



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, 16 JUNE 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 19th May 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. APPLICATIONS REQUIRING REFERENCE TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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

(a) Huntingdon - 25/00577/FUL (Pages 9 - 40)

Enhancement works to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, to include an extension to the existing countryside centre, new car parking (to include new electric vehicle charging), improved access, biodiversity enhancements and other associated improvements and works - Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Hinchingsbrooke Park Road, Huntingdon.

(b) Holywell-cum-Needlingworth - 25/00069/FUL (Pages 41 - 66)

Partially retrospective application for change of use of land to Use Class B8 (storage or distribution) to provide self-storage facilities including the provision of storage containers - The Barn, Overcote Lane, Needlingworth, St Ives.

4. APPEAL DECISIONS (Pages 67 - 68)

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

LATE REPRESENTATIONS

4 day of June 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](#)

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Please contact Anthony Roberts, Democratic Services, Tel: 01480 388015 / email 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.

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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, 19 May 2025

PRESENT: Councillor D L Mickelburgh – Chair.

Councillors R J Brereton, E R Butler, S J Corney, D B Dew, P A Jordan, S R McAdam, S Mokbul, B M Pitt, T D Sanderson, R A Slade and C H Tevlin.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Clarke, K P Gulson, J Neish and S Wakeford.

5 MINUTES

Subject to apologies for absence of Councillor Mickelburgh being recorded, the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 14th April and 15th May were approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

6 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Jordan declared a Non-Registerable Interest in Minute No 8 b) by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward she represents.

Councillor Jordan also declared a Non-Registerable Interest in Minute No 8 a) by virtue of the fact that she had been spoken to during a site visit but she did not reply.

7 PLANNING SERVICES PEER REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the outcome of the Planning Services Peer Review. The Review had been undertaken in accordance with a recommendation of the Corporate Peer Challenge. Members' attention was drawn to the composition of the Peer Challenge Team, the work that had been completed and recommendations that had been made.

Members were reminded that training had been organised for the Development Management Committee on the findings of the Report. Discussion then took place on potential changes to the type of applications submitted to the Committee for determination based on the Report's recommendations, national best practice and anticipated changes at the national level. Having commented on the importance of communicating with interested parties on the programme of improvement, it was

RESOLVED

- a) that the Planning Advisory Service Peer Challenge report attached as Appendix 1 to the report now submitted be received and the recommendations noted; and
- b) that the intention to bring back an Action Plan to the Development Management Committee within a timescale to be agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, in consultation with the Chair of the Development Management Committee, be noted.

8 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) Change of use from field to residential garden (retrospective) -1 Meadow View - Great North Road, Norman Cross - 25/00176/FUL

(Councillor A Wood, Yaxley Parish Council, addressed the Committee on the application).

See Minute No 6 for Members' interests.

that, subject to the resolution of the issue of land ownership, the Planning Service Manager (Development Manager) be authorised to approve the application subject to conditions to include those listed in paragraph 8 of the report now submitted together with the additional condition contained in the Late Representations.

b) Erection of a single chalet style two-bedroom bungalow with associated parking - 8 Pepys Road, Brampton - 24/01968/FUL

See Minute No 6 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.

9 APPEAL DECISIONS

The Committee received and noted a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management), which contained details of seven 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

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 16th JUNE 2025

Case No: 25/00577/FUL

Proposal: ENHANCEMENT WORKS TO HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK, TO INCLUDE AN EXTENSION TO THE EXISTING COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE, NEW CAR PARKING (TO INCLUDE NEW ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING), IMPROVED ACCESS, BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS AND OTHER ASSOCIATED IMPROVEMENTS AND WORKS

Location: HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK,
HINCHINGBROOKE PARK ROAD, HUNTINGDON

Applicant: HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Grid Ref: 522073 271679

Date of Registration: 27th March 2025

Parish: HUNTINGDON

RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE

This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) as the application has been submitted by Huntingdonshire District Council for its own development.

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The site

- 1.1 Hinchingsbrooke Country Park covers an area of approximately 150 acres comprising open grassland, mature woodland and lakes. It includes a café, water sports centre, visitor centre and countryside centre. The application site measures 3.56ha which includes the northern part of the County Park where the existing car park, play area and countryside centre are located as well as existing footpaths in the southern part of the park.
- 1.2 The site falls within the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan area and the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority area wherein Policy LP3 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan applies. The site is within the wider Hinchingsbrooke Gravel Pits County Wildlife Site and parts of the site are covered by a blanket Tree Preservation Order (TPO 003/59). Public Footpaths 24 and 47 Huntingdon run through the site.

- 1.3 The site falls outside the Huntingdon Conservation Area which is the east of the site and further east is Hinchbrooke House (Grade I) and its grounds.
- 1.4 The northern parts of the site fall within Flood Zone 1 but some areas are shown as being at risk of surface water flooding. The southern parts of the site, notably around the existing lakes, fall within Flood Zones 2 and 3b on the Environment Agency's Flood Maps for Planning and Huntingdonshire's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024).

The proposal

- 1.5 The application seeks planning permission for enhancement works to Hinchbrooke Country Park, to include an extension to the existing countryside centre, new car parking (to include new electric vehicle charging), improved access, biodiversity enhancements and other associated improvements and works.
- 1.6 Enhancements to the visitor facilities at Hinchbrooke Country Park are a corporate priority project as set out in paragraph 59 of Huntingdonshire District Council's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028.
- 1.7 The proposed extension to the existing countryside centre would provide new toilet facilities, new café/dining area, new function space, kitchen and bar/servey. This would widen the use of the facility for corporate events, exhibitions, weddings, local groups and meeting.
- 1.8 The proposed car park extension would create 116 additional car parking spaces including disabled and electric vehicle charging spaces. The proposal also includes the resurfacing of existing footpaths to improve accessibility for all park users and the widening of the existing internal access road.
- 1.9 This application follows a previous application for a similar scheme (reference 23/01377/FUL) which was subsequently withdrawn and seeks to address consultation comments received during that application.

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.

For full details visit the government website [National Guidance](#)

3. PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)
- Policy LP1 - Amount of Development
 - Policy LP2 – Strategy for Development
 - Policy LP3 – Green Infrastructure
 - Policy LP4 – Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
 - Policy LP5 – Flood Risk
 - Policy LP7 – Spatial Planning Areas
 - Policy LP10 – The Countryside
 - Policy LP11 – Design Context
 - Policy LP12 – Design Implementation
 - Policy LP14 – Amenity
 - Policy LP15 – Surface Water
 - Policy LP16 – Sustainable Travel
 - Policy LP17 – Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
 - Policy LP22 – Local Services and Community Facilities
 - Policy LP23 – Tourism and Recreation
 - Policy LP30 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - Policy LP31 – Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
 - Policy LP32 – Protection of Open Space
 - Policy LP34 – Heritage Assets and their Settings
- 3.2 Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 (Adopted 9 October 2019)
- Policy TL2 – Leisure and Community Facilities
 - Policy NE2 – Open Space and Green Infrastructure
 - Policy NE3 – Setting of Huntingdon
 - Policy BE1 – Design and Landscaping
 - Policy BE2 – Local Distinctiveness and Aesthetics
 - Policy BE3 – Heritage Assets
 - Policy TT1 – Sustainable Transport
- 3.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017)
 - Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
 - Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2022)
 - Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)

- Huntingdonshire Tree Guidance Note 3

For full details visit HDC's website [Local policies](#)

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 8700988CCC - Use of land as Country Park including access road, bridges, car park & visitor centre, APPROVED 20.10.1987
- 4.2 0802246FUL – Extension to cafe at visitors centre, APPROVED 26.08.2008
- 4.3 23/01377/FUL – Enhancement works to Hinchbrook Country Park, to include an extension to the existing countryside centre, new car parking (to include new electric vehicle charging), improved access and lighting, biodiversity enhancements and other associated improvements and works – Withdrawn

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 Huntingdon Town Council – Recommend approval. HTC supports the application on the basis of policy NE3 from the Neighbourhood Plan due to its positive contribution to the recreational use of the park.
- 5.2 Environment Agency – No objection, providing the footpath improvements are undertaken in accordance with the landscape drawings:
 - All footpath and surfacing improvements other than the two sections of the Lakeside Footpath – East Side will not include land raising and finished levels will be flush with the existing ground levels.
 - The land raising detailed on drawing NCSP 508/3-024 of the Lakeside Footpath – East Side includes two sections of land raising up to 600mm. This should be limited to infilling and gradual level changes, we would not support land raising of the circular path as a whole or in areas of flow.
- 5.3 Local Lead Flood Authority – Following the submission of additional/amended information, the LLFA have no objection in principle to the proposed development. Conditions requested for detailed surface water drainage design and drainage during construction.
- 5.4 HDC Urban Design – No objection subject to further information/conditions requested.
- 5.5 HDC Environmental Health – No objection with regard to land contamination.
- 5.6 HDC Arboricultural Officer – No objection subject to conditions.

- 5.7 HDC Ecology Officer – No objection. Having reviewed the documents submitted for the above application, the proposed development will not cause significant adverse impact to the ecology of the site or surrounding land and can provide a minimum 10% net gain in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).
- 5.8 HDC Landscape and Biodiversity Officer - The current planting plan does not adequately mitigate the localised harm caused by the proposal. This is chiefly due to the planting palette proposed which includes ornamental and non-native planting, and is out of character with the receiving landscape. Should officers be minded approving this application, landscaping conditions, including an alternative soft landscaping scheme should be secured.
- 5.9 Natural England – No objection.
- 5.10 Highway Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) – No objection. It was noted that the proposal will result in additional parking spaces. However, the additional vehicle movements cannot be considered significant as Hinchbrook Park Road already serves two housing developments, the hospital, the police HQ and a school. Also, the additional journeys are likely to be at the weekends and not a peak times. Therefore, no significant adverse effect upon the Public Highway should result from this proposal should it gain benefit of Planning Permission.
- 5.11 Definitive Maps Team (Cambridgeshire County Council) – No objection.
- 5.12 Archaeology Team (Cambridgeshire County Council) – No objection subject to condition.
- 5.13 Cadent Gas – No objection

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 2 objections received raising the following matters:
- Encroachment of car park extension onto existing green field used for play and recreation
 - Safety concerns for pedestrians
 - Increase in traffic and congestion leading to pollution and noise
 - Alternative car park location should be considered
 - There is already sufficient parking space
- 6.2 1 representation received in support of the proposals.

- 6.3 Representation received in support from Friends of Hinchbrook Country Park (Volunteer Membership Group/Registered Charity):
- The existing car park is too small for current visitor numbers
 - At busy times visitors park on surrounding streets
 - The intrusion into the main grassland area and extra vehicle movements is not ideal but better than possible alternatives which could have involved loss of trees
 - Expansion of the countryside centre will enable a wider range of functions and larger café
 - Improvements to footpath network, enhanced toilet facilities and measures to increase biodiversity will also be welcome

7. ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- Principle of Development
 - Design and Visual Amenity
 - Impact on Heritage Assets
 - Residential Amenity
 - Highway Safety and Parking
 - Flood Risk and Drainage
 - Biodiversity
 - Trees and Hedgerow

Principle of Development

- 7.2 Policy LP3 (Green Infrastructure) sets out that a proposal within the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area will be supported where it contributes to the landscape, wildlife, cultural and historical value of the area. Policy LP3 goes on to state “A proposal to provide facilities associated with strategic green infrastructure in the countryside will be supported where a countryside location is justified, the use is compatible with the green infrastructure in question and adverse effects are avoided.”
- 7.3 Policy NE3 (Setting of Huntingdon) of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan states “development affecting Hinchbrook Country Park will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance, setting, recreational purpose and biodiversity value of the park.”
- 7.4 The NPPF 2024 states that planning decisions should enable and support healthy lives through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure (paragraph 96 c.) and the provision of community facilities and meeting places should be supported to enhance the sustainability of communities.

- 7.5 Policy LP22 of the Local Plan seeks to support local facilities and services to provide for the needs of the local community. Policy LP22 states that the extension of an existing local service and community facility on land immediately adjoining the built-up area, will be supported where it:
- a. is of a scale to serve local needs;
 - b. comprises up to a maximum of 600m² net internal floorspace for a main town centre use; and
 - c. provides for a new service or facility or it retains or enhances an existing service or facility, including through the provision of premises suitable for mixed use or multiple community functions.
- 7.6 The proposal looks to retain and enhance the existing countryside centre. The proposed extension (approx. 318sqm increase in footprint) would provide new toilet facilities, café/dining area, function space, kitchen and bar/servery. The proposed extension to the existing building would create a multi-purpose community building which could be used for a variety of purposes including but not limited to corporate events, exhibitions, weddings, local groups and meetings. It is considered that this would enable the building to better serve the needs of the community and would facilitate a range of community functions which accords Policy LP22 a. and c. of the Local Plan. The proposed café/dining area is below the 600m² internal floorspace threshold for main town centre uses and therefore accords with Policy LP22 b.
- 7.7 Policy LP23 (Tourism and Recreation) is also considered to be relevant as it supports expanded tourism, sport or leisure use in the countryside will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
- a. it is well-related to a defined settlement unless there are robust operational or sustainability reasons why it needs to be located elsewhere;
 - b. it does not cause harm to, and where appropriate, enhances the ecological, landscape and heritage significance of the proposed location;
 - c. the impact of the scale, character and location of the development on both its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape are minimised as far as possible;
 - d. adequate servicing can be provided, including water supply, electricity and for sewage and waste disposal; and
 - e. it will not have an adverse impact on any internationally or nationally designated wildlife site through increased visitor pressure.
- 7.8 The site is well-related to Huntingdon and the proposals enhance and improve the existing infrastructure and facilities at the Country Park. An assessment of the landscape and ecological impacts and impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area is carried out later within this report. It is not

considered the proposed development would conflict with the criteria of Policy LP23.

- 7.9 The proposed car park extension would result in the partial loss of open space, comprising grassland and an area with existing play equipment. Policy LP32 states a proposal that would lead to the whole or partial loss of an area of open space of public value will only be supported where there would be no significant adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area and:
- a. the loss is minimised where possible and compensatory measures are put in place that provide a net benefit to the community that is served by the space, which will be judged in terms of availability, accessibility, quality and quantity.
- 7.10 As set out in the submitted Planning Statement, the existing car park is frequently insufficient for the number of visitors to the park. The proposed car park extension and additional cycle parking would improve accessibility to the park which is a strategic green space. The partial loss of open space to create the car park extension is not considered significant having regard to the wider Country Park which is circa 150 acres. Furthermore, it is noted that the existing play equipment to be removed has reached the end of its life, however the existing double slide would be retained in situ and the zip line would be relocated elsewhere in the country park.
- 7.11 In terms of impacts on the character of the surrounding area, there would inevitably be harm to the immediate landscape due to the reduction of green space and its replacement with a car parking area. However, suitable mitigation is proposed including wildflower bunds, tree and shrub planting which would screen views of the car park from the south. A detailed soft landscaping scheme has been submitted with the application however HDC's Landscape and Biodiversity Officer has raised concerns that with the use of ornamental and non-native species proposed. A native planted edge would better reflect the landscape character of the country park. A condition is recommended to secure a revised soft landscaping scheme which incorporates the recommendations put forward by HDC's Landscape and Biodiversity Officer. Subject to this condition, it is not considered the proposed car park extension would result in detrimental harm to the character of the park or the surrounding landscape.
- 7.12 Together with the extended countryside centre, it is considered the proposed improvements to the existing footpaths and the provision of additional car and cycle parking would improve accessibility to the Country Park, therefore enhancing its public and recreational value. It is noted that Huntingdon Town Council has recommend approval of the application based on Policy NE3 from the Neighbourhood Plan due to its positive contribution to the recreational use of the park. Furthermore, the proposed biodiversity enhancements including native hedgerow and tree

planting and wildflower bunds/banks are intended to minimise the pressure to the retained habitats and provide compensation, thereby contributing to the wildlife and biodiversity value of the Country Park and wider Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area in accordance with Policy LP3 of the Local Plan.

- 7.13 The proposed development would enhance the existing green infrastructure in the park and it would be consistent with the objectives of the Cambridgeshire Strategic Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011). The main objectives are to reverse the decline in biodiversity; to mitigate and adapt to climate change; to promote sustainable growth and economic development and to support healthy living and well-being. The enhancements to the park would make it more accessible and attractive as a facility to visit and use, and would support healthy living and well-being.
- 7.14 The aim of the proposed development is to improve the accessibility and quality of the existing green infrastructure and expand the existing Countryside Centre to facilitate a wider range of community uses. For the reasons set out above, the principle of development is supported by Policies LP3, LP22, LP23 and LP32 of the Local Plan and Policies NE2 and NE3 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, subject to all other material considerations below.

Design and Visual Amenity

- 7.15 Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 state that developments should respond positively to their context, draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings and contribute positively to the area's character and identity. Policy BE1 of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan states proposals will be supported where they provide landscaping and green public open space to help it integrate into the built form and the surrounding landscape as appropriate to the scale and form of development proposed.

Existing Northern Car Park & Access Road

- 7.16 The proposal includes the resurfacing and widening of the existing internal access road to enable two-way traffic flows as well as the resurfacing and widening of an existing path to the west of the existing car park to create a 2.5 to 4-metre-wide shared cycleway and footpath. The existing car park area is to be retained with existing gravel parking area and asphalt access roads. It is proposed to better define existing parking bays with wooden sleepers to the rear of parking spaces, with reflective circular disks to define parking bays at 2.5 metres, indicating the width of each parking bay (2.5m x 5m). The existing end bays would be reduced to 2.5m wide and existing hard standing removed to accommodate additional soft landscaping. HDC's Landscape and Biodiversity Officer has raised concern with the use of non-native planting currently proposed and as set out

earlier in this report, a condition is recommended to secure a revised soft landscaping scheme. The proposed introduction of post and rail fencing in and around the car park area would prevent cut throughs, ground compaction and trampling of the new planting. Details of the proposed post and rail fencing should be secured by way of condition. Overall, it is considered the proposed improvements to the existing car park area and access road would ensure the development integrates successfully into the existing landscape setting.

New Car Park

- 7.17 The proposed car park would comprise 116 vehicle parking spaces in total, including 19 EV charging spaces and 24 disabled spaces. The layout of the proposed car park has been designed to respect the existing woodland edge to the north. The proposed car park is divided into 4 distinct areas of parking, each containing a bin, ticket machine and signage. The car parks are separated by footpath links to the existing woodland and northern parkland footpath. A new footpath would be created along the southern boundary of the car park. The eastern part of the proposed car park comprises 51 parking spaces and 24 disabled spaces which would be block paved and the western end of the car park, containing 41 parking spaces would form an overflow car park with reinforced grass spaces and would be separated from the main car park by gates/barrier.
- 7.18 As set out in the Principle of Development section above, due to the size and location of the proposed car park area there would be harm to the immediate landscape compared to the existing grassland and play area. However, the proposal includes three wildflower bunds to the south of the proposed car park as well as native hedge and tree planting to the boundaries and within the car park which would soften and screen views, particularly when viewed from the open grassland to the south. The layout and form of the car park is supported in design terms and forms an undulating edge to the grassland meadows. Furthermore, the reinforced grass overflow car park forms a more sympathetic relationship with the setting of the Country Park.

Countryside Centre

- 7.19 The proposals include extensions to the front (west), side (south) and rear (east) elevations to create the new café, increase the size of the function space and provide improved WC facilities to the rear of the building. Large window openings and doors are proposed on the front and side elevations from the Café, lobby and function room providing access to a covered terrace and external café seating area.
- 7.20 The supporting Design & Access Statement indicates the proposed materials are timber cladding to reflect the existing

building and would incorporate recycled rubber roof tiles, a sedum green roof for the rear extension and solar panels on the front elevation. The canopies would comprise a single ply membrane finish made from recycled materials and incorporate roof lights. The proposed materials, whilst indicative at this stage are acceptable in design terms and reflect those used on the existing building. It is recommended that full details of materials should be secured by way of condition, including colours of window openings and the treatment and colour of the canopy soffits and fascias. Furthermore, the details of any external plant equipment (e.g. AC/air handling units) and the location and colour of flues/vents/kitchen and WC extracts should also be secured by condition.

Footpath Improvements

- 7.21 The new footpaths around the proposed car park extension, the proposed shared cycleway and footpath to the west of the existing car park and the resurfacing of the existing footpaths in various locations around the Country Park would be done with asphalt hard surfacing. It is considered that the proposed footpath improvements would be in keeping with the overall appearance of the park.

Summary

- 7.22 The proposed enhancements to the park are considered to have a positive impact upon its appearance and the proposed landscaping would sufficiently mitigate any adverse impacts to the immediate landscape setting. The proposed development therefore complies with Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Local Plan, Policies BE1 and BE2 of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2017) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 7.23 Policy LP34 of the Local Plan states that great weight and importance should be given to the conservation of heritage assets which reflects the statutory protections afforded to heritage assets and their management through the NPPF 2024.
- 7.24 The site falls outside of the Huntingdon Conservation Area which is the east of the site and further to the east is Hinchbrooke House (Grade I) and its curtilage. Given the nature of the proposal and distance to these heritage assets, it is not considered that there would be any harm to their settings.
- 7.25 The Historic Environment Team at Cambridgeshire County Council have been consulted and they have indicated the proposed development area has archaeological potential. It is

considered that some of the more impactful elements of the application particularly the extended car park area, should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the inclusion of a suitably worded pre-commencement archaeological condition. Subject to this, the proposal would comply with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan in this regard.

Residential Amenity

- 7.26 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan states that 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.
- 7.27 An objection has been received stating that the proposal would increase in traffic and congestion leading to pollution and noise impacts. HDC's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted and has not raised any concerns in relation to potential noise or pollution associated with the proposed development. It is not considered that the proposal would result in a significant impact on current noise or pollution levels to warrant further investigation or consideration.
- 7.28 The nearest residential properties are at Brecon Way and Dartmoor Drive to the east of the existing car park and Countryside Centre. The proposal includes the widening of the existing internal access in close proximity to the rear garden boundaries of nearby properties, notably 26 and 28 Beacon Way. The proposed car park extension and improved facilities within the Countryside Centre would increase vehicle movements along the internal access, however this is an existing arrangement and it is not considered the increased movements would not be significant to result in detrimental adverse effects on the occupants of these nearby properties.
- 7.29 Given the nature and siting of the other aspects of the proposal in relation to nearby dwellings, it is not considered the development would have a harmful impact upon the amenities of occupiers in any regard. The proposed development would therefore comply with Policy LP14 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety and Parking

- 7.30 Policy LP16 of the Local Plan looks to ensure that developers fully consider how the opportunities and impacts of the range of travel and transport modes are addressed in their proposals. Policy LP17 of the Local Plan sets out that a proposal will be supported where it incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates accessibility for service and emergency vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.

- 7.31 Policy TT1 (Sustainable Transport) of the Huntingdon Neighbourhood Plan states that development proposals will be supported where they demonstrate how opportunities for the use of sustainable modes of transport are maximised. Furthermore, proposals will be supported, appropriate to the scale of development, where they maximise the potential for cycling and walking throughout the site.
- 7.32 The Highway Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council) have raised no objection to the proposed development. The additional vehicle movements associated with the proposed car park extension are not considered significant as Hinchbrook Park Road already serves two housing developments, the hospital, the police HQ and a school. Furthermore, the additional journeys are likely to be at the weekends and not at peak times. Therefore, it is not considered that there would be any significant adverse effect upon the public highway.
- 7.33 The access road leading to the existing car park, proposed car park extension and the Countryside Centre is proposed to be widened to approximately 6 metres along its length to enable two-way traffic flows. It is considered that this would improve space for vehicle movements within the site. Furthermore, the existing footpath close to the Christie Drive junction which leads into the site would be widened to create a shared footpath and cycleway which would ensure safe and suitable access to the site is achieved for all users in accordance with paragraph 115b) of the NPPF 2024.
- 7.34 In terms of cycle parking provision, the proposal includes junior and adult cycle storage including repair stand and pump in various locations across the country park, including the car park, adjacent to the Countryside Centre and adjacent to existing areas of play equipment. Together with the shared cycleway/footpath into the site and the resurfacing of existing footpaths, the provision of appropriate cycle parking facilities within the Country Park would encourage cycle journeys to and from the park, as well as within the park which is supported by Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan and Policy TT1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.35 With regard to vehicle parking, a 'Parking Justification Summary Sheet' has been submitted in support of the application. This states that the existing country park has 80 standard vehicle parking spaces and two disabled parking spaces. During peak periods the existing level of car parking is insufficient and results in cars parking on grass verges and adjacent residential roads impacting on amenity, increased congestion and also safety concerns. The proposed car park extension has been designed to accommodate typical day usage which is estimated to cover 95% of annual demand. The proposal looks to create 116 additional car parking spaces including 24 disabled spaces as

well as electric vehicle charging spaces. The western end of the proposed car park extension would contain 41 parking spaces for exceptional event overflow parking (e.g. special events, school holidays). The proposal has been based on evidence of seasonal and event-driven peaks in visitor numbers and balances, for example, during the summer peak (May-August 2024) footfall numbers exceed 4,000 visitors a day, particularly during school holidays and events. It is considered that clear justification has been provided for the level of car parking proposed and this is balanced against the proposed improvements to footpaths and the shared cycleway and footpath leading into the site and the provision of cycle parking.

- 7.36 Public Footpaths 24 and 47 Huntingdon run through the site. Footpath 24 will have gated access to the footpath and the park's cycleway to the southern end. The Rights of Way Officer has raised no objection, but requires that the gate is accessible for all applicable users (as shown on 'Proposed Dimensions: Lakeside Footpath South West & West Side' drawing no. NSCP-508/3-027 Rev H).
- 7.37 With the above, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and accords with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Policy PT1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.38 Policy LP5 of the Local Plan sets out that a proposal will only be supported where all forms of flood risk have been addressed. Furthermore, Policies LP6 and LP15 set out the Council's approach to wastewater and surface water management. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment dated March 2025 produced by Link Engineering.
- 7.39 The northern parts of the site including the existing car park, proposed car park and countryside centre extension are entirely within Flood Zone 1 and which means that these aspects of the proposal are at a low probability of fluvial flooding.
- 7.40 In accordance with paragraph 170 of the NPPF 2024, where development is necessary in areas at risk of flooding, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Southern parts of the site, notably the footpaths around the main lake, are within Flood Zones 3 on the Environment Agency's Flood Maps for Planning and Flood Zone 3b on Huntingdonshire's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024). The submitted hard landscaping plans detail that the majority of the footpath improvement works do not include any alternations or raising of ground levels apart from two sections (shown on 'Proposed Dimensions: Lakeside Footpath East & South Sides – drawing no. NCSP 508/3-024).

The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the proposed development providing that the footpath improvements are undertaken in accordance with the submitted drawings, and the land raising proposed for the two sections of footpath should be limited to infilling and gradual level changes as the land raising of the circular path as a whole or in areas of flow would not be supported. A condition is recommended to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures outlined in section 3 of the submitted FRA.

- 7.41 The submitted FRA sets out that a drainage strategy is not required for the majority of the site which is to remain in its existing condition and therefore it is proposed that the greenspace and footways are left to infiltrate naturally. A drainage strategy has been provided for the proposed car park and the Countryside Centre extension. It is proposed that surface water would be managed through the use of permeable paving and an attenuation tank, restricting surface water discharge to 1.3l/s. Following the submission of additional information, the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) have raised no objection in principle to the proposed development. As requested by the LLFA, it is recommended that conditions be imposed requiring the submission of a detailed drainage design and measures for drainage during construction.
- 7.42 Subject to the conditions outlined above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of flood risk and drainage meeting the objectives of Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan and the NPPF 2024.

Biodiversity

- 7.43 Policy LP30 of the Local Plan 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. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.
- 7.44 The application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) produced by Greenwillows Associates Ltd dated April 2025. It is considered that the EclA provides suitable mitigation and compensation recommendations to prevent significant adverse impact to the ecology of the site and surrounding land. A Construction Environmental Management Plan, further details of ecological enhancements in addition to BNG, and protection for nesting birds should be secured by condition.
- 7.45 The EclA states "Works will be undertaken under a great crested newt District Level Licence (DLL) which is in the process of being obtained from Natural England (NE) following a modification to

the original red line boundary.” A condition is recommended requiring submission of an Impact Assessment Conservation Payment Certificate issued and countersigned by Natural England prior to commencement of the development.

- 7.46 A Ground Level Tree Assessment was carried out on eighteen trees which found three requiring an Aerial Tree Assessment. This confirmed one Ash (W001 – Ash 4, MKA Aerial Tree Assessment) to contain a bat roost. The proposed works include the Ash’s felling so a European Protected species licence must be obtained prior to commencement via condition.
- 7.47 The Aerial Tree Assessment recommends further surveys to classify the roost type in Ash 4 and obtain information from the maternity season to inform the EPSL mitigation strategy, and 24-48 hours prior to any proposed works on the other two trees inspected during the Aerial Tree Assessment (W001 – Ash 5 and W001 – Elm 3) to ensure an absence of roosting bats. In accordance with BSI Standards Publication, Biodiversity — Code of Practice for Planning and Development, BS 42020:2013, Clause 9.2.4. c) and d), the additional surveys can be secured by condition as they fall within the criteria for exceptional circumstances.
- 7.48 In terms of biodiversity net gain, HDC’s Ecology Officer has raised no objection as the development can provide a minimum 10% net gain so complies with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). The Ecology Officer has advised that further detail in relation to onsite post-intervention habitat maps will be required and further assessment of the baseline habitat conditions which will need to be provided when the Biodiversity Net Gain plan is submitted post-determination.
- 7.49 Subject to conditions identified above, as well as a condition requiring details of soft landscaping, it is considered the proposal would protect and enhance ecological features and therefore accords with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan.

Trees and Hedgerow

- 7.50 Policy LP31 of the Local Plan states a proposal will be required to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and where development has any adverse impacts in these regards, that they be minimised as far as possible.
- 7.51 The application is supported by an ‘Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan In Accordance with BS 5837:2012 Rev B’ produced by Hayden’s Arboricultural Consultants.

- 7.52 To facilitate the proposed development, it is proposed to fell one individual tree, three trees from one group, eleven trees from one woodland and one tree from a further woodland. The removal of trees is regrettable however most of these are low value or threatened with Pests/Disease such as Elm or Ash Dieback, as such HDC's Arboricultural Officer has not raised an objection to the proposed removal of trees. It is also noted that the proposal incorporates significant tree planting around the proposed car park extension.
- 7.53 The alignment of new or replacement hard surfaces would encroach within the Root Protection Areas of several retained trees and woodland areas, however "no dig" construction techniques are proposed which HDC's Arboricultural Officer has raised no objection to.
- 7.54 The widening of the internal access road would encroach within the Root Protection Areas of trees that are to be retained. Section 4.4.1 of the submitted Tree Survey, AIA, AMS and Tree Protection Plan sets out that further investigation and engineering details/specification must be provided to allow further Arboricultural appraisal in relation to tree impact and/or required felling. A condition is recommended to secure further details of the arboricultural impacts of the widening of the internal access road and any required mitigation measures.
- 7.55 The proposed alignment of a new underground services intrudes within the Root Protection Areas of three individual trees and two groups of trees to be retained. HDC's Arboricultural Officer has raised concern with the proposed methods of hand digging straight through RPAs and recommends that investigations should be carried out with an airspade and if necessary, the route diverted to ensure significant roots are unaffected. It is therefore recommended that a condition be imposed to any planning permission granted to secure a programme of tree root investigation works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Tree Root Investigation prior to the commencement of development.
- 7.56 The new footpaths around the proposed car park and the resurfacing of existing footpaths proposed would encourage use of the footpaths and take footfall away from woodland and RPAs of retained trees. Subject to the recommended conditions, it is not considered the proposal would conflict with Policy LP31 of the Local Plan as potential adverse impacts on trees have been investigated, tree loss has been minimised where possible and the proposal involves replacement tree and hedgerow planting.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 7.57 The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

- *Would improve the accessibility and quality of the existing green infrastructure
- *Would enhance an existing community facility
- *Would make a positive contribution to the character, appearance, setting, recreational purpose and biodiversity value of the Country Park;
- *Would support healthy living and well-being;
- *Would be acceptable in terms of flood risk and drainage;
- *Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours;
- *Would not have an unacceptable impact on highways matters;
- *Would provide a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity;
- *Would not have a significant adverse impact on existing trees.

7.58 Having regard to all relevant material considerations, it is concluded that the proposal would accord with local and national planning policy. Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION – APPROVAL subject to conditions to include the following:

- Time limit
- Approved plans
- Materials
- Architectural Details
- Revised soft landscaping scheme
- Details of paving to external terrace
- Landscape Implementation
- Boundary treatment
- Details of PV panels
- Archaeology
- External lighting scheme
- EV charging details
- Cycle parking details
- Compliance with FRA
- Compliance with Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan
- Submission of additional Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan in relation to the widening of the internal access road
- Written Scheme of Tree Root Investigation
- Biodiversity Net Gain plan
- Submission of Biodiversity Method Statement for enhancements not covered under BNG
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- No removal of hedgerow during bird breeding season
- European Protected Species Licence
- Submission of further surveys as recommended in the Aerial Tree Assessment

- Surface water drainage design
- Details of drainage during construction

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: Lucy Pateman (Senior Development Management Officer) – lucy.pateman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Huntingdon Town Council Planning Comments – 15th April 2025

25/00305/HHFUL - Erection of a single storey extension to the front of the house 40 American Lane Huntingdon PE29 1TY

No comment

25/00577/FUL - Enhancement works to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, to include an extension to the existing countryside centre, new car parking (to include new electric vehicle charging), improved access, biodiversity enhancements and other associated improvements and works Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Hinchingsbrooke Park Road Huntingdon

Recommend APPROVE. Huntingdon Town Council supports this application on the basis of policy NE3 from the Neighbourhood Plan due to it's positive contribution to the recreational use of the park.

25/00458/FUL - Installation of 13 lighting bollards. Cambridgeshire Constabulary Hinchingsbrooke Park Hinchingsbrooke Park Road Huntingdon PE29 6NP

No comment

25/00507/FUL - Installation of 3 no. new full height sections of shopfront complete with automatic bi-parting entrance doors 3 Stukeley Road Retail Park Huntingdon PE29 6DA

Recommend APPROVE. Huntingdon Town Council supports the application on the basis that it supports policy E1 from the Neighbourhood Plan that supports economic development and doesn't conflict with the surrounding businesses and area.

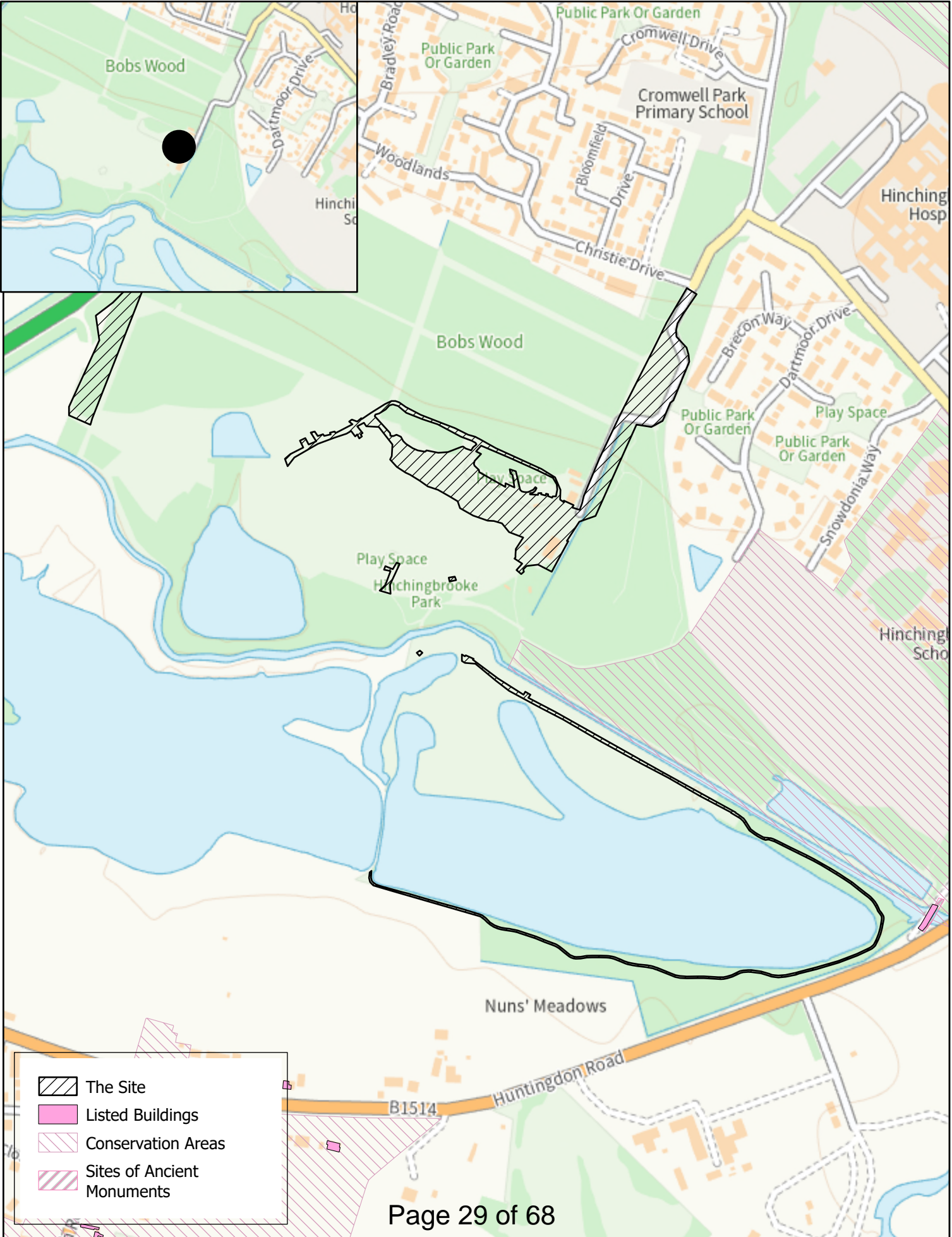
25/00506/FUL - Creation of plant compound (of Flow Forge material) and installation of plant thereto together with the creation of 1 no. bin store (of Flow Forge material) and forming of 2 no. openings in external wall for pipework and 2 no. openings for vent grilles 3 Stukeley Road Retail Park Huntingdon PE29 6DA

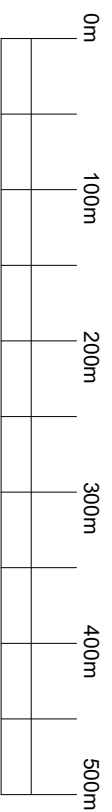
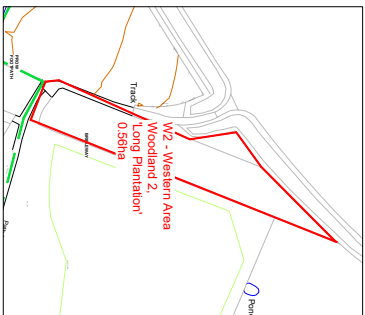
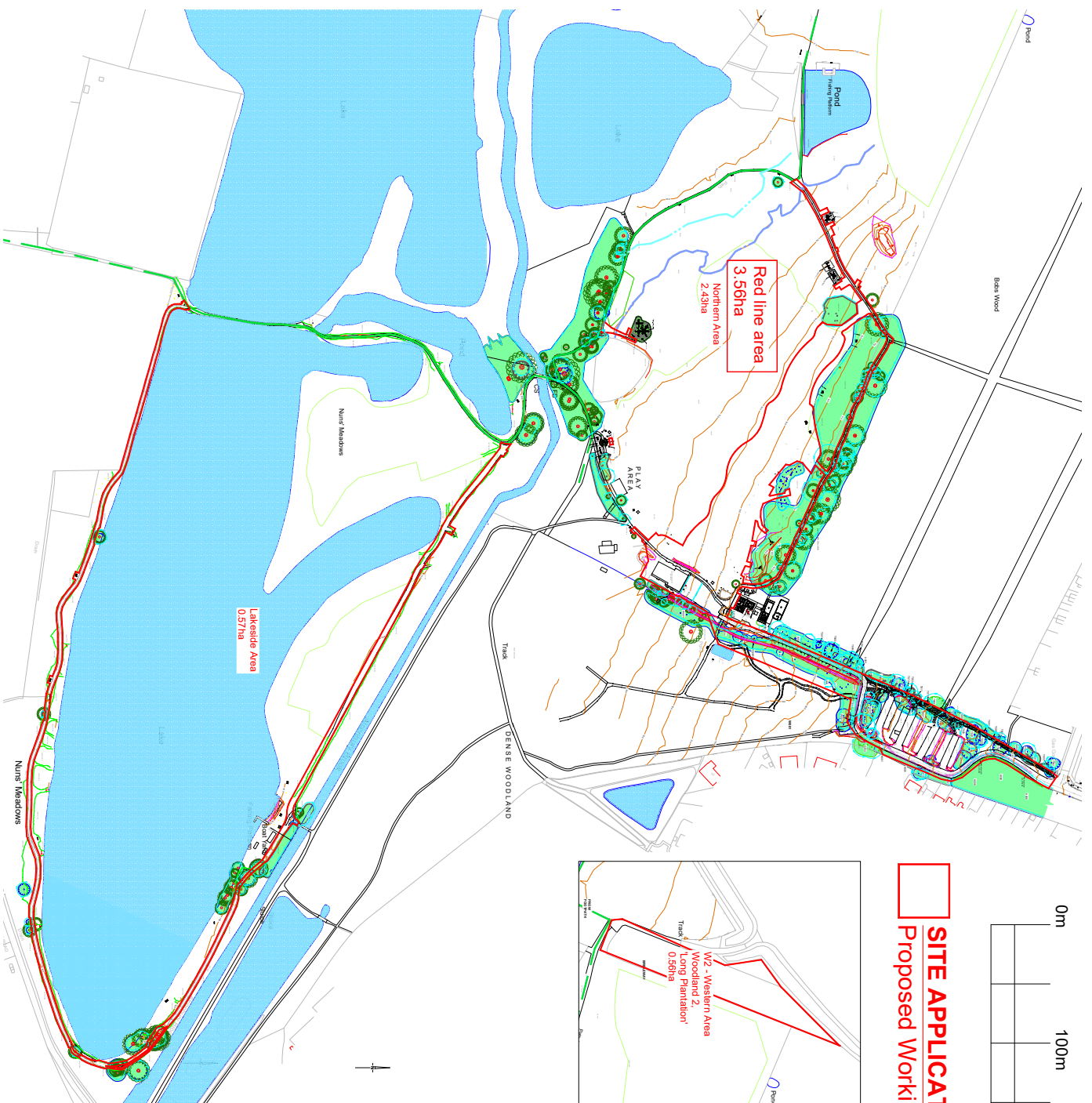
Recommend APPROVE. Huntingdon Town Council supports the application on the basis that it supports policy E1 from the Neighbourhood Plan that supports economic development and doesn't conflict with the surrounding businesses and area.

25/00257/TREE - T17 - (London Plane) Remove 3m - There is visible decay at the base of the tree. There is large dead wood over hanging the car park which needs to be removed before it falls on a car.

T18 - (Chestnut) There are large cavities in the main stems and the trunk as a large hole in it. Re-pollard this tree by 10m to take the weight off it. The large stems head towards the building and the car park behind the wall.

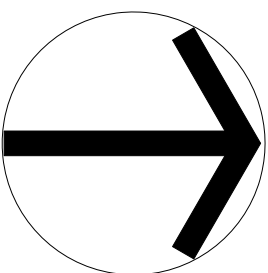
No comment





SITE APPLICATION AREA

Proposed Working Area is Approximately 3.56ha



ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE. TO BE READ WITH ALL CONTRACT DOCUMENTATION. ANY DISCREPANCIES TO BE REPORTED TO THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.

N.B. THESE LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS HAVE NOT BEEN CROSS REFERENCED AGAINST DRAINAGE, SERVICES AND UTILITY LOCATIONS TO IDENTIFY ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS. CLIENT/ENGINEER TO CHECK AND ADVISE ACCORDINGLY.

Rev.	Date	Issued	Details
M.	25/03/24	RE	Areas converted to the Proposed reserved. Issued for planning.
N.	25/03/24	RE	Areas converted to the Proposed reserved. Issued for planning.
L.	25/03/24	RE	Issued for planning.
K.	25/03/24	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
J.	25/03/24	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
I.	25/03/24	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
H.	25/03/24	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
G.	25/03/24	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
F.	25/03/24	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
E.	25/03/24	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
D.	24/11/25	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
C.	24/04/20	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
B.	24/04/20	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
A.	24/04/20	RE	Red line area updated to a street with a tree offset to pits in area W2.
Rev.	Date	Issued	Details

E.L.D

ELWOOD LANDSCAPE DESIGN
CHARTERED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Suffolk Office:
The Barn, Cherry Tree Farm, Mendlesham
Green, Snettisham, Suffolk, IP14 5NQ.
Tel: 01449 766828 E: team@e-l-d.co.uk

Cambridgeshire Office:
The Nurseries, Market Street, Fordingham,
Cambridgeshire, CB7 5LQ.
Tel: 01638 721006 E: team@e-l-d.co.uk

CLIENT: NCS/HUNTS DC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ISSUED BY	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT: HINCHINGBROOKE COUNTRY PARK
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PROPOSED APPLICATION AREA - RED LINE BOUNDARY

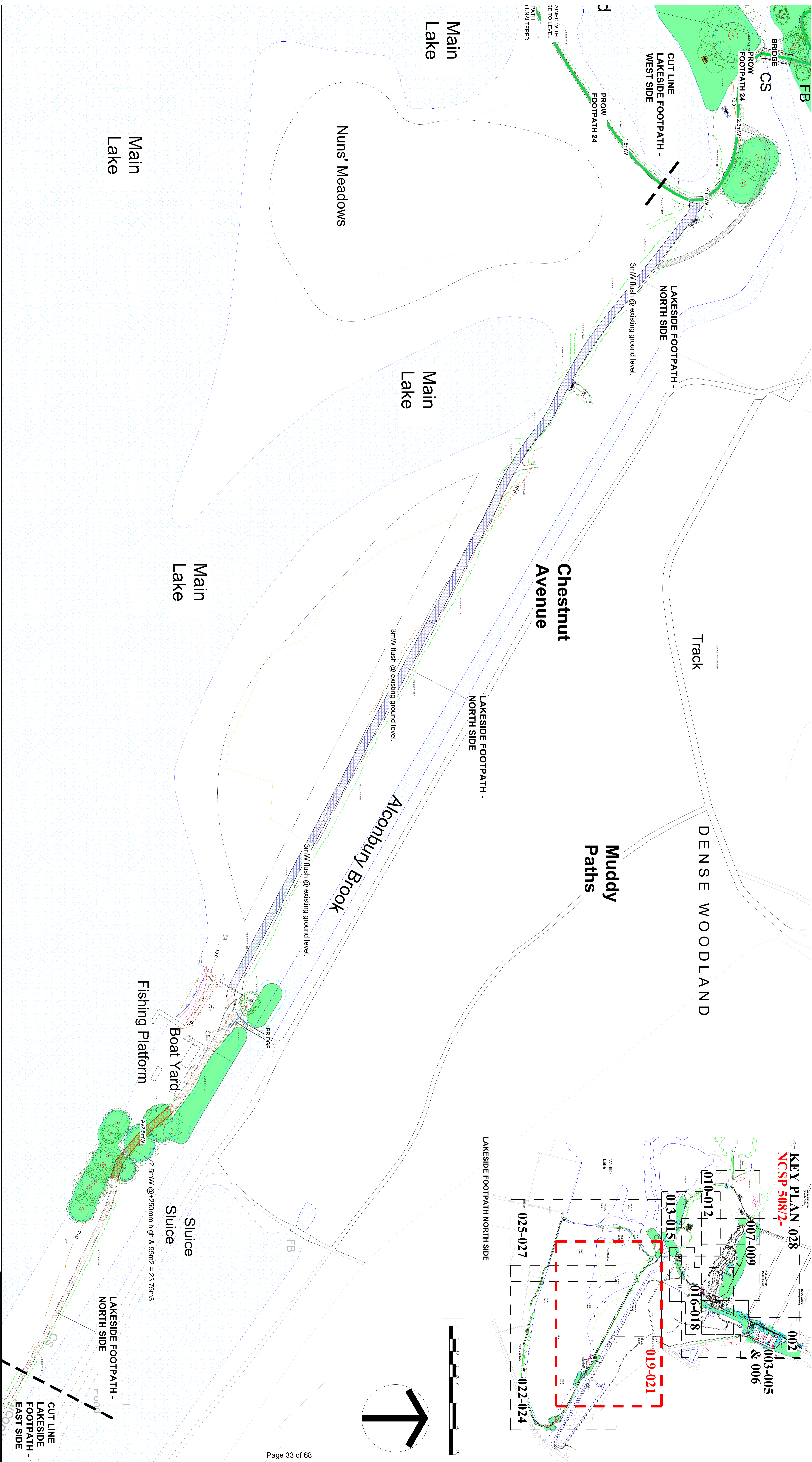
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17TH JULY 2023

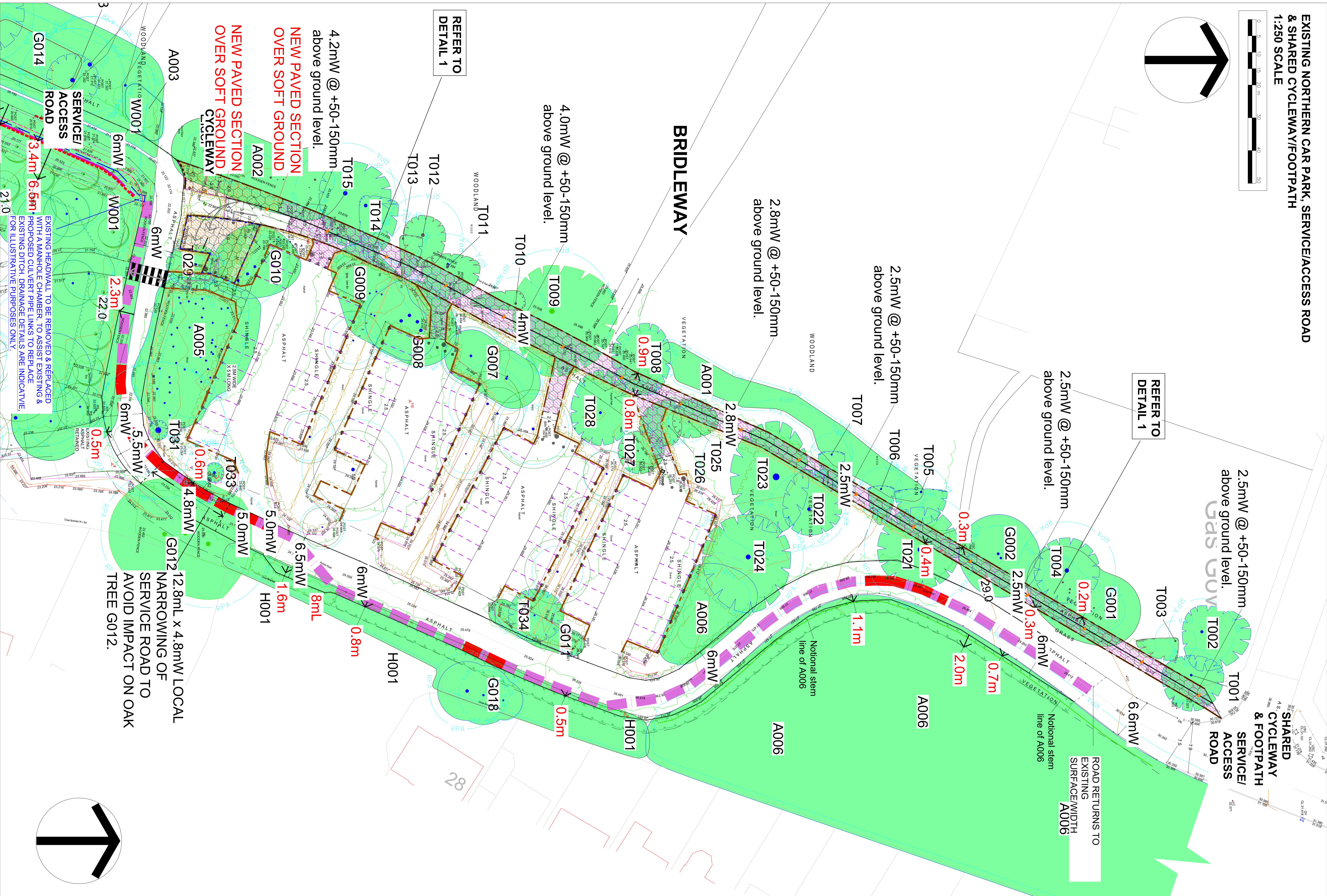
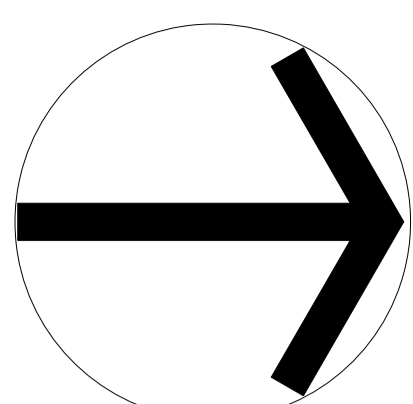
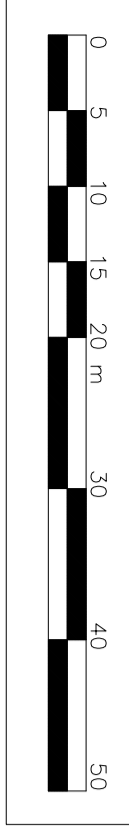
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RE.	AE.	NCSP 508/3-001
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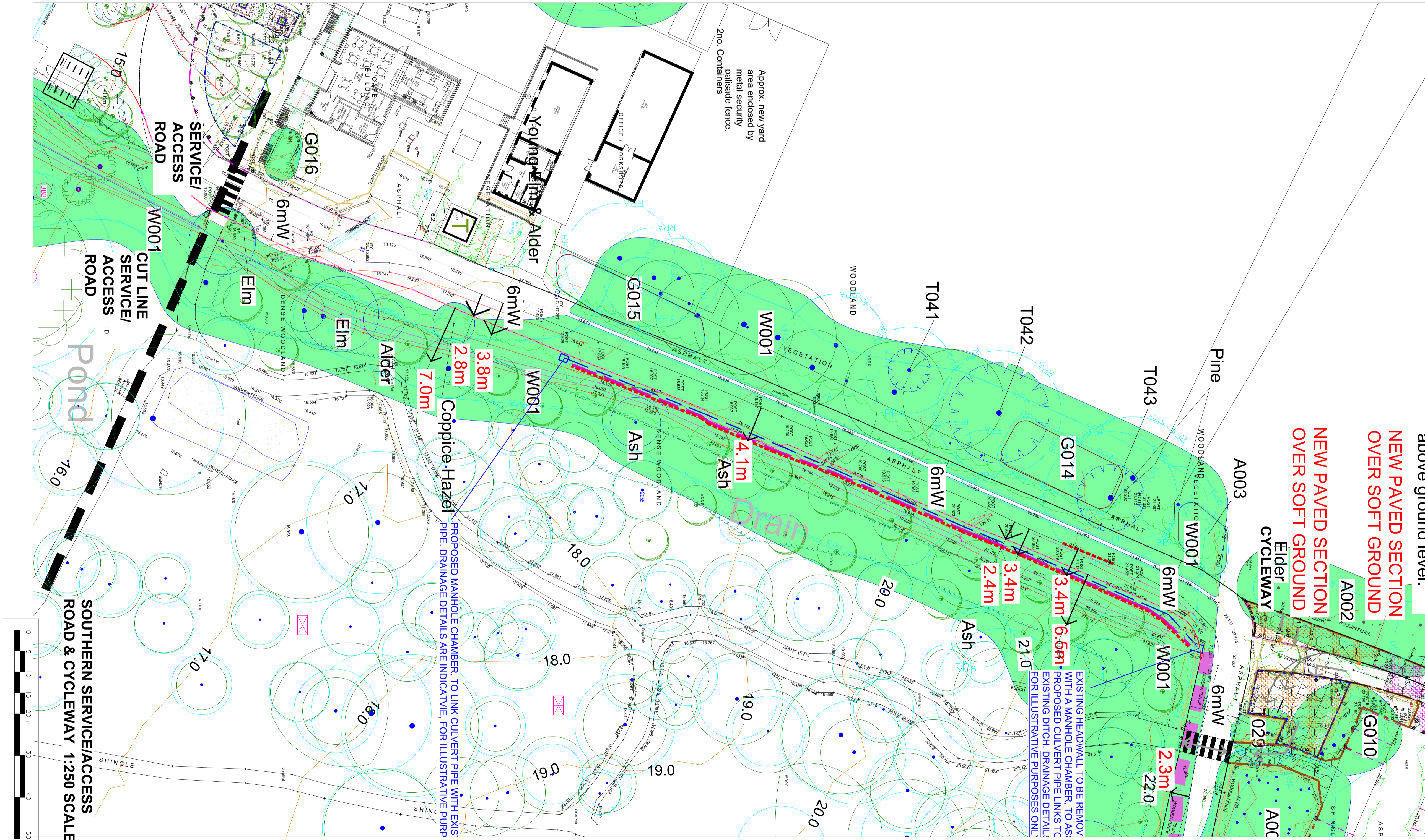
EXISTING NORTHERN CAR PARK, SERVICE/ACCESS ROAD & SHARED CYCLEWAY/FOOTPATH
1:250 SCALE



above ground level.

NEW PAVED SECTION
OVER SOFT GROUND

NEW PAVED SECTION
OVER SOFT GROUND



KEY

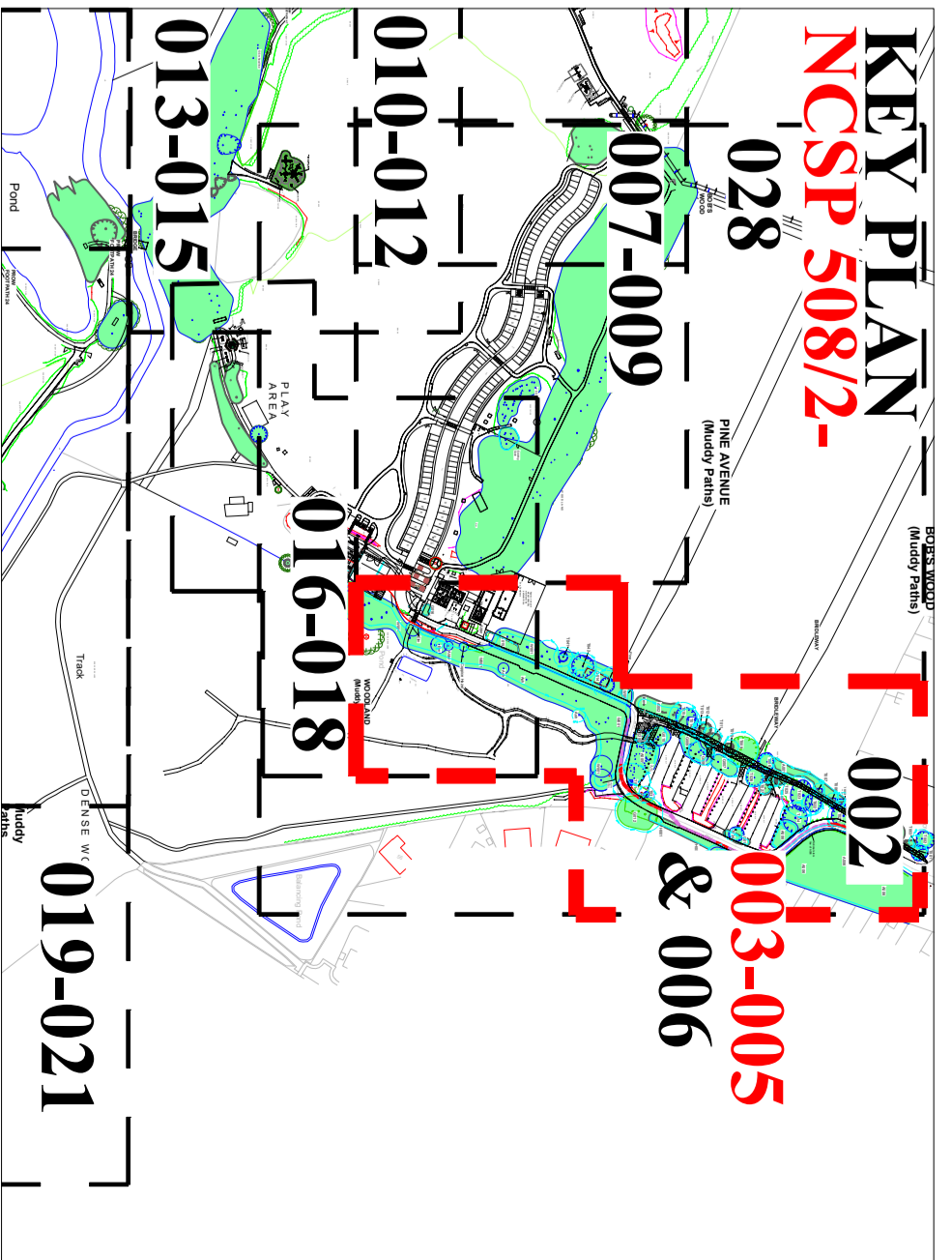
EXISTING SOFT WORKS

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PROPOSED HARD WORKS

- PROPOSED HARD WORKS: TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH A NEW PAVED SECTION OVER SOFT GROUND. THE EXISTING SOFT WORKS ARE TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH A NEW PAVED SECTION OVER SOFT GROUND. THE EXISTING SOFT WORKS ARE TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH A NEW PAVED SECTION OVER SOFT GROUND.

NORTHERN CAR PARK & SERVICE/ACCESS ROAD

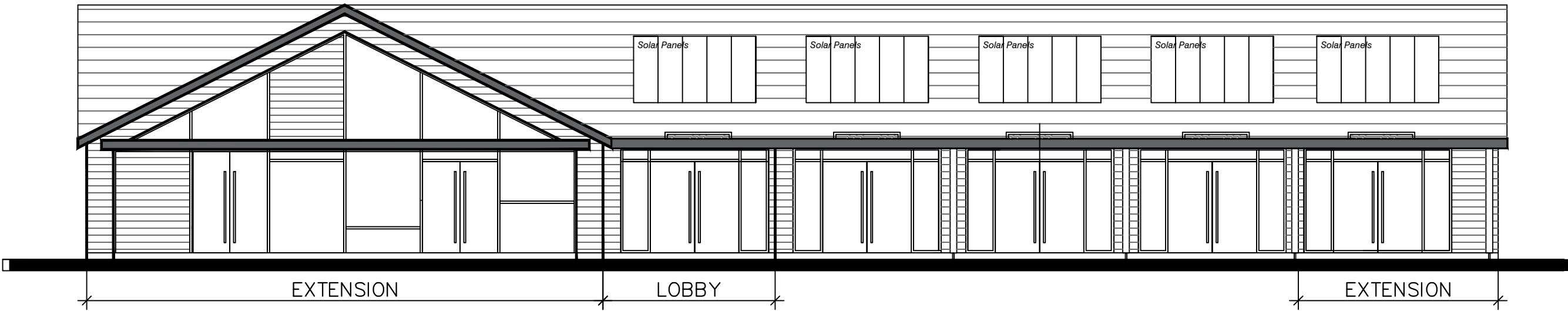


E.L.D.
ELWOOD LANDSCAPE DESIGN
CHARTERED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

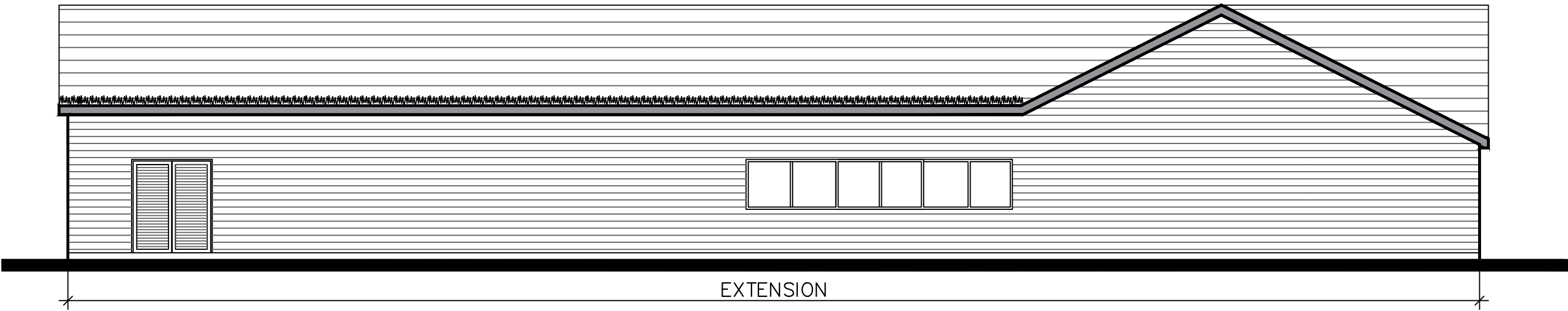
Studio Office: 14, Ashburnham Road, Elwood, Victoria 3176
Tel: 03 9588 72100
Fax: 03 9588 72101
Email: info@eldesign.com.au

Project Office: 14, Ashburnham Road, Elwood, Victoria 3176
Tel: 03 9588 72100
Fax: 03 9588 72101
Email: info@eldesign.com.au

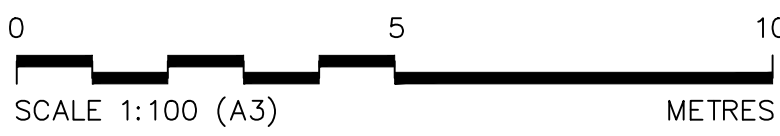
Client: ELWOOD LANDSCAPE DESIGN
Project: NORTHERN CAR PARK, SERVICE/ACCESS ROAD & SHARED CYCLEWAY/FOOTPATH
Date: 10/10 OCTOBER 2021
Drawn by: A.E.
Checked by: M.L.
Scale: 1:250



WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



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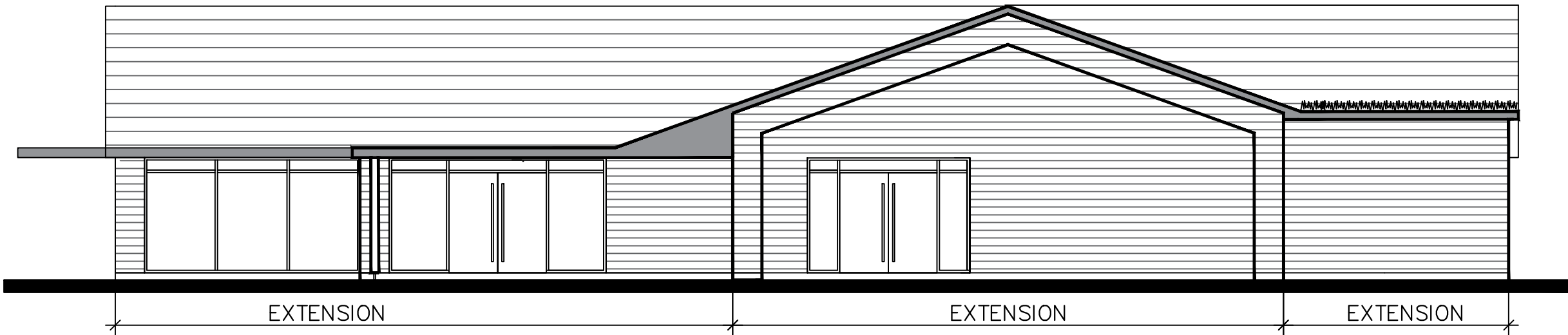
Rev	Date	Notes
A	02.08.22	Amended to GA
B	31.10.22	Amended to GA
D	09.11.22	Amended to GA
E	07.03.23	Amended for planning

Client Hinchinbrooke Country Park
Property Visitors Centre
Drawing title As Proposed Elevations 1

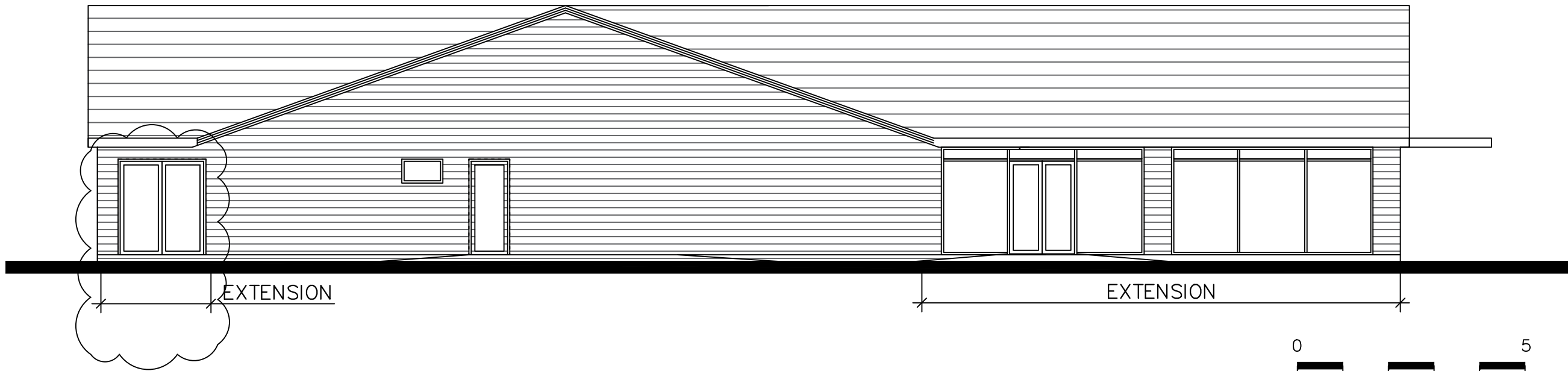
Project No. 21.1738			
Drawing No 12		Rev	E
Drawing Status		Preliminary	
1:100 @A3		Drawn LC	
Date July 2022		Checked NCS	



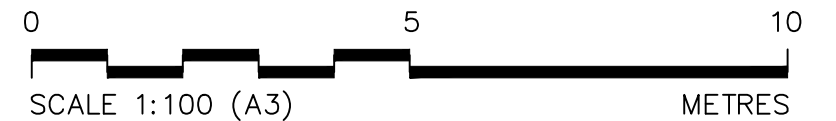
buildings, projects
& architecture



SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



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Rev	Date	Notes
A	02.08.22	Amended to GA
B	31.10.22	Amended to GA
D	09.11.22	Amended to GA
E	07.03.23	Amended for planning
F	13.03.23	sth elevation corrected
G	15.06.23	Naming amended
H	01.11.23	doors amended

Client Hinchinbrooke Country Park
Property Visitors Centre
Drawing title As Proposed Elevations 2

Project No. 21.1738		
Drawing No 14	Rev	H
Drawing Status	Preliminary	
1:100 @A3	Drawn LC	
Date July 2022	Checked NCS	

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buildings, projects
& architecture

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 16TH JUNE 2025

Case No: 25/00069/FUL

Proposal: Partially retrospective application for change of use of land to Use Class B8 (storage or distribution) to provide self-storage facilities including the provision of storage containers

Location: The Barn, Overcote Lane, Needingworth, PE27 4TN

Applicant: Mr John Gray

Grid Ref: (E) 535241 (N) 271710

Date of Registration: 13th January 2025

Parish: Holywell-cum-Needingworth

RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

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

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 The application site is an area of land measuring approximately 5640m². It is a mixture of hard surfacing, compacted earth and grass/meadowland extending south. The meadowland appears to be outside of the red line but within the blue line (and so within the control of the applicant). At the time of the site visit a number of vehicles/caravans were parked on the grassed area. There is some informal Heras fencing in place within the site. Where containers are placed, these are largely on solid bases. The site appears very 'informal', there is no structure in terms of hard surfacing for vehicle movements around the containers.
- 1.2 The site lies within the countryside, to the east of Needingworth and on the south side of Overcote Lane. A section of the site (towards the front) includes an area of land given permission for the siting of two shipping containers under planning application reference number 20/01030/FUL.
- 1.3 The site is located within Flood Zone 3 and has a very high risk of river flooding as per the most recent Environment Agency Flood Risk Maps and Data and the 2024 Strategic Flood Risk

Assessment. It also lies within the Great Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area. There are no other constraints associated with it.

- 1.4 This planning application seeks permission for the change of use of land to provide self-storage facilities as well as the provision of storage containers for this purpose. The application is partially retrospective as some of the land outside of that permitted under previous planning permissions or certificates of lawful development is being used for storage/storage containers which is unauthorised. Part of the site within the red line does have an authorised use (as detailed in the proceeding sections of this report) but the layout differs from that approved. There are already containers within this section and more are proposed.
- 1.5 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.
- 1.6 Throughout the lifetime of the planning application and at the agreement of the agent the description has been revised to better reflect the development proposed. This was for matters of clarity. The development proposed was clearly set out in the submitted documents and so further full consultation was not considered to be necessary on this occasion. In any event, re-consultations have taken place with some key contributors by default and the site notice displays the revised description.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (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 Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

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
- LP9: Small Settlements
- LP10: The Countryside
- LP11: Design Context
- LP12: Design Implementation
- LP14: Amenity
- LP15: Surface Water
- LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- LP19 Rural Economy
- LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP36: Air Quality
- LP37: Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution

3.2 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

- Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2024)
- LDF Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
- The National Design Guide (2021)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

Local For full details visit the government website [Local policies](#)

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 7600013REFUSL – Hardstanding for parking lorries (Refused)
- 4.2 8000320FUL – Hardstanding area for parking of lorries (Refused)
- 4.3 8001435FUL – Hardstanding for parking three lorries (Permission)
- 4.4 9100213FUL - Removal of personal condition of Planning permission Land off Overcote Lane, Needingworth (Permission)
- 4.5 20/01030/FUL – Use of land for open storage and the siting of 2 shipping containers (retrospective) (Permission)

- 4.6 21/01528/CLED – Commercial open storage along with the siting of shipping containers and use of former workshop building for commercial storage (Consent)
- 4.7 22/80225/COND – Conditional information for 20/01030/FUL (C2 – Eco Mitigation) (Condition approved)

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 Holywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council were consulted twice. Originally they objected with reasons broadly set out below:
- Members noted that the application was retrospective.
 - Result in further increase of containers (though suggested the number unclear).
 - Highway safety and damage to the highway concerns.
 - Light pollution.
 - Health and concerns if no controls over what is stored.
 - Noise concerns (traffic).
 - Breach of Policies LP5 (flood risk) and LP10 (the countryside).
- 5.2 Following a request for further details from Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Team, Officers allowed the applicant to submit additional information in the form of a Highways Technical Note and general response to concerns raised in a Cover Letter. Re-consultation was then undertaken with Highways and the Parish Council. Following this, the Officers received an email from the Parish Council dated 7th of May 2025 which stated that they accepted the report from the agent as it answered ‘many’ of the questions raised with the original application. It was considered that this response was ambiguous and so clarity was sought. The Parish Council then confirmed in an email dated 8th of May 2025 that the original objections still stood due to concerns regarding development in the countryside, environmental impacts and the flood zone.
- 5.3 However further to this final published comments were received from the Parish Council on the 15th of May 2025 confirming that they wished to support the application in full. Their objection is therefore considered to have been removed.

- 5.4 Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways Team – No objections.
- 5.5 CCC Lead Local Flood Authority – No representations received at the time of writing this report.
- 5.6 HDC Ecology Officer (informal) – raises concerns but notes the retrospective nature of the application.
- 5.7 HDC Environmental Health Team – No objections subject to conditions.
- 5.8 Environment Agency – No objections, recommendations made for flood protection detailed in the proceeding sections of this report.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 None received at the time of determination.

7. ASSESMENT

- 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 consists of a number of adopted neighbourhood plans, however, there is not an adopted neighbourhood plan in place for Needingworth. Therefore, in this case no neighbourhood plans are given weight in the determination of this planning application.
- 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 planning applications.

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

- The principle of development (including impact on the countryside)
- Design, visual amenity and the impact upon the character of the area
- Residential amenity
- Highway safety
- Flood risk
- Biodiversity
- Other issues

The principle of the development

7.6 In assessing this proposal it should be noted that regard has been given to the earlier approvals/certificates which have been issued in relation to the site and which are referenced in the submitted statement. These are referenced above, but, for further clarity:

- Planning application reference 8001435FUL – Hardstanding for parking three lorries was given permission but related only to a section of land at the very front of the site (largely covering the location of the 2021 Certificate of lawfulness of existing development (CLED) application). This is provided for clarity and is not considered to have a bearing on this determination as it relates to an entirely different character of development and a smaller section of the site.
- Planning application reference 20/01030/FUL gave retrospective permission for the change of use of a section of land (also included in this planning application site) to the front of the site for open air storage and the siting of two shipping containers. It should be noted that whilst this was a 2020 application the approval was not issued until the 22nd of April 2022 after the Lawful Development Certificate (referenced below) had been issued and deemed lawful. This was a key consideration of the Case Officer in the determination of this application.

- Planning application reference 21/01528/CLED issued a Lawful Development Certificate dated 15th of October 2021 establishing the use of a section of land to the front (east of that considered under the FUL application above) to B8 (Storage) use. This land is shown in blue in the current application but outside of the red line. The Certificate of Lawfulness was issued as the LPA were satisfied that the use (including the siting of some shipping containers) had been established for a period in excess of ten years.

7.7 Based upon the details submitted as part of this planning application there are unauthorised containers within the land subject to both of the above approved applications. It is noted that the proposed detailed site plan (drawing no. 24-096-DK0002-P5) shows the area subject to the 21/01528/CLED application highlighted in pale yellow. However, plans approved as part of the 21/01528/CLED application did not show as many containers as now indicated on the submitted plans. It should be noted that a Certificate of Lawful Development was issued at a point in time and that changes could 'tip the balance' to planning permission being required. This land is excluded from this planning application and so the applicant should be satisfied that any material changes have not resulted in an alteration in the validity of the certificate issued or contains works that would require the benefit of planning permission.

7.8 Both of the above applications related to land measuring approx. 2490m². This present planning application relates to a further 4500m² approx. (excluding the section already covered by the approved 20/01030/FUL planning application) extending south into the countryside which is a key consideration in the below assessments. Also proposed is the siting of 79 shipping containers (49 existing on site and a further 30 proposed) though this does not include the additional containers within the site subject to the 21/01528/CLED application. Overall, there are 114 containers shown on the plans. 35 in the area which is not part of the application but which was dealt with under the 21/01528/CLED application. (It should be noted that only 11 were shown on the plans submitted with the 21/01528/CLED application). In the site for consideration (within the red line), a total of 79 containers are shown, 49 of which are suggested to be existing (the retrospective element) and 30 proposed).

7.9 The site is located outside of the built-up area of Needingworth which is the nearest settlement and therefore considered to be within the countryside. As

such, Policy LP10 of the Local Plan is the starting point for assessment.

7.10

Policy LP10 seeks to limit development within the countryside except where it is permitted through other policies of the Local Plan. One such policy which allows LP10 to be relaxed is LP19 (Rural Economy) and this is discussed in more detail below. Regardless of any relaxations LP10 states that all development in the countryside must:

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.

7.11

In this case, the land in question is Grade 3 Agricultural Land, and, so whilst not land of the highest value it is considered to be some of the most versatile land. Whilst as detailed below the site is considered inappropriate for the use applied for, having regard to the history of the site (use of the front of the site for lorry parking dating back to 1980 and the permission/certificate granted above) indicate that it is not (and has not for some time) been in use for agricultural purposes. Therefore, the weighting that can be given to the loss of the land for agricultural purposes is limited. Furthermore, given the nature of the development it is arguable that it could be considered the irreversible loss of the land. As such, the LPA raise no objection in this regard.

7.12

Turning attention to part b, whilst the loss of the land is not given weight it remains that this has/would result in a significant intrusion into the countryside (approx. 62 metres further south of the current boundary with the established uses). A site visit reveals that whilst generously screened to the frontage and there is planting to the east and west, the southern boundary remains open and it is very much viewed as a countryside location with a rural character. The submitted Planning Statement

details that planting is proposed along the southern boundary (which could be conditioned) but it remains that regardless of any efforts to try and propose new planting to screen the visual intrusion, such a use is not visually characteristic of the countryside and the ancillary factors of such a use (additional vehicle movements within the site/vehicles depositing or moving containers) all erodes the intrinsic character of the countryside, and is the expansion of a use that is unsuitable in this rural location. For the same reasons, it is considered that this use would also give rise to factors detailed within part c of LP10, with the potential introduction of security fencing etc. Such uses are generally focused on industrial or established employment areas where such factors are expected and are focused such that they do not cause harm to the rural character of an area. It is considered that this scheme is inappropriately sited and contrary to Policy LP10 (parts b and c).

7.13

Policy LP19 of the Local Plan details that a proposal for the expansion of an established industrial or rural business on land outside of its existing operational site in the open countryside will be supported where it is demonstrated that:

e. opportunities to reuse existing buildings have been fully explored; and replacement or new build are only proposed where it can be demonstrated that no suitable reuse opportunities are available;

f. any opportunities to make more efficient use of land within the existing site boundary are not suitable for the proposed use;

g. it avoids the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) particularly Grade 1 where possible and should use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value; and

h. the scale, character and siting of the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on its immediate surroundings and the wider landscape.

LP19 goes on to state that a rural business is one which has a legitimate reason to be located in the countryside, including but not limited to agriculture, horses, horticulture or forestry with Para. 6.22 specifically stating that “the primary justification for employment related development in the countryside is where either a rural location is essential to the successful operation of the business or the business is dependent upon natural resources only

available in limited locations. The LPA acknowledge that there are established industrial uses within rural areas and, as required, these are assessed upon their own merits. However, in this case, the existing and intended expansion of this operation is considered to cause harm and there is no legitimate justification for its siting.

- 7.14 The key question here is whether the proposed expansion of the established business is within its existing operational site or outside of its existing operational site.
- 7.15 The Local Plan does not define what an 'existing operational site' is. In planning terms, existing could be interpreted as lawful. Lawful is the granting of a planning permission or the granting through the passage of time (4 years for a building or 10 years for a continuous change of use). The following planning legislation provides the definition of lawful in the context of existing development.
- 7.16 *Section 191 (certificate of lawfulness of existing use or development) of Town and Country Planning Act 1990:*
- (2) For the purposes of this Act uses and operations are lawful at any time if—*
- (a) no enforcement action may then be taken in respect of them (whether because they did not involve development or require planning permission or because the time for enforcement action has expired or for any other reason);*
- 7.17 Therefore, officers deem the correct assessment here is to establish what the lawful operation site is, in order to understand whether the proposed expansion of the established business is within its existing operational site or outside of its existing operational site.
- 7.18 As outlined above, the proposal extends approx. 62 metres further south of the current boundary with the established use permitted under the Certificate of lawful development (ref 21/01528/CLED). This defines the existing operational site. Therefore, officers have concluded that the red line for this current change of use application contains land outside of its existing (lawful) operational site. The application must be assessed against the criteria e to h of Policy LP19. Officers consider criterion h to be the most relevant for this application.
- 7.19 The submitted planning statement seeks to demonstrate compliance with parts e to h of LP19, but only limited information has been provided. In summary it suggests that there are no existing buildings which can be-reused

and the additional containers are to meet demand (but no physical evidence has been provided as to current capacity or the additional demand). It goes on to state that as the approved sites (which is questionable given the earlier assessment on their current state) are at capacity this makes more efficient use of the land. It further states that the loss of the agricultural land is acceptable (which Officers do accept and is assessed in the preceding sections of this report), and that the impact on the surroundings will be minimised due to not stacking the containers and landscaping (which could be secured by condition in the event that Members are minded to support the application).

7.20 The applicant has put forward the argument that part of the site benefits from a fall back B8 use. As such, there is no control over the height of materials that can be stored or the methods of storage. It should be noted that condition 3 of planning permission reference 20/01030/FUL stated that: "No more than two shipping containers shall be placed on the site which shall not be used for any purpose other than for B8 storage use as approved by this planning permission". A fallback position is a material consideration for the Local Planning Authority when assessing the merits of any planning proposal. The weight afforded to this is limited given that it only relates to the front of the site and the breach of condition 3 as detailed above.

7.21 Whilst some of the arguments put forward are acknowledged (and arguably more palatable - avoiding the stacking of containers on the existing site for example) this is not a reason to grant permission for such a significant intrusion and intensification of use which result in harm to the surrounding countryside. No clear evidence has been provided to support the justification for compliance with LP19. From the planning history it appears that the established use of the front of the site has solely been achieved through retrospective permission and a Lawful Development Certificate which demonstrated a use (in breach) for in excess of ten years. This likely acted as a fallback position for the FUL planning application (being next to the site granted the Certificate). This scheme seeks to expand the site further into the countryside (by approx. 62m) resulting in the further harm assessed above. It is therefore not considered that this is an appropriate location or that it makes the most efficient use of the land.

7.22 Overall, whilst it is accepted that some arguments have been put forward with regard to compliance with Policy

LP19, taken as a whole the scheme is considered to be contrary to the policy.

7.23

Further to the above a consideration in establishing the principle is the location of the site within the Great Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area. The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022) states that development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its distinct local character.
- Use appropriate building materials to retain the distinctive local character of villages.
- Maintain or enhance water quality and quantity and not lead to any adverse impact on flood risk or flood defences.
- Protect and enhance the strategic green corridor formed by the river valley, particularly where it passes through settlements.
- Minimise the environmental impacts of recreational activities.
- Protect and enhance the ecological value of the river, its margins and the valley floor.
- Promote opportunities for wildlife and conservation initiatives to support and enhance the area's biodiversity.
- Protect the setting of historic structure such as bridges and mill buildings.
- Encourage public access along the Great Ouse Valley through.

Policy LP3 of the Local Plan goes on to state that a proposal within the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area will be supported where it contributes to the landscape, wildlife, cultural and historical value of the area.

7.24

As can be seen, not all aspects of the above are relevant to this scheme. However, it is not considered that the scheme is fully compliant with the above principles as it does not seek to enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its distinct local character nor contribute positively to the landscape. It is acknowledged that given the limited height wider views would be limited

(and storage height could be secured by condition) but it remains that this is an unacceptable expansion of the site into the countryside to the south. At a depth that would be significantly beyond the built form of the uses on either side of the site. This together with the significant increase in use and storage containers would result in the introduction of an uncharacteristic and alien feature in a protected rural setting. Matters regarding flood risk are discussed in the proceeding sections of this report but for the purposes of this assessment it is considered that the scheme does not fully accord with Policy LP3 of the Local Plan to 2036.

- 7.25 To conclude, the development is considered contrary to Policies LP3, LP10 (parts b and c) and LP19. It is therefore considered to be unacceptable in principle and harmful to the rural location and is therefore recommended for refusal.

Design and Visual Amenity

- 7.26 The general characteristics of the area are discussed above. As the site lies outside of the built-up area of the village it is rural in character and built development is sparse and sporadic. The northern side of Overcote Lane is mainly undeveloped land (though as with the application site is heavily bounded by dense trees/hedgerows). The southern side is punctuated by gaps in the vegetation and there are accesses to a number of developed sites to the south and views across the countryside. There are some commercial enterprises along Overcote Lane but the general rural agricultural character remains.
- 7.27 This scheme results in the introduction of additional storage containers extending approximately a further 37m from where those on the land granted the certificate terminate (the full extent of the land subject to the change of use extends approx. 62m from that approved under the 21/01528/CLED application). As above, it is unclear if all of the containers currently on the land subject to the 21/01528/CLED application are authorised – this measurement is provided for context. Further containers are proposed to the south of the land permitted under the FUL application (though not extending as far south). The containers are typical metal storage containers the majority of which are of a similar scale and appearance. Plans have been provided which show a footprint of approx. 14.5m² and height of 2.59m.
- 7.28 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. The above policies are reinforced by Paragraphs 129 (d) and (e) and Paragraph 135 (b) and (c) of the NPPF that seek to maintain an area's prevailing character and ensure development is sympathetic to local character. The National Design Guide (2021) sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It covers the following: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

- 7.29 As considered above, permitting the change of use of this land which extends 62m into the countryside outside of the existing operational site boundary along with the introduction of additional storage containers would result in development which would be uncharacteristic of and visually harmful to the rural setting. Whilst landscaping is in place at present this is not protected and could be removed at any time with no prior agreement with the LPA rendering the site much more visible. The intention to provide further landscaping to the south is acknowledged (and could be conditioned) but this remains insufficient to satisfy Officers that this would resolve all of the visual impact concerns and, notwithstanding this, aside from the built development the use would be at odds with the rural setting and so is not supported.
- 7.30 As such, it is considered that the scheme fails to respond positively to its context, fails to contribute positively to the area's character and identity, and fails to successfully integrate with the adjoining open landscape and is therefore contrary to Policies LP11 and LP12 of the Local Plan to 2036 and the provisions of the NPPF (2024).

Residential Amenity

- 7.31 Given the degree of separation to adjacent dwellings and land and limited height of the proposed containers it is not considered that there would be any concerns with regard to overbearing impacts, overshadowing or loss of light nor matters of reduced privacy for any surrounding neighbours.
- 7.32 It is therefore considered that the main impacts to consider are the increased vehicle movements and activity through the village as a result of the expansion of the business creating noise and odour through emissions. HDC's Environmental Health Team have been consulted and raise no objections subject to a condition to limit any heavy goods

vehicles of 7 tonnes or more between the hours of 11pm to 7am. This could be imposed in the event that Members are minded to support the proposals.

- 7.33 On balance, whilst this would be an expansion of an existing business which would be uncharacteristic of the location, given the authorised use of the front of the site along with typical vehicle movements associated with other activities (agricultural for example) it is not considered that the scheme would result in significant harm in terms of residential amenity and would therefore comply with Policies LP14 and LP36 of the Local Plan to 2036.

Highway Safety

- 7.34 Access to the site would be via the existing access from Overcote Lane (serving the authorised uses). Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority have been consulted and initially requested further details on a number of points including the provision of inter-vehicle visibility splays, details of trip generations for the current permitted uses, clarity on the number of containers, details of how many businesses are using the site and vehicle movements generated by these, details of any haulage use of the site (from previous permissions), details of on-site customer parking, details of the existing access and distances between the edge of the carriageway and gates and finally details of predicted movements in line with the proposed use. Subsequently revised drawings and a Technical Note has been provided. Both CCC and the Parish Council have been re-consulted.
- 7.35 Following a review of the submitted details CCC have confirmed that they raise no objections. They confirm the access dimensions and visibility splays proposed are acceptable. They consider the proposed vehicle movements to be commensurate with other similar sites. They acknowledge reservations regarding the intensification of Overcote Lane, which has a limited number of passing places, but the vehicle movements would be insignificant in comparison to other businesses/uses which the lane serves. Therefore, they are satisfied that there will be no significant adverse effect upon highways safety as a result of the scheme.
- 7.36 On balance, given the flows associated with the authorised uses and other uses in the vicinity and the lack of objection from CCC Highways as specialists, the scheme is considered to be acceptable in terms of highway safety impacts and traffic generation and

therefore the proposal would accords with Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036.

Flood Risk

- 7.37 The application site is located within Flood Zone 3a and has a high risk of river flooding as indicated in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024).
- 7.38 The proposed storage use is classified as a Less Vulnerable use under the flood risk vulnerability categories. In Flood Zone 3a, less vulnerable uses are considered appropriate, and not subject to the exception or sequential tests.
- 7.39 A Flood Risk Assessment (dated May 2020) accompanies the application and the Environment Agency have been consulted and comment that whilst they have no objections in principle, a flood emergency plan, and flood resilient measures should be incorporated. If Members are minded to approve the application then these could be included as planning conditions.

Biodiversity

- 7.40 Policy LP30 of the Local Plan requires a development to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and achieve a net gain where possible. As well as this (and separate from the requirements of LP30), qualifying new development is subject to Biodiversity Net Gain legislation pursuant to the Environment Act 2021. This means that a 10% statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) would be required with any future application, following the hierarchy of onsite provision; mixture of on-site and off-site provision; and the last resort of statutory biodiversity credits unless it can be demonstrated that the development would be exempt.
- 7.41 In this case, at present there is no legislation to deal with planning applications which are made retrospectively as matters relating to BNG are generally pre-commencement and so opportunities to impose controls or evaluation of habitats are lost. The land subject to the application appears to be of limited value. It may have previously been grassland but due to the operations taking place within it, it is now largely compacted earth/hard surfacing with rubble/hardcore in some places. HDC's Ecology Officer noted that it was intended to provide a net gain by the introduction of 33 native trees to the south of the site as detailed within the submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Statement. The Officer raised concerns regarding the

likelihood of this being achieved given the space given over to the trees and the chance of their longer-term survival. However, he did also acknowledge the retrospective nature of the proposals and so it is not considered necessary to pursue this further.

That said, despite this, LP30 does still apply and a net gain should be achieved where possible. In this case however, Officers are satisfied that given the commercial nature of the site, opportunities for providing a net gain are limited and so it is not considered necessary to pursue these on this occasion.

- 7.42 Overall, having regard to the above matters, the development is considered to be acceptable with regard to biodiversity impacts and broadly accords with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

Other Matters

- 7.43 *Developer contributions (CIL)

The development will be CIL liable in accordance with the Council's adopted charging schedule; CIL payments will cover footpaths and access, health, community facilities, libraries and lifelong learning and education. No CIL forms have been provided with the planning application, but this is a matter which will be pursued by the Council's Implementation Team.

- 7.44 The proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of Policy LP4 of the Local Plan to 2036 and the Developer Contribution SPD in this regard.

Planning balance

- 7.45 As outlined above, all planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.46 It should be noted that not all proposed developments are entirely without harm or entirely without benefit. Therefore, in reaching a recommendation on the application, Officers have considered the potential harm of the development against the potential benefits of the development. Officers have considered what weight should be given to each material consideration. This forms the overall planning balance.
- 7.47 The applicant has made attempts to demonstrate compliance with Policy LP19 of the Local Plan but this has not been supported by evidence to substantiate the claims.

For example, no details of the actual capacity or demand for the services have been provided and so it is unclear why the existing established containers are no longer sufficient for the needs of the business.

- 7.48 Officers acknowledge that this is an established business within the countryside and the need to support a thriving rural economy. However, this must be assessed against the full suite of local and national policies, justification put forward to permit such development and the harm caused. There are some economic benefits but, based upon the details submitted, as detailed throughout this report, the environmental harm is significant and the extension to this site at the scale proposed would cause harm to the rural setting by virtue of its intrusion into the countryside.
- 7.49 As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policies LP10 and LP19 of the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and would result in significant and demonstrable harm both visually and upon the character of the area.
- 7.50 Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is concluded that the proposed development is contrary to policy and not acceptable. There are no overriding material considerations that indicate that permission should be granted in this instance and it is therefore recommended that the application be refused.

8. RECOMMENDATION – REFUSAL

- 8.1 The proposed change of use of land to Use Class B8 (storage or distribution) to provide an extension to accommodate further self-storage facilities including the provision of storage containers represents a 62m intrusion into the countryside beyond the existing operational site. The impact of allowing the extension of such a use (including the containers) a further 62m into the countryside would result in significant and demonstrable harm both visually and upon the character of the area through increased activity/vehicle movements within the site and is contrary to Policies LP3, LP10 (parts b and c), LP11, LP12 (particularly parts a, b, and c), LP19, Paras. 129 (d & e) and 135 (b and c) of the NPPF (2024) and the provisions of the National Design Guide (2021).

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388424 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

CONTACT OFFICER: Kevin Simpson:
kevin.simpson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

From: [DevelopmentControl](#)
To: [DevelopmentControl](#)
Subject: Comments for Planning Application 25/00069/FUL
Date: 05 February 2025 11:58:28

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 05/02/2025 11:58 AM from [REDACTED] - Needingworth PC.

Application Summary

Address:	The Barn Overcote Lane Needingworth St Ives PE27 4TN
Proposal:	Change of use to self-storage yard (Use Class B8)
Case Officer:	Kevin Simpson

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	[REDACTED] - Needingworth PC
Email:	[REDACTED]
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:	<p>In considering the application Council noted that the facility does provide a service to local businesses and residents.</p> <p>Members commented on the fact that this is another retrospective application for the site and that this application also includes further increase in the number of containers to be permitted, although the total numbers of containers that will be allowed if the application is approved is confusing and unclear.</p> <p>Whilst members understand that one site cannot be held responsible for problems with the Highway something needs to be done to resolve issues of increasing traffic on a single-track road which has no pedestrian footpath and is used by horse riders to access a public bridleway. The letter from CCC Highways dated 29/1/25 raises many concerns shared by the Parish Council.</p> <p>The application is unclear, but Council considers the proposed development may cause light pollution, Health & safety issues if there is no control over what is stored on the site, noise from additional traffic and damage to the highway.</p> <p>The application is in breach of the following policies:</p> <p>LP5 - The site is located in flood zone 3</p> <p>LP10 - The site is located in the countryside.</p>
-----------	---

Kind regards

Dear Mr Simpson.

Ref Application 25/00069/ful – The Barn, Overcote Lane Needingworth.

The Parish Council has asked me to contact you to confirm that they support the application in full.

Should you require any further clarification please do come back to me.

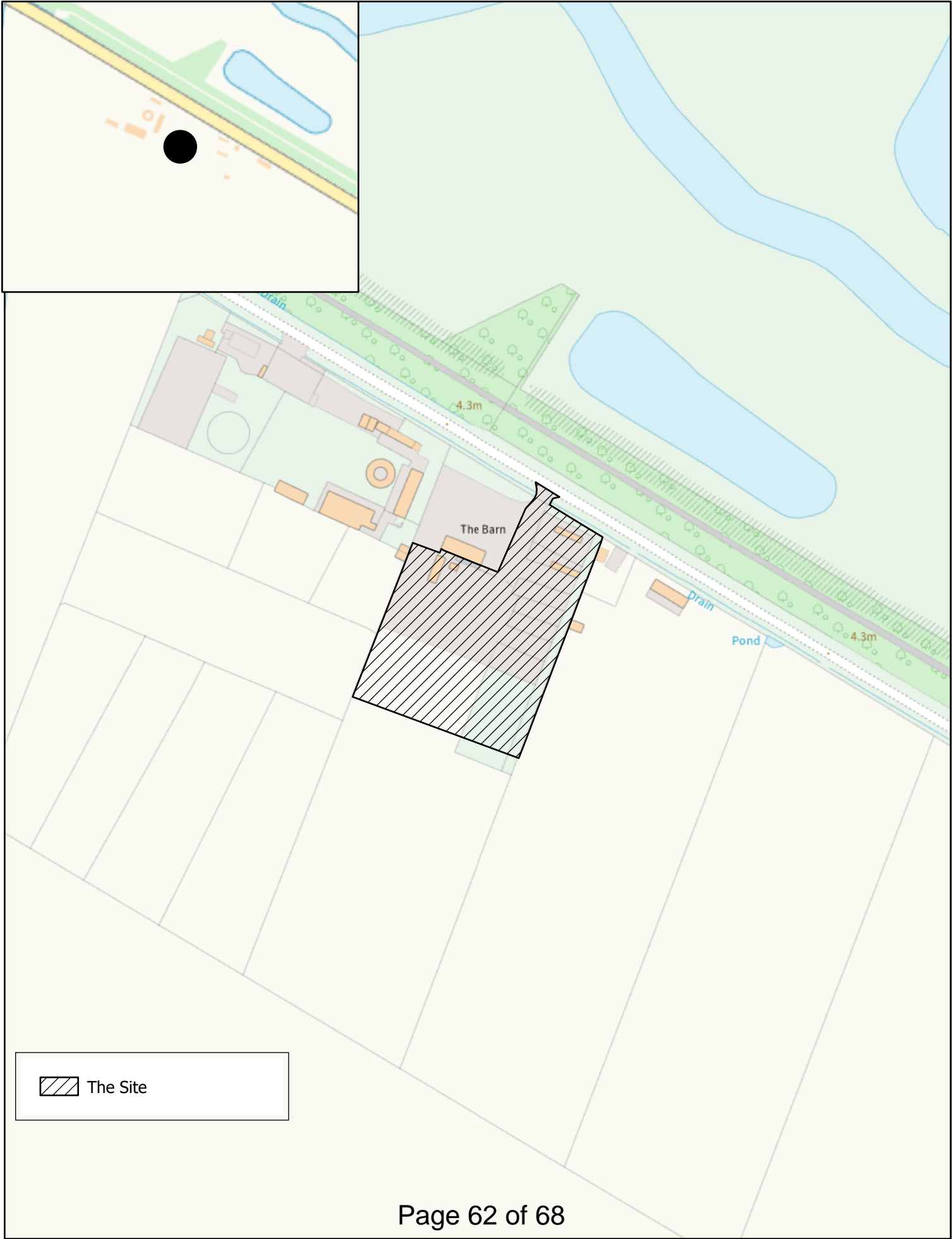
Please accept my apologies for the inconvenience.

Kind regards

Jane

Jane Bowd, Parish Clerk

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council



Issue Status			
Planning			
This drawing is copyright. Only figured dimensions to be worked to.			
Revision		Drawn	Check
P1	First Issue	PL	AD
		09.01.25	

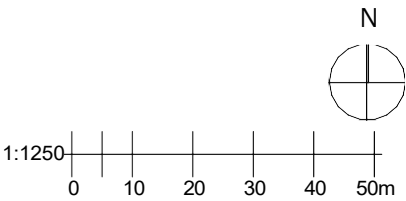
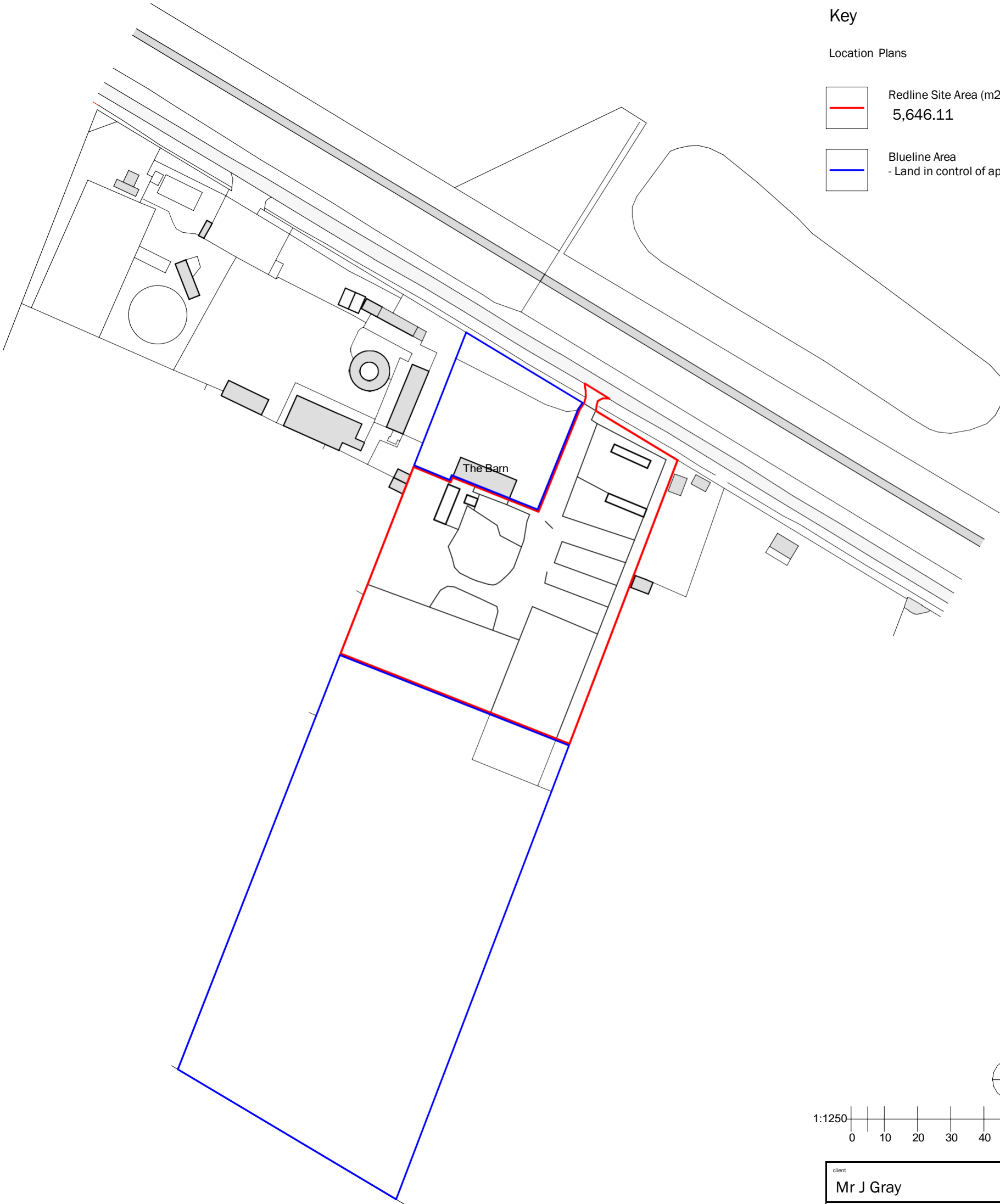
Key

Location Plans

- Redline Site Area (m2)

5,646.11
- Blueline Area

- Land in control of applicant



client		
Mr J Gray		
project		
3 Overcote Lane, Needingworth, St Ives Proposed Open Storage and the Siting of Containers		
drawing		
Location Plan		
date	15.10.24	scale
drawn	PL	1:1250 @ A3
check	AD	



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24	096	DL0101	P1
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Issue Status			
Planning			
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Revision		Drawn	Check
P1	First Issue	PL	AD
P2	Amended as comments - visibility splays added	AD	AD
P3	Amendments to Comments	AD	AD
P4	Amendments to Comments	AD	AD
P5	Amendments to Comments	AD	AD

Highways

Key

- Visibility Splays
- Vehicular / Pedestrian
- Vehicle Turning
- Vehicle Parking
- Cars, Lorries, Cycles

Planning

Key

- Lawful Development Area
LPA: 21/01528/CLED
- Consented
- Existing - On Site

client

Mr J Gray

project

3 Overcote Lane, Needingworth, St Ives
Proposed Open Storage and the Siting of Containers

drawing

Site Plan As Existing Detail

date

15.10.24

scale

1:200

@ A1

drawn

PL

checked

AD

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P5



Issue Status			
Planning			
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Revision		Drawn	Check
P1	First Issue	PL	AD
P2	Amended as comments - visibility splays added, container key added	AD	AD
P3	Amendments to Comments	AD	AD
P4	Amendments to Comments	AD	AD
P5	Amendments to Comments	AD	AD

Highways

Key

- Visibility Splays
- Vehicular / Pedestrian
- Vehicle Turning
- Vehicle Parking
- Cars, Lorries, Cycles

Planning

Key

- Lawful Development Area
LPA: 21/01528/CLED

Containers

- Consented
- Existing - On Site
- Proposed - Additional

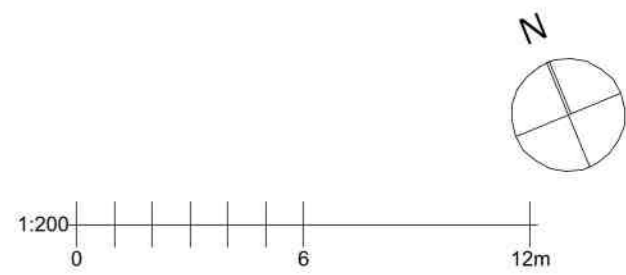
Landscaping

Planting

- Hedge with Tree Planting
- Tree Planting

Planting Information

Hedges to consist of -
70% hawthorn, 15% hazel, 10% blackthorn and 5% dog rose.
Planting should be in a double staggered row -
500mm between plants, 500mm between rows.

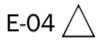


client		
Mr J Gray		
project		
3 Overcote Lane, Needingworth, St Ives Proposed Open Storage and the Siting of Containers		
drawing		
Site Plan As Proposed Detail		
date	scale	@ A1
15.10.24	1:200	
drawn	checked	
PL	AD	

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Ground Floor



Planning Appeal Decisions Since May 2025 Committee

Ref No	Appellant	Parish	Proposal	Site	Original Decision	Delegated or DMC	Appeal Determination	Costs
24/001 22/ CLED	Mrs Margaret Harris	Barham and Woolley	Lawful Development Certificate Existing for unrestricted use of a annex ancillary to the main granted planning permission on 28 May 1996 in excess of a period of 10 years in breach of Condition 3 of 9600408FUL ancillary to the main dwelling.	The Cottage New Manor Farm Ellington Road Woolley Huntingdon PE28 5BH	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Allowed	Awarded to Appellant
23/023 31/ FUL	Mr David Tiffin	Fenstanton	Erection of 4 dwellings with new access following demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings.	10 Honey Hill Fenstanton Huntingdon PE28 9JP	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Dismissed	N/A
23/020 84/ HHFU L	Mr & Mrs Lewis	St Ives	Rear single storey extension with associated landscaping and drainage. Rear dormer loft conversion.	1 Holbein Road St Ives PE27 3EA	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Dismissed	N/A
22/015 32/ OUT	Mrs Toates	Kings Ripton	Outline planning application for the construction of 5 mixed sized dwellings, all matters reserved	The County Kennels Sapley Road Kings Ripton PE28 2NX	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Dismissed	N/A

24/004 57/ OUT	Mr & Mrs Vincent Haines	Bluntisham	Outline application with all matters reserved for erection of one new dwelling	Land North Of 45 To 51 Wood End Bluntisham	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Dismissed	N/A
24/003 72/S73	Mr Colin Marron	Brampton	Variation of Condition 2 (Plans Listed) for 18/02661/S73 (as amended by 20/00192/NMA) - Alterations to proposed development from 10 x 2 bed and 4 x 3 beds to 10 x 3 bed and 4 x 4bed units, with associated minor modification of the landscape and parking	Brampton Park Buckden Road Brampton Huntingdon PE28 4NG	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Allowed	N/A
24/003 36/ FUL	Mr D Coutts	St Neots	Erection of a bespoke-designed wheelchair-friendly bungalow and associated ancillary works	49 St Neots Road Eaton Ford St Neots PE19 7BA	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Dismissed	N/A
24/010 09/ FUL	Oleksandra Greenland and Matthew Valentine	The Stukeleys	Erection of self-build dwelling and associated development	21 Church Road Great Stukeley Huntingdon PE28 4AL	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Withdrawn	N/A