deferral by Members, HDC's Environmental Health Officer will be attendance at the April 2025 Development Management Committee to provide clarification and answer Members questions on odour related matters.
- 1.2 There have been no further representations received and no additional information submitted by the applicant following the deferral.
- 1.3 The Officer Recommendation remains as per Section 8 of the March 2025 Development Management Committee report, the March 2025 Late Representations Summary and Officers verbal update to Members which is set out below for ease of reference:

**2. RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 obligation relating to affordable housing, provision of open space and wheeled bins, and subject to conditions to include those listed below:**

- Approval of Reserved Matters Time Limit and Time limit following last Reserved Matters
- Timing of permission and submission of Reserved Matters
- Approved Plans (site location and access)
- Reserved matters app accords with the broad layout principles established on Site Layout Plan dwg 22/09/201/01B
- Site levels and finished floor levels detailed as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of updated Odour Assessment as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Noise Assessment to inform a Noise Mitigation Scheme as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of any reserved matters for layout or landscaping
- External lighting scheme be provided as part of any application for reserved matters.
- Recommendations of Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to be adhered to and a net gain in biodiversity to be demonstrated as part of any reserved matters application
- Surface water drainage scheme
- Construction drainage
- Surface water drainage system sign off
- Submission of Foul Water drainage strategy, including identifying a sustainable point of connection to public foul water network
- Construction Environmental Management Plan to include details of lighting
- Construction and delivery times
- Fire Hydrants
- Internal road and associated infrastructure layout of the site
- Access gradient, width, 10m radius kerbs, metalled surface 20m, construction etc
- Temporary facilities for construction clear of highway
- Visibility splays
- Off-site high improvement works
- Written scheme of investigation
- M4(2) dwellings
- Water efficiency

or

**REFUSAL only in the event that the obligation referred to above has not been completed, or on the grounds that the applicant is unwilling to complete the obligation necessary to make the development acceptable.**

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to **Lucy Pateman Senior Development Management Officer** – [Lucy.Pateman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lucy.Pateman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

APPENDIX 1 – OFFICER REPORT  
FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025

## **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Case No:** 23/01002/OUT

**Proposal:** Proposed development of up to affordable 30 dwellings to include public open space, landscaping, access and associated works. Approval sought for Access to Overcote Lane only at this stage with Layout, Landscaping, Scale and Appearance as reserved matters.

**Location:** Land North Of Lodel Farm, Overcote Lane, Needingworth

**Applicant:** Mr Mark Hudson

**Grid Ref:** 534680 271818

**Date of Registration:** 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023

**Parish:** HOLYWELL-CUM-NEEDINGWORTH

---

### **RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE**

This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation as the Officer recommendation of approval is contrary to that of the Town Council.

#### **1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION**

##### **Site and Surroundings**

- 1.1 The application site is a 1.39-hectare broadly rectangular parcel of Grade 2 agricultural land which adjoins the eastern edge of the built-up area of Needingworth. Existing hedges punctuated with occasional mature trees line the northern site boundary (to Overcote Lane) and eastern boundary (a farm track outside the application site leading to Lodel Farm). Residential development lies beyond in both directions. To the east is a further field lacking in any meaningful physical demarcation from the application site, beyond which is the Overcote Farm intensive poultry rearing unit, some 120m east of the application site. Opposite this is a water treatment works. To the south is Lodel Farm, the applicant's correspondence address but not edged in blue on the submitted



site location plan and therefore declared to be in separate ownership to the application site.

- 1.2 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding) as identified by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2024 and the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning.
- 1.3 There are no designated heritage assets which would be affected by the proposed development and no trees subject to a preservation order in the vicinity. The site does not fall within a protected landscape and there are no statutory habitat sites in close proximity.

#### Proposal

- 1.4 This application seeks outline permission for the erection of up to 30 dwellings with all matters reserved except access.
- 1.5 Vehicular access to the site would via a new priority junction to be formed on Overcote Lane, approval for which is sought within the application.
- 1.6 Dwelling mix has not been prescribed at this stage, being deferred as a reserved matter. Matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping would all also be determined at reserved matters stage.
- 1.7 The proposal is for 100% of the dwellings to be affordable for either rent or shared ownership, with the applicant offering additional flexibility to incorporate First Homes if required. The application seeks to respond to a shortfall of affordable housing at the national and district-wide level.
- 1.8 Post-submission the applicant amended the maximum quantum of development from 35 dwellings to 30 dwellings. Following a full reconsultation (in addition to this, the Council has also issued a further site notice and press advert stating it is a departure), the application has been assessed on this revised basis.
- 1.9 This application has been accompanied by the following drawings and documents:
  - Proposed plans
  - Planning, Design & Access and Affordable Housing Statement
  - Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy
  - Foul Sewerage and Utilities Assessment
  - Odour Impact Assessment
  - Transport Statement
  - Arboricultural Statement

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

- 1.10 With regard to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 the development does not meet the criteria to require a detailed screening opinion, as the application proposes less than 150 dwellings. It is therefore not anticipated that the project would have significant environmental effects and is therefore not considered to be EIA development.
- 1.11 Indicative plans relating to layout, open space, landscaping and parking have been submitted but, as these are submitted on an illustrative basis only and not in the form of parameter plans, these are not for formal determination.
- 1.12 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF December 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'
- 2.2 The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
- delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
  - building a strong, competitive economy;
  - achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
  - conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment
- 2.3 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.
- 2.4 For full details visit the government website [National Guidance](#)

## **3. PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)
- LP1: Amount of Development
  - LP2: Strategy for Development
  - LP3: Green Infrastructure
  - LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery

- LP5: Flood Risk
- LP6: Waste Water Management
- LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
- LP10: The Countryside
- LP11: Design Context
- LP12: Design Implementation
- LP14: Amenity
- LP15: Surface Water
- LP16: Sustainable Travel
- LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- LP25: Housing Mix
- LP28: Rural Exceptions Housing
- LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
- LP37: Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution

### 3.2 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

- Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017)
- Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2017)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)
- Annual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply (2024)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

Local policies are viewable at <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk>

### 3.3 The National Design Guide (2021):

- C1 - Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context
- I1 - Respond to existing local character and identity
- I2 - Well-designed, high quality and attractive
- B2 - Appropriate building types and forms
- M3 - Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users
- N3 - Support rich and varied biodiversity
- H1 - Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment
- H2 - Well-related to external amenity and public spaces
- H3 - Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities.

For full details visit the government website.

## 4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 18/02401/OUT - Outline: Up to 30 new residential units, including 12 affordable housing units. (Disposed of undetermined 18th May 2022)

## **5. CONSULTATIONS**

### Initial consultation, July 2023 (“up to 35 dwellings”)

- 5.1 Needingworth Parish Council – Objects on several grounds:
- outside built-up area
  - loss of agricultural land
  - significant recent development in the village renders any more contrary to Local Plan Policy LP9
  - access is poor, with Overcote Lane serving commercial development and with no footway in places
  - surface water run-off, and proximity to land that is subject to flooding
  - lack of sewerage capacity
  - odour issues from nearby poultry farm
  - primary school is already at capacity
- 5.2 HDC Housing Officer – Comments:
- supports provision of affordable housing as a general principle, subject to conforming with the Council’s planning policies. Notes potential constraints relating to odour nuisance.
- 5.3 HDC Urban Design Officer – Comments:
- flat blocks inappropriate in this rural, edge of village location
  - open space too fragmented on the illustrative site layout
  - illustrative site layout shows a poor relationship with the adjacent footpath
  - poor relationship with the southern site boundary trees shown on the illustrative site layout
  - recommends a reduction in the number of units in order to accommodate more usable open space within the centre of the development, increase rear garden depths and to reduce the number of blocks of flats.
- 5.4 CCC Archaeology – No objection subject to a written scheme of investigation condition.
- 5.5 Local Highway Authority – No objection subject to conditions in respect of access width, visibility splays, kerb radii, cross-over construction specification (etc)

### Revised plans consultation, February 2024 (“up to 30 dwellings”)

- 5.6 Needingworth Parish Council – Continues to object on several grounds:

- outside built-up area
  - loss of agricultural land
  - local need for affordable housing already met by recent affordable developments in the village
  - access is poor, with Overcote Lane serving commercial development and with no footway in places
  - surface water run-off, and proximity to land that is liable to flooding
- 5.7 HDC Environmental Health Officer – Comments:
- notes that the sniff tests within the odour report were done when the development site was upwind of the odour sources
  - some odour present at the site briefly during some upwind conditions but this was not found to be significant
  - odour was assessed at locations downwind of the odour sources during the assessment and again these were not considered to cause a significant adverse impact
  - consequently taking all aspects into account there is not sufficient evidence to object to the proposals
  - recommends conditions relating to both acoustic and odour mitigation at reserved matters stage, as well as construction-related conditions
- 5.8 HDC Urban Design Officer – Comments:
- reduced development quantum and omission of apartments from the illustrative layout is supported
  - consolidated location and quantum of open space on the illustrative site layout is supported
  - recommends conditions that would inform scheme design at reserved matters stage
- 5.9 CCC Archaeology – No objection subject to a written scheme of investigation condition.
- 5.10 Environment Agency – No objection, noting that the site may be subject to some odour nuisance despite best achievable techniques being used by nearby permitted uses.
- 5.11 Lead Local Flood Authority – No objection subject to conditions regarding detailed surface water drainage design (etc)
- 5.12 Local Highway Authority – No objection subject to conditions in respect of access width, visibility splays, kerb radii, cross-over construction specification (etc)
- 5.13 Cambridgeshire County Council Policy Team:

Proximity to Needingworth Water Recycling Area: The proposed development site lies within the consultation area (CA) for the Needingworth Water Recycling Area (WRA) as identified under Policy 16 (Consultation Areas) of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021). Policy 16



seeks to safeguard water recycling areas (also known as sewage treatment works) and is as set out above. In this instance the Environmental Health Officer has not raised any objection in relation to the odour assessment. Consequently, the MWPA is satisfied that the proposal complies with Policy 16 and has **no objection**.

#### Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Areas

Similar to the previous site, this site lies within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area which is safeguarded under Policy 5 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021). As before, should the Planning Authority be of the view that there is an overriding need for the development, the MWPA will be content that Policy 5 has been addressed, subject to the following informative being included in any permission:

“The site lies within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area, which indicates that there may be an underlying sand and gravel resource. In this instance, the Planning Authority considers that prior extraction is unlikely to be feasible and that there is an overriding need for the development. Prior extraction of the resource has, therefore, not been required in this instance. However, the applicant is encouraged to make best use of any sand and gravel that may be incidentally extracted as part of the development.”

## 6. REPRESENTATIONS

Initial consultation, July 2023 (“up to 35 dwellings”)

### 6.1 38 letters of objection received from 31 addresses:

Principle of development

- Poor accessibility other than by car means the site is not sustainably located
- Outside the built-up area and extending into the countryside – so contrary to Local Plan LP9
- Not infill, but an extension to the village
- This is high grade farmland that should be retained as such – so contrary to Local Plan LP10
- Brownfield land should be developed in preference to greenfield site
- Lack of medical facilities in the village including sufficient primary care or dentistry
- No children’s nursery in the village and local schools are already at capacity
- Must travel to St Ives for all but the most basic shopping
- Local need for affordable housing already met by recent affordable developments in the village
- Development density is excessive and out-of-keeping

- Harm to landscape, character and appearance
- Recent appeal dismissal on land next to Sunrhyl (APP/H0520/W/22/3302802) sets a precedent
- Increased air pollution and additional CO2 emissions
- No community benefits offered

#### Access

- Overcote Lane is too narrow to accommodate further development
- No footway near the application site
- Overcote Lane provides vehicular access between High Street and homes at Ashton Close/The Furlongs/Harris Crescent, and is well trafficked
- Overcote Lane provides the sole vehicular access to commercial premises at a chicken processing plant, the Pike & Eel Hotel, yacht marina, other farms and the RSPB's lakes
- Site access would be near a bend
- Poor visibility at the junction of The Furlongs with Overcote Lane
- Speeding on Overcote Lane
- Cycling not as convenient/attractive as the Transport Statement suggests
- Rail services from Huntingdon are remote
- Bus service is poor
- Congestion on the wider road network
- Poor physical condition of local roads

#### Flooding, drainage and water resources

- Shows as floodplain on some insurance company records
- Increased risk of flooding
- Sewage treatment works lacks capacity
- Pollution of nearby ditches and watercourses
- Additional pressure on already stretched fresh water supplies

#### Amenity

- Close to the sewage treatment plant which often gives off unpleasant smells
- Odour report is unrepresentative
- Noise and disruption during construction
- Loss of privacy

#### Ecology

- Impact on the wildlife and bird sanctuary further to the east
- Loss of onsite wildlife habitat, the land in recent years being used as set-aside
- Existing onsite trees and hedges provide valuable habitats
- Potential future pressure to remove trees due to shading

- 6.2 15 One respondent raised concerns in respect of loss of their view, which is not a consideration that the Local Planning Authority can lawfully take into account. A further respondent cited an unspecified breach of the Town and Country Planning

Act 1968, which it is noted has almost entirely been replaced by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and associated Statutory Instruments. One respondent raised Green Belt matters, which are not relevant to this site as it does not lie within a designated Green Belt.

Revised plans consultation, February 2024 (“up to 30 dwellings”)

- 6.3 15 further letters of objection received from 11 addresses which, in addition to those matters summarised above, raise the following additional concerns

Principle of development

- Site is not large enough for 30 dwellings
- No local need for the development
- Lack of funding for rural services, such as young work
- Loss of peace and tranquillity
- Threat to viability of the nearby intensive poultry unit, which has a lawfully implemented planning permission to redevelopment the site and increase from 175,000 to 348,000 chickens
- The “agent of change” principle applies
- General Permitted Development Order requires a 400m separation distance between housing and new Class A large livestock buildings; in this instance the separation is 120m
- Concerns raised by consultees pursuant to 18/02401/OUT remain unresolved in respect of highways, dust, noise and odour

Access

- Insufficient onsite car parking

Flood risk and drainage

- Submitted reports are inadequate

Amenity

- Harmful to existing residents’ mental health
- Reported adverse health impacts of living too close to a poultry farm
- Living conditions for future site residents would be unacceptable, resulting in a form of discrimination through housing inequality

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 When determining planning applications, it is necessary to establish what weight should be given to each plan’s policies in order to come to a decision. The following legislation, government policy and guidance outline how this should be done.

- 7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

(Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as “the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area”.

- 7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan (relevant to this applications) consists of:
- Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
  - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
- 7.4 The statutory term ‘material considerations’ has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the circumstances which bears on the use or development of the land: *Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor* [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P. & C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraph 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.
- 7.5 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- The principle of development, including its impact on the character and appearance of the area
  - Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Drainage

**The principle of development, including its impact on the character and appearance of the area**

Housing Land Supply

- 7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).
- 7.7 As Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test a 5% buffer is required here. The five-

year housing land requirement including a 5% buffer is 5,501 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,430 homes equivalent to 4.03 years' supply.

- 7.8 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

Location and suitability of the site (including its impact on the character and appearance of the area)

- 7.9 The application seeks outline planning permission for 30 dwellings (100% affordable dwellings) on a site within Needingworth.
- 7.10 Policy LP2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (the Local Plan) sets out the overarching development strategy for Huntingdonshire through the plan period. The main objectives are:
- Concentrate development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities;
  - Direct substantial new development to two strategic expansion locations of sufficient scale to form successful, functioning new communities;
  - Provide opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations for housing, employment, commercial or community related schemes;
  - Support a thriving rural economy;
  - Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside;
  - Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and
  - Provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation.
- 7.11 Policy LP2 directs approximately a quarter of the objectively assessed need for housing (together with a limited amount of employment growth) to sites dispersed across the Key Service Centres and Small Settlements in order to support the vitality of these communities and provide flexibility and diversity in the housing supply. In addition, rural exception, small and windfall sites will be permitted on sites which are in conformity with other policies of the plan, thereby providing further flexibility in the housing supply.



- 7.12 Policy LP2 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP2 given that it directs development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities which is consistent with the NPPF.
- 7.13 Local Plan Policy LP9 identifies Needingworth as a Small Settlement, one of many settlements across Huntingdonshire which have limited or no available services and facilities. Small Settlements are less sustainable than those in the Spatial Planning Areas or the Key Service Centres, and inherently involve a greater need to travel on a regular basis to access services and facilities elsewhere. Consequently, the Local Plan does not make any development allocations in the Small Settlements, instead allowing only for a limited amount of sustainable development in order to contribute to the settlements' social and economic sustainability.
- 7.14 Policy LP9 states:

*'Development Proposals within the Built-up Area*

*A proposal that is located within a built-up area of a Small Settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the:*

- a. level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement;*
- b. opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport;*
- c. effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole.*

*Development Proposals on Land well-related to the Built-up Area*

*A proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan.'*

- 7.15 Policy LP9 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP9 given that the policy sets out that a set of criteria for assessing whether the proposal reflects sustainable development which is consistent with the NPPF. However, the part of Policy LP9 which specifies that only certain types of development on land well-related which accords with specific opportunities allowed for

through other policies of this plan is to be given reduced weight in determining a proposal for residential development. This means that any residential development on land well-related may be acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations.

7.16 Firstly, it must be considered whether the site falls within the Countryside or on land well-related to the built-up area.

7.17 The supporting text to Local Plan Policy LP7 provides extensive criteria-based guidance on the assessment of whether land falls within or outside the built-up area, specifically excluding:

“Farmyards and associated agricultural buildings which extend into the countryside or primarily relate to the countryside in their use, form, character or connectivity.”

7.18 Consequently, neither Lodel Farm itself to the south, nor the intensive poultry unit to the east, fall within the built-up area. Taking this into account, the site’s relationship with the built-up area is limited to the development to the north (fronting Overcote Lane, extending further north to St John’s Close, Beldams etc) and the main body of the village to the west.

7.19 It is acknowledged that the settlement edge on the eastern boundary is well-defined by a substantial row of mature trees and associated hedgerow running alongside the track access to Lodel Farm. By contrast, the eastern site boundary is largely undefined and accordingly, in the context of adjoining fields and agricultural buildings, the application site from this point of view is perceived to be part of the wider surrounding countryside. However, the northern boundary of the site is defined by Overcote Lane where there a row of properties spanning the width of the application site. The front of these properties which are open in nature at the front with driveways and gardens. The application site does not extend beyond the last property in the row on Overcote Lane, nor does it extend beyond Lodel Farm. It is considered that there is an argument heading west along Overcote Lane that the site may appear to be visually well related to the built up given the properties to the north of the site and the properties to the west of the site. But it is also acknowledged from the other direction, the site appears more visually part of the Countryside. It is considered that the site does join the existing built-up area, as it is also physically and functionally related to the built-up area. For these reasons, the site is considered to be well-related to the built-up area.

7.20 Given the above commentary about how the site may appear more visually part of the countryside, policy LP10 is considered to be relevant.

- 7.21 Policy LP10 places significant restrictions on developments in such locations, referring to only “limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan” as being acceptable in principle. Policy LP10 requires all development in the countryside to:
- (a) seek to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value;
  - (i) avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible, and
  - (ii) avoiding Grade 1 agricultural land unless there are exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the loss of land;
  - (b) recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and
  - (c) not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.
- 7.22 Policy LP10 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan to 2036, and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP10 especially in relation to criteria (a) to (c) as it is consistent with the NPPF. However, the part of Policy LP10 which restricts residential development in the countryside is to be given reduced weight. This means that any residential development on land in the countryside may be acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations.
- 7.23 With regard to Policy LP10 part (a) the application site comprises an undeveloped arable field which is classified as Grade 2 agricultural land, nationally considered as amongst the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- 7.24 Some 98% of the district comprises land within Grades 1 to 3, with 15% being Grade 1 and an estimated 77% of land falling within the definition of best and most versatile land. The proposal would result in the irreversible loss of some of this best and most versatile agricultural land. While the site is relatively small in relation to the extent of the district’s most versatile land, and the development would not prevent the farming of the wider agricultural field, the irreversible loss of agricultural land which can be used for food or crop production would conflict with Policy LP10 part (a)(i).
- 7.25 In terms of Policy LP10 part (b), following revisions to reduce the maximum quantum of development the proposal is for a form of development which illustratively retains and enhances features of the site’s character through large retention of boundary trees and

hedgerows, the provision of and appropriate quantum of onsite open space, and new planting to enhance biodiversity.

- 7.26 Whilst layout is not for considered under the remit of this application, nonetheless the applicant's illustrative layout plan shows one potential way in which 30 dwellings could be accommodated on the site. The Council's Urban Design Officer is content that, in principle, a scheme of 30 dwellings could be designed in a manner that accords with the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD 2017.
- 7.27 In respect of the wider visual impact of residential development in this location, respondents' comments are noted in respect of the high leisure and amenity value placed on the countryside link between the village and the River Great Ouse to the east. Whilst pockets of tree planting, modern agricultural buildings and Overcote Lane's high hedgerows limit visibility of the application site in some longer views, development of the site would nonetheless inherently affect the intrinsic character of the adjoining countryside. Notwithstanding the potential for new landscape screening on the eastern boundary, Needingworth's countryside setting of arable fields wrapping around its well-defined eastern perimeter would be partially eroded. To this extent the proposed development would have some conflict with Policy LP10 part (b).
- 7.28 Policy LP10 part (c) requires proposals to avoid giving rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others. These objectives could be secured by conditions and would remain controlled at reserved matters stage, such that in principle compliance with Policy LP10 part (c) would appear possible.
- 7.29 As outlined above, Needingworth is a small settlement. Smaller settlements are, by their nature, considered less sustainable than those locations identified higher up the settlement hierarchy under Policy LP2.
- 7.30 The site lies approximately 3.7km from the nearest Town Centre, at St Ives. The closest bus stop is at the junction of High Street and Overcote Lane (approximately half a kilometre away) where the 301 bus service provides a sporadically-timed schedule of 7 buses each way weekdays, once on Saturdays and with no Sunday service. At times the gap between weekday buses is 4.5 hours. The shared footway/cycleway alongside the heavily-trafficked A1123 between Needingworth and St Ives is unlit and fails to meet the width required for a cycle to pass a pedestrian or an opposing cycle as indicated in Local Transport Note 1/20.
- 7.31 Needingworth itself has a convenience store and Post Office, pre-schools, a primary school, public houses, places of worship, and a village hall. The closest secondary school, medical centre,

dentist and pharmacy are all at St Ives. The closest railway station (Huntingdon) by bus requires a change at St Ives and is approximately 1 hour 15 minutes by public transport.

7.32 NPPF Para 84 states: Planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside.

7.33 NPPF Para 110 states: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should 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. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

7.34 It is considered that the development would have access to services and facilities within Needingworth, and also the means to access larger settlements such as the Market Towns of St Ives and Huntingdon through sustainable modes of transport. The development would therefore not result in the development of isolated homes in the countryside nor would the future occupiers have an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle.

7.35 Given that the proposed development is for 100% affordable housing, the relevant policy tests lie at Local Plan Policy LP28 ("Rural Exceptions Housing"):

"A proposal for housing will be supported on a site well-related to a built-up area, as an exception to the requirements of relevant policies, where it can be demonstrated that:

- (a) at least 60% (net) of the site area is for affordable housing for people with a local connection;
- (b) the number, size, type and tenure of the affordable homes is justified by evidence that they would meet an identified need arising within the settlement or nearby small settlements (as defined in 'Small Settlements' ) through a local needs survey or other local needs evidence;
- (c) the remainder of the site area is available as open market housing or plots suitable for custom or self-build homes tailored to meet locally generated need; and
- (d) the amount of development and location of the proposal is sustainable in terms of:
  - (i) availability of services and existing infrastructure;
  - (ii) opportunities for users of the proposed development to travel by sustainable modes; and
  - (iii) effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole."



- 7.36 Whilst the application meets requirement (a), it fails to evidence the local need requirement at (b). Indeed, to the contrary, the applicant's supporting information is clear that the scheme seeks to address a much wider district-wide and national need. This approach is not supported by Policy LP28. LP28 (c) is not engaged in this instance. With regard to LP28 (d), the quantum of recent residential development at Needingworth is to be noted, especially as it includes a significant number of affordable homes:
- 17/01687/OUT – 120 dwellings, including 48 affordable
  - 18/01073/OUT – 45 dwellings, all affordable
  - 17/01077/FUL – 14 dwellings, all affordable
- 7.37 Regard has been had to the level of recent residential growth at Needingworth and how it has demonstrably made a significant contribution to meeting local housing need.
- 7.38 But regard is also given to the fact that there is a significant need for affordable housing at a district level and this development proposes 30 additional affordable dwellings towards that unmet need.
- 7.39 It is determined that the site is considered to be sustainable for the amount of development proposed.

#### **Highway Safety and accessibility**

- 7.40 Means of access is for consideration at this time and accordingly the applicant has submitted a Transport Statement which includes the general arrangement design of a proposed new priority junction on Overcote Lane as well as traffic modelling data.
- 7.41 The Local Highway Authority has no objection to the proposed development, a view which is not shared by the Parish Council or a number of objecting neighbours. In assessing network capacity, the Local Highway Authority has advised that, as the development is less than 50 homes, it is deemed not to have a significant impact on the surrounding network. Notwithstanding this general assumption, having assessed the applicant's Transport Statement the Local Highway Authority considers that the likely number of movements associated with the development, and the Transport Assessment's findings, are reasonable in relation to the number of dwellings proposed. The impact during peak time movements indicates an average of a single movement every two minutes, which the Local Highway Authority does not consider to be significant.
- 7.42 The Local Highway Authority is equally satisfied in principle with the design of the proposed new access. The applicant has proposed a 5.5m wide access with 6m kerb radii, which in the absence of tracking drawings to the contrary should be increased

to a 7.5m kerb radii. Were the Local Planning Authority minded to granted planning permission, this revised kerb radii could be secured by condition. The applicant has proposed adequate visibility splays in relation to the speeds of vehicles via the use of an 85th-percentile speed survey and noting objector's comments about excessive vehicle speeds they have observed on Overcote Lane, the Local Highway Authority is satisfied with the proposed junction location and design from a safety perspective.

- 7.43 Pedestrians are proposed to be catered for with a 2m wide footway alongside the road within the site, with the new footway extending westwards on the southern side of Overcote Lane to join the existing footway network. The Local Highway Authority has no objection to this type of provision, which would address the Parish Council's concerns at the lack of a southern footway and would also result in good connection to the main village.
- 7.44 Car parking provision, be it the total number of car parking spaces or their layout, is not for consideration at this stage but would be assessed and controlled at the reserved matters (layout) application stage.
- 7.45 In light of the above and subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development is considered capable of according with Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan and section 9 of the NPPF (2024) in terms of highway safety, access and parking provision.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 7.46 Local Plan Policy LP14 supports proposals only where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.
- 7.47 The submitted illustrative site layout plan demonstrates one way in which 30 dwellings could be accommodated on the site with causing any inherent significant harm to the living conditions of existing adjacent occupiers by way of overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact. Exact details of site layout, separation distances, building design and so forth would be assessed and controlled at the reserved matters (appearance, layout, scale) application stage. It is noted that properties on the other side of Overcote Lane, and those on Ashton Close, front the application stage thereby inherently obscuring any new overlooking of their private rear amenity spaces. Only two houses present their side elevations to the application site and careful design at reserved matters stage would mitigate any lateral direct overlooking of their rear gardens.
- 7.48 In terms of the living conditions of future residents, the submitted illustrative site layout plan demonstrates that the site's size, shape

and constraints would not fetter the ability at reserved matters stage to secure appropriate design standards to mitigate internal overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts.

- 7.49 The application site is in close proximity to an existing intensive poultry farm (approximately 120m away) and a sewage treatment works (approximately 150m away). Both are potentially significant sources of nuisance in terms of odour and noise, as raised by the Parish Council and several objectors.

- 7.50 NPPF (2024) paragraph 200 sets out the Government's "agent of change" policy:

*"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed."*

- 7.51 In assessing whether the agent of change principle is engaged in this instance it is necessary to understand whether the facility would have a "significant adverse effect" on the proposed new dwellings.

- 7.52 Advice from the Council's Environmental Health Officer is that the applicant's odour report indicated a slight adverse impact, in line with the Officer's previous findings. In some weather conditions/during some activities it is likely there would be some odour detectable at the proposed dwellings, probably more so than experienced by the receptors already present to the west.

- 7.53 The sniff tests within the odour report were all completed when the application site was upwind of the odour sources, with the frequency of downwind situations likely to be relatively low. The report indicated that there was some odour present at the site briefly during some upwind conditions but this was not found to be significant. The odour was assessed at locations downwind of the odour sources during the assessment and again these were not considered to cause a significant adverse impact.

- 7.54 The operator of the intensive poultry unit points out that the sniff tests were undertaken prior to the facility's redevelopment and enlargement. Given that planning permission is in place to almost double the number of chickens at the unit, the level of odour is likely to proportionately increase. The application site is almost due west of the intensive poultry unit, and south-west of the

sewage treatment works; prevailing winds from the south-west would generally blow odour away from the site. The Environmental Health Officer has advised that odour impact is more difficult to mitigate against than noise, but nonetheless distance (good buffers to the north and east of the site) and orientation of sensitive rooms/ amenity areas would assist. Exact details of site layout, separation distances, building orientation, floorplans and so forth would be assessed and controlled at the reserved matters (appearance, layout, scale) application stage.

- 7.55 An objector has referenced reported adverse health outcomes from living in close proximity to intensive poultry facilities. NPPF (2024) section 8 refers extensively to the need to promote healthy and safe communities, but does not in terms provide any guidance on this specific matter.
- 7.56 Taking all aspects into account the Environmental Health Officer considers there is insufficient evidence to object to the proposed development and whilst noting that some odour may be released during certain times of operation, the Environment Agency has not raised any objections either. On this basis, the agent of change principle is not considered to be engaged.
- 7.57 The proposed development site lies within the consultation area (CA) for the Needingworth Water Recycling Area (WRA) as identified under Policy 16 (Consultation Areas) of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021). Policy 16 seeks to safeguard water recycling areas (also known as sewage treatment works) and is as set out above. In this instance the Environmental Health Officer has not raised any objection in relation to the odour assessment. Consequently, the MWPA is satisfied that the proposal complies with Policy 16 and has no objection.
- 7.58 In light of the above assessment, subject to appropriate conditions the proposed development is considered capable of safeguarding the amenities of existing occupiers and providing acceptable living conditions for future occupiers in compliance with Policy LP14 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and paragraph 124 of the NPPF (2024).

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 7.59 Section 14 of the NPPF (2024) states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. This is echoed at Local Plan Policy LP5 which only supports development where all forms of flood risk, including breaches of flood defences or other defence failures, have been addressed, including with reference to the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

- 7.60 The Parish Council and objectors have raised concerns in respect of flood risk but these concerns are not shared by the Lead Local Flood Authority, who has no objection to the proposed development. The application site is located in Flood Zone 1, where there is the lowest risk of flooding. The Lead Local Flood Authority has scrutinised the applicant's surface water drainage strategy and is satisfied that that this would be appropriate to manage run-off through permeable paving and an onsite infiltration basin, which the illustrative site layout makes provision for. This approach has both flow attenuation and water quality benefits and therefore subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development is considered capable of complying with Policy LP5 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.
- 7.61 Concerns have also been raised in respect of the reliability and capacity of the Needingworth Sewage Treatment Works. No comments have been received from Anglian Water but given that the Water Industry Act 1991 entitles any domestic property to have foul and surface water from their property connected to the public sewerage system, details of a connection (which might or might not require upgrades to the Needingworth Sewage Treatment Works at the applicant's expense) could be secured by condition, were the Council minded to grant outline planning permission. Comments have been sought from Anglian Water and will be reported on the update report or at committee.
- 7.62 Local Plan Policy LP12 requires new dwellings to comply with the optional Building Regulation standard for water efficiency set out in Approved Document G of the Building Regulations, which could be secured by condition were the Council minded to grant planning permission.
- 7.63 Overall, it is considered that the risks of flooding have been fully assessed and it has been demonstrated that the development can be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Subject to conditions, the proposed development is considered to accord with Policies LP5, LP15 and LP16 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, Section 14 of the NPPF (2024), and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017.

## **Biodiversity**

- 7.64 Local Plan Policy LP30 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated; to ensure no net loss in biodiversity; and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development. This mirrors the ecological and environmental policies set out at Section 15 of the NPPF (2024).



- 7.65 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted by the applicant comprised a desk study, Phase 1 habitat survey and an ecological scoping survey which assessed the potential of the site to support species of conservation concern or other species which could present a constraint to the development of the site. Describing the site in habitat terms as “an arable field, with improved grassland margins, species-poor hedges with trees and a ditch on two boundaries” the Appraisal considered the presence of great crested newts to be unlikely, with limited potential for nesting birds. No trees with potential for bat roosts were identified although the boundary hedgerows could be used by foraging / commuting bats and should be retained accordingly. Evidence of hedgehog was found during the survey, but no other mammals.
- 7.66 The Appraisal makes a number of recommendations to protect nesting birds and roosting / foraging bats during construction and after development, including a sensitive lighting design to minimise light spillage onto boundary features. A range of habitat enhancement measures - including the provision of bat and bird boxes on new buildings and retained trees, the creation of additional hedgerows and the use of native species - could deliver a biodiversity net gain of 20% for area-based habitats and 54% for hedgerows. This would exceed the minimum legislative requirements under the Environment Act 2021, had it applied to this application (which it does not).
- 7.67 In light of the above, and notwithstanding the habitat value placed on the application site by some objectors, subject to conditions the proposed development is considered to accord with Policy LP30 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and section 15 of the NPPF (2024).

## **Trees**

- 7.68 The application is supported by an Arboricultural Assessment which highlights that no works to trees are necessary to facilitate the proposed development. Two sections of hedge alongside Overcote Lane would need to be removed to form the proposed new access and a separate pedestrian link, a total length of approximately 15m. Careful siting of these two access points would allow the existing trees along the northern boundary to be retained, whilst new onsite planting could be secured by condition and is considered to offer sufficient potential to mitigate the hedgerow loss.
- 7.69 Overall, it is not considered that the existing trees and hedgerows present a significant constraint to development and their predominant retention is supported. Any minor loss of hedgerow would be more than compensated through replacement planting as part of the development. Subject to conditions, the proposed development is considered capable of according with Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

## **Housing Mix and Accessible**

- 7.70 The requirements within policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 relating to accessible and adaptable homes are applicable to all new dwellings. This states that all dwellings (where practicable and viable) should meet Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'. The illustrative masterplan demonstrates that the site is capable of accommodating a mix of dwelling types and sizes, which would be assessed and controlled at reserved matters stage. A condition would need be imposed to provide for accessible and adaptable dwellings.

## **Developer Contributions**

### CIL

- 7.71 Housing in Huntingdonshire is generally Chargeable Development under the Community Infrastructure Levy ("CIL") Regulations. CIL payments cover footpaths and access, health, community facilities, libraries, lifelong learning and education.
- 7.72 However, a chargeable development which comprises social housing is entitled to full relief from CIL for the 'qualifying dwellings' within the development. There are clawback provisions if the development no longer qualifies for relief within seven years of the commencement of development but nonetheless, objections in respect of a paucity of infrastructure in this Small Settlement are noted and would not be capable of mitigation through CIL funding from the proposed development. However, this is not a planning issue.

### Affordable Housing

- 7.73 Given the proposal is for 100% affordable housing, were the Council minded to grant outline planning permission the scheme's tenure would need to be secured by way of Section 106 Agreement.

### Open/Green Space

- 7.74 In accordance with Local Plan Policies LP3 and LP4, proposals for residential development of this scale are required to provide appropriate levels of onsite informal and formal green space. The illustrative masterplan shows an appropriate level of onsite provision, with the Urban Design Officer commenting in support of the location, useability and natural surveillance of those open spaces.
- 7.75 When assessed against the adopted Developer Contributions SPD sufficient green space could be provided as part of the

proposed development, such to accord with Policies LP3 and LP4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The design and delivery of the onsite open spaces, and their future management/maintenance, would need to be secured by way of Section 106 Agreement, were the Council minded to grant outline planning permission.

#### Residential Wheeled Bins

- 7.76 Each dwelling would require the provision of one black, blue and green wheeled bin. The current cost of such provision to the developer is £150 per dwelling and would be secured through S106 Agreement were the Council minded to grant outline planning permission.

#### **Other matters**

#### Carbon emissions

- 7.77 This matter has been raised by an objector. With reference to the judgement in the case of R (on the application of Finch of behalf of the Weald Action Group)(Appellant) v Surrey County Council and others (Respondents) there is not the same certainty of greenhouse gas emissions as featured in Finch from an affordable housing development which the Court found would be inherent to an oil extraction scheme. Conditions could secure provision of low-carbon heating solutions, renewable energy technologies and electric vehicle charging facilities, were the Council minded to grant outline planning permission. The urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is balanced at a national level by Government policies including those in the NPPF (2024) in respect of the need for, and presumption in favour of, sustainable development.

#### Tranquillity:

- 7.78 This matter has been raised by an objector. Paragraph 198(b) of the NPPF (2024) requires planning decision-takers to identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason. Whilst the application site may have personal value to the objector for its perceived tranquillity, this needs to be balanced against its proximity to nearby housing, the lawful operations of the nearby intensive poultry unit and sewage treatment works, and the level of passing traffic on Overcote Lane identified by the Parish Council and other objectors. On balance the site is unlikely to meet the threshold of tranquillity that the Government intended for protection under NPPF paragraph 198(b).

#### Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Areas

- 7.79 This site lies within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area which is safeguarded under Policy 5 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021).
- 7.80 Cambridge County Council Policy Team have been consulted and advise that this policy seeks to prevent mineral resources of local and/or national importance being needlessly sterilised. Policy 5 sets out a number of exemptions (criteria (a) – (h)), for when Policy 5 is not applicable, none of which relevant in this case. It then goes on to set out that that development will only be permitted in certain circumstances (criteria (i) – (k)). The application documentation does not appear to make any reference to the safeguarded minerals, or Policy 5. Consequently criteria (i) – (k) have not been demonstrated, leaving criterion (l), which states that:
- “development will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that there is an overriding need for the development (where prior extraction is not feasible) \*\*”.
- 7.81 In this instance the MWPA considers that, although the extent of the resource within the site is unknown that complete prior extraction is, in this case, is unlikely to be feasible. Cambridge County Council Policy Team advised that should the Planning Authority be of the view that there is an overriding need for the development, the MWPA will be content that Policy 5 has been addressed, subject to an informative to make best use of any sand and gravel that has been incidentally extracted as part of the development. This will be weighed up in the planning balance below.

### **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 7.82 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as ‘the tilted balance’. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.
- 7.83 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.84 A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for

establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS). While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

- 7.85 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'.

- 7.86 NPPF para 11 states:

*'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.'*

*For decision-taking this means:*

*d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*

*i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance (7\*) provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

*ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.*

*7\* Foot note 7 states: The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.'*

- 7.87 As outlined in the report, in light of my considerations, there are no strong reasons for refusal in relation to any habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Green Space, irreplaceable



habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75) and areas at risk of flooding. Therefore, there is no reason to not move forward to test d (ii) as per above and thus the 'titled balance' is engaged.

- 7.88 As stated above, a tilted balance approach should be applied in the assessment of the proposed development, and a balancing exercise should be carried out to determine the potential any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 7.89 The application seeks outline planning permission with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of 100% affordable 30 dwellings in Needingworth.
- 7.90 It has been determined that overall the site is on land well-related to the built-up area but will visually appear as part of the countryside when looking east. Policies LP9 and LP10 are therefore relevant. These Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications. The aspects of these policies that restrict development on land well-related to the built up or in the countryside is to be given reduced weight.
- 7.91 It has been established that the proposed development would have access to services and facilities, and that it would not result in an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle. As such, the proposed development would comply with Framework Paragraph 109.
- 7.92 It is considered that the application site could satisfactorily accommodate 30 dwellings and the general layout could be made acceptable for reserved matters applications.
- 7.93 The proposed access is considered to be safe and acceptable in highway terms. The level of traffic generated by the development would not result in adverse traffic impacts.
- 7.94 The site would operate as Flood Zone 1, and the site is therefore acceptable in principle in terms of flood risk and drainage.
- 7.95 The development of the site would result in Grade 2 agricultural land, nationally considered as amongst the best and most versatile agricultural land. While the site is relatively small in relation to the extent of the district's most versatile land, and the development would not prevent the farming of the wider agricultural field. the irreversible loss of agricultural land which can be used for food or crop production would conflict with Policy LP10 part (a)(i). Significant weight is attached to this.

- 7.96 Notwithstanding the potential for new landscape screening on the eastern boundary, Needingworth's countryside setting of arable fields wrapping around its well-defined eastern perimeter would be partially eroded. To this extent the proposed development would have some conflict with Policy LP10 part (b). Moderate weight is attached to this.
- 7.97 The proposal will result in the delivery of 30 homes towards the housing supply. Substantial weight is afforded to this.
- 7.98 The proposal will result in the delivery of 30 affordable homes towards a significant district affordable need. The development would also be 100% affordable. Significant weight is afforded to this.
- 7.99 In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposal would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation - during the construction phase and in the longer term through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. Moderate weight is afforded to this.
- 7.100 In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, the proposal offers potential for the incorporation of energy efficiency measures (to be considered in detail at reserved matters stage) as well as the delivery of green space and a net gain in biodiversity. The application site constitutes a sustainable location for the scale of development proposed in respect of access to local employment opportunities, services and facilities within wider St Ives Spatial Planning Area; and is accessible by sustainable transport modes. Moderate weight is afforded to this.
- 7.101 Whilst some conflict/harm has been identified in relation to agricultural land and countryside impact, it is concluded that the identified harm would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits when taking all the positives and negatives of the proposal into account.
- 7.102 It has therefore been concluded that there is an overriding need for the development given the lack of a five-year housing land supply and the need for affordable housing in the district. This alongside the size of the site and the fact that the wider agricultural field remains undeveloped, it is considered that the aims of Policy 5 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (July 2021) has been met.
- 7.103 Having regard to all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that approval be granted for the outline planning with all matters reserved except access.

**8. RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 obligation relating to affordable housing, provision of open space and wheeled bins, and subject to conditions to include those listed below:**

- Approval of Reserved Matters Time Limit and Time limit following last Reserved Matters
- Timing of permission and submission of Reserved Matters
- Approved Plans (site location and access)
- Reserved matters app accords with the broad layout principles established on Site Layout Plan dwg 22/09/201/01B
- Site levels and finished floor levels detailed as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Noise Mitigation Scheme as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of any reserved matters for layout or landscaping
- External lighting scheme be provided as part of any application for reserved matters.
- Recommendations of Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to be adhered to and a net gain in biodiversity to be demonstrated as part of any reserved matters application
- Surface water drainage scheme
- Construction drainage
- Surface water drainage system sign off
- Construction Environmental Management Plan to include details of lighting
- Construction and delivery times
- Fire Hydrants
- Internal road and associated infrastructure layout of the site
- Access gradient, width, 10m radius kerbs, metalled surface 20m, construction etc
- Temporary facilities for construction clear of highway
- Visibility splays
- Off-site high improvement works
- Written scheme of investigation
- M4(2) dwellings
- Water efficiency

or

**REFUSAL only in the event that the obligation referred to above has not been completed, or on the grounds that the applicant is unwilling to complete the obligation necessary to make the development acceptable.**

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to **Lucy Pateman Senior Development Management Officer** – [Lucy.Pateman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lucy.Pateman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

APPENDIX 2 – LATE  
REPRESENTATIONS SUMMARY  
FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025



# **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025**

## **LATE REPRESENTATIONS SUMMARY**

**3(a) 24/00938/FUL – Retrospective change of use of land from equestrian use (sui generis) to a mixed use of equestrian and gypsy/traveller residential use (sui generis) creating 1 pitch comprising 1 mobile home with associated parking and amenity – Tower Farm and Stables, Toseland Road, Yelling**

A further neighbour representation (Mill View, Toseland Road) has been received. This representation raises concerns in relation to: the principle of development in a rural location; impact on the countryside; the inadequacy of the access; and the need for the proposed development. These concerns have been raised previously and have been addressed in the Officer report and do not change the recommendation.

**3(b) 23/01002/OUT – Proposed development of up to affordable 30 dwellings to include public open space, landscaping, access and associated works. Approval sought for Access to Overcote Lane only at this stage with Layout, Landscaping, Scale and Appearance as reserved matters – Land North of Lodel Farm, Overcote Lane, Needingworth**

Further comments were received on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025 from Needingworth Parish Council in response to the consultation comments from Cambridgeshire County Council Minerals and Waste Team (dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025). The comments from Needingworth Parish Council do not raise any new/additional concerns which have not been previously addressed in the Officer report.

A further neighbour representation (18 Overcote Lane) has been received raising concerns in relation to the proximity of the site to the existing chicken farm and potential impacts on human health. These concerns have been raised previously and has been addressed in Paragraphs 7.49 to 7.58 of the Officer Report.

A further neighbour representation (Overcote Farm) has been received raising the following matters:

- The redevelopment of the farm is under construction and due to be operational from the end of May;
- Concern is that the operation of the farm will draw complaints from new residents which could see onerous restrictions placed on future operations;
- A further odour assessment should be undertaken to understand the full impact of the poultry farm on this site;
- An acoustic assessment should be undertaken to understand the noise impact on future occupants acknowledging the impact of the upgraded poultry farm.

The redevelopment of the farm was granted pursuant to planning permission 1101863FUL for '*Upgrade of poultry unit including demolition of 12 poultry sheds and erection of 6 replacement poultry sheds and 3 service buildings with associated equipment.*' Once constructed and operational, this would result in an intensification of the site in terms of the number of chickens. Following further discussions with HDC's Environmental Health Officer, it is considered that the newly constructed buildings would create a more controlled environment and a betterment in terms of odour dispersal. For instance, the Odour Impact Report for 1101863FUL Point 5 page 22 states: 'If the new [poultry] houses were to be constructed, the total odour emissions from Overcote Farm would increase slightly. However, as the emissions from the proposed houses would be from elevated point sources, with a significant initial vertical velocity, dispersion of odour would be greatly enhanced and this would mitigate against increased ground level concentrations in the surrounding area'.

It is also noted that intensive farming activities require an Environmental Permit from the Environment Agency (EA) which will include an odour management plan for the prevention or minimisation of odour.

It is considered that the relationship between the proposed residential development and Overcote Farm is acceptable in terms of odour impact, noting that the proposed dwellings would be in similar proximity to the farm as existing dwellings on Overcote Lane. However, the submitted Odour Assessment was carried out prior to the redevelopment of the farm which is under construction and therefore it is recommended that an updated Odour Assessment be undertaken and secured by way of condition to inform the layout of the proposed development.

Similarly, the relationship between the proposed residential development and Overcote Farm (over 120 metres) is acceptable in terms of potential noise impacts. Officers have already recommended a condition requiring a Noise Mitigation Scheme (paragraph 8 of the Officer Report), however it is recommended that the condition wording be more prescriptive to require that the Noise Mitigation Scheme is informed by a noise assessment to take account of the intensification at the intensive poultry facility.

For clarity, the following amended/additional conditions are added to paragraph 8 of the Officer Report:

- Submission of updated Odour Assessment as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Noise Assessment to inform a Noise Mitigation Scheme as part of any reserved matters for layout

Lastly, as set out in paragraph 7.61 of the Officer Report, comments have been sought from Anglian Water however no response has been received at the time of writing. An update will be provided at the committee meeting.

### **3(c) 24/02258/FUL -**

There are no late representations for this item.

**3(d) 24/01867/OUT -**

A signed and dated Unilateral Undertaking for the provision of wheeled bins was received by the Local Planning Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**3(e) 23/02319/S73 -**

There are no late representations for this item.

# APPENDIX 3 – SUMMARY OF OFFICERS VERBAL UPDATE FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025

Consultation comments from Anglian Water were received 17/03/2025 (available to view on public access) and a verbal update was provided to Members. The following text was included in the Officers presentation to Members:

Policy LP6 of the Local Plan states:

A proposal for any scale of development will be supported if: d. Anglian Water Services do not raise concerns relating to the ability of waste water infrastructure to accommodate waste water flows from the proposal.

Anglian Water does not state that it is not possible to increase the capacity of the Needingworth Water Recycling Centre, the case is that funding has not currently been allocated to increase the capacity. This is therefore an issue for their business plan (and the allocation of funding to increase capacity to address new development) and is not a land use issue.

The following amended/additional conditions have been added to paragraph 8 of the Officer Report:

- Submission of updated Odour Assessment as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Noise Assessment to inform a Noise Mitigation Scheme as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Foul Water drainage strategy, including identifying a sustainable point of connection to public foul water network

**From:** DevelopmentControl <developmentcontrol@huntingdonshire.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 05 March 2025 13:51:46 UTC+00:00  
**To:** "DevelopmentControl" <DevelopmentControl@huntingdonshire.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Comments for Planning Application 23/01002/OUT

## Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 05/03/2025 1:51 PM from Miss Jane Bowd - Needingworth PC.

### Application Summary

Address:	Land North Of Lodel Farm Overcote Lane Needingworth
Proposal:	Proposed development of up to affordable 30 dwellings to include public open space, landscaping, access and associated works. Approval sought for Access to Overcote Lane only at this stage with Layout, Landscaping, Scale and Appearance as reserved matters.
Case Officer:	Lewis Tomlinson

[Click for further information](#)

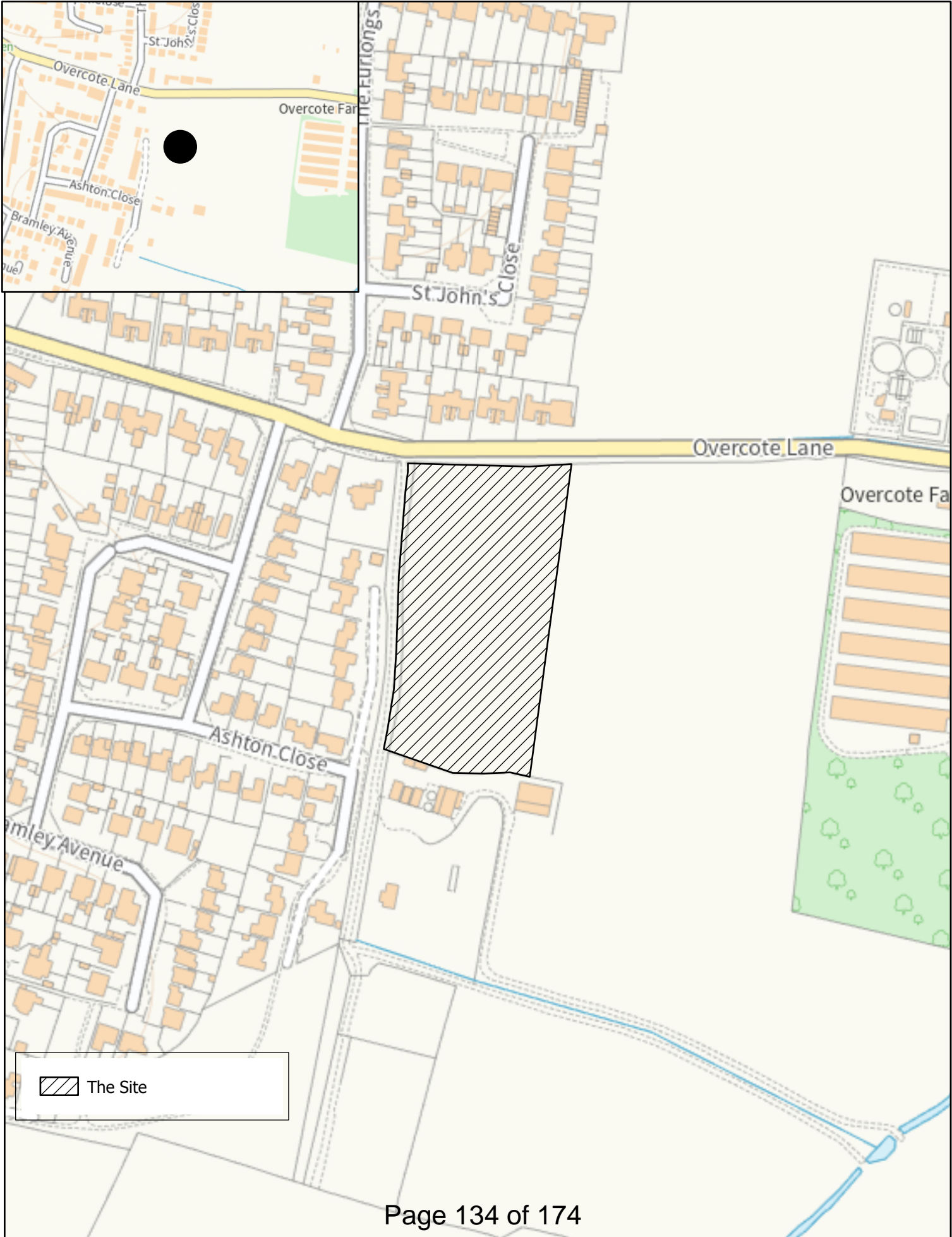
### Customer Details

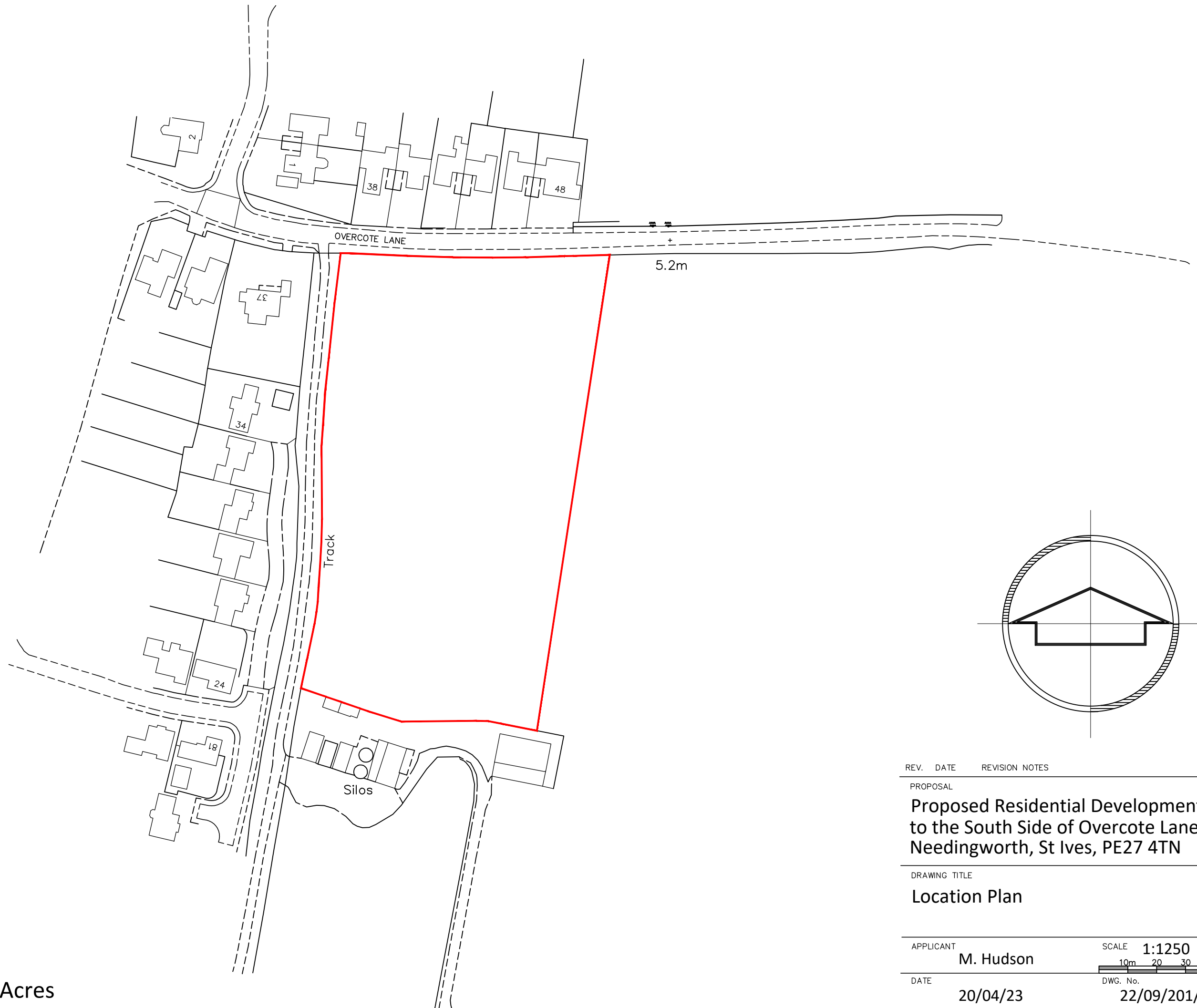
Name:	Miss Jane Bowd - Needingworth PC
Email:	needingworthpc@btconnect.com
Address:	Village Hall Overcote Lane Needingworth Cambridgeshire

### Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Town or Parish Council
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	The Parish Council has reviewed the letter from M Breeze CCC dated 11th February 2025. The Parish Council does not support the findings in relation to this application and wishes to register its continued objection to this application.







Site Area - 3.45 Acres

REV.	DATE	REVISION NOTES
PROPOSAL		
Proposed Residential Development at Land to the South Side of Overcote Lane, Needingworth, St Ives, PE27 4TN		
DRAWING TITLE		
Location Plan		
APPLICANT		SCALE 1:1250 @ A3
M. Hudson		10m 20 30 40 50 60
DATE	DWG. No.	REV.
20/04/23	22/09/201/02	-







REV	DATE	REVISION NOTES
A	11/10/23	Updated layout as per urban design comments
B	20/11/23	Updated landscaping details

PROPOSAL

**Proposed Residential Development at Land to the South Side of Overcote Lane, Needingworth, St Ives, PE27 4TN**

DRAWING TITLE

**Site Layout Plan**

APPLICANT	M. Hudson	SCALE	1:250 @ A0
DATE	10/02/23	DATE	22/09/201/01

REV. B



## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**Case No:** 24/02228/FUL

**Proposal:** Erection of two-bedroom barn-style property & associated works

**Location:** Land at 516 Great North Road Eaton Ford

**Applicant:** HW Unique Developments Ltd

**Grid Ref:** 517438 261155

**Date of Registration:** 18.12.24

**Parish:** St Neots

---

### RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE

This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, as the Officer recommendation of refusal is contrary to that of the Parish Council's recommendation of approval.

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 The site sits on the northern side of Crosshall Road close to the roundabout that links Crosshall Road with Great North Road and the B645, which runs westwards. The site is a broadly triangular parcel of land covering 0.10 hectares and currently comprises vegetation with its boundaries on all sides being high boarded timber fencing with mature trees, hedging and timber gate to the front of the site facing Crosshall Road.
- 1.2 Immediately northwest of the site is Cross Hall Manor, a Grade II\* Listed Building and to the east lies a residential dwelling at 204 Crosshall Road. The Eaton Oak, a Grade II Listed Public House sits approximately 72 metres southwest on the opposite side of the roundabout. The whole of the site is in St Neots Conservation Area. Subsequently all trees over 7.5 centimetres in diameter, measured 1.5 metres above the ground both on and in close proximity to the site are legally protected.
- 1.3 The site is in Flood Zone 1 according to Environment Agency Mapping Data and the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024), which also places the site at a low risk of ground and surface water flooding.

- 1.4 The proposal seeks planning approval for the erection of one two-bedroomed single storey two-bedroom barn-style property and associated works including permeable block-paved driveway and the removal of the existing conifers on the front boundary to be replaced with mixed species native hedge.

#### Site History

- 1.5 It is noted that a non-determination planning appeal was subject to the site (APP/H0520/W/20/3249223) with the same red line boundary following a planning application proposing one new single storey dwelling (19/01736/FUL) in 2021 within the site.
- 1.6 While it is recognised that this 2021 application proposed a dwelling sited closer to Crosshall Road spanning most of the width of the site, it should also be noted that this non-determination appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds that the site as an enclosed verdant space with a general absence of built form and sense of spaciousness above and beyond the fencing and hedging contributed positively to the setting Grade II\* Cross Hall Manor to the immediate north west and the wider St Neots Conservation Area.
- 1.7 The Inspector also noted that Cross Hall Manor's significance relates to its siting on a historical junction linking St Neots with Cambridge and Northampton and as per page 30 of the St Neots Conservation Character Area Statement, forms an part of the arc of the original course of the Great North Road where setbacks and trees enclosing the space contribute positively to the Conservation Area and so are historically important. While noting that the grounds of Crosshall Manor have been subdivided and sold off over time and that the historic grounds were now viewed as physically and visually separated, the Inspector was clear that the open and spacious character of the proposal site still had a relationship with Cross Hall Manor and its current character remained a positive contribution to the setting and significance of the listed building and wider conservation area.
- 1.8 Additionally, on this 2019 dismissed application, the Inspector noted that the proposed dwelling, at 3.978m above ground level would be visible over the existing 2 metre fencing with the northwest elevation being seen from the GII\* listed Manor, and the introduction of a barn-like dwelling having an awkward and incongruent relationship which would diminish the setting and significance of the Manor. Furthermore, the inspector also raised concern that the amount of green space around the dwelling as compared to Crosshall Manor and No.204 and would feel cramped in comparison with a dwelling's siting contrary to the existing arc characterising this historic crossroads.

- 1.9 This Inspector's dismissal is a material consideration in the determination of the current proposal. This Appeal decision is found at the end of this report pack as an appendix.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'
- 2.2 The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
- \* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
  - \* building a strong, competitive economy;
  - \* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
  - \* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.
- 2.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990, Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: <https://www.gov.uk>

## **3. PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 - adopted May 2019

LP1: Amount of Development  
LP2: Strategy for Development  
LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery  
LP5: Flood Risk  
LP6: Waste Water Management  
LP7: Spatial Planning Areas  
LP11: Design Context  
LP12: Design Implementation  
LP14: Amenity  
LP15: Surface Water  
LP16: Sustainable Travel  
LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement  
LP25: Housing Mix  
LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity  
LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows



## LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

### Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017

Developer Contributions SPD 2011

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)

Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017

LDF Developer Contributions SPD (2011)

Annual Monitoring Review: Housing land supply (2024 Part 1)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

The National Design Guide (2021)

St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2029 (2016):

\*Policy A3 – Design

\*Policy PT1 – Parking and Traffic

\*Policy P4 – Drainage

Local policies are viewable at:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk>

## **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 17/02534/FUL for Creation of access with gate and new fencing to amenity land., APPROVED 11.05.2018.
- 4.2 19/01265/FUL for Proposed erection of one new dwelling consisting of a main two-storey element and two single-storey elements., WITHDRAWN 28.08.2019.
- 4.3 19/01736/FUL for Proposed erection of one new dwelling consisting of a main single-storey hipped element, single-storey gable element and single-storey link piece. APPEAL AGAINST NON-DETERMINATION DISMISSED (20/00012/NONDET) 25.03.2021.
- 4.4 19/02465/CLED for The fence (being the close boarded wooden panelled fence (with concrete posts between each panel and with concrete gravel boards at its base) having a height varying

between circa 2.7m and 2.1m) erected along the western boundary of the land (which is the subject of this application) between the points shown marked 'A' and 'B' on the plan which accompanies this application., CONSENT GIVEN 17.02.2020.

- 4.5 23/02430/CLED for Creation of access with gate and new fencing to amenity land., CONSENT GIVEN 13.02.2024.

## **5. CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 St Neots Town Council – Supports the application. Full comments:

Satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development.

- 5.2 Huntingdonshire District Council's Conservation Officer – Objects to the proposal. Summary comments:

The proposal is not considered to preserve the character of the Grade II\* Listed Building Crosshall Manor because of the development within its setting and it is considered harmful to its significance. The proposal is also considered harmful to the significance, character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of the Eaton Oak public house, Grade II\* Listed Building Crosshall Manor (516 Great North Road) and the St. Neots Conservation Area.

- 5.3 Historic England – Objects to the proposal. Summary comments:

Raises concern that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the St. Neot's Conservation Area and the grade II\* listed Crosshall, noting comments from the Planning Inspectorate on non-determination appeal on the site (19/01736/FUL) which viewed the site as contributing positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area and a minor positive contribution to the setting of the listed building. Historic England conclude that this current application would have a negative effect upon the verdant quality, general absence of built form and sense of spaciousness of the application site.

- 5.4 Cambridgeshire County Council's Highway Authority - No objections subject to conditions for sufficient manoeuvring space and a metalled surface shall be provided for a minimum distance of 5m along the access road from its junction with the public highway to safeguard highway safety.

- 5.5 Huntingdonshire District Council's Arboricultural Officer – No objections subject to a condition requiring the Arboricultural Method Statement be adhered to.
- 5.6 Huntingdonshire District Council's Ecology Officer – Raises no objection to the submitted Biodiversity Matrix.
- 5.7 Huntingdonshire District Council Waste Officer – No response.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 One letter of objection was received during the course of the application from the occupants of Crosshall Manor raising the following concerns (full comments):

I believe the above proposed development will negatively impact on the character and appearance of the St Neots Conservation Area & there is no valid justification for this. In addition, such a development would be detrimental to the setting of CrossHall Manor, a 17th Century Grade II\* listed building of historical significance. Development would diminish the significance of this important heritage asset.

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 When determining planning applications, it is necessary to establish what weight should be given to each plan's policies in order to come to a decision. The following legislation, government policy and guidance outline how this should be done.
- 7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".
- 7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan relevant to this application consists of:
  - o Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
  - o Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
  - o St. Neots Neighbourhood Plan to 2036 (2016)
- 7.4 The statutory term 'material considerations' has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the

circumstances which bears on the use or development of the land: *Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor* [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P. & C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraph 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.

- 7.5 The main issues to consider are:
- o The Principle of Development
  - o Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
  - o Residential Amenity
  - o Highway Safety and Parking Provision
  - o Flood Risk and Surface Water
  - o Biodiversity
  - o Trees
  - o Developer Contributions
  - o Accessible and Adaptable Homes
  - o Water Efficiency

## **The Principle of Development**

### Housing Land Supply

- 7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).
- 7.7 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test a 5% buffer is required here. The 5 year housing land requirement including a 5% buffer is 5,501 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,430 homes equivalent to 4.03 years' supply.
- 7.8 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply

and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

7.9 Policy LP2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (the Local Plan) sets out the overarching development strategy for Huntingdonshire through the plan period. The main objectives are:

- Concentrate development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities;
- Direct substantial new development to two strategic expansion locations of sufficient scale to form successful, functioning new communities;
- Provide opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations for housing, employment, commercial or community related schemes;
- Support a thriving rural economy;
- Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside;
- Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and
- Provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation.

7.10 Policy LP2 directs approximately a quarter of the objectively assessed need for housing (together with a limited amount of employment growth) to sites dispersed across the Key Service Centres and Small Settlements in order to support the vitality of these communities and provide flexibility and diversity in the housing supply. In addition, rural exception, small and windfall sites will be permitted on sites which are in conformity with other policies of the plan, thereby providing further flexibility in the housing supply.

7.11 Policy LP2 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP2 given that it directs development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities which is consistent with the NPPF.

7.12 Local Plan Policy LP7 identifies St Neots as a Spatial Planning Area, one of four larger settlements across Huntingdonshire

which have the greatest amount of available services and facilities.

7.13 Policy LP7 states that:

### **Development Proposals on Unallocated Sites**

A proposal for development on a site which is additional to those allocated in this plan will be supported where it fulfils the following requirements and is in accordance with other policies:

### **Residential Development**

A proposal for housing development (class 'C3') or for a residential institution use (class 'C2') will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement.

- 7.14 Policy LP7 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP7 given that the policy sets out that a set of criteria for assessing whether the proposal reflects sustainable development which is consistent with the NPPF. However, the part of Policy LP7 which specifies that only certain types of development on land within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area settlement which accords with specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan is to be given reduced weight in determining a proposal for residential development.
- 7.15 This means that any residential development on land outside of the built-up area may be acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations.
- 7.16 Given the proposal seeks approval for the erection of 1 residential dwelling within an existing residential and built-up area of St. Neots, the development is therefore considered to be situated in an appropriate location and acceptable in accordance with LP7 of the Local Plan.
- 7.17 NPPF Para 110 states: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should 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. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise



sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

- 7.18 It is considered that the development would have access to services and facilities within St. Neots, and through sustainable modes of transport. The development would therefore not result in the development of isolated homes in either the edge of settlement or countryside, nor would the future occupiers have an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle as other options are available in the settlement.
- 7.19 It is considered therefore that the site is considered to be sustainable for the amount of development hereby proposed.

### **Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets**

- 7.20 Planning approval is sought for the erection of one dwelling sited within the St. Neots Conservation Area and within the setting of a Grade II\* Listed Building Crosshall Manor (516 Great North Road) and across the junction where the Grade II Listed Building The Eaton Oak public house is sited.
- 7.21 The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 at Section 72. Section 66 also states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. This is also reflected in Policy LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).
- 7.22 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape. This is also reflected in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).
- 7.23 Policy A3 of the St. Neots Neighbourhood Plan (2016) requires all development to be designed to a high quality that reinforces local distinctiveness and should reflect the town heritage design

and be guided by its surroundings, paying due consideration to flood risk management, carparking and servicing and waste.

- 7.24 This stretch of Crosshall Road is comprised of a mixture of single storey, 1.5 storey and two storey dwellings with a variety of designs, setbacks and materials. It is accepted therefore that there is no uniform character in terms of dwellings in the street scene although it is acknowledged that the line of development curves around the historic line of Crosshall Road where it leads to Great North Road. This curved line of development was observed by the Planning Inspectorate in non-determination appeal for a dwelling on this site as part of the historic character (LPA ref 19/01736/FUL as set out in paragraphs 1.5-1.8 of this report and discussed further below).
- 7.25 According to the submitted Site Plan (DWG JLG912/01), the dwelling proposed would be sited 8.4 metres into the site with a new permeable block paved driveway taking up a large part of the front of the site and this driveway then wraps around the eastern side to allow for vehicular turning. The existing 1.8 metre close boarded timber fencing would be retained with a new section introduced to the rear boundary and an existing gate to the eastern rear would be removed and replaced with fencing to fully enclose the site. Otherwise, the site is laid to grassland / vegetation.
- 7.26 The proposed dwelling comprises a half-hipped Dutch style rectangular roof with a maximum 5.4m-high ridgeline, with a width 6.965m and depth 11.577 metres. Velux rooflights are proposed to both sides of the roof planes. The proposal would be constructed with rectangle black feather boarding and clay pantiles. The front door of the dwelling would be to the eastern side and the side facing the road would have a blank elevation.
- 7.27 The existing conifers to the front boundary would be replaced with mixed species native hedge.
- 7.28 In the non-determination appeal dismissal for a dwelling on the site in 2021 (19/01736/FUL / 20/00012/NONDET), it is a material consideration to take into account the Planning Inspectorates assessment that the site “is largely screened by mature trees, close boarded fencing and hedging at the perimeters. It is generally characterised by an enclosed verdant quality, a general absence of built form adjacent to the highway and sense of spaciousness above and beyond the fencing and hedging ... which makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (Paragraph 9 of the appeal report), with a dwelling set between 2.926 metres and 8.028 into the site with a ridge height of 3.978 metres to be largely visible over fencing, with the northwest elevation viewable from the Manor (Paragraph 17), stating that “situated roughly midway in

the “tree enclosed space” [as set out in the St. Neots Conservation Area Character statement, 2006], the development would be incongruous to the detriment of the spacious open character and appearance of this part of the St Neots Conservation Area. It would be seen over the fence line and glimpsed through the access” (Paragraph 20). The Inspector concludes that the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the listed building, and would fail also to preserve the character and appearance of the St. Neots Conservation Area.

- 7.29 Two formal consultees, namely Historic England and the Huntingdonshire Council's Historic Conservation Officer as well as a neighbour at the Grade II\* listed dwelling (Crosshall Manor) have objected to the proposals on the basis of heritage harm, with the formal consultees both noting that a previous proposal on the site for a residential dwelling was dismissed at non-determination appeal on grounds including less than substantial harm to the significance of the St. Neots Conservation Area and the Grade II\* Listed Building Cross Hall Manor.
- 7.30 Historic England (HE) notes that the St. Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment (2006, henceforth CACC) shows the site to be one of only 2 Grade II\* listed buildings in this part of St. Neots Conservation Area and is sited in a historic strategic location at a crossroads and that the Planning Inspector in the previous dismissal to have highlighted the importance of the of the verdant quality, general absence of built form and sense of spaciousness of the application site which made a positive contribution to the setting of the wider St. Neots Conservation Area and a minor positive contribution to the setting of the listed building to the north of the site (Cross Hall Manor).
- 7.31 Similarly, the Huntingdonshire District Councils Historic Conservation Officer notes that the CACC describes Crosshall as a small hamlet associated with an important manor house on the crossroads where the Great North Road meets the road from Cambridge to Northampton and while noting that the current proposal is orientated differently and set further back from the road maintains the Inspectors views on the previous application that the current proposal would remain a harmful intrusion into the curtilage and setting of the Grade II\* listed building.
- 7.32 Crosshall Manor is a Grade II\*1 Listed Building, and such heritage assets are described by Historic England as “particularly important buildings or more than special interest” and only 5.8% of Listed Buildings are included in this category. In addition, the NPPF gives greater protection to buildings which have a Grade II\* listing. Development that impacts this heritage building of special interest is therefore requires particular consideration.

- 7.33 It is acknowledged that there have been two applications for Certificate of Lawful Developments (CLD) issued for fencing on the site (19/02465/CLED and 23/02430/CLED). It should be acknowledged that applications with the suffix 'CLED' seek to confirm that carried out development does not require planning permission.
- 7.34 19/02465/CLED was for confirmation that a close boarded wooden panelled fence (with concrete posts between each panel and with concrete gravel boards at its base) having a height varying between circa 2.7m and 2.1m) erected along the western boundary from the front of the site to where it bends towards the rear was lawful being in situ since at least 2014 and was therefore immune to enforcement action as it had been in place for over four years. This CLD confirmation was issued in February 2020 before the non-determination appeal decision in March 2021. It is noted that a close boarded fence along this western boundary is included in the site photos for the non-determination appeal and is referenced by the inspector in paragraphs 3, 16, 20 and 35 of the appeal decision. Specifically, paragraph 20 of the Inspectors report states:
- “Situated roughly midway in the “tree enclosed space” the development would be incongruous to the detriment of the spacious open character and appearance of this part of the St Neots Conservation Area. It would be seen over the fence line and glimpsed through the access.”*
- 7.35 23/02430/CLED, issued in February 2024 confirmed that the implemented access with gate and new fencing to amenity land was in accordance with the approved plans within approved application 17/02534/FUL and was evident in mapping data in September 2018.
- 7.36 It can therefore be reasonably assumed that the site was physically separated and visually detached from the historic Grade II\* Crosshall Manor when the Planning Inspectorate appraised the site against its heritage setting in 2021.
- 7.37 Crosshall Manor stands at the crossroads of the old Great North Road with Crosshall Road and Kimbolton Road which is now adjacent to the modern A1 road. This location is described in the CCAC as an important crossroads where the Great North Road met the road from Cambridge via St Neots to Northampton, and the CACC notes that a short stretch of the Great North Road original alignment prior to the construction of the modern dual carriageway can still be seen.
- 7.38 The Eaton Oak Public House, a Grade II Listed Building, also stands on this crossroads, opposite Crosshall Manor and

together they form a surviving group recording the historic layout of the crossroads and this relationship between the buildings contributes to their settings. The area which includes the proposal site forms part of the historic road network based on the river crossing that underpinned the prosperity of St Neots and Eaton Socon and much of the Great North Road south of Crosshall now lies amongst late 20th century housing estates built over the fields.

- 7.39 Crosshall Manor and the proposal site therefore forms part of an important historic record of the layout of St Neots and its development from the three separate settlements of St Neots, Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford. The proposal site, as part of the historic curtilage of Crosshall Manor, contributes positively to the evidential and historic values which form the significance of the Grade II\* Listed Building as well as that of the Conservation Area.
- 7.40 The existing building at 204 Crosshall Road which stands adjacent to the proposal site is an isolated building on the northern side of the road. Number 204 is an anomaly in the location which is not considered to contribute positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area being a modern dwelling of a standard modern design. It also stands beyond the historic curtilage of Crosshall Manor in contrast to the proposed dwelling. Planning records at Huntingdonshire DC related to planning consent for a dwelling at Number 204 date back to 1977, prior to the current legislation and regulations which protect heritage assets and Listed Buildings and their settings.
- 7.41 The design of the proposed dwelling appears to suggest a converted agricultural building. The building has a half-hipped roof, black timber boarded walls, and a large dormer above a large door opening. The proposed barn type house has only one window but numerous rooflights which are prominent, being high in the roof slope.
- 7.42 The proposal is not for the conversion of an existing historic building associated with Crosshall Manor but for a new dwellinghouse which imposes into the historic curtilage and setting of that heritage asset. It is not clear that the proposed design has any reference to Crosshall Manor and there is no record of a building in this location historically.
- 7.43 In considering the current application, Historic England (HE) note the design of the dwelling, which resembles an agricultural barn and is a more modest than the previously refused dwelling on the site still results in a negative effect upon the verdant quality, general absence of built form and sense of spaciousness of the application site. HE conclude that the current proposal would

cause less than substantial harm to the setting and significance of the St. Neot's Conservation Area and the grade II\* listed building and object to the proposals.

- 7.44 Furthermore, regard must be given to the Inspectors appraisal of a previously proposed dwelling on the site with an above ground level ridgeline of 3.978 metres as unacceptable given it would be seen over the fence towards the Grade II\* building to the north and wider conservation area. In comparison, with this current proposed dwelling having a 5.4 metre ridgeline, it is considered that the proposed dwelling would be similarly sited to the shared boundary with Crosshall Manor causing an increased level of harm as it would be taller and more viewable over the fence from the GII\* Listed Building. Given the increased height, although set back into the site would again be viewable from the wider St. Neots Conservation area.
- 7.45 In addition to the dwellinghouse, the residential development of the proposal site requires ancillary works including the addition of hardstanding for parking (in addition to existing hard standing for access and turning), bin and cycle storage (although not denoted on plans), formal gardens to front and back, and the site would necessarily accumulate the usual domestic detritus such as garden furniture, etc. Such domestication of the historic curtilage and setting of the Grade II\* Listed Building would not preserve the contribution which the undeveloped site currently makes to the setting of the heritage asset as a neutral green space and historic record of the extent of its historic curtilage. The proposed changes to the site would also remove the contribution which the site makes to the record of the historic arc of the road layout and junction and its relationship with Crosshall Manor and its historic site.
- 7.46 Although the applicant proposes to add native hedging to the front of the site, these could fail to provide any meaningful screening and could not be relied upon as a permanent screen for the proposed permanent building from the public realm of the wider St Neots Conservation Area.
- 7.47 Therefore, for the above reasons and paying regard to the planning history of the site, the proposal is not considered to preserve the character of the Grade II\* Listed Building Crosshall Manor because of the development within its setting and it is considered harmful to its significance.
- 7.48 The NPPF requires that great weight be given to the conservation of heritage assets (Para 212) and clear and convincing justification for any harm to them (Para 213). Given that the proposal is for a market dwelling, no clear and convincing justification has been provided for the harm to the setting of the Listed Building or the Conservation Area.



In accordance with Local Plan Policy LP34 and paragraph 215 of the NPPF 2024, where there would be less than substantial harm to heritage assets, there is a requirement for this to be balanced against the public benefits of the scheme. The balancing exercise has been carried out at the end of this report.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 7.49 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.
- 7.50 The nearest neighbouring residential properties surrounding the proposed development are No.204 Crosshall Road approximately 21 metres to the east and Crosshall Manor which is approximately 28 metres to the north west, both of which exceed the 21 metre separation recommendations as set out in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide in terms of safeguarding residential amenity.
- 7.51 Having regard to the single storey nature of the proposal and the orientation and height of windows on the proposed new dwelling (including rooflights) it is considered that there would be no significant loss of residential amenity, overlooking loss of privacy or disturbance to any of the surrounding neighbours.

### **Amenity of Future Occupiers**

- 7.52 The Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposed development would provide appropriate private amenity spaces for the proposed dwellings, providing a rear garden at a depth of at least 15.8 metres which would allow for activities such as drying laundry and recreation space in good weather.
- 7.53 The proposed dwelling is 2-bedroom and the plans show a four-person capacity bedspace, which accord with the nationally described space standards (NDSS). The proposal exceeds the overall 70 sqm floorspace which is recommended for 2 bedroom or 4-person, single storey home. The garden areas for both dwellings are considered satisfactory, both having adequate private amenity areas and sufficient parking (2 spaces). Accordance with the NDSS is not a policy requirement within the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 but provides some context in terms of living space. In this instance, the proposed internal space is considered appropriately functional and acceptable such that future occupiers would experience a good standard of amenity in this regard.

- 7.54 In addition the Huntingdonshire Council's Environmental Health Officer has considered the proposals and raise no objections, nor recommend the appending of any conditions to the proposal should it be approved.
- 7.55 Overall, taking the above factors into consideration, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

### **Highway Safety and Parking Provision**

- 7.56 Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024) states that development should only be prevented or refused on Highway Safety Grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Policy LP16 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 also encourages sustainable transport modes. Policy PT1 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan seeks development to maximise sustainable modes of transport.
- 7.57 The proposed dwelling would be accessed via Cross Hall Road, which is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The proposal would utilise existing dropped kerbs and access that serve the existing site and seeks to implement an area of hardstanding to the front and side of the dwelling and use this as a drive and turning area with the plans showing space for at least two vehicle to park within the curtilage of the site with additional space available on the driveway should this be required. With regard to the level of parking provision, the Local Plan to 2036 does not include set standards, but having regard to Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036, two formal spaces for the dwelling is considered to be acceptable in this instance.
- 7.58 No cycle parking is proposed, however it is accepted that there is room on site to accommodate 2 cycle spaces (1 per bedroom) and could be secured by condition should the proposal be approved to allow the proposal to accord with LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036. Furthermore, the site is in a sustainable location in St. Neots where services can be accessed without reliance on the motor vehicle.
- 7.59 Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority have reviewed the proposals and raise no objections subject to conditions for sufficient manoeuvring space and a metalled

surface shall be provided for a minimum distance of 5m along the access road from its junction with the public highway to safeguard highway safety.

- 7.60 Overall, subject to conditions and informatives recommended by the Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways Officer, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and therefore accords with Policies LP16 and LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy PT1 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

### **Flood Risk**

- 7.61 The site is at the lowest risk of flooding according to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2017 and Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zone 1) and the proposal is for minor development. Accordingly, the sequential and exceptions tests for flooding nor the submission of a flood risk assessment are considered necessary in this instance in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG. Policy P4 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan seeks development to have adequate drainage.
- 7.62 Given the low flood risk and minor scale of development, Officers are satisfied that full details of the surface and foul water drainage can be secured as part of building regulations and other relevant legislative requirements in this instance.
- 7.63 Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water and therefore accords with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy P4 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

### **Biodiversity**

- 7.64 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.
- 7.65 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) by Sound Ecology dated October 2024 accompanies the application and states the site is of negligible ecological value with no further surveys required. The report provides recommendations within part 6 to

protect nesting birds, bats and hedgehogs and offers biodiversity enhancement measures including insect and bat boxes, as well as hedgehog friendly boundary treatments. A condition is recommended to ensure compliance with the recommendations contained in the PEA should the proposal be approved.

- 7.66 The proposal is also subject to Biodiversity Net Gain Legislation (BNG) which pursuant to the Environment Act 2021, 10% statutory Biodiversity Net Gain is required following the hierarchy of onsite provision; mixture of on-site and off-site provision; and the last resort of statutory biodiversity credits. A Biodiversity Net Gain Metric accompanies the application and identifies offsite habitat creation totalling 0.13 habitat units. HDC's Ecology Officer has reviewed the metric and has confirmed that this is acceptable, and a 10% net gain can be achieved. As this will require the purchase of off-site credits, should the proposal be approved, a condition should be sought to secure this.
- 7.67 Therefore, subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with the objectives of Policy LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Schedule 7A of the Town and country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) in this regard.

### **Impact on Trees**

- 7.68 Policy LP31 of the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 states that a proposal will be required to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated. Furthermore, a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development. Paragraph 136 of the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework states that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and decisions should ensure that existing trees are retained, wherever possible.
- 7.69 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan by East Midlands Tree Surveys Ltd, dated 9/9/2024.
- 7.70 There is a Cypress tree to the front of the site which is annotated in the accompanying tree documentation as H1. Otherwise, there are a number of trees on the western boundary and to the rear and northeast side.
- 7.71 It is acknowledged that given the location of the site within St Neots Conservation Area, all qualifying trees are legally

protected. Nevertheless, no trees within close proximity to the site have Tree Protection Orders.

- 7.72 The submitted tree report states that there will be no impact on the root protection areas of any on or off-site trees. There will be some minor shading to the NW of the building from NT1 (Sycamore), outside the red line boundary plan to the eastern front corner & NT2 (Yew) also outside the red line boundary plan to the western side. However, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not cause significant pressure to prune trees in the future.
- 7.73 The Councils Tree Officer has reviewed the application and raises no objections to the proposal and considers that the applicant has demonstrated that the proposal would not have a significant detrimental impact on nearby trees, subject to condition requiring the Arboricultural Method Statement is followed.
- 7.74 Accordingly, subject to condition the proposal is considered to accord with Policy LP31 of the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and Sections 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

### **Developer Contributions**

- 7.75 Part H of the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) requires a payment towards refuse bins for new residential development, which in this instance would be secured by the Unilateral Undertaking already submitted with the application.
- 7.76 On this basis, the proposal is considered to provide a satisfactory contribution to meet the tests within the CIL Regulations. The proposal therefore accords with Policy LP4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011).

### **Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings**

- 7.77 Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that all housing developments in the district offers a genuine choice of Accessible and adaptable dwellings that meet the requirements of residents:
- f. ensuring 100% of new dwellings, across all tenures provided, meet Building Regulation requirement M4 (2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' (or replacement standards).
- 7.78 To ensure that the development can meet these standards a condition would be imposed on any permission that may be granted in this regard in accordance with Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

## **Water Efficiency**

- 7.79 Policy LP12 (j) of the Local Plan to 2036 states that new dwellings must comply with the optional Building Regulation requirement for water efficiency set out in Approved Document G of the Building Regulations. A condition is recommended to be imposed on any permission to ensure compliance with the above, in accordance with Policy LP12 (j) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

## **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 7.80 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

- 7.81 A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS).

- 7.82 As stated earlier, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'.

- 7.83 NPPF para 11 states:

'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For decision-taking this means:

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:



- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance (7\*) provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

7\* Foot note 7 states: The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to:

“habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.”

- 7.84 The site is within the historic setting of a Grade II\* Listed Building and is characterised by its enclosed, verdant quality, a general absence of built form adjacent to the highway and a sense of spaciousness above and beyond the fencing and hedging, making a minor positive contribution to the setting and significance of the listed Building. The proposal for one dwelling on the site would bring modern development closer to the Grade II\* Listed Building and within its curtilage and setting, removing the existing spacious and verdant buffer zone between Crosshall Manor and the modern development of Crosshall Road and would be viewable over the proposed boundary from both the public realm and the setting of the Grade II\* Listed building. Therefore, the placing of built form here would remove the undeveloped space which provides a positive contribution within which the grade II\* Listed Building (Crosshall Manor) can be experienced as a historic building within the St Neots Conservation Area away from the modern housing beyond its historic setting. The proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the listed building, and fail also to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7.85 The above identified heritage harm forms a strong reason for refusing the development proposed as set out in Paragraph 11 d (i) and footnote 7. Tilted balance is therefore disengaged, and there is no need to move forward to the test in paragraph 11 d (ii).

- 7.86 As the identified harm is considered to be less than substantial, paragraph 215 is engaged.

Paragraph 215 of the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework states:

*“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

- 7.87 The harm to the designated heritage asset would be less than substantial as set out in the NPPF and therefore the harm has to be weighed against the public benefits but the limited public benefit of the development that include the provision of additional market dwellings and the employment opportunities associated with the construction, would not outweigh the harm caused.
- 7.88 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of one market dwelling in St Neots.
- 7.89 The proposal will result in the delivery of 1 new home towards the housing supply. In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposal would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation - during the construction phase and in the longer term through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, notwithstanding the loss of the on-site trees, the proposal offers the incorporation of some energy efficiency measures, as well as the delivery of new landscaping and some biodiversity enhancements. The application site constitutes a sustainable location for the scale of development proposed in respect of access to local employment opportunities, services and facilities within wider St Neots Spatial Planning Area; and is accessible by sustainable transport modes.
- 7.90 However, these identified benefits would not outweigh the identified harm to the heritage assets.
- 7.91 It is acknowledged that the applicant has submitted a reduced scheme to address the previous reasons for refusal in the non determination appeal for a single dwelling on site. However, taking into account the special interest of the site as within the setting of the Grade II\* Listed Building Crosshall Manor notable for its open, verdant and spacious character providing a buffer between modern built form and the historical setting, it is considered that the introduction of a dwelling and associated residential praphernelia would not be acceptable in line with the previous appeal decision.

7.92 Taking national and local planning policies into account, having paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be refused.

**8. RECOMMENDATION - REFUSAL FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON:**

1. The site is within the historic setting of a Grade II\* Listed Building and is characterised by its enclosed, verdant quality, a general absence of built form adjacent to the highway and a sense of spaciousness above and beyond the fencing and hedging, making a minor positive contribution to the setting and significance of the listed Building. The proposal for one dwelling on the site would bring modern development closer to the Grade II\* Listed Building and within its curtilage and setting, removing the existing spacious and verdant buffer zone between Crosshall Manor and the modern development of Crosshall Road and would be viewable over the proposed boundary from both the public realm and the setting of the Grade II\* Listed building. Therefore, the placing of built form here would remove the undeveloped space which provides a positive contribution within which the grade II\* Listed Building (Crosshall Manor) can be experienced as a historic building within the St Neots Conservation Area away from the modern housing beyond its historic setting. The proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the listed building and fail also to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and paragraphs 8c, 192, 194 and 196 of the NPPF 2024, which aim to preserve and enhance the conservation area. It is also contrary to the requirements of section 16 and paragraph 130 the NPPF and is also considered to be contrary to Policies LP2, LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policies A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, and the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

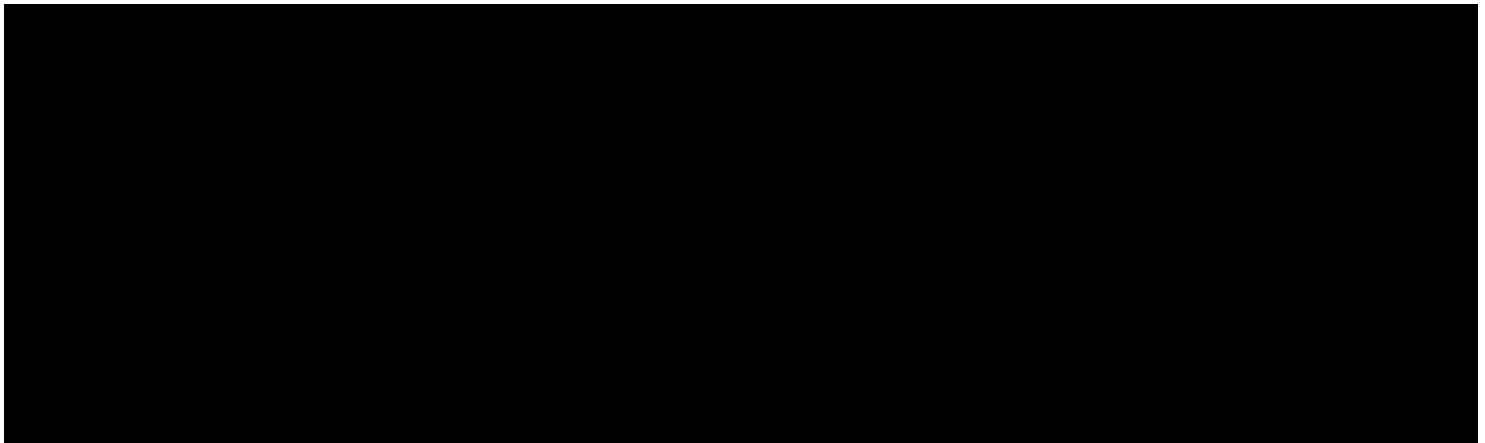
If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

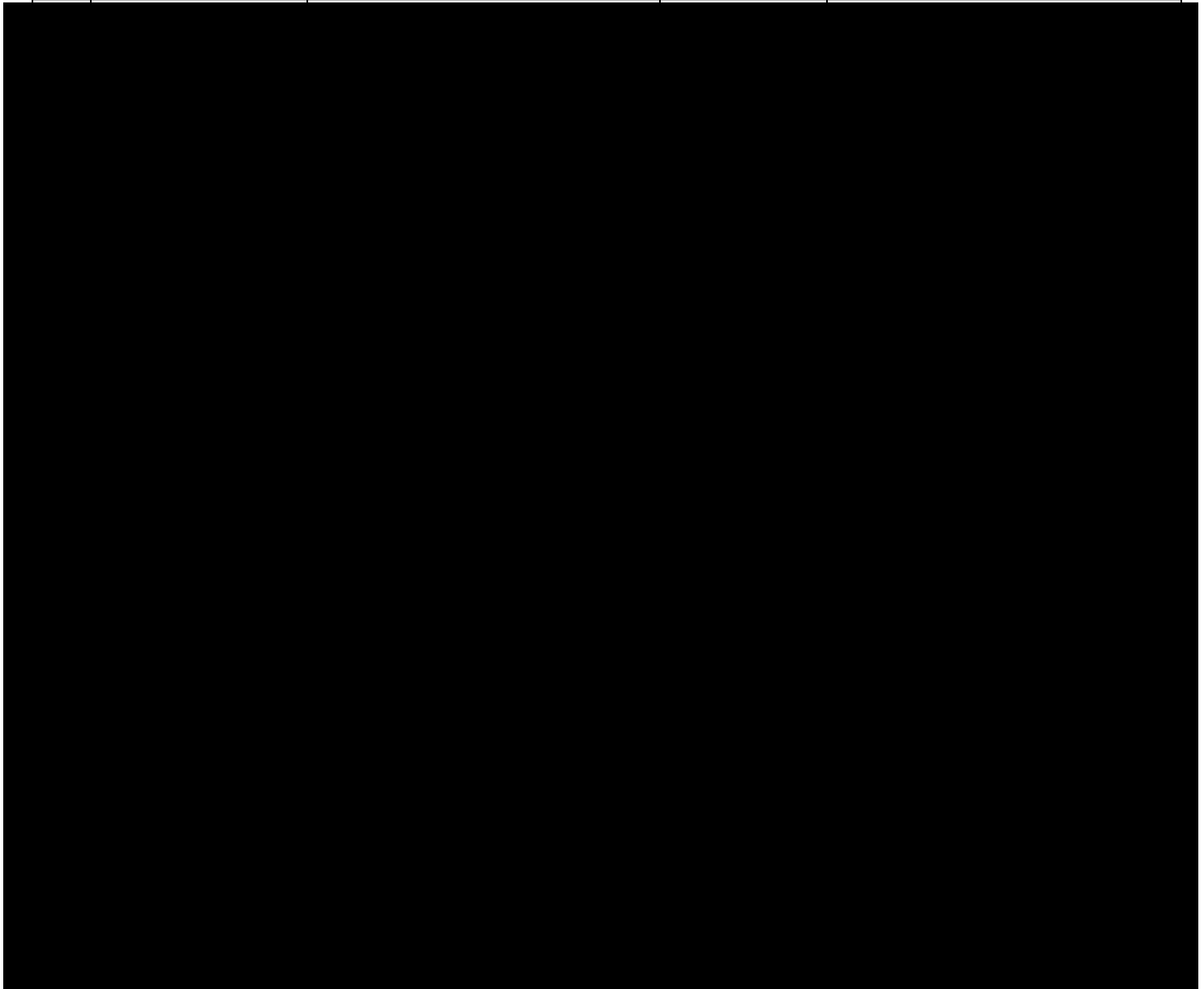
Enquiries about this report to Marie Roseaman, Senior Development Management Officer – [marie.roseaman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:marie.roseaman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

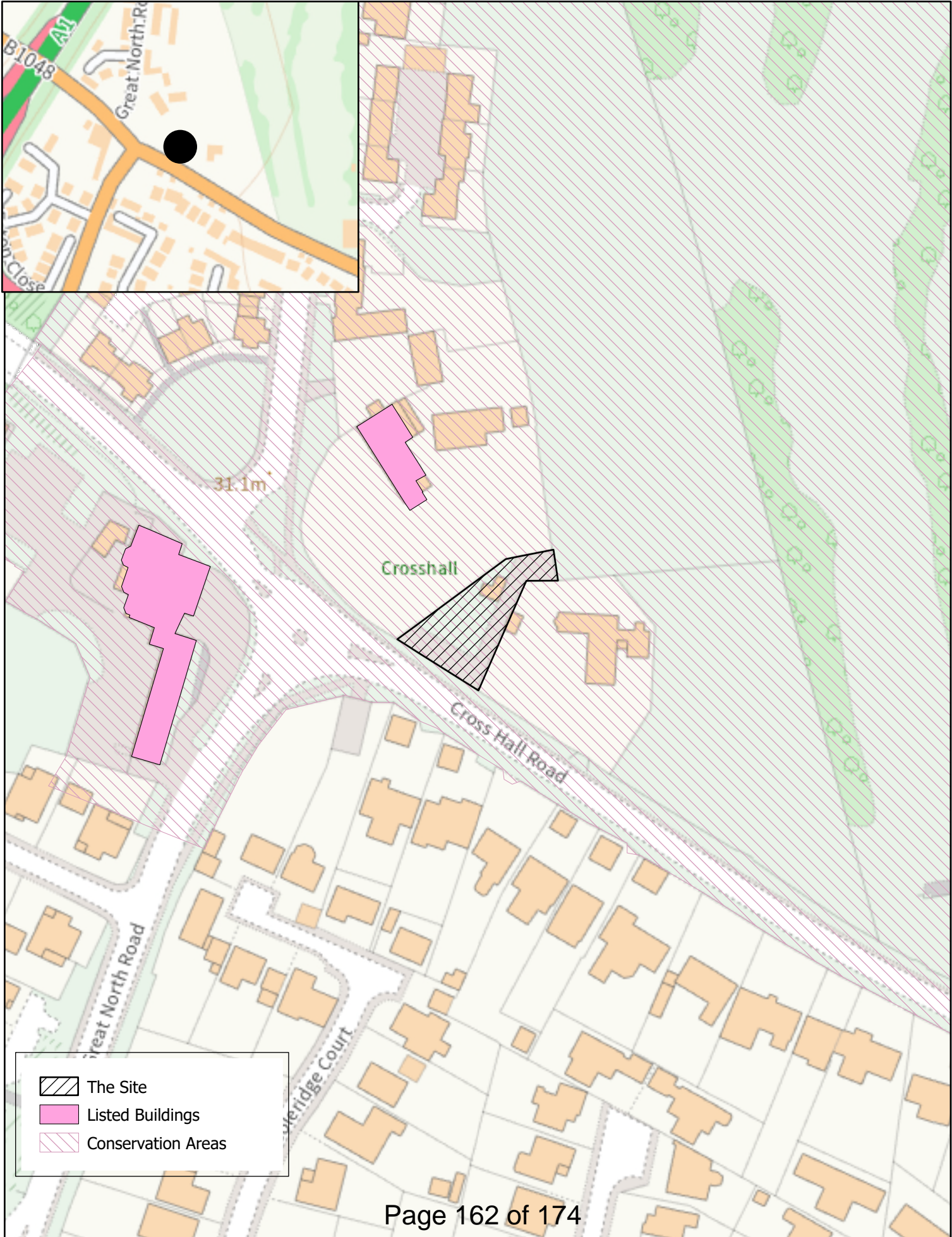
# Schedule of Planning Applications –14<sup>th</sup> January 2025

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
-----	-----------	-------------	---------------	-------



<b>S3</b>	<b>24/02228/FUL</b>	<b>HW Unique Developments Ltd</b> <b>Land At 516 Great North Road</b> <b>Eaton Ford</b> Erection of two-bedroom barn-style property & associated works	<b>SUPPORT</b> <b>JD abstained</b>	Satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development.
-----------	---------------------	---	---------------------------------------	---





# Location Plan

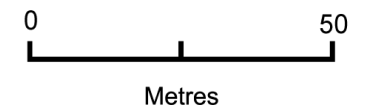
Site Address: Easting: 517439 Northing: 261152

Date Produced: 27-Nov-2024

Scale: 1:1250 @A4



Planning Portal Reference: PP-13583331v1





---

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 September 2020

**by Helen Heward BSc (Hons) MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 25 March 2021**

---

**Appeal Ref: APP/H0520/W/20/3249223**

**Land at 516 Great North Road, Eaton Ford, Northamptonshire**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Lord Vincent Constantine, Tavistock Antiques Ltd against Huntingdonshire District Council.
  - The application Ref 19/01736/FUL, is dated 2 September 2019.
  - The development proposed is described as "erection of one new dwelling consisting of a main single-storey hipped element, single-storey gable element and single-storey link piece".
- 

### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matters

2. I have used the site address given on the appeal form and used by both parties, although I have noted that the application form described the site as "land adjacent (west) of 204 Crosshall Road". The application and appeal are made by Tavistock Antiques Ltd. Folium Architects advise that the person named should be Lord Vincent Constantine of Tavistock Antiques Ltd.
3. A boundary fence has the benefit of a Certificate of Lawful Existing Development.
4. Matters concerning how the Council dealt with the application are not before me and I have considered the proposal on its own merits.

### Main Issues

5. The Council put forward four putative reasons for refusal relating to heritage, protected trees, biodiversity and building regulations. I consider the main issues to be the effect of the proposed development on (1) the special interest of CrossHall Manor which is listed Grade II\* and on the character and appearance of the St Neots Conservation Area, and (2) trees.

### Reasons

#### *Listed Building and Conservation Area*

6. St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment 2006, (CACC) highlights Crosshall as part of the historic road network. A significant spatial element formed where the original course of the Great North Road crossed the route

from St Neots to Northampton. Crosshall Manor being built at the important crossroad where the Great North Road met the road from Cambridge (via St Neots) to Northampton. Its form has become eroded over time.

7. Crosshall Manor is a Grade II\* listed building (LB), and one of only two LB's in this part of St Neots Conservation Area (CA). Crosshall Manor (Manor) is a medieval timber framed house which has been re-fronted and altered. The Listing description refers only to details of the building. However, its location at this historical crossroads is part of its significance
8. The Manor is located in the northeast quadrant of the crossroad where an annotated inset map in the CACC, pp 30, notes broken built form in a broad curve set back from the junction. The appeal site is located between the Manor and No. 204 Crosshall Road (204), a modern dwelling. Both have a significant setback and the broad arc indicated in the CACC can be roughly extrapolated across the gardens of the Manor to 204.
9. The area between these properties and the road is annotated as "trees enclosing the space" on the same inset map in the CACC. This area, including most of the appeal site, is largely screened by mature trees, close boarded fencing and hedging at the perimeters. It is generally characterised by an enclosed, verdant quality, a general absence of built form adjacent to the highway and a sense of spaciousness above and beyond the fencing and hedging. In this way, and notwithstanding one glimpsed view from the access of the unkempt cleared ground within, this area, including the appeal site, makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
10. The CACC recognises that Crosshall would benefit from an enhancement plan and that its potential will not be fulfilled without a well-planned enhancement scheme. The CACC is dated 2006 and development has taken place since. There is tightly grained modern urban redevelopment in the locality and the alignment and character of the road junction is much changed. However, the historic road intersection, albeit much altered, and the Manor in the northeast quadrant remain. And in between the "trees enclosing space", including most of the appeal site, remains spacious and verdant.
11. A Heritage Statement prepared by Humble Heritage for a two-storey development, agrees that the appeal site has a historical relationship with the Manor. On an extract from a 1799 Enclosure Award Map for Eaton Socon the Manor can be seen on the northeast side of the crossroad. The appeal site forms part of an enclosed field to the south east and part of the crossroads and the Enclosure Award refers to a farmhouse with buildings, yards and gardens. Although the exact use of the field can only be surmised.
12. An 1884 Ordnance Survey (OS) extract indicates that the grounds of the Manor had become extended and laid out as formal gardens between the Manor and the roads, including much of the appeal site. It indicates paths, lawns and trees, although OS maps were not produced as accurate records of gardens. Subsequent OS maps continue to show the area of the appeal site to be largely within the bounds of the Manor, albeit that the bounds variously extend and contract over time. By the 1985 OS map 204 is seen in part of the former grounds of the Manor.
13. Mapping evidence indicates that the appeal site has been part of the grounds of the Manor, but that its use, relationship and importance to the property have

changed over the years. Today ownership is separate, and the appeal site is physically and visually separated from the Manor by tall concrete post and timber panel fencing along the mutual boundary. Shrubbery, hedging and trees on the Manor side further limit intervisibility, but the Appellant acknowledges that the site can be seen from the house and gardens. Coniferous hedging and other trees along Crosshall Road prevent views of the Manor from the public realm over the appeal site.

14. The Framework is clear that any harm to the significance of a heritage asset from development within its setting should require clear and convincing justification. The glossary defines the Setting of a heritage asset as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
15. The contribution of the appeal site to the surroundings in which the Manor is experienced is much diminished. Even so, as part of the verdant space between the Manor and the roads, the appeal site continues to make a minor positive contribution to the setting and significance of the listed building.
16. Effects upon the significance of the Manor could only be by way of affecting the setting. The appeal proposal would not require any further changes to boundaries of the Manor as it has already been separated, fenced off and has access to the public highway.
17. The height of the roof would be reduced by lowering ground levels. Notwithstanding the 500mm cut, the drawings indicate that window headers, top courses of brickwork, the large hipped roof and lesser pitched roof would all be visible over fencing. The north west elevation would be seen from the Manor.
18. The Design and Access statement refers to the scheme reflecting the vernacular of converted barns in the former grounds of the Manor. Those barns are behind the Manor. The proposed dwelling would be largely in front. This would be an awkward and incongruent relationship which would diminish the setting and significance of the Manor.
19. Roughly 12m wide, extending across almost the full width of the site and within approximately 3m of the boundary, the front part of the dwelling would appear wide and very close to the road. Most of the dwelling would be forward of a broad arc of a building line through the front of the Manor and 204. Limited space for landscaping would make it more prominent. Whilst all of the dwelling components would fit on the site, there would be little green space about the dwelling. It would appear very cramped in comparison to the Manor and 204.
20. Situated roughly midway in the "tree enclosed space" the development would be incongruous to the detriment of the spacious open character and appearance of this part of the St Neots Conservation Area. It would be seen over the fence line and glimpsed through the access.
21. The dwelling would be close to a number of mature trees and hedging. Cut into the site and with limited space about the dwelling there would be a likelihood that the trees and hedging would combine to limit daylight and create a hemmed in and overbearing feeling for future occupants. This could lead to

pressure to cut down hedging and/or remove trees. Increased visibility of the dwelling within the CA could exacerbate the negative impact on the character and appearance of the CA and the setting of the Listed Building. This adds to my concerns.

22. I conclude the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of the listed building, and fail also to preserve the character and appearance of the CA. The proposal would be contrary to aims of Policy LP2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (Local Plan) to "Protect the character of existing settlements..." and to "Conserve and enhance the historic environment". It would fail to satisfy the requirement of Policy LP11 that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, including natural, historic and built environment, to help create distinctive, high quality and well-designed places. It would conflict with a requirement of Policy LP12 that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it (a) contributes positively to areas of character and identity and (b) successfully integrates with adjoining buildings, the routes and spaces between buildings, topography, and landscape.

23. The proposal also fails to satisfy requirements of Policy LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (Local Plan) which advises that works to a heritage asset within its setting must demonstrate that the proposal, amongst other things:

Protects the significance of designated heritage assets and their settings by protecting and enhancing architectural and historic character, historical associations, landscape and townscape features and through consideration of scale, design, materials, siting, layout, mass, use and views both from and towards the asset;

Does not harm or detract from the significance of the heritage asset, its setting and any special features that contribute to its special architectural or historic interest and the proposal conserves and enhances the special character and qualities.

24. The harm to the significance of both the Listed Building and Conservation Area would be less than substantial. Policy LP34 requires that where this is the case, the harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. I return to this balancing exercise in the final section of my decision.

### *Trees*

25. The dwelling would be close to boundaries. Trees within the CA are subject to protection. Trees surrounding the site contribute to the character and appearance of this part of the CA.

26. Whilst Folium Architects Dwg 302 PV2 01 and 01a appear to indicate that the canopy of T3 does not extend over the site, on my site visit I found that it did, as shown on the Arboricultural Report Tree Constraints Plan. I also observed that the canopy of T2 appeared to overhang the site more than depicted on Dwg 302 PV2 01 and 01a. It appeared to overhang to the extent depicted on the visibility splay drawing DWG 2287-01. I could not be certain about the

facts. Nonetheless, the Arboricultural Report identifies that the Root Protection Area (RPA) of G2, T3 and T5 would be impacted by the development.

27. BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations, paragraph 5.3 states that the default position should be that structures are located outside of the RPA's of trees to be retained. It goes on to say that 'where there is an overriding justification for construction within the RPA... technical solutions might be available that prevent damage to the tree(s)'. The proposal is to "ideally" retain the existing gravel surface with a top-dressing, but I find the evidence insufficient to demonstrate and justify the approach.
28. If T2's canopy is as shown on DWG 2287-01 then it may be that the Tree Protection Plan at Appendix 7 of the Arboricultural Report might not be achievable, and this adds to my concerns. Particularly given the close relationship of T2 to the dwelling.
29. The proposal fails to satisfy requirements of Policy LP31 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 which advises that loss, threat or damage to any tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of visual, heritage or nature conservation value will only be acceptable where it is addressed firstly by seeking to avoid the impact, then to minimise the impact and finally where appropriate to include mitigation measures; or where there are sound arboricultural reasons to support the proposal. Where impacts remain the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location must clearly outweigh the loss, threat or damage.

### **Other Matters**

30. The Council raised concern about evidence to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and accessible and adaptable buildings, but as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, these matters are not determinative.
31. I have noted references to sections of the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, 2017, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2018 and C1, C2, I1, I2 and B2 of the National Design Guide, 2019, but found insufficient specificity to address them, and these documents are not determinative in any event.

### **Planning balance**

32. The approach to listed buildings and conservation areas is underpinned by the statutory requirements placed on decision makers by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: "s.66 (1) In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses." "s.72 (1) ... with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."
33. The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) gives 'great weight' to the conservation of a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 194 sets out that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

34. Paragraph 196 adds that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The approach set out in Policy LP34 of the Local Plan is broadly consistent with this advice.
35. The proposal would result in a net addition of one dwelling to the housing stock. This is a benefit to which I attach a moderate amount of weight. It would remove the view of the unkempt vacant site, but this is only a fleeting view and the detracting elements are not seen over the fences and hedging. I attach little weight to this as a benefit.
36. There are suburban dwellings in the wider locality. Undoubtedly the built form will interrupt some specific views, but on my site visit I observed that trees in the garden of the Manor and 204 would limit views from the Manor of the wider suburban area along Crosshall Road. There is scant evidence to demonstrate that the proposal would have any meaningful effect in terminating views of suburban style dwellings from the Manor or its grounds.
37. The overarching statutory duty imposed by s66 or s72 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 applies even where the harm to heritage assets is found to be less than substantial and I attach considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of the LB and the character and appearance of the CA.
38. Although there are some public benefits they do not outweigh the considerable weight that I attach to the harms. The proposal would not satisfy the requirements of Local Plan Policy LP34 and is contrary to the Development Plan when read as a whole.

## **Conclusion**

39. For the reasons given and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

*Helen Heward*

PLANNING INSPECTOR

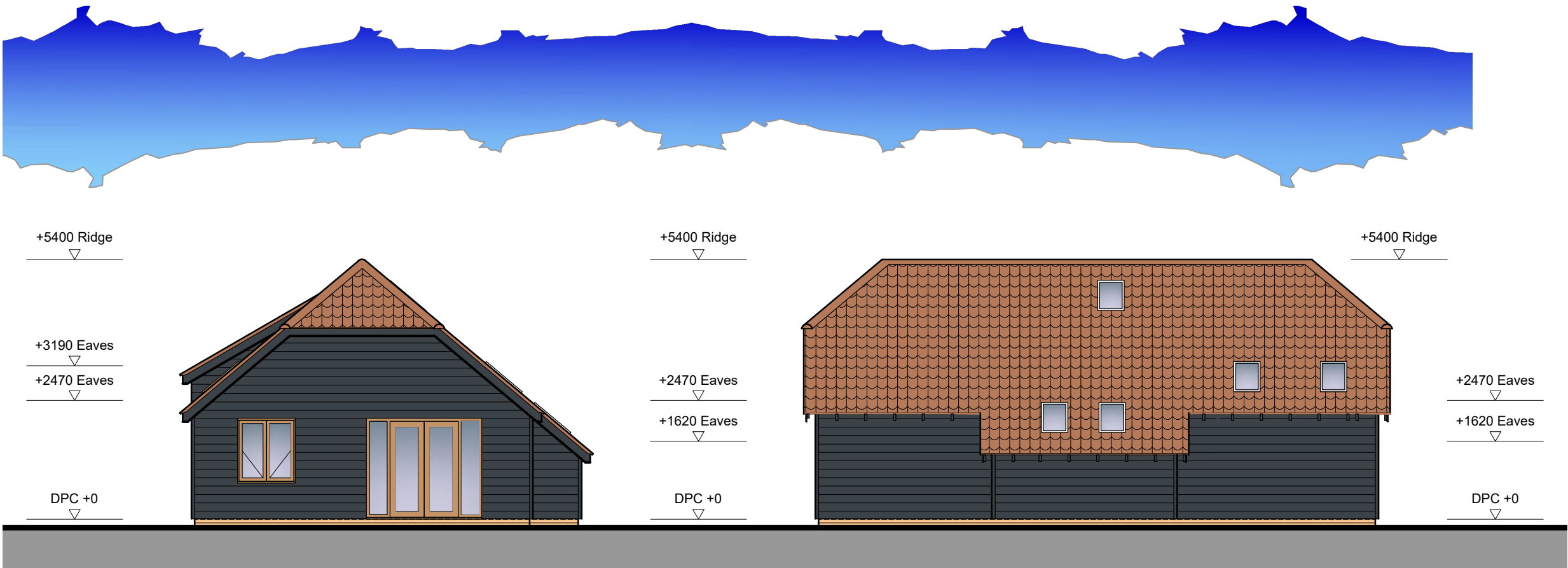




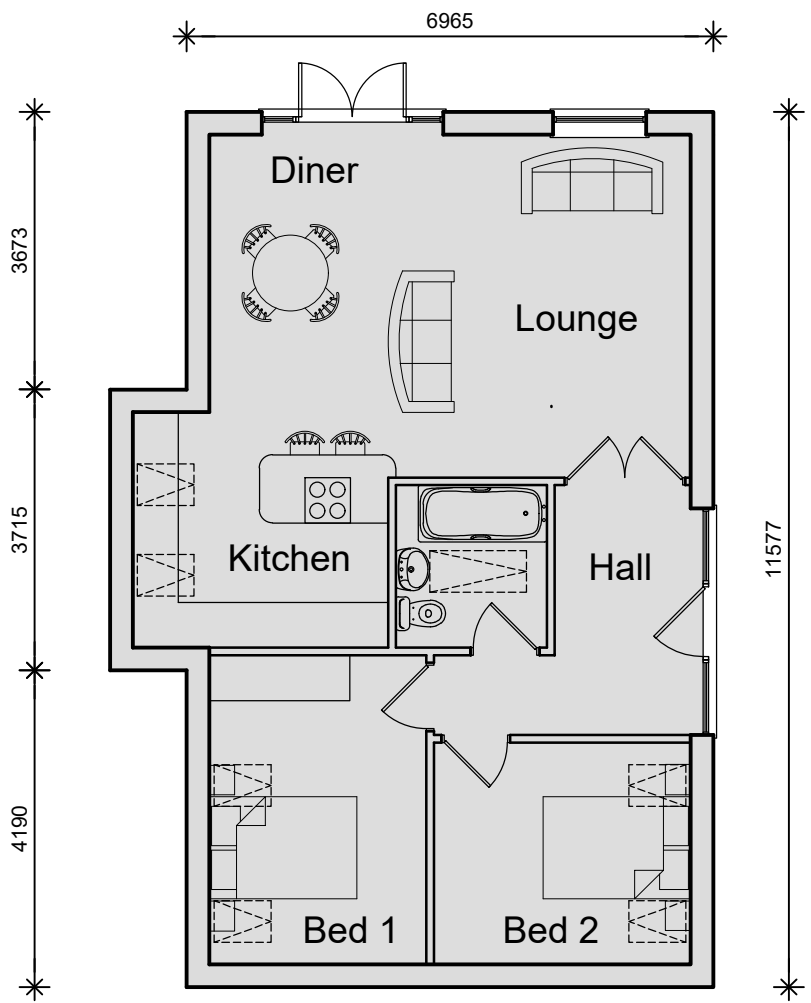
Materials  
Walls - Black feather edged timber featheredge boarding - Colour: Black  
Roof - Sandtoft New Arcadia Clay Pantiles - Colour: Reclaimed  
Entrance frame and door - Oak - Colour: Natural  
Windows, doors and rooflights - Colour: Softwood with teal finish  
Rainwater goods - Brett Martin uPVC half round cast iron effect - Colour: Black




South West Elevation (Front) South East Elevation (Side)



North East Elevation (Rear) North West Elevation (Side)



Floor Plan



**JLG Design**  
.co.uk  
Architectural CAD Services

8 Tennyson Place  
Eaton Ford  
St. Neots  
Cambridgeshire  
PE19 7LL  
Tel / Fax: 01480 218440  
Email: john@jlgdesign.co.uk

Project:  
Land At 516 Great North Road,  
Eaton Ford, St Neots,  
Cambs. PE19 7GH.

Drawing:  
Plan and Elevations

Drawn by:  
JG

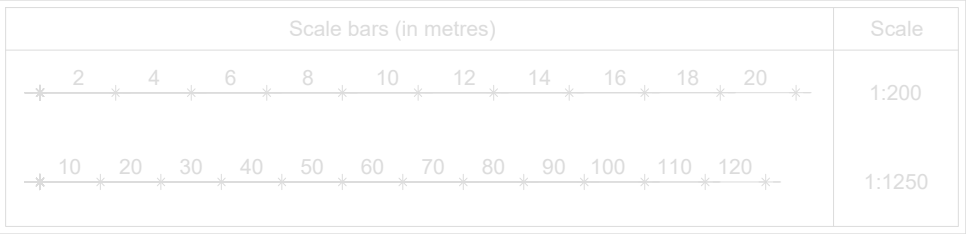
Scale:  
1:100

Date:  
17.7.24

This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

Drawing no:  
JLG912/02

Revision



8 Tennyson Place  
Eaton Ford  
St. Neots  
Cambridgeshire  
PE19 7LL  
Tel / Fax: 01480 218440  
Email: john@jlgdesign.co.uk

Project:  
**Land At 516 Great North Road,  
Eaton Ford, St Neots,  
Cambs. PE19 7GH.**

Drawing:  
**Site Plan**

Drawn by:  
JG

Scale: 1:200	Date: 17.7.24
-----------------	------------------

This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

Drawing no: <b>JLG912/01</b>	Revision
---------------------------------	----------

This page is intentionally left blank

## Planning Appeal Decisions Since March 2025 Committee

Ref No	Appellant	Parish	Proposal	Site	Original Decision	Delegated or DMC	Appeal Determination	Costs
23/023 51/FU L	Mr Charles Birch	Brampton	Raise Land Levels to 11.5m AOD	Taylor's Dredging Ltd Bromholme Lane Brampton PE29 6GP	Non-Determination	Delegated	<b>Appeal Allowed</b>	N/A
23/024 76/PIP	Mr Darren Coote	Buckden	Residential redevelopment with 3-5 dwellings following demolition of existing buildings	Westfield Farm Great North Road Buckden St Neots PE19 5XJ	Refused	Delegated	<b>Appeal Allowed</b>	Costs Refused
23/024 31/S73	Mr Steve Daniels	Fenstanton	Variation of Condition 2 (Plans) of 18/00785/HHFUL.	10 Greenfields St Ives PE27 5HB	Grant Permission	Delegated	<b>Appeal Allowed</b>	N/A
24/004 64/FU L	Fenside Leisure Limited	Warboys	Change of use of a touring caravan site comprising 16no. pitches to a mixed touring and caravan park comprising 16no. pitches (6no. Shepards huts, and 7no. Static caravan and 3no. touring pitches) and extension of seasonal opening times (11 months) (pursuant to refusal 22/01755/ful)	Fenside Caravan Park Puddock Road Warboys Huntingdon PE28 2UA	Refused	Delegated	<b>Appeal Allowed</b>	N/A

<b>23/020 78/FU L</b>	Mr G Popham	Huntingdon	Erection of 2x semi-detached two-bedroom bungalows.	Land Between 14 And 16 Coneygear Road Huntingdon	Refused	Delegated	<b>Appeal Dismissed</b>	N/A
<b>24/006 80/HH FUL</b>	Mr & Mrs Smith	Great Staughton	Proposed Garage, new boundary, wall and oil tank	73 The Highway Great Staughton St Neots PE19 5DA	Refused	Delegated	<b>Appeal Dismissed</b>	N/A
<b>24/007 35/HH FUL</b>	Mr Barrie Stoneham	Bluntisham	Retrospective application for the erection of 1.8m fence	22 Colne Road Bluntisham Huntingdon PE28 3LU	Refused	Delegated	<b>Appeal Dismissed</b>	N/A