



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, 19 JANUARY 2026** 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 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 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) Farcet - 25/00892/OUT (Pages 11 - 56)**

Outline application with all matters reserved except for access via Peterborough Road for the demolition of 107 Peterborough Road, and the development of up to 185 dwellings (Use Class C3), public open space and associated infrastructure - Land West of Peterborough Road, Farcet.

##### **(b) Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy - 25/01237/OUT (Pages 57 - 88)**

Demolition of equestrian centre buildings and erection of up to 7 dwellings including revised access from New Road with all matters reserved - Northbrook Equestrian Centre, New Road, Offord Cluny, St Neots.

**(c) St Neots - 25/01875/FUL (Pages 89 - 122)**

Erection of four dwellings and associated works - Land Adjacent 31 Luke Street, Eynesbury.

**(d) St Neots - 25/01894/FUL (Pages 123 - 148)**

Erection of bungalow with garage and associated works - Land Rear of 34 to 38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon.

**4. APPEAL DECISIONS (Pages 149 - 150)**

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

**LATE REPRESENTATIONS**

9 day of January 2026

***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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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**

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# Agenda Item 1

## 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, 15 December 2025

PRESENT: Councillor D L Mickelburgh – Chair.

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

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R J Brereton, J Clarke, D B Dew, S R McAdam, S Mokbul and R A Slade.

### **37 MINUTES**

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

### **38 MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor C Tevlin declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 42 (a) by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward she represented.

Councillor J Neish declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 42 (d) by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward he represented.

Councillor J Neish declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 42 (e) by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward he represented.

Councillor P Jordan declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 40 by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward she represented.

Councillor P Jordan also declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 41 by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward she represented.

### **39 APPLICATION REQUIRING REFERENCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - PROPOSED 2 NO. REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS AND 1 NO. DETACHED DOUBLE GARAGE - 3 SHEEPWALK COTTAGES, OUNDLE ROAD, ELTON, PETERBOROUGH - 25/01436/FUL**

Following receipt of further information relating to the application, it was

RESOLVED

that the application be not determined.

**40 APPLICATION REQUIRING REFERENCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - PROPOSED CONVERSION OF OUTBUILDING TO DWELLING - 50 HIGH STREET, BRAMPTON, HUNTINGDON - 25/00884/FUL**

Following the withdrawal of the application by the Agent, it was  
RESOLVED

that the application be not determined.

**41 APPLICATION REQUIRING REFERENCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - PROPOSED CONVERSION OF OUTBUILDING TO DWELLING - 50 HIGH STREET, BRAMPTON, HUNTINGDON - 25/00885/LBC**

Following the withdrawal of the application by the Agent, it was  
RESOLVED

that the application be not determined.

**42 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) Reserved Matters Application Relating to the Approval of Appearance, Layout, Landscape and Scale Following Outline Approval 20/00164/Out in Respect of the Construction of 16 Dwellings - Land West of Wychwood, Church End, Hilton - 25/00781/REM**

*(Councillor P Balicki, Hilton Parish Council, and A Ahmed, Agent, addressed the Committee on the application).*

See Minute No 38 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.

At 6.30 pm Councillor Wakeford took his seat at the meeting.

b) **Residential Development of 65 Dwellings Together with New Access, Open Space, Suds Features and Associated Infrastructure - Land North of Aragon Place, Stow Road, Kimbolton - 25/01029/FUL**

*(Councillor J Gray, on behalf of Kimbolton and Stonely Parish Council, Councillor J Gray, Ward Member, G Pierce, Objector, and D Joseph, Applicant, addressed the Committee on the application).*

that powers be delegated to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection to approve the application subjects to conditions including final wording for a foul water drainage strategy condition and completion of a Section 106 obligation or refuse the application in the event that the obligation referred to above has not been completed and the Applicant is unwilling to agree to an extended period for determination; or on the grounds that the Applicant is unwilling to complete the obligation necessary to make the development acceptable; or if the applicant is unwilling to agree to the pre-commencement conditions specified in this report as being necessary to make the development acceptable.

At 7.52 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 8.00 pm the meeting resumed.

c) **Erection of 2 No. Dwellings and Associated Works - 2 Queens Court, Eaton Socon, St Neots - 25/01238/FUL**

*(S Richardson, Agent, addressed the Committee on the application).*

that the application be refused for the following reasons:

- a) The application site occupies a prominent corner position at the junction of Queens Court and Queens Gardens within an established residential area characterised by two-storey terraces set behind generally consistent building lines, open front gardens and soft landscaping which together create a pleasant, spacious street scene. By reason of its scale, massing, detailed design and, in particular, its siting substantially forward of the established building line on Queens Gardens, the proposed pair of dwellings would appear as an intrusive and incongruous extension of the existing terrace, eroding the open character of this corner and harming the visual relationship between Queens Court and Queens Gardens. The development would result in unusually small and cramped private garden areas that do not reflect the prevailing pattern, scale and proportion of gardens in the locality and would introduce a 1.8-metre close-boarded fence to Queens Gardens that is out of keeping with the generally open, landscaped front boundaries along the street.
- b) In addition, the layout would create an overly hard-surfaced, car dominated frontage to Queens Court, with an almost continuous run of parking spaces serving No. 2 Queens Court and the new dwellings, and limited opportunity for meaningful soft landscaping. This would materially diminish the existing pleasant, open aspect of this part of Queens Court and fail to reinforce the local distinctiveness and positive qualities of the area.

- c) Taken together, these factors amount to an overdevelopment of a constrained corner plot that fails to respond positively to its context, does not integrate successfully with the established form, layout and townscape character of Queens Court and Queens Gardens, and does not achieve a high quality, beautiful or locally distinctive place.
- d) The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies LP7, LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017), in particular sections 3.3 (Place Making and Hierarchy of Movement) and 3.7 (Building Form), and Policy A3 (Design) of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, which together require development to respect local character, established building lines, garden patterns and boundary treatments. The proposal also conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), notably Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places), including paragraphs 131–135 and 140, which seek development that is sympathetic to local character and history, establishes or maintains a strong sense of place and creates visually attractive and well-designed environments. . 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.

**d) Change of use from Day School to Residential Dwelling. Demolition of Ancillary Buildings to the Rear and Construction of New Rear Extensions With Internal Alterations - The Old Day School, High Street, Bluntisham - 25/01600/FUL**

*(Councillor P Hope, Bluntisham Parish Council, and S Claridge, Applicant, addressed the Committee on the application).*

See minute No 38 for Members' interests.

that the application be refused for the following reasons:

- a) The proposed extensions by virtue of their siting, scale, mass, design and material finish would result in the addition of an incongruous form of development which would cause a high level of less than substantial harm to the Grade II Listed building and less than substantial harm to surrounding the Bluntisham Conservation Area. In addition, it would fail to respond positively to its surroundings, contribute to the character and identity of the area, or successfully integrate with the host building. It is contrary to Policies LP2, LP11, LP12 (parts a, b and c) and LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990, the NPPF (2024) and parts C1, C2, I1 and I2 of the National Design Guide (2021).
- b) Insufficient detail has been provided to allow for an assessment of the impact on the trees to the northern boundary. In the absence of this information it cannot be confirmed that the proposed works could proceed without unacceptable harm to the adjacent protected trees, particularly as future works would likely occur within their root protection areas. The development therefore conflicts with Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

**e) Change of use from Day School to Residential Dwelling. Demolition of Ancillary Buildings to the Rear and Construction of New Rear Extensions With Internal Alterations - The Old Day School, High Street, Bluntisham - 25/01601/LBC**

See Minute No 38 for Members' interests.

that the application be refused because the alterations and proposed extensions by virtue of their siting, scale, mass, design and material finish would result in the addition of an incongruous form of development which would cause a high level of less than substantial harm to this Grade II Listed building and less than substantial harm to the surrounding Bluntisham Conservation Area. In addition, it, it would fail to respond positively to its surroundings, contribute to the character and identity of the area, or successfully integrate with the host building. The proposed internal works to facilitate the conversion would also result in a high level of less than substantial harm to the heritage significance of the building and insufficient detail has been provided to allow Officers to fully assess all elements of the heritage impact, The public benefits of bringing the building back into use in this instance would not outweigh the identified harm. The scheme as a whole is contrary to contrary to Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, and Section 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

#### **43 APPEAL DECISIONS**

The Committee received and noted a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management), which contained details of one recent decision 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 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Case No:** 25/00892/OUT

**Proposal:** Outline application with all matters reserved except for access via Peterborough Road for the demolition of 107 Peterborough Road, and the development of up to 185 dwellings (Use Class C3), public open space and associated infrastructure

**Location:** Land West Of Peterborough Road Farct

**Applicant:** Hallam Land and Persimmon Homes East Midlands

**Grid Ref:** 520045 295395

**Date of Registration:** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Parish:** FARCET

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### RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE

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

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

##### Site and Surroundings

1.1 The application site is an 8 hectare, broadly rectangular, parcel of agricultural land, that is bound by the A605 to the North. This forms a robust physical edge to the site, and the City of Peterborough City lies beyond. The western boundary is defined by Stanground Lode, which provides a natural buffer to Stanham Way and the Peterborough South Logistics Park, Kingston Park, including an Amazon distribution centre (logistics warehouses) immediately beyond. Stanground Lode and the associated habitat also connects to Crown Lakes Country Park located approximately 450m south of the site and a wider woodland corridor. There are residential properties on Peterborough Road in the village of Farct to the east, with arable fields further beyond. There are also residential properties on Throstlenest to the south of the site as well as equine pastures. Land immediately to the southeast has planning permission for 12 assisted living apartments under reference 23/02502/FUL.

- 1.2 Visually, the site is well-contained and not publicly accessible with strong boundary edges. The administrative boundary of the City of Peterborough lies immediately to the West of the site and to the North beyond the A605. The City of Peterborough lies north of the A605 Peterborough Road flyover.
- 1.2 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding) as identified by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2024 and the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning. There is some surface water flooding on the far eastern element of the site, close to the backs of the properties on Peterborough Road.
- 1.3 There are no designated heritage assets which would be affected by the proposed development and no trees subject to a preservation order in the vicinity. The site does not fall within a protected landscape and there are no statutory habitat sites in close proximity.

### Proposal

- 1.4 This application seeks outline permission with all matters reserved except for access via Peterborough Road for the demolition of 107 Peterborough Road, and the development of up to 185 dwellings (Use Class C3), public open space and associated infrastructure.
- 1.5 Vehicular access to the site would be via a new priority junction to be formed on Peterborough Road, approval for which is sought within this application. The proposed access would be off Peterborough Road, as No.107 would be demolished to provide the access provision. The access would comprise of a 5.5m wide carriageway, a 2m footpath on the south side, and a 2.5m cycle path and 2m footpath on the north side. An emergency access would be provided in the northeast of the site between 135 and 137 Peterborough Road. The emergency access would also be used as a footway and cycleway link into the site. A recreational route is also proposed, linking the new development with the A605.
- 1.6 The dwelling mix has not been prescribed at this stage, being deferred to be considered as a reserved matter. Matters of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping would all also be considered at the reserved matters stage.
- 1.7 The proposal includes 40% of the dwellings to be affordable for either rent or shared ownership.
- 1.9 This application has been accompanied by the following drawings and documents:
  - Location plan & parameter plan
  - Planning, Design & Access and Affordable Housing Statement

- Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy
- Foul Sewerage and Utilities Assessment
- Odour Impact Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Arboricultural Statement
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

1.11 An illustrative masterplan has been provided to assist in assessing the scheme but is a reserved matter as it relates to the detailed layout etc, and therefore will not be an approved plan.

1.12 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

#### Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

1.10 With regard to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 the development meets the criteria within Schedule 2 to require a detailed screening opinion, as the application proposes more than 150 dwellings and is over 5 hectares.

1.11 Officers have therefore screened the proposal as part of this application and considered the Characteristics of development, Location of development, types and characteristics of the potential impact. A high level appraisal of potential in-combination effects has been undertaken alongside a consultation and detailed review of the submitted documents. No relevant consultees have raised any significant effects to any receptors. Suitable mitigation is also proposed as part of the application for any effects that may rise.

1.21 The proposal is considered to be Schedule 2 development that is unlikely, having regard to the nature, location and other characteristics of the development, to give rise to significant environmental effects. As such, it is not considered to be EIA development.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF December 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

2.2 The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

- delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- building a strong, competitive economy;
- achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
- conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment

2.3 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

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

### **3. PLANNING POLICIES**

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

- LP1: Amount of Development
- LP2: Strategy for Development
- LP3: Green Infrastructure
- LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
- LP5: Flood Risk
- LP6: Waste Water Management
- LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
- LP9: Small Settlement
- LP10: The Countryside
- LP11: Design Context
- LP12: Design Implementation
- LP14: Amenity
- LP15: Surface Water
- LP16: Sustainable Travel
- LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- LP25: Housing Mix
- LP28: Rural Exceptions Housing
- LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
- LP37: Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution

3.2 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

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

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

3.3 The National Design Guide (2021):

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

For full details visit the government website.

#### **4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 None relevant.

#### **5. CONSULTATIONS**

##### Summary of consultation responses

5.1 Farcet Parish Council - Objection

The proposal, in its current form, fails to comply with multiple policies of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, and does not demonstrate that it can be delivered safely or without significant harm to amenity, highway safety or the local environment.

1. Conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - a. Sustainable development
  - b. Highway safety (unacceptable impact)
  - c. Infrastructure capacity
  - d. Ecology and biodiversity
  - e. Prematurity
2. Conflict with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted Plan)
  - a. LP2 – outside settlement boundary, unallocated
  - b. LP11 / LP12 – inadequate design certainty
  - c. LP14 – unsafe access, no suitable transport mitigation
  - d. LP19 – insufficient flood/drainage evidence
  - e. LP30 – bat corridor not secured
3. Site NOT included in the updated Local Plan allocations
4. Highway Safety, Traffic Impact & Access — Concerns NOT Mitigated

- a. The proposed 4 m wide cycleway/footpath on St Mary's Street offers very little benefit
- b. Narrowing the Gazeley Gardens junction is unnecessary and makes the junction more hazardous
- c. Traffic analysis does NOT consider existing or potential developments
- d. Parish Council was NOT consulted — contrary to how the application is presented
- e. Farset Business centre → Cardea footpath link would provide real benefit

5. Scale and Impact on Village Character
6. Ecology, Lighting and Bat Corridor
7. Flooding and Drainage
8. Local Services Capacity
9. Prematurity & Reliance on Reserved Matters

5.2 HDC Housing Officer – Supports

- supports provision of affordable housing as a general principle, subject to conforming with the Council's planning policies. Notes potential constraints relating to odour nuisance.

5.3 HDC Urban Design Officer – Supports

- Recommends condition compliance with parameter plan.

5.4 HDC Landscape Officer – No objection.

5.5 HDC Ecology Officer – No objection in principle.

- Futher info required. Recommends condition for bat corridor, BNG etc.

5.6 HDC Tree Officer – No objection.

- Recommends conditions for tree info to be submitted with reserved matters.

5.7 HDC Environmental Health – No objection.

- Recommends conditions regarding contamination, CEMP, noise etc.

5.8 Cambridgeshire Constabulary Designing Out Crime Office – No objection.

5.9 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Archaeology – No objection.

- Recommends a written scheme of investigation condition.

5.10 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Highways – Defer for updated information.

*Paragraphs 7.34-7.57 address this. Revised information has been received. Officers have confidence that the submitted information will address outstanding concerns. Officers will update members on this matter in due course.*

5.11 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Transport Assessment Team – No objection.

- Recommends conditions regarding off site highway improvement works, travel plan and S106 contribution.

5.12 Cambridgeshire County Council Development & Policy Team – No objection.

5.13 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) – Objection.

*Paragraphs 7.58-7.67 address this. Revised information has been received. Officers have confidence that the submitted information will address outstanding concerns. Officers will update members on this matter in due course.*

5.14 Peterborough City Council (PCC) Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) – Objection.

*Paragraphs 7.58-7.67 address this. Officers have confidence that the submitted information will address outstanding concerns. Officers will update members on this matter in due course.*

5.15 Peterborough City Council (PCC) Highways – Objection.

*Paragraphs 7.34-7.57 address this. Officers have confidence that the submitted information will address PCC Highways outstanding concerns. Officers will update members on this matter in due course.*

5.16 Anglian Water – No objection. This site is within the catchment of Peterborough (Flag Fen) Water Recycling Centre (WRC), which currently can accommodate the additional flows generated by the proposed development. Peterborough (Flag Fen) WRC is included within our Business Plan as a named growth scheme with investment delivery planned between 2025- 2030.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

6.1 Summary of letters of objection received from 85 addresses:

- Will worsen congestion especially during peak times as this is key road connecting Yaxley and Stanground.
- The addition of 185+ cars onto local roads will detrimentally affect highway safety especially for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Safety of proposed access
- Access Alternatives: No viable options, such as Stanham Way or the A605, have been explored. The cited toucan crossing (incorrectly labelled A405) offers no relief to Peterborough Road
- Too many homes proposed for this size of village (27% increase). The proposed development is out of proportion

with Faracet's character as a small rural village. Such large-scale expansion threatens the village's identity and overwhelms existing infrastructure

- Impact on village character
- Lack of services and facilities
- Doctors and schools are oversubscribed.
- A similar development on the other side of Peterborough Road has recently been declined due to similar concerns.
- 17 homes are already being built on Cross Street
- Lack of meaningful consultation
- Lack of local support
- Inconsistent with local plan policies
- Loss of green space and buffer between Faracet and warehouses
- Impact on wildlife
- Noise and air pollution from vehicles
- Loss of view
- Loss of value to neighbouring properties.
- The proximity and height of the new homes may overlook existing properties, leading to significant loss of privacy for current residents.
- The scale and positioning of the new buildings risk overshadowing neighbouring homes, reducing natural light.
- Directional light shining into 80 Peterborough Road from cars exiting the new junction/access.
- Properties at 105 & 109 Peterborough Road will be impacted by the access road into the new development.
- Impact of construction and demolition on neighbouring properties
- Drainage and flooding concerns

6.2 Concerns raised about the loss of views and loss of value to neighbouring properties are not material planning considerations that the Local Planning Authority can lawfully take into account in determining the application. In terms of consultation, the Council has carried sufficient consultation in line with statutory duties.

## 7. ASSESSMENT

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

7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within the NPPF

(2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as “the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area”.

7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan (relevant to this applications) consists of:

- Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

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

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

- The principle of development, including its impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Access, Transport, Highway Safety & Parking Provision
- Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Drainage
- Parameter Plans, Indicative Layout, Landscaping, Trees and Open Space
- Biodiversity
- Residential Amenity
- Affordable Housing
- Accessible Housing
- Water Efficiency
- Other Matters
- Developer Contributions

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

Housing Land Supply

7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).

7.7 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply

(5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test, a 5% buffer is required here. The 5-year housing land requirement, including a 5% buffer, is 5,907 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,345 homes, equivalent to 3.68 years' supply.

7.8 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the titled balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications. Each planning application will be considered on its own merits and the degree of weight to be attached is a matter for the decision maker. Where an application is situated within a parish with a made Neighbourhood Plan NPPF paragraph 14 should also be taken into account.

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

7.9 The application seeks outline planning permission for up to 185 dwellings (40% affordable dwellings) on a site within Farcet.

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

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

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

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

7.13 Local Plan Policy LP9 identifies Farset as a Small Settlement, one of many settlements across Huntingdonshire which have limited or no available services and facilities. Small Settlements are less sustainable than those in the Spatial Planning Areas or the Key Service Centres, and inherently involve a greater need to travel on a regular basis to access services and facilities elsewhere. Consequently, the Local Plan does not make any development allocations in the Small Settlements, instead allowing only for a limited amount of sustainable development in order to contribute to the settlements' social and economic sustainability.

7.14 Policy LP9 states:

*'Development Proposals within the Built-up Area*

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

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

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

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

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

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

7.17 The supporting text to Local Plan Policy LP7 provides extensive criteria-based guidance on the assessment of whether land falls within the built-up area or outside the built-up area. It advises that the built up area will include:

*Principle - Open space, sports and recreational facilities, allotments, caravan sites, churchyard and cemeteries which are predominantly surrounded by and integral to the built up area and defined by strong boundary features.*

*Implementation guidance - Some greenfield uses such as recreational or amenity open space, churchyards, wide grass verges and allotments, can form an integral and valuable part of the built-up area and its character. These must have buildings on at least two sides and have a clear physical and visual relationship with the built-up area rather than any adjoining countryside. Examples of strong boundary features include a tree belt or substantial stone or brick wall.*

7.18 The application site is bound by the A605 to the North with Peterborough City beyond, Stanground Lode and mature vegetation to the West with Kingston Park (logistics warehouses) immediately beyond, residential properties on Peterborough Road in the village of Faracet to the East, and with residential properties on Throstlenest and paddocks to the South. Therefore the site has buildings on at least two sides, arguably three due to Kingston Park on another side. It is also considered that the site has strong boundaries on all sides.

7.19 It also advises that the built up area will exclude:

*Principle - Agricultural land, woodland, meadow, areas of water and natural habitats that penetrate the built form or sections of*

*large residential curtilages where the character of the land primarily relates to the countryside.*

*Implementation guidance - These spaces can provide a visual buffer between built development and the open countryside, softening the visual impact and linking the built up area with its rural context.*

7.20 The site does not relate to the countryside on the eastern side of Peterborough Road or the countryside further to the further south near Crown Lakes Country Park. It is also acknowledged given the agricultural character of the site, it may appear visually part of the Countryside. However, the site is not connected to the wider countryside. It is considered that the site does join the existing built-up area, as it is also physically and functionally related to the built-up area. For these reasons, the site is considered to be well-related to the built-up area of Farcet.

7.21 Given the above commentary about how the site may appear visually part of the countryside and for completeness, policy LP10 is considered to be relevant. Policy LP10 places significant restrictions on developments in such locations, referring to only "limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan" as being acceptable in principle. Policy LP10 requires all development in the countryside to:

- (a) seek to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value:
  - (i) avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible, and
  - (ii) avoiding Grade 1 agricultural land unless there are exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the loss of land;
- (b) recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and
- (c) not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

7.22 Policy LP10 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP10 especially in relation to criteria (a) to (c) as it is consistent with the NPPF. However, the part of Policy LP10 which restricts residential development in the countryside is to be given reduced weight. This means that any residential development on land in the countryside may be acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations.

7.23 With regard to Policy LP10 part (a) the application site comprises an undeveloped arable field which is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land, nationally considered as amongst the best and most versatile agricultural land.

7.24 Some 98% of the district comprises land within Grades 1 to 3, with 15% being Grade 1 and an estimated 77% of land falling within the definition of best and most versatile land. The proposal would result in the irreversible loss of some of this best and most versatile agricultural land. The site is disconnected from the wider countryside and other agricultural fields. However, the irreversible loss of agricultural land which can be used for food or crop production would conflict with Policy LP10 part (a)(i).

7.25 In terms of Policy LP10 part (b), as discussed above, the site is considered to be well-related to the built up area of Faracet. A Landscape & Visual Appraisal has been submitted in support of the application. This has been reviewed by the Council's Landscape Officer who agrees with the methodology and the conclusions that as the site is not visually prominent, the proposed development would have limited impact on landscape character and therefore would be acceptable in visual terms in principle. However, its location on Faracet's northwestern edge could reduce the perceived separation from Peterborough. With a 10m westward slope, higher ground is visible from the east and north, so sensitive landscaping is needed to soften visual impacts. The applicant has provided a landscape strategy to show how this could be achieved.

7.26 Whilst layout is not for considered under the remit of this application, nonetheless the applicant's illustrative layout plan shows one potential way in which 185 dwellings could be accommodated on the site. Both the Council's Landscape Officer and Urban Design Officer are content that, in principle, a scheme of 185 dwellings could be designed in a manner that accords with the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD 2017. The parameter plan will be discussed below.

7.27 Policy LP10 part (c) requires proposals to avoid giving rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others. These objectives could be secured by conditions and would remain controlled at reserved matters stage, such that in principle compliance with Policy LP10 part (c) would appear possible.

7.28 As outlined above, Faracet is a small settlement. Smaller settlements are, by their nature, considered less sustainable than those locations identified higher up the settlement hierarchy under Policy LP2.

7.29 However it is considered that this site is in a highly sustainable and accessible location for residential development, as it has local

shops and services within reasonable walking and cycling distance, including a bus stop, convenience store, supermarket, playing fields, and a village hall. Further amenities include Farcet C of E Primary School, Stanground Academy Secondary School, and Stanground GP Surgery. Employment opportunities are available at the nearby Kingston Park. The Site is well served by other employment and leisure opportunities within the immediate vicinity given its proximity to Peterborough. Indeed, the Site is located within walking distance to bus stops located on Peterborough Road served by the 5 and 5A services, offering frequent services from Yaxley to Peterborough twice per hour.

- 7.30 NPPF Para 84 states: Planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside.
- 7.31 NPPF Para 110 states: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.
- 7.32 It is considered that the development would have access to services and facilities within Farcet, and also the means to access the City of Peterborough through sustainable modes of transport. The development would therefore not result in the development of isolated homes in the countryside nor would the future occupiers have to have an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle.
- 7.33 Therefore Officers consider in this instance that the site is sustainable for the amount of development proposed.

### **Access, Transport, Highway Safety & Parking Provision**

#### Access, Transport & Highway Safety

- 7.34 Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seek to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.
- 7.35 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states: 116. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

7.36 The application seeks outline planning permission for up to 185 dwellings with all matters reserved except for access. Extensive objections have been received by local residents and the Parish Council regarding the amount of additional cars that would serve the proposed additional 185 dwellings and their impact on the local traffic network, the existing congestion issues and highway safety concerns.

7.37 Given the site location on the Cambridgeshire/Peterborough border, the proposals would have an impact on the highway network in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The Highway Authority (Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)) have been consulted as part of the application and deals with the aspects that impact the network under the control of CCC Highway Authority. Comments have been received from CCC in relation to the highway safety element of the access etc and also from the Transport Assessment Team (who deal with impact upon the wider strategic traffic network. Peterborough City Council (PCC) Highways have also been consulted separately regarding the aspects that impact the network under the control of PCC Highway Authority and have provided comments on such matters.

7.38 The applicant submitted a Transport Assessment and then subsequent Technical Notes in response to comments from CCC Transport Assessment Team and PCC Highways.

7.39 There appears to be a crossover of information between the PCC objection being received and CCC removal of their objection to the proposal. For clarity, the applicant has provided a revised Technical Note to address this which is being reviewed by PCC. Officers have confidence that the recently submitted information will address PCC Highways outstanding concerns given that CCC are content. Officers will update members on this matter prior to DMC.

7.40 The proposed access would be located off Peterborough Road, as the residential property No.107 would be demolished to make way for this access provision. The access would comprise of a 5.5m wide carriageway, a 2m footpath on the south side and a 2.5m cycle path and 2m footpath on the north side. An emergency access would be provided in the northeast of the site between 135 and 137 Peterborough Road. The emergency access would also be used as a footway and cycleway link into the site. These access arrangements are considered to be acceptable subject to conditions.

7.41 The site is located within walking and cycling distance of a range of key facilities and amenities. The applicant proposes to deliver a 3m wide shared use path along the western side of the B1091 Peterborough Road between the site access junction and the new toucan crossing to be provided opposite 195 Peterborough Road. The works would facilitate pedestrian and cycle access from the

site to the new toucan crossing. Such provision would improve pedestrian and cycle access to the facilities to the north of the site for both future residents of the site and existing residents of Farct. Whilst the works proposed within the Cambridgeshire boundary are acceptable to CCC Highways, the works within the Peterborough boundary are still to be agreed with PCC Highways.

- 7.42 The applicant now proposes to provide the new toucan crossing opposite 195 Peterborough Road to replace the existing uncontrolled pedestrian and cycle crossing on the B1091. The new toucan crossing location facilitates better connection to the existing shared use walking and cycling route in Cardea, offering a more direct link to local facilities such as Stanground Academy and the Morrisons supermarket and avoids an additional crossing point on the B1091. Whilst the location of the new toucan crossing is acceptable to the CCC Highway Authority, the works within the Peterborough boundary are yet to be agreed with PCC Highways.
- 7.43 The new 3m wide shared use path to be delivered on the western side of the B1091 Peterborough Road as part of the proposals would provide a new desire line for pedestrians and cyclists to access facilities and amenities north of the site and in the Cardea estate from Farct.
- 7.44 The applicant also proposes to provide a new 3m wide lit shared use path of bound surfacing from the site, across Persimmon's-owned land, to the existing shared use path situated south of the A605 which routes east-west from Peterborough Road to Stanham Way. The new shared use path would facilitate access from the site by active travel modes to employment destinations to the west. A letter from Persimmons has been provided confirming Persimmons' agreement to this new shared use path. The principle of the new 3m wide shared use path is agreed with CCC Highways. The new shared use path would be secured as a planning condition should approval be given to this planning application with detailed design to be agreed at the reserved matters stage.
- 7.45 Additionally, the applicant would provide a physically defined footway along the short section fronting Farct Hand Car Wash where the existing provision is currently not separated from the carriageway.
- 7.46 To further improve routes to Farct CofE Primary School for pedestrians and cyclists, the applicant proposes to widen the existing footway on the northern side of Vicarage Gardens between the raised table crossing on the B1091 Peterborough Road and Farct CofE Primary School to a 4m wide segregated footway/cycleway to better facilitate travel to Farct CofE Primary School from the site by active travel modes. Such works are acceptable subject to their detailed design.

7.47 The closest two bus stops are situated less than 100m north of the site access on the B1091 Peterborough Road. Both bus stops comprise a bus flag and pole with timetable information and serve the Stagecoach No.5 bus service which provides a frequent service between Dogsthorpe and Yaxley via Peterborough. To enhance passenger transport provision within the site vicinity, the applicant proposes to upgrade these bus stops to include RTPI provision. CCC Highways are therefore seeking a S106 contribution £21,000 (twenty-one thousand pounds) towards maintenance of the two new Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) units to be delivered by the applicant at the two closest bus stops to the site on the B1091 Peterborough Road.

7.48 The CIL regs for S106 contributions sets out 3 statutory tests a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is –  
(a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;  
(b) directly related to the development; and  
(c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

7.49 Officer's consider the required S106 contribution for maintenance of the new RTPI units to be justified and CIL compliant.

7.50 CCC Transport Assessment Team are content with the Baseline Traffic Surveys and Assessment Study Area under the control of CCC Highway Authority. This includes the turning count, queue length, and ATC surveys undertaken to inform the baseline turning counts, queue lengths, and traffic flows. The baseline traffic flows are agreed with CCC.

7.51 The development is anticipated to generate 139 two-way vehicle trips (30 inbound/109 outbound) in the AM peak and 121 two-way vehicle trips (82 inbound/39 outbound) in the PM peak. The development is also anticipated to generate 21 pedestrian, 8 cycle, and 7 bus trips in the peaks. It is anticipated that 73% of development trips will route to/from the north of the site access whilst 27% will route to/from the south of the site access.

7.52 All committed developments have been considered in future year traffic flows. The CCC Highway Authority is satisfied with the junction capacity assessment models submitted for Junctions 1 and 2 located on the Cambridgeshire network. Both these junctions are anticipated to operate within capacity under all future year assessment scenarios. Peterborough City Council Highways will comment separately with regards to the junction capacity assessment models submitted for Junctions 3, 4, and 5 located on the Peterborough network.

7.53 The following wider infrastructure improvements are proposed to be delivered by the applicant:

- A new toucan crossing opposite 195 Peterborough Road to connect to existing cycleway provision within the Cardea Estate.
- 3m wide shared use provision on the western side of the B1091 Peterborough Road between the site access junction and the new toucan crossing to be provided opposite 195 Peterborough Road to improve pedestrian and cycle access to the facilities to the north of the site.
- A new 3m wide lit shared use path of bound surfacing from the site, across Persimmons-owned land, to connect to the existing east-west cycleway south of the A605.
- A village gateway feature on entry to Faracet from the north including speed signage roundel.
- A new physically defined footway with dropped kerb along the short section fronting Faracet Hand Car Wash where the existing provision is currently not separated from the carriageway.
- Narrowing the Gazeley Gardens junction bellmouth to facilitate pedestrian movement.
- Upgrade the two closest bus stops to the site on the B1091 Peterborough Road to include RTPI provision.
- 4m wide segregated footway/cycleway provision between the raised table crossing on the B1091 Peterborough Road and Faracet CofE Primary School to better facilitate travel to Faracet Primary School from the site by active travel modes.

7.54 The CCC Highway Authority is satisfied with the above mitigation proposed by the applicant. Peterborough City Council Highways will comment separately with regards to mitigation on the Peterborough network.

7.55 A pre-occupation condition is recommended to secure Welcome Travel Packs. The Welcome Travel Packs would be delivered to the first occupants of each dwelling and would include incentives inclusive of bus vouchers and/or active travel vouchers, and cycle awareness training courses for residents to encourage sustainable travel to and from the site.

7.56 Subject to the confirmation of PCC Highway Authority that their objection has been overcome, it is considered that a safe means of access can be achieved for the development and the traffic generated by the proposal would not have a severe impact upon the highway network. The development would connect to existing networks of sustainable transport to encourage travellers to use the sustainable travel opportunities within the development and the surrounding areas. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024, the development should not be refused on transport grounds. Subject to the inclusion of the recommended conditions, the proposed development complies with the NPPF 2024, policies LP16 and LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

## Parking

7.57 The application is for outline permission with all matters reserved except for access. Both car and cycle parking is a consideration when assessing whether the proposed layout is acceptable and therefore they would be considered under any future reserved matters application. Notwithstanding this, the submitted masterplan does demonstrate a scheme of this size and scale could be capable of providing sufficient car and cycle parking in accordance with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

## **Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Drainage**

### Flood Risk & Surface Water

7.58 National guidance and Policy LP5 of the Local Plan to 2036 seek to steer new developments to areas at lowest risk of flooding and advises this should be done through application of the Sequential Test, and if appropriate the Exceptions Test (as set out in paragraphs 170-179 of the NPPF 2024).

7.59 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding) as identified by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2024 and the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning. There is some surface water flooding on the far eastern element of the site, close to the backs of the properties on Peterborough Road. There is a risk of surface water flooding in relation to the Site accesses. The site slopes gently from approximately 16m AOD in the centre to 7m AOD along the western edge.

7.60 Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 7-027-20220825 of Planning Practice Guidance outlines that: In applying paragraph 175 a proportionate approach should be taken. Where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates clearly that the proposed layout, design, and mitigation measures would ensure that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development (therefore addressing the risks identified e.g. by Environment Agency flood risk mapping), without increasing flood risk elsewhere, then the sequential test need not be applied.

7.61 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been submitted with this application which demonstrates that the proposed layout, design, and mitigation measures would ensure that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development, without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The sequential test therefore does not need not be applied in accordance with PPG.

- 7.62 The concerns over Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Drainage raised by the Parish Council and local residents are carefully noted.
- 7.63 In regard to surface water flooding, The CCC Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the PCC LFFA have both been consulted given that surface water will be discharged into Peterborough's administrative boundary. Both the CCC and PCC have raised concerns.
- 7.64 The applicant has provided additional information for review which sets out that the surface water drainage strategy for the site incorporates on plot attenuation by a number of methods such as attenuation tanks and permeable paving etc which is a matter for the detailed design stage (reserved matters), as well as two connected attenuation ponds on the western boundary on the lowest points of the site to capture surface water which is then discharged into the watercourse on the western boundary. The ponds sizes have been designed to get the maximum volume possible from the ponds.
- 7.65 Officers have confidence that the submitted information would address both CCC and PCC LLFA's outstanding concerns. Officers will update members on this matter in due course.
- 7.66 Subject to the comments of both LLFAs, the proposal would be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water, and would not result in flooding on the site or elsewhere. The proposal therefore accords with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

#### Foul Drainage

- 7.67 Anglian Water have confirmed that the site is within the catchment of Peterborough (Flag Fen) Water Recycling Centre (WRC), which currently can accommodate the additional flows generated by the proposed development. Peterborough (Flag Fen) WRC is included within our Business Plan as a named growth scheme with investment delivery planned between 2025- 2030. Subject to foul drainage condition, the proposed development is considered to accord with Policies LP5, LP15 and LP16 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, Section 14 of the NPPF (2024), and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017.

#### **Parameter Plans, Indicative Layout, Landscaping, Trees and Open Space**

##### Parameter Plans & Indicative Layout

- 7.68 As previously highlighted, the application is for outline consent with matters relating to appearance; landscaping; layout; and

scale being reserved for future applications. The application is accompanied by a Site Access drawing, Parameters Plan and an Illustrative Masterplan. These plans allow full evaluation and consideration of the development and assist in determining whether the proposed amount of development could be satisfactorily accommodated within the site.

- 7.69 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.
- 7.70 Section 12 of the NPPF (2024) seeks to achieve well designed places, noting that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 7.71 The National Design Guide (2020) 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. Of particular note to the current proposals is guidance relating to design and how this understands and relates well to the site within its local and wider context, how the history of the place has evolved and that local sense of place and identity are shaped by local history, culture and heritage, how a proposal responds to existing local character and identity, whether proposals are well designed, high quality and attractive and whether they are of an appropriate building type and form.
- 7.72 The HDC Design Guide (2017) is relevant to the current application proposals, in particular chapter 4 and sections 3.7 and 3.8. The guide states that the size, shape and orientation (the form) of a building can have a significant impact upon its surroundings. The form of new buildings should generally reflect traditional built forms found in Huntingdonshire. The scale, massing and height of proposed development should be considered in relation to that of adjoining buildings, the topography, pattern of heights in the area and views, vistas and landmarks.
- 7.73 The guide notes that with regard to building detailing, the district has various architectural styles and materials which reflects the local vernacular. It is noted that new buildings should be designed in harmony and proportional to each other, complimenting the overall street character of the place. Appropriate spaces between buildings helps to create an interesting streetscape. Detailed guidance is also provided relating to roofs, eaves and ridge lines

and chimneys. With regards to materials, these should complement the successful parts of any surrounding developments in order to conserve or enhance the distinctive character of the various parts of the district and to ensure that buildings sit comfortably within the landscape.

7.74 Whilst all matters are proposed to be reserved (accept for access), an illustrative masterplan has been submitted to illustrate how 185 dwellings could potentially be accommodated on the site. The outline application is accompanied by a Parameters Plan which covers the proposed extent of residential development, building heights, movement hierarchy, access points, open space locations, green infrastructure, structural landscaping, hedgerows, attenuation ponds and location of community orchards and equipped play. The Parameter Plan has been revised to show development would be a Max 2.5 storeys (11m ridge heights) with max 2 storeys (8.5m ridge height) to the rear of properties fronting Peterborough Road. A condition is recommended to ensure reserved matters applications follow the design principles set out in the Parameter Plan.

7.75 Urban Design have been consulted as part of the proposal and have provided feedback on the indicative site layout. The proposed access would be off Peterborough Road, as No.107 would be demolished to provide the access. The access would comprise of a 5.5m carriageway, 2m footpath on the south side and 2.5m cycle path and 2m footpath on the north side. The illustrative Masterplan and Parameter Plan indicate the Primary Street would include street trees within a grass verges to both sides further west within the site, however the specific details would be matters for any future reserved matters proposals.

7.76 Whilst the Illustrative Masterplan will not be an approved plan, it demonstrates how an acceptable scheme could be designed. The Illustrative Masterplan shows the access from Peterborough Road connects to a 'Main Street' that extends westwards into the site. Within the site the Main Street connects to a central Secondary Street Loop Road creating a connected layout of blocks and improved legibility with raised tables proposed at junctions with Tertiary Street reducing vehicle speeds. Tertiary Streets extend towards the northern, western and southern site boundaries connecting to private drive 'Lanes' creating an outward facing development fronting the northern and western boundaries and proposed structural planting and attenuation basins. Tertiary Street Loop Road have been introduced adjacent to the northern and western site boundaries as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan. The principle of recreational routes within the northern structural landscaping belt, connecting to the A605 footpath and Peterborough Road (via the emergency access) and mown paths around the attenuation ponds are welcomed and improve pedestrian connectivity around the development.

7.77 The Parameter Plan now confirms that the Main Street and Secondary Street Loop Road will incorporate street trees within grass verges, with breaks permitted for access and private drives. The precise alignment of these streets will be determined at the detailed design stage. However the parameter plan, if Members are minded to approve the application, would form an approved plan on which future reserved matters would have to be based

7.74 Units are shown adjacent to the southern site boundary with the adjacent paddock, to the west of application ref 23/02502/FUL. However, the updated Illustrative Masterplan and Parameter Plan show a green corridor, ranging from 5m to 10m in width, along the southern site boundary. This is supported as it will help establish a 'dark corridor' to enhance ecological connectivity and biodiversity.

7.75 The revised Parameters Plan (dwg DR L 0005 P12) and Illustrative Masterplan (dwg DR L 0006 P11) now confirm that street trees within grass verges will be provided on both sides of the Primary Street and the Secondary Street Loop. The extent of frontage parking within the Secondary Street has also been reduced, with side drives provided both sides of the street, reducing breaks across the verge. This approach is strongly supported, responds positively to earlier comments, and effectively secures the principle of verge and tree planting for the future reserved matters application. Development fronting the northern edge is shown to include side drives, reducing the dominance of parking and creating a more informal character.

7.76 The Illustrative Masterplan demonstrates how the development could be arranged such to accommodate the maximum quantum of development proposed. The Illustrative Masterplan shows the potential for development of a mix of building forms including terrace, semi-detached and detached dwellings. The variety of built form shown would reflect the existing variety in the built form within the locality albeit the mix of housing, as detailed within policy LP 25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, would be determined at reserved matters stage. Therefore the illustrative masterplan gives comfort that a scheme of 185 could acceptably be achieved on the site, and the Parameter plan details the key issues that any future reserved matters applications should follow.

### Landscaping

7.77 Landscaping would be subject to a future reserved matters application; however the submitted plans do indicate the approach to the proposed boundary treatments.

7.78 The site is visually contained and not prominent within the wider landscape. In principle therefore, residential development is acceptable from a landscape impact perspective. The submitted

landscaping strategy sets out the required planting to help soften and integrate the proposed development.

- 7.79 Structural planting is proposed in the northern section of the Site, within an area of grassland scrub mosaic, existing hedgerows and trees. This part of the Site underwent significant modification in 2009 during the construction of the A605 Stanground Bypass, as illustrated in the aerial imagery from that period. The resulting landform comprises a steep-sided earth mound with a level plateau, bordered by sporadic perimeter tree planting. Since its alteration, the area appears to have been left unmanaged, allowing natural succession to take place. This has led to the development of a predominantly scrub and grassland mosaic habitat, which now defines the ecological character of the Site. The proposed additional tree planting in this area will be integrated into a mosaic of grassland, complementing the existing structural vegetation, which is to be retained. A network of mown paths is planned throughout this green infrastructure zone, enhancing accessibility and encouraging informal recreation. A recreational route is also proposed, linking the new development to the south with the A605, thereby improving connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. Within this open space, a community orchard and an equipped play area are included. The submitted Parameter Plan shows the structural vegetation and orchard etc. The S106 will secure the amount of open space.
- 7.80 An emergency access route is proposed, incorporating pedestrian and cycle access, entering the site between 137 and 135 Peterborough Road. This route will pass through an area of structural planting, proposed in the northeast corner of the site, to the rear of the gardens at 135 to 119 Peterborough Road, approximately 40m wide. The planting will help mitigate visual impacts identified in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal in areas of higher ground visible from the east and north. Sensitive landscaping is required in this area to soften these visual impacts.
- 7.81 The dense structural landscaping recommended would provide privacy and security for the rear garden boundaries of existing properties at 119 to 135 Peterborough Road.
- 7.82 The updated Illustrative Masterplan and Parameter Plan now provides a 10-metre-wide green corridor incorporating tree and soft landscaping to help establish a 'dark corridor' and enhance ecological connectivity. The remainder of the southern boundary is vegetation and some small trees. A native mixed hedgerow with trees, accompanied by a grassland buffer, is to be established along this largely unvegetated stretch to enhance habitat connectivity and ecological value.

### Trees

7.83 Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and that a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development.

7.84 This application is accompanied by a Tree Survey and a constraints report. The higher quality trees are located on the western boundary at Stanground Lode. Nothing of high value would be lost to accommodate the access, therefore this is considered to be acceptable. As all matters are reserved at this stage, with the exception of access, the impact the wider development would have upon existing trees has not been assessed. It is therefore recommended that a condition be imposed to secure the submission of a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of any future reserved matters application for layout or landscaping.

### Open Space

7.85 The proposed up to 185 dwellings would regenerate an open space requirement of 0.859 Ha / 8589 sqm, based on a projected population of 405 occupants (2.19 average occupancy per dwelling), based on the HDC Developer Contributions SPD. The majority of open space is located towards the northern and western site boundaries with a small central area. Open space provision would be secured through a S106 agreement.

### Summary

7.86 Overall, it is considered that the application site could satisfactorily accommodate 185 dwellings. Taking these points into account, and when considering the densities of development in the locality, it is considered that the density of development and mix of built form shown on the submitted Illustrative Masterplan would not be uncharacteristic to the area.

7.87 It is therefore concluded that the general layout could be made acceptable for any reserved matters applications, and would achieve the quantum of development proposed. Therefore, whilst the indicative layout shown on the Illustrative Masterplan may be subject to change, and subject to the above site constraints and site requirements being satisfied, the quantum of development proposed is considered to be achievable without causing a significant detrimental impact upon visual amenity or the character and appearance of the locality. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle and the 'appearance', 'landscaping', 'layout' and 'scale'; would be considered in detail as

part of any future reserved matters applications should outline permission be granted. Conditions are recommended in terms of levels and compliance with the Parameter Plan (any deviation must be justified).

7.88 The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable with regards to the impact upon visual amenity, the character of the area and the impact upon trees; with further details in relation to the impact on trees to be secured by condition. The proposed development would accord with the aims of the NPPF (2024), policies LP11, LP12, LP13 and LP31 of the Local Plan to 2036.

## **Biodiversity**

7.89 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.

7.90 A preliminary ecological assessment (PEA) within the Habitat and Protected Species Suitability Report has been submitted as part of the application, and demonstrates that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on wildlife subject to recommendations outlined in the report.

7.91 The development envelope has been pulled back from the southern boundary to create a 5m dark commuting corridor and 10m dark foraging corridor and hedge and tree planting to southern boundary proposed. Lighting buffer zones have not been provided as part of the current proposal. While some improvements have been made to reduce potential light spill along the central section of the boundary, concerns remain regarding lighting impacts from private garden areas. Both issues can be effectively addressed through appropriate site layout and design measures within the development envelope at the reserved matters stage. A suitably worded condition will ensure a site-wide lighting scheme follows the industry standard ILP guidelines 'Guidance Note GN/08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night'. This represents protection as well as enhancement. The Ecology Officer is content with this approach.

7.92 In accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021 and amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, this development is subject to the mandatory requirement to deliver at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

7.93 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment within the Habitat and Protected Species Suitability Report has been submitted as part of the application.

7.94 The site is an arable field with a mixture of mosaic of other neutral grassland in poor condition, bramble scrub and mixed scrub in moderate condition on the northern section.

7.95 There is significant scope onsite to provide biodiversity net gain through enhancements on the northern section and well designed SUD's features on the western boundary.

7.96 A BNG condition is recommended to secure this net gain. Due to the size and distinctiveness of habitat created onsite, a monitoring fee of £6,345 broken up into instalments is required to cover a period of 30 years. This would be required to be secured through a Section 106 agreement and is considered necessary to ensure the biodiversity net gain is achieved in accordance with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan and the NPPF 2024. The Ecology Officer is content with this approach.

7.97 Natural England have been consulted as part of the application process and raises no objection to the proposed development.

7.98 Subject to the imposition of the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to broadly accord with the objectives of Policy LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

### **Residential Amenity**

7.99 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

#### Amenity of neighbouring properties

7.100 The closest neighbouring residential properties are on the western side of Peterborough Road, where gardens back onto the site and on the southern boundary where application ref 23/02502/FUL has planning permission (which hasn't been constructed yet). The Parameter Plan has been revised to show development would be a Max 2.5 storeys (11m ridge heights) with max 2 storeys (8.5m ridge height) to the rear of properties fronting Peterborough Road. This is acceptable, any future reserved matters application would need to establish a minimum 21m separation distances for the eastern and southern neighbouring properties in accordance with the HDC Design Guide SPD.

7.101 It is considered that a detailed layout could be designed to ensure that any future reserved matters application demonstrates no significant impact upon any neighbouring properties.

7.102 The Environmental Health Team (EH) have been consulted as part of the application and have not raised any concerns. Conditions to protect neighbouring properties during construction, conditions construction/delivery times and a construction environmental management plan are recommended to be imposed should Members be minded to approve the application.

7.103 In terms of lighting, the objections about directional light shining into 80 Peterborough Road from cars exiting the new junction/access are noted. However whilst it is considered there would be a degree of impact, given the urban context and that curtains are likely to be drawn when there would be the most impact, it does not warrant refusal of the application in this instance.

7.104 In terms of noise, the vehicle access is proposed from Peterborough Road via the demolition of No. 107. A further emergency access (with pedestrian / cycle access) is proposed in the northeast corner, between Nos. 135 and 137 Peterborough Road. Nos. 105 and 109 Peterborough Road are likely to be subject to a level of noise and disturbance associated with the comings and goings of up to 185 dwellings. For No.105, this would mostly be limited to first floor windows on the front and rear elevation as no windows exist on the side elevation, and there is a built in garage adjacent to the proposed access. For No.109, it would be limited to the front ground floor window adjacent to the access. These windows are already exposed to the noise and disturbance from Peterborough Road. The treatment of the side boundaries of these neighbouring properties would need to be considered as part of a future reserved matters application and must include robust brick boundary walls and soft landscaping to the front to help mitigate against noise and disturbance by providing a good quality buffer. There would be a degree of impact upon Nos. 105 and 109 Peterborough Road but it is considered this would be limited a small number of windows, and can be partially mitigated with good boundary design.

#### Amenity for future occupiers

7.105 The Environmental Health Team (EH) have been consulted as part of the application. An Air Quality Screening Assessment was submitted with the application. EH have advised that the proposals will not lead to a breach in national objectives or an unacceptable risk from air pollution. However, current advice from public health experts is that the health impacts of air pollution should be minimised, even if there is no risk that air quality standards will be breached. Measures such as sustainable modes of transport (cycles, electric vehicles etc). Cycle parking will be secured at

reserved matters stage and the provision of electric charging points for residential dwellings now falls within the Building Regulations requirements.

7.106 In terms of noise, a noise impact assessment (NIA) was submitted with the application. The report demonstrates acceptable internal and external noise levels could be achieved through careful consideration of the development layout (i.e placing gardens on the screened side of dwellings). Where this is not possible, alternative forms of mitigation have been recommended where appropriate to reduce external noise levels as much as practicable. A condition is recommended to ensure noise is addressed within the reserved matters.

7.107 In respect of the amenity of future occupants, it is considered that a detailed layout could likely be designed to ensure amenity of the future occupiers of the development is of a high quality. It is noted that, in any event, occupants would be aware of the layout and relationship of the site and would be able to make an informed decision on how that relationship would relate to their personal needs.

7.108 The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms amenity to both existing neighbouring properties and future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP14, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Affordable Housing**

7.109 As set out in adopted policy LP24, proposals of this scale are required to contribute towards affordable housing, providing 40% of the dwellings as affordable units. With the proposed number of dwellings being 185 this equates to a total of 74 affordable homes. The policies indicate that provision should be made on site and should seek to achieve a target tenure split of 70% social rented and 30% shared ownership. Policy does however acknowledge that, in determining the amount and mix of affordable housing to be delivered, site specific considerations and other material considerations, including viability, will need to be taken into account. In this instance, no site specific considerations have been submitted and therefore the proposal shall provide policy compliant on-site affordable housing provision of 40%. This has been confirmed by the Policy and Enabling Officer.

7.110 The affordable housing will be secured through the S106 Agreement, to accord with policy LP24 and section A of the Developer Contributions SPD.

## **Accessible Housing**

7.111 The requirements within policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 relating to accessible and adaptable homes are applicable to all new dwellings. This states that all dwellings (where practicable and viable) should meet Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'. These include design features that enable mainstream housing to be flexible enough to meet the current and future needs of most households, including in particular older people, those with some disabilities, and also families with young children. The applicant has confirmed that all the dwellings meet the requirements of M4(2) and a condition is recommended to be attached to secure these Building Regulation requirements.

## **Water Efficiency**

7.112 The requirements within policy LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 relating to sustainable design and construction methods are applicable to all new dwellings. A condition is recommended to be attached to ensure that the dwellings are built in compliance.

## **Other Matters**

### Contamination

7.113 Policy LP37 of the Local Plan states that where ground contamination of a site is possible, the risks of such needs to be investigated. The submitted report finds no contamination issues for the site given its previous use as a paddock. The proposal therefore complies with Policy LP37 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan.

### Health Impact Assessment

7.114 Local Plan Policy LP29 (Health Impact Assessment) requires large scale developments to be informed by the conclusions of a Rapid Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The land West of Peterborough Road qualifies as a large scale development defined by the Local Plan glossary, being a development for more than 50 dwellings. A rapid Health Impact Assessment has been submitted with this application, using the London Healthy Urban Development Unit Rapid Health Impact Assessment Tool. The results of the Rapid HIA indicate the development will either have positive or neutral impacts on the themes set out in the health impact matrix. Therefore the requirements of Policy LP29 have been satisfied.

### Fire Hydrants

7.115 A fire hydrant condition is recommended to be imposed given the size and scale of development.

### Archaeology

7.116 In terms of archaeology, The Historic Team at Cambridgeshire County Council have been consulted. They advise that the development lies in an area of high archaeological potential lying on the fen edge of Peterborough, an area commonly exploited in the prehistoric to Roman periods. The geophysical survey revealed a dense complex of enclosures with internal features aligned north-south within the eastern half of the development area. These remains are likely to be Iron Age to Roman in date, possibly associated with the settlement activity at Stanground South, c.400m to the northeast. Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation was detected across the site, with a headland dissecting the area on a rough north-south axis. There is a lot of evidence in the region for well preserved and highly significant archaeological remains along Peterborough's Fen Edge and into the areas of deeper fen, such as the internationally significant site of Must Farm, which lies c.3km to the north-east. Archaeological excavations have also found evidence for a Bronze Age cremation cemetery (Peterborough Historic Environment Record reference. MPB5068) and drove ways leading to the fen edge (PHER ref. MPB3918). Evidence suggests that marine inundation began to occur in this period along the fen edge, with peat and complex depositional sequences being found. Archaeological activity continued into the Iron Age, with a settlement being identified during pipeline excavations to the north-east (PHER ref. MPB4929). Excavations to the north found further Iron Age settlements including structures, enclosures and roundhouses (PHER refs. MPB2731, MPB6369 and MPB2239). Several enclosures and structures of a Roman date were also found in the Stanground excavations to the north (PHER refs. MPB3878, MPB3919 and MPB5070). To the east of the proposed development area a prominent ridge is present and visible on LiDAR. This has been interpreted as a possible Roman road (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record reference. MCB29418), extending from Ermine Street towards the Fen Causeway.

7.117 The Historic Team advise that due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary. A written scheme of investigation condition is therefore recommended.

Previously refused application (18/01417/OUT) on the south eastern of Peterborough Road, Farcet

7.118 Objectors have raised that this application is similar to a previously refused application (18/01417/OUT) on the southeastern of Peterborough Road, Farcet that was also for 185 dwellings. The context of 18/01417/OUT was different giving its connectivity and relationship to the wider open countryside immediately adjacent to the site. The application site in question is completely different in context as it is considered to be well-related to the built-up area, well contained and detached from the wider open countryside.

### **Developer Contributions**

7.119 Statutory tests set out in the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (Regulation 122) require that S.106 planning obligations must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonable related in scale and kind to the development. S.106 obligations are intended to make development acceptable which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms. Without prejudice to the eventual determination of the planning application, negotiations have been held with the Applicant in order to determine the extent of the obligations required to make the development acceptable. These negotiations have been held in line with the advice within the Regulations and the outcome is summarised below.

7.120 Cambridgeshire County Council Development & Policy Team have provided a response outlining potential education and library impacts of the development. As the total number of dwellings falls below the 200 thresholds, no s106 developer contributions in relation to these matters have been sought in accordance with Huntingdonshire District Council policy. No exceptional circumstances or project have been put forward by CCC that warrants a contribution. It is envisioned that CIL may be used for such matters.

7.121 Open Space: Policies LP3 and LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Part B of the Developer Contributions SPD requires proposals to provide land for informal green space. In accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD, 185 dwellings generates a requirement for open space of 0.859 Ha / 8589 sqm. The scheme is providing significantly more than this, at least double the required amount.

7.122 The Developer Contributions SPD details a cascade mechanism for future management and maintenance of informal green space with the land first offered to the Town/Parish Council for adoption, then the District Council and then taken on by a Management Company. The usual cascade mechanism in the SPD is to be included in the Section 106 in order to secure the long-term

management and maintenance of the areas of shared open space. A Landscape Maintenance contribution (using the updated costs for 2024/2025) will be secured through the Section 106 agreement in the event that the open space is to be transferred to the District or Parish Council.

7.124 Outdoor sports provision: As the scheme is for less than 200 dwellings, and provides sufficient open space on the site, no contributions are sought for this.

7.126 Biodiversity Net Gain: The proposal includes onsite habitat creation. Due to the size and distinctiveness of habitat created onsite, a monitoring fee of £6,345 broken up into instalments is required to cover a period of 30 years. This would be required to be secured through a Section 106 agreement and is considered necessary to ensure the biodiversity net gain is achieved in accordance with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan and the NPPF 2024.

7.127 Residential Wheeled Bins: In accordance with Policy LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Developer Contributions SPD (Part H) each dwelling will require the provision of one black and blue wheeled bin (green bins are payable separately per year as requested by occupiers). The current cost of such provision is £114 per dwelling. A total of £7,410 is recommended to be secured through a section 106 agreement and is considered necessary to ensure the development has adequate waste infrastructure, in accordance with policy LP4 and section H of the Developer Contributions SPD.

7.128 Affordable Housing: The application proposes a policy compliant level of affordable housing (40% = 26 dwellings). These would be a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 beds and the four units would be M4(3) wheelchair adaptable. Subject to final wording within the S106 Agreement, the scheme is supported with provision of on-site affordable housing in accordance with Policy LP24 and section A of the Developer Contributions SPD.

7.129 Community Infrastructure Levy (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.

7.130 All of the obligations are considered to meet the statutory tests and are compliant with relevant policies and the Developer Contributions SPD. The planning obligations set out above have been agreed by the Applicant and are considered to mitigate the development in accordance with policies LP3, LP4, LP24, LP30 and the Developer Contributions SPD.

## Conclusion and Planning Balance

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

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

7.133 A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS). While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

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

7.135 NPPF para 11 states:

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

*For decision-taking this means:*

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

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

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

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

- 7.136 As outlined in the report, in light of the considerations, there are no strong reasons for refusal in relation to any habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Green Space, irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75) and areas at risk of flooding. Therefore, there is no reason to not move forward to test d (ii) as per above and thus the 'titled balance' is engaged.
- 7.137 As stated above, a tilted balance approach should be applied in the assessment of the proposed development, and a balancing exercise should be carried out to determine the potential any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 7.138 The application seeks outline planning permission with all matters reserved, except for access, for the erection of up to 185 dwellings in Faracet.
- 7.139 It has been determined that overall the site is on land well-related to the built-up area but it is also acknowledged given the agricultural character of the site, it may appear visually part of the countryside. Policies LP9 and LP10 are therefore relevant and considered for completeness. These Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications. The aspects of these policies that restrict development on land well-related to the built up or in the countryside is to be given reduced weight.
- 7.140 It has been established that the proposed development is in a sustainable location, would have access to services and facilities,

and that it would not result in an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle. As such, the proposed development would comply with Framework Paragraph 109.

- 7.141 It is considered that the application site could satisfactorily accommodate 185 dwellings and the general layout could be made acceptable for reserved matters applications.
- 7.142 The proposed access is considered to be safe and acceptable in highway terms subject to final confirmation from PCC Highway Authority. The level of traffic generated by the development would not result in adverse traffic impacts and can be acceptably mitigated.
- 7.143 The site is Flood Zone 1, and the site is therefore acceptable in principle in terms of flood risk and drainage subject to final confirmation from the LLFA's.
- 7.144 The development of the site would result in the loss of Grade 3 agricultural land, nationally considered as amongst the best and most versatile agricultural land. The proposal would result in the irreversible loss of some of this best and most versatile agricultural land. The site is disconnected from the wider countryside and other agricultural fields. However, the irreversible loss of agricultural land which can be used for food or crop production would conflict with Policy LP10 part (a)(i). Significant weight is attached to this.
- 7.145 The proposed development would have limited impact on landscape character and therefore would be acceptable in visual terms in principle.
- 7.146 The proposal would result in the delivery of 185 homes towards the housing supply. The applicant has agreed to two years for reserved matters submissions and also two years for implementation. This could help the Council justify putting this outline consent in the 5YHLS. Substantial weight is afforded to this provision and delivery.
- 7.147 The proposal will result in the delivery of 74 affordable homes towards a significant district affordable need. Substantial weight is afforded to this, given the quantum of affordable housing that will be provided as part of the development.
- 7.148 This quantum of residential development would not only address local needs but will also contribute to the national imperative to deliver 1.5 million new homes over the current parliamentary period as set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of July 2024.
- 7.149 In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposal would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation - during the construction phase and in the longer term

through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. Moderate weight is afforded to this.

7.150 In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, the proposal offers potential for the incorporation of energy efficiency measures (to be considered in detail at reserved matters stage) as well as the delivery of green space and a 10% minimum net gain in biodiversity. The application site constitutes a sustainable location for the scale of development proposed in respect of access to local employment opportunities, services and facilities in the local area as well as the City of Peterborough; and is accessible by sustainable transport modes. The proposal also includes numerous off site highway improvements. Moderate weight is afforded to this.

7.151 Whilst some conflict/harm has been identified in relation to agricultural land, it is concluded that the identified harm would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits when taking all the positives and negatives of the proposal into account.

7.152 Having regard to all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that approval be granted for the outline planning with all matters reserved except access.

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

- Approval of Reserved Matters Time Limit and Time limit following last Reserved Matters (2 years)
- Timing of permission and submission of Reserved Matters (2 years)
- Approved Plans (site location and access)
- Reserved matters app accords with the broad layout principles established on parameter plan
- Site levels and finished floor levels detailed as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Noise Mitigation Scheme as part of any reserved matters for layout
- Submission of Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of any reserved matters for layout or landscaping
- External lighting scheme for dark bat corridor be provided as part of any application for reserved matters.
- Ecology
- Surface water drainage
- CEMP

- Fire Hydrants
- Access
- Off-site high improvement works
- Written scheme of investigation
- M4(2) dwellings
- Water efficiency
- Foul drainage

or

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

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

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

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**Planning Application:** 25/00892/OUT

**Site:** Land West of Peterborough Road, Farcet

**Proposal:** Outline application for up to 185 dwellings with access

Farcet Parish Council has reviewed all revised material submitted in November 2025, including transport amendments, access drawings, ecological responses, updated Design & Access Statement, the BNG metric, and the applicant's covering letter.

After considering these updates, the Parish Council maintains its **recommendation for refusal**, based on the following reasons:

## **1. Conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The proposal continues to conflict with key NPPF requirements, including:

- ¬ **Sustainable development**

The proposal does not reflect a sustainable growth strategy and fails the NPPF requirement to focus housing in supported, well-connected settlements.

- ¬ **Highway safety (unacceptable impact)**

The NPPF clearly states planning permission should be refused where a development results in:

**“an unacceptable impact on highway safety.”**

Given the unresolved issues, inaccurate transport assumptions, and new concerns (below), this test is **not met**.

- ¬ **Infrastructure capacity**

No evidence is provided for: school capacity, GP capacity, road network resilience

- ¬ **Ecology and biodiversity**

Lighting and bat corridor protection remain unenforceable.

- ¬ **Prematurity**

The application undermines the updated Local Plan, which **does not allocate this site** for development.

## **2. Conflict with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted Plan)**

The proposal conflicts with multiple adopted policies including:

- ¬ **LP2** – outside settlement boundary, unallocated
- ¬ **LP11 / LP12** – inadequate design certainty
- ¬ **LP14** – unsafe access, no suitable transport mitigation
- ¬ **LP19** – insufficient flood/drainage evidence
- ¬ **LP30** – bat corridor not secured

## **3. Site NOT included in the updated Local Plan allocations**

The Parish Council highlights again that:

This site is NOT included in the updated Huntingdonshire Local Plan development sites for Farcet.

Farcet is **not identified** for major growth, nor capable of supporting it without significant and inappropriate impacts and would be contrary to emerging policy,

## **4. Highway Safety, Traffic Impact & Access — Concerns NOT Mitigated**

Despite extensive claims in the applicant's covering letter, the proposals **do not mitigate the Parish Council's concerns**.

**a) The proposed 4 m wide cycleway/footpath on St Mary's Street offers very little benefit**

The Parish Council objects because:

- ¬ It is **not required**,
- ¬ It does **not serve local desire lines**,
- ¬ introduces potential conflict between vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians,
- ¬ It does **not mitigate the traffic generated by 185 new dwellings**
- ¬ It is located where it **cannot meaningfully improve safety or connectivity**.

This measure does **not** address the development's impacts.

**b) Narrowing the Gazeley Gardens junction is unnecessary and makes the junction more hazardous**

The Parish Council strongly disagrees with the proposal to narrow the junction:

- ¬ The current arrangement functions safely.
- ¬ Narrowing would create tighter turns and reduced visibility
- ¬ It provides no mitigation for the development's actual impact.

This proposal worsens safety rather than improving it.

**c) Traffic analysis does NOT consider existing or potential developments**

The transport evidence fails to include:

- ¬ Cumulative impacts with Cardea
- ¬ Ongoing density increases in Stanground / Farcet/ Yaxley
- ¬ Growth in traffic volumes over the Local Plan period,
- ¬ Likely future developments in the vicinity.

Therefore, the modelling underestimates real traffic conditions and does not satisfy NPPF or Local Plan requirements for robust evidence.

**d) Parish Council was NOT consulted — contrary to how the application is presented**

The applicant claims engagement with the Parish Council, however this has not happened.

In the matter of the bus shelters and MVAS, the Parish Council will not maintain these if installed as part of the proposal.

**e) Farcet Business centre → Cardea footpath link would provide real benefit**

The Parish Council stresses that a completed and upgraded footpath linking Ken Girven Way directly to Cardea would provide *genuine, safe, meaningful* pedestrian connectivity.

## **5. Scale and Impact on Village Character**

The proposal for **up to 185 dwellings** remains excessive for Farcet's scale and does not reflect the Local Plan's spatial hierarchy.

## **6. Ecology, Lighting and Bat Corridor**

Lighting controls relying on future residents to comply are unenforceable.  
Buffers remain indicative and unsafeguarded.

## **7. Flooding and Drainage**

No detailed modelling or drainage capacity evidence has been supplied.

## **8. Local Services Capacity**

No assessment or mitigation is provided regarding school, GP or community services.

## **9. Prematurity & Reliance on Reserved Matters**

Critical elements—lighting, drainage, design, ecology—are deferred to Reserved Matters, confirming the application is **premature**.

## **Conclusion**

For the reasons outlined above, Faracet Parish Council **recommends REFUSAL**.

The proposal, in its current form, fails to comply with multiple policies of the **National Planning Policy Framework** and the **Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036**, and does not demonstrate that it can be delivered safely or without significant harm to amenity, highway safety or the local environment.

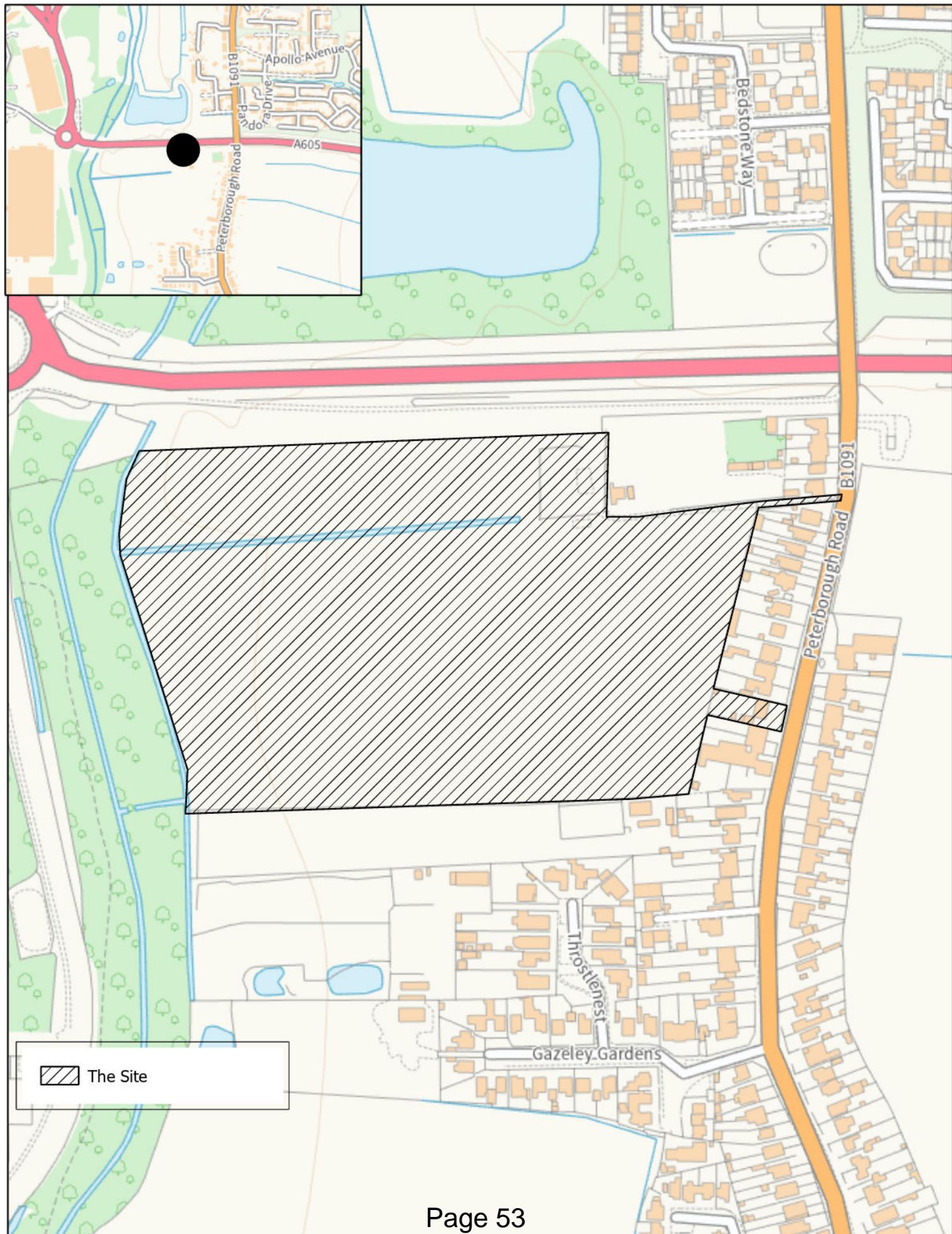
# Development Management Committee

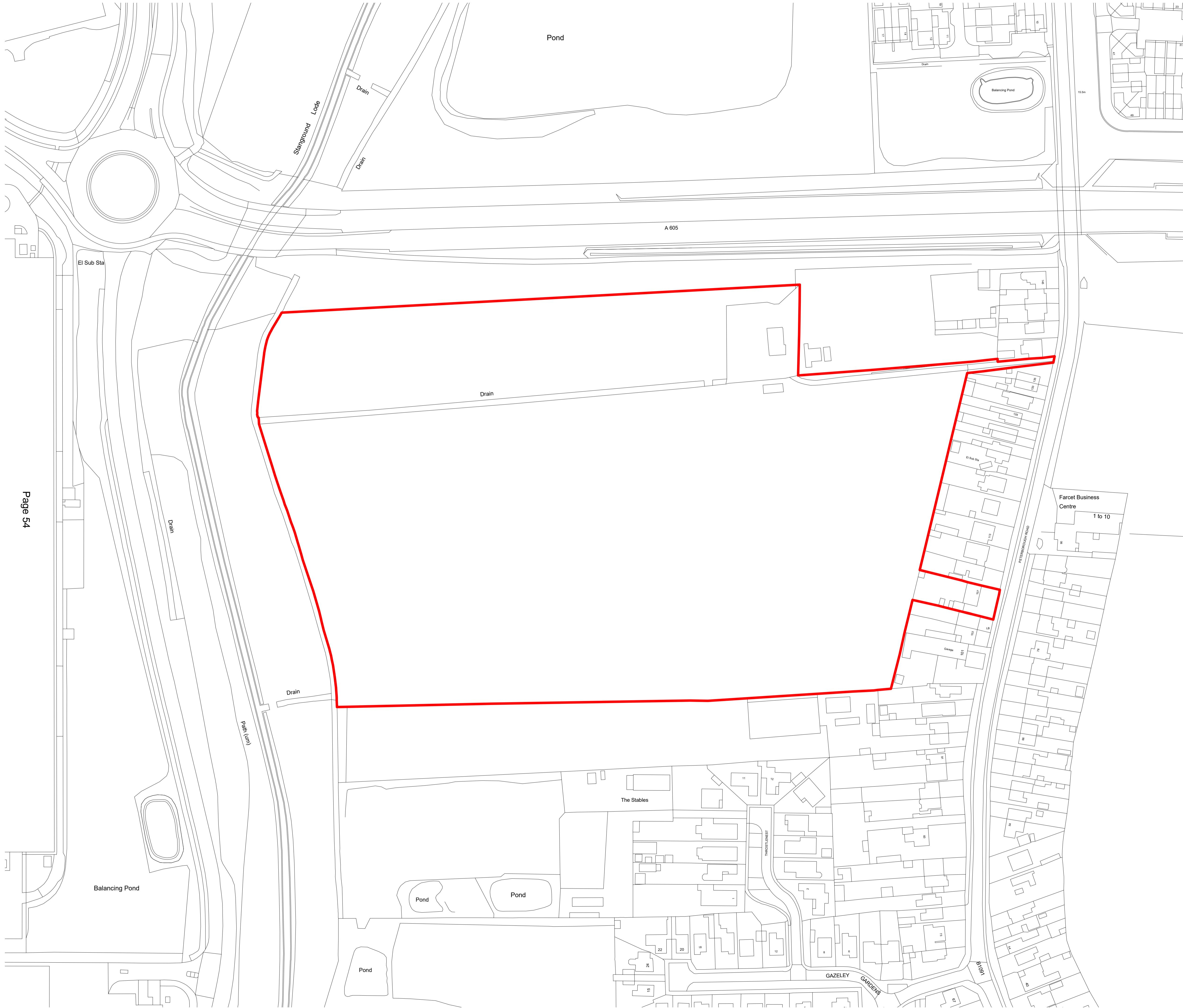
## Application Ref: 25/00892/OUT



Scale = 1:3,000

Date Created: 08/01/2026







<b>KEY</b>	
<b>Site Boundary</b>	8.01ha
<b>Residential Development</b> Up to 185 dwellings Max. 2.5 storeys (11m)	4.80ha
<b>Max. 2 storeys (8.5m)</b>	

<b>Access</b>	
Main Access Point (refer to Engineer's Detailed Access Drawings)	
Main Street & Secondary Street 'Loop'	
Street trees in grass verges to be provided on both sides of the Main Street and Secondary Street Loop. Breaks in verges are permitted to allow access and for private drives. Precise alignment of streets and loop to be confirmed at detailed design stage	
Emergency Access & Pedestrian/Cycle Access Point	
Emergency Access Route & Pedestrian/Cycle Access Route (to connect with adoptable highway within development)	
Pedestrian/Cycle Route within the site	
Pedestrian/Cycle Access Point	
Existing/Potential off-site Pedestrian/Cycle Connection	

<b>Green Infrastructure</b>	
Open Space & Green Infrastructure	
Existing Structural Vegetation to be retained & enhanced	
Retained Ditch	
Structural Vegetation (Trees, woodland and scrub)	
Species-Rich Native Hedgerow (Species composition, density of planting and inclusion of hedgerow trees to be determined at a detailed stage based on context and function)	
Indicative location for Community Orchard	
Sustainable Urban Drainage	
Indicative location for Equipped Play	

P12 19/12/2025 Updated streets & verges to Urban Design comments. TGE SGL  
rev date description dm / chk

client Hallam Land & Persimmon Homes

project Land West of Peterborough Road, Farcet, Huntingdonshire

title Parameters Plan  
number 11710-FPCR-XX-XX-DR-L-0005 status S3 rev P12



## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026

Case No: 25/01237/OUT

**Proposal:** Demolition of equestrian centre buildings and erection of up to 7 dwellings including revised access from New Road with all matters reserved

**Location:** Northbrook Equestrian Centre, New Road, Offord Cluny, St Neots

**Applicant:** Mr and Mrs Pavet-Golding

**Grid Ref:** E522548 N266940

**Date of Registration:** 07.07.2025

**Parish:** Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy

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### RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE subject to conditions

**This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) as the officer's recommendation is contrary to that of the Parish Council**

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 The application site comprises 0.4ha of land and is located to the south of New Road, Offord Cluny. New Road comprises the eastern arm of Offord Cluny extending into the countryside towards Waterloo Farm. Northbrook Equestrian Centre is located beyond the built-up area and comprises an indoor riding arena, stable blocks, an outdoor menage and grazing paddocks beyond the site edged red to the south.
- 1.2 The existing equestrian entrance into the site sits approximately 200m to the west of The Glebe, a small cul-de-sac on the edge of the built-up area of Offord Cluny.
- 1.3 The site is within the countryside, not located in a Conservation Area and considered to be previously developed land. The site is generally flat and lies within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency Maps for Flooding and as designated within the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024. There are no other designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the site.
- 1.4 This application seeks outline approval, with all matters reserved for approval for the erection of up to seven dwellings. This will involve demolition of the existing buildings on site and a relocation

of the existing access from New Road. An indicative layout plan has been provided to demonstrate how the development proposed could be accommodated on site. There is some planning history relevant to the residential development of this site under planning reference 22/01913/OUT and the subsequent dismissed appeal following non determination. It should be noted that the appeal site covered 1.4 hectares and up to 28 dwellings were proposed. The current application site measures 0.4 hectares and proposes up to 7 dwellings. Subsequent to residential proposals the planning history is more specific to the equestrian use. This is discussed further in the report below.

1.5 This application has been accompanied by:

- Application form
- Location plan
- Site plan as existing
- An indicative site plan as proposed
- Site specific flood risk assessment
- Transport Note
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and Metric;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- Draft Unilateral undertaking
- Planning policy checklist

1.6 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

2.2 The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):

- delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- building a strong, competitive economy;
- achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
- conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment

2.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, 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  
LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery  
LP5: Flood Risk  
LP6: Waste Water Management  
LP9: Small Settlements  
LP10: The Countryside  
LP11: Design Context  
LP12: Design Implementation  
LP14: Amenity  
LP15: Surface Water  
LP16: Sustainable Travel  
LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement  
LP25: Housing Mix  
LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity  
LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerow  
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings  
LP37: Ground Contamination

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

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

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

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

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

For full details visit the government website.

#### **4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 22/01913/OUT - Outline planning application with all matters reserved save for access for the redevelopment of land and erection of up to 28 dwellings (C3) – Not determined.
- 4.2 9801631FUL - Renewal of consent 97/1508 for temporary siting of caravan – Approved 11/01/1999
- 4.3 9701508FUL - Renewal of consent ref: 95/0944 for stationing of caravan – Approved 23/12/1997
- 4.4 9601259FUL - Re-location of hay storage building Northbrook Equestrian Centre New Road Offord Cluny – Approved 23/12/1996
- 4.5 9601204FUL - Retention of stables & siting of mobile building for administrative purposes – Approved 23/12/1996
- 4.6 9500944FUL - Stationing of a caravan – Approved 26/09/1995
- 4.7 9500448FUL - Erection of steel framed building for Equestrian Centre -Approved – 26/06/1995

#### **Appeals History**

- 4.8 23/00023/NONDET for Outline planning application with all matters reserved save for access for the redevelopment of land and erection of up to 28 dwellings (C3), DISMISSED dated 04.12.2023
- 4.9 The Inspector dismissed the appeal on the basis that the site was located outside the settlement boundary in the open countryside, resulting in an unsustainable location for residential development. It was concluded that future occupiers would be heavily reliant on private car travel to access everyday services and facilities, given the lack of nearby services, limited convenience of public transport and the absence of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes. The proposal was also found to cause harm to the character and appearance of the countryside, introducing a more urban and domestic form of development that would be visually prominent within an otherwise open rural landscape. In addition, the Inspector identified highway safety concerns, arising from increased traffic movements along a narrow rural road lacking pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, and flood risk concerns, due to surface water flow routes across the site, increased impermeable surfacing and insufficient certainty that flood risk could be adequately mitigated.

4.10 In undertaking the planning balance, the Inspector acknowledged that the proposal would bring some benefits, including the redevelopment of previously developed land, the provision of additional housing and biodiversity enhancements. However, these benefits were afforded limited weight, particularly as the Council was able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. As such, the proposal was found to conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole, and there were no material considerations sufficient to justify granting planning permission.

4.11 As detailed above the appeal site covered 1.4 hectares and proposed up to 28 dwellings. The current application site is focused on the area of the Equestrian Centre comprising an indoor riding arena and stable blocks, and measures 0.4 hectares. Up to 7 dwellings are proposed.

## 5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Parish Council – recommends refusal as it stands as it clearly contravenes LP9b and LP16 of the existing Local Plan (full comments on file). Further correspondence was sent to the Parish Council with regard to the connectivity to the site for review from the applicant but no further comment was received.

5.2 The content of the additional information did not overcome the originally received comments of the Parish Council and therefore further formal re-consultation from the LPA was not carried out.

5.3 Cambridgeshire County Council Highway Authority – No objections to the proposal in principle, however changes to the exiting highway would be required to make the development acceptable in highway terms. While it is accepted that a development of this scale would reduce the net traffic volume using this road, it is not considered appropriate to introduce pedestrians on to a narrow national speed limit road with no separate facility for pedestrians. Although it is recognised that the road is currently used by pedestrian traffic such as dog walkers there is a significant difference between those who choose to walk in the road and those whom have no alternative, such as future residents of the development, some of whom may be more vulnerable, such as the elderly or infirm. It is recommended that the applicant be invited to provide a 2m footway adjoining the site to the nearest existing facility adjacent The Glebe, while retaining or relocation an appropriate passing place. In progressing the development the applicant should be advised that provision of shared residential/agricultural accesses would need a minimum of 6m wide for 20m from the carriageway edge to accord with section 2.16 of the Cambridge County Councils General Principles for Development.

5.4 Further discussion took place between the LPA and Highways with regard to the potential of providing a 2m footpath as part of the

proposal. A plan has been provided by County Council showing the public highway ownership, full details of which are on the public file.

- 5.5 Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology – No objections to the proposal, subject to the imposition of a condition on any planning permission granted. Due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary.
- 5.6 Huntingdonshire District Council Environmental Health Officer – No objections to the proposal, subject to the imposition of conditions on any planning permission granted. A land contamination strategy (and if necessary a remediation strategy) is therefore recommended proper to the commencement of development. Also recommend a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) be submitted in order to protect the very close residential neighbours from noise, vibration, light and air pollution etc during construction works.
- 5.7 Huntingdonshire District Council Arboricultural Officer –The application has been submitted for outline permission for 7 detached dwellings. The proposal is not located in a Conservation Area and there are no TPO's in place on the property.

The associated Arboricultural Impact Assessment provides details of the trees on site. It is clear that the retention of Poplars and large Cypress trees would not be appropriate within the development. The trees along the northern boundary should be protected during works and retained where possible. Two mature Sycamore trees could also be retained potentially but are not of high enough value to refuse the application.

It is agreed that none of the trees on site are worthy of TPO, but the HDC policies in this area are clear that trees should be retained wherever possible and compensated for if this is not possible (LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, LP31 Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows).

Recommendation: Support application. The trees on site are not of high value, and if replaced with large canopied/high value specimens, could be compensated for.

- 5.9 Ecology - no comments received. Updates will be provided if comments are received.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

6.1 During the course of the application, six letters of representation were received by neighbouring residential properties. Three letters were in support; three were in objection to the proposal. The concerns raised have been summarised below:

Support:

- Would positively assist with the existing housing shortage
- Opportunity for new smaller development and houses in the village
- New dwellings would promote a reduced traffic flow in comparison
- Social and economic benefits for residents

Object

- negative impact on character and appearance
- lack of safe pedestrian footway
- lack of continuous footway
- Outside development boundaries
- Highway safety (increased traffic and parking issues);
- Upgrade of the road is necessary
- No sustainable travel options
- Flood risk;
- Impact on trees and wildlife.

## 7. ASSESSMENT

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

7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".

7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan (relevant to this application) consists of:

- Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

7.4 The statutory term 'material considerations' has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the circumstances which bears on the use or development of the land: *Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P.*

& C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraph 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.

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

- The Principle of Development
- Design, Visual Amenity and impact on the character of the area
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety, Access and parking provision
- Flood Risk, Surface Water and drainage
- Biodiversity
- Impact on Trees
- Accessible and Adaptable Homes
- Water Efficiency
- Developer Contributions
- Other Matters

### **The Principle of Development**

7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12 December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).

7.7 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old, it is necessary to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires the provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test, a 5% buffer is required here. The 5-year housing land requirement, including a 5% buffer, is 5,907 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,345 homes, equivalent to 3.68 years' supply.

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

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

7.9 Each planning application will be considered on its own merits and the degree of weight to be attached is a matter for the decision maker. Where an application is situated within a parish with a made Neighbourhood Plan NPPF paragraph 14 should also be taken into account.

#### Location and suitability of the site

7.10 Northbrook Equestrian Centre is not considered to fall within the built-up area of Offord Cluny. The site's relationship with the main body of the village is limited, with the nearest residential area located approximately 600 metres to the west.

7.11 The site is generally open to the wider countryside, particularly to the east and south. While the western boundary benefits from mature hedgerows and trees that reduce visibility in wider views, the site is perceived, in visual terms, as part of the surrounding countryside. The application site lies outside the defined built-up area of Offord Cluny and is therefore treated as countryside for the purposes of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. As such, development plan policies relating to development in the countryside are engaged.

7.12 The starting point for assessing the principle of any development in the countryside is Policy LP10 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. Policy LP10 of the Local Plan states that development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan and 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.

7.13 With regard to criteria (a) of Policy LP10, the site is previously developed land (also known as brownfield land) and would therefore, not result in the loss of any of the districts best and most versatile agricultural land.

7.14 The proposed reduction in development quantum, together with the potential retention and enhancement of boundary planting, on-site open space provision and additional landscaping, indicates that a scheme of up to seven dwellings could be accommodated without unacceptable harm to countryside character, in accordance with Policy LP10 criterion (b). This is discussed in more detail below.

7.15 Potential impacts relating to noise, lighting or other disturbance, as referenced in Policy LP10 criterion (c), could be appropriately controlled through conditions and would be assessed in detail at a subsequent application stage.

7.16 In addition to complying with Policy LP10, development in the countryside is restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of the Local Plan, including Policy LP33 'Rural Buildings' which is most relevant in this instance.

7.17 However, notwithstanding the above consideration, whilst the local plan does seek to resist residential development in the countryside (not least due to sustainability issues), Policy LP33 of the local plan covers the conversion or replacement of rural buildings and does not require tests relating to the sustainability of the site. There are however tests to ensure that the building(s) are suitable for conversion/replacement. In this case, the proposal seeks to replace a covered menage, two sets of stables and a large storage barn, amongst other small cabins and temporary caravan with 7 dwellings and so LP33 is the starting point for assessment.

7.18 Policy LP33 of the Local Plan states that a proposal for the conversion of a building in the countryside that would not be dealt with through 'Prior Approval/ Notification' will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. the building is:
  - i. redundant or disused;
  - ii. of permanent and substantial construction;
  - iii. not in such a state of dereliction or disrepair that significant reconstruction would be required; and
  - iv. structurally capable of being converted for the proposed use; and
- b. the proposal:
  - i. would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting; and
  - ii. any extension or alteration would not adversely affect the form, scale, massing or proportion of the building.

A proposal for the replacement of a building in the countryside will be supported where criteria a, i to iii above are fulfilled and the proposal would lead to a clear and substantial enhancement of the

immediate setting. A modest increase in floorspace will be supported.

The position of the replacement buildings within the site should be considered comprehensively so that it is located where it would have the least possible adverse impact on the immediate surroundings, the wider landscape and the amenity of the users of existing buildings nearby'.

- 7.19 As outlined above, the proposal comprises only re-build and replacement of existing buildings and footprint with the new dwellings.
- 7.20 Regardless of whether the proposal is for a conversion of an existing building or the replacement of an existing building, it should be demonstrated that the buildings comply with Policy LP33 a.i) – a.iii). For conversion a.iv) should also be complied with.
- 7.21 With regard to part a.i) of Policy LP33, it is acknowledged as it has been in the determination of previous applications and appeals, that the riding school is no longer running, with the majority of horses there belonging to the applicant. For these reasons, it is considered that the buildings are primarily redundant or disused in accordance with part a.i) of Policy LP33.
- 7.22 With regard to parts a.ii) and a.iii), Officers have attended the site to visit the buildings and can confirm all the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, and also not in a state of dereliction or disrepair that significant reconstruction would be required. Part a.iv) is not relevant as this application proposes the replacement of the buildings on site.
- 7.23 Given that parts parts a.i), a.ii) a.iii are met, the existing equestrian buildings qualify in principle for replacement under Policy LP33.
- 7.24 Officers therefore need to assess whether the proposal, especially in relation to the replacement of the equestrian buildings, would lead to a clear and substantial enhancement of the immediate setting. LP33 also requires 'The position of the replacement buildings within the site should be considered comprehensively so that it is located where it would have the least possible adverse impact on the immediate surroundings, the wider landscape and the amenity of the users of existing buildings nearby'.
- 7.25 For the reasons set out in the below design section, Officers consider that the proposed development would lead to a clear and substantial enhancement of the immediate setting in accordance with policies LP10 and LP33. Policy LP33 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan sets out the circumstances in which development in the countryside may be supported. The policy does not impose an absolute restriction on development but instead requires proposals to be assessed against a series of criteria including

scale and form, impact on the character of the countryside, relationship to existing development and sustainability.

7.26 Additionally, National policy places significant weight on the effective reuse of previously developed land, recognising that its redevelopment can reduce pressure on undeveloped countryside and represent a more sustainable pattern of growth. While PDL status does not in itself make a proposal acceptable, it is a material consideration which reduces the level of harm typically associated with countryside development.

#### Conclusion on Principle

7.27 When assessed against the relevant policies of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (with reduced weight), the requirements of Policy LP33, the material consideration of the site's Previously Developed Land status, and the policies of the NPPF, officers consider that the site is capable of accommodating a limited amount of residential development without resulting in unacceptable harm.

7.28 In this context and having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, officers conclude that the proposed development is acceptable in principle, subject to the detailed consideration of matters including layout, access, landscaping and design at the subsequent application stage.

#### **Design, Visual Amenity and impact on the character of the area**

7.29 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.

7.30 Section 12 of the NPPF (2024) seeks to achieve well designed places, noting that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

7.31 Whilst all matters are proposed to be reserved, an illustrative plan (Northbrook 1001) has been submitted to illustrate how 7 dwellings could be accommodated on the site. In terms of site layout, the access road would be central to the site, with housing to the west and open space and SUDS drainage to the east. A refuse turning area is located at the north of the site with a bin collection point sited approximately one third into the application

site. All properties are shown to have off road parking provision, garages/carports and private amenity space.

- 7.32 The indicative layout plan demonstrates how the development could be arranged as such to accommodate the maximum quantum of development proposed. It shows the potential for development of seven detached dwellings, although this would be determined at reserved matters stage. The western boundary would be best served with natural boundary screening (trees and shrubs), the potential for close boarded fences along the proposed boundaries should be avoided.
- 7.33 Policy LP33 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan supports the replacement or re-use of rural buildings in the countryside where it can be demonstrated that the buildings are redundant, of permanent and substantial construction, and where the proposal would result in a clear and substantial enhancement of the immediate setting. The existing equestrian use, comprising a large covered menage, two stable blocks, a storage barn and associated areas of hardstanding are no longer required for its original purpose. The buildings are of a permanent nature and are not in such a state of dereliction as to require significant reconstruction, thereby meeting the initial criteria of the policy.
- 7.34 A key element of Policy LP33 is that proposals must be considered comprehensively across the site, ensuring that development does not erode the character of the countryside. In this case, the proposed development has been deliberately designed with regard to the existing built form across the site, rather than treating individual buildings or plots in isolation. The indicative positioning of the proposed dwellings responds to the existing pattern of development created by the equestrian buildings and hardstanding, allowing redevelopment to be contained within the established envelope of built development. This approach avoids encroachment into undeveloped parts of the site, consistent with the objectives of Policy LP33 to prevent development sprawling into the countryside.
- 7.35 The proposed dwellings (albeit indicative at this stage) are positioned largely on areas of existing hardstanding and built development, ensuring that the scheme makes efficient use of previously developed land. This approach limits the need for new development within undeveloped areas of the site and allows for the introduction of enhanced landscaping, ecological features and softer edges to the development.
- 7.36 Policy LP33 requires that replacement development leads to a clear and substantial enhancement of the immediate setting. In this instance, the removal of large-scale, equestrian structures, particularly the covered menage, would represent a significant improvement. Their replacement with sensitively designed

residential buildings of appropriate scale, alongside the introduction of structured landscaping and biodiversity enhancements, would materially improve the appearance and environmental quality of the site.

7.37 It is noted that the appeal decision at Northbrook Equestrian Centre, Offord Cluny, reached a different conclusion under Policy LP33. However, that case is materially distinguishable. The appeal site covered a larger area of 1.4 hectares and proposed up to 28 dwellings. The current application covers 0.4 hectares and proposes up to 7 dwellings. The Inspector found that the appeal scheme introduced a new and extensive spread of residential development in an open countryside location, remote from the settlement and services, resulting in an unsustainable pattern of development and significant harm to countryside character. By contrast, the current proposal involves a significantly reduced quantum of development with development consolidated within the established developed footprint. The proposal avoids the dispersal and urbanising effects identified in the appeal decision and instead delivers a contained form of development that enhances the site and accords with both the wording and intent of Policy LP33.

## **Residential Amenity**

7.38 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

7.39 As all matters are reserved for future consideration, the detailed impact of the scale, layout, and design of the proposed dwellings on neighbouring properties cannot be fully assessed at this outline stage. However, it is noted that the site appears capable of accommodating up to seven dwellings without resulting in significant harm to the amenity of nearby properties, in terms of overlooking, loss of light, or overbearing impact. And particularly given the separation distance between the application site and The Glebe to the west.

7.40 Recent planning permission has been granted under 25/01992/PIP on the land to the west of the application site. The layout of which has not been considered beyond principle stages but does form a material consideration with regard to future layout of both schemes.

7.41 While the development may generate some additional noise and disturbance, this is not considered sufficient to warrant refusal. The proposed density of development provides adequate scope to ensure that the amenity of neighbouring residents and future occupiers can be safeguarded at the detailed design stage. The

proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy LP14 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

## **Highway Safety, access and Parking Provision**

7.42 Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 require development to promote sustainable modes of travel, provide adequate parking provision and safe movement of vehicles.

7.43 The submitted Transport Note describes the existing access arrangements and local highway environment on New Road. A new site access is proposed onto New Road, and the submitted access plan indicates that appropriate visibility splays can be achieved. On this basis and given the modest scale of the proposal (7 dwellings), the Transport Note concludes that safe vehicular access can be provided, subject to detailed design and any required conditions at the subsequent application stage.

7.44 In terms of highway impact, the Transport Note provides survey evidence of the existing equestrian use, which is reported as generating an average of approximately 70–79 daily vehicle trips (and 80–92 when Sundays are excluded), with observed daily totals ranging up to 140. By comparison, TRICS-based estimates for the proposed residential development indicate approximately 39 daily vehicle trips and around 5 two-way trips in each peak hour. On this basis, the redevelopment is forecast to generate materially fewer vehicle movements than the lawful/established use, and therefore would not be expected to result in a severe residual cumulative impact on the local highway network.

7.45 With regard to sustainable travel, the Transport Note confirms that the site would be accessible by all modes and identifies the presence of a footway on New Road up to The Glebe, beyond which the route becomes shared surface. While the Note does not provide detailed assessment of pedestrian connectivity improvements, it identifies that access is available and that the scale of development is limited. Further discussion has taken place with regard to securing pedestrian connectivity and is discussed further below.

7.46 Parking is provided for all properties and the proposed layout indicates on-plot parking (including carports) with EV charging provision. Overall, subject to ensuring manoeuvrability and subject to detailed design of the access and pedestrian/highway works secured through condition, the submitted information indicates the development can accord with Policies LP16 and LP17 in highway safety, access and parking terms.

7.47 Having regard the formal consultation response from the Local Highway Authority, officers are satisfied that the proposed

development of up to seven dwellings would not result in a severe impact on highway safety or the operation of the local highway network. The proposal would generate fewer vehicle movements than the existing equestrian use and benefits from acceptable visibility at the proposed access.

- 7.48 While the Local Highway Authority has raised concerns in relation to pedestrian safety along New Road, these concerns relate to the need for improved pedestrian infrastructure rather than to the principle of development itself. The recommended provision of a 2m wide footway linking the site to the existing footway network is considered reasonable and proportionate and is capable of being secured through an appropriately worded Grampian condition.
- 7.49 On this basis, and subject to the implementation of the pedestrian and access improvements identified by the Local Highway Authority, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and the guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.50 Therefore, subject to appropriate conditions the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and therefore accords with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

## **Flood Risk and Surface Water**

- 7.51 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, Policy LP15 sets out the Council's approach to surface water management.
- 7.52 The site is at the lowest risk of flooding according to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024 and Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zone 1) and the proposal is for minor development.
- 7.53 The submitted Flood Risk Assessment confirms that the application site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. There are no records of historical flooding affecting the site, and the risk from groundwater, sewer flooding, reservoirs, canals or other artificial sources is assessed as low. The principal identified flood risk relates to surface water, which ranges from low to locally higher risk across parts of the site. However, the proposed dwellings are all located within the footprint of existing buildings, resulting in a reduced built footprint overall and no loss of flood storage. Finished floor levels would be set a minimum of 600mm above prevailing ground levels and incorporate additional flood resistance measures, providing

an appropriate level of protection in accordance with national guidance.

- 7.54 Surface water would be managed through a sustainable drainage strategy incorporating permeable paving, a hydrobrake flow control and an on-site detention basin, with discharge rates restricted to a greenfield equivalent of 2.1 l/s and attenuated to accommodate the 1 in 100 year event plus a 40% allowance for climate change. Surface water would discharge to an existing on-site ditch and watercourse to the south, while foul water would connect to the adopted sewer network within The Glebe.
- 7.56 Subject to detailed design at the reserved matters stage, the Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the site is appropriate for the proposed residential development and that flood risk can be safely and effectively managed in accordance with national and local policy.
- 7.57 The objections raised by the Lead Local Flood Authority under application 22/01913/OUT related primarily to the lack of a defined surface water drainage strategy, the siting of development and SuDS features within surface-water conveyance routes, and the absence of evidence demonstrating that flood risk would not increase elsewhere. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (June 2025) represents a comprehensive response to those concerns. It provides a detailed and quantified drainage strategy, incorporates design changes including a reduced built footprint and raised finished floor levels, and demonstrates that surface water runoff will be appropriately managed on-site with no increase in flood risk to neighbouring land or property.
- 7.58 Concerns have been raised by the Parish Council and neighbouring residents regarding existing flooding issues in the area and the potential for increased surface water run-off as a result of the proposed development. It is important to note that this application is not required to resolve pre-existing flooding problems in the wider area, but rather to demonstrate that it can mitigate its own impact effectively.
- 7.59 Officers are therefore satisfied that the matters previously raised by the LLFA have been addressed in principle, subject to detailed design and appropriate conditions. Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water and therefore accords with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

## **Biodiversity**

- 7.60 Local Plan Policy LP30 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have

been investigated; to ensure no net loss in biodiversity; and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development. This mirrors the ecological and environmental policies set out at Section 15 of the NPPF (2024).

- 7.61 The application has been informed by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment prepared by Brown & Co (June 2025). The site comprises a previously developed equestrian centre with associated buildings, hardstanding, modified grassland and boundary vegetation. No statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites are located within the application site or immediately adjacent to it.
- 7.62 The ecological surveys confirm that the site is of low ecological value, reflecting its long-established developed and managed character. Habitats present include buildings, hardstanding, modified grassland, and boundary hedgerows and trees. These boundary features provide some limited potential for nesting birds and foraging or commuting bats; however, no evidence of bat roosts, great crested newts or other protected species was recorded during the surveys. The assessment concludes that, subject to standard precautionary measures, the proposed redevelopment would not give rise to significant adverse ecological effects. This approach is consistent with paragraph 187 of the NPPF and Policy LP30, which require that impacts are proportionately assessed and appropriately mitigated.
- 7.63 Mitigation measures set out in the submitted reports include timing restrictions on vegetation clearance to avoid the bird nesting season, precautionary working methods during construction, and a sensitive lighting strategy to minimise potential disturbance to bats. In addition, the proposals include a package of ecological enhancements, such as native hedgerow and tree planting, species-rich grassland creation, and the installation of bat and bird boxes. These measures would enhance habitat diversity and ecological functionality across the site and accord with paragraph 180(d) of the NPPF and Policy LP30, which seek biodiversity enhancements as part of new development.
- 7.64 The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment confirms that the proposal has been designed to achieve a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity units, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 and national guidance. The development would result in an increase in both area-based habitat units and hedgerow units through habitat creation and enhancement within the site. No off-site compensation or statutory credits are required. Subject to the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan and a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to secure delivery

and long-term management, officers are satisfied that the proposal would meet national BNG requirements.

7.65 Overall, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied with the findings of the submitted PEA and BNG Assessment and as such the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy LP30 and the NPPF (2024) subject to the imposition of conditions.

### **Impact on Trees**

7.66 Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and that a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development.

7.67 The application has been considered by the Council's Arboricultural Officer, who confirms that the site is not located within a Conservation Area and that no Tree Preservation Orders apply. The Arboricultural Officer raises no objection in principle to the proposal, subject to the retention of identified boundary trees, the protection of retained trees during construction, and the provision of replacement and compensatory planting where tree loss is unavoidable.

7.68 Subject to conditions requiring the submission and implementation of an Arboricultural Method Statement, Tree Protection Plan and a detailed landscaping scheme, officers are satisfied that the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to trees or landscape character. The development is therefore considered to comply with Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy LP31 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

### **Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings**

7.69 Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 states that proposal for new housing will be supported where they meet the optional Building regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' unless it can be demonstrated that site specific factors make this impractical or unviable.

7.70 To ensure that the development can meet these standards a condition would be imposed on any permission that may be granted in this regard in accordance with Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

## **Water Efficiency**

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

## **Developer Obligations**

### Bins

7.72 In accordance with Policy LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Developer Contributions SPD (Part H) each dwelling will require the provision of one black and blue wheeled bin (green bins are payable separately per year as requested by occupiers). The current cost of such provision is £114 per dwelling. An incomplete Unilateral Undertaking Form in respect of wheeled bins has been received by the Local Planning Authority. Once completed the proposed development can be considered to accord with Policy LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Developers Contributions SPD (2011).

### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

7.73 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.

## **Other**

### Contamination

7.74 The application has been reviewed by the Council's Environmental Health Officer, who has raised no objection in principle to the proposed redevelopment, subject to appropriate investigation and remediation of potential land contamination. Given the historic use of the site as an equestrian centre and the presence of former buildings and hardstanding, the Environmental Health Officer advises that a staged land contamination risk assessment be undertaken to establish whether any contamination is present and to ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed residential use. This approach accords with the precautionary principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.75 The Environmental Health Officer recommends a series of conditions requiring the submission and approval of a site

investigation prior to development (with the exception of demolition), the submission and implementation of a remediation scheme where necessary, verification of any remediation works prior to occupation, and procedures for dealing with unexpected contamination encountered during construction. These matters are capable of being appropriately controlled through planning conditions and, subject to their implementation, officers are satisfied that the development would not give rise to unacceptable risks to future occupiers, neighbouring land, controlled waters or the wider environment.

### Archaeology

7.76 The application has been reviewed by the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of a planning condition. The Archaeological Officer advises that, due to the archaeological potential of the site, a further programme of investigation and recording is required to establish the presence or absence, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to determine whether any mitigation is necessary. It is considered that this can be appropriately secured by condition requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), and the implementation of archaeological fieldwork, recording and reporting in accordance with the approved WSI. Subject to this requirement, officers are satisfied that the proposal accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036 and Section 16 of the NPPF (2024).

### Grampian Condition

7.77 The Local Highway Authority has confirmed that it has no objection to the proposal in principle but advises that changes to the existing highway are required to make the development acceptable in highway terms, in particular the provision of improved pedestrian connectivity along New Road. The Highway Authority recommends a 2m wide footway linking the site to the nearest existing footway network adjacent to The Glebe, whilst retaining or relocating an appropriate passing place as necessary. Given that the pedestrian works are off-site and within land under highway control, it is considered reasonable and necessary to secure these works via a Grampian-style condition preventing development until the footway and any associated highway alterations have been completed. This approach is acceptable because the required works are clearly defined, deliverable, and proportionate to the scale of development, and would ensure safe pedestrian access for future residents in accordance with Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 and the NPPF (2024).

## Conclusion

7.78 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

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

7.80 The proposal seeks outline permission for the redevelopment of a previously developed equestrian site to deliver up to seven dwellings. The principle of a modest redevelopment of this nature is supported by policy, the site's previously developed status and the contribution the scheme would make to housing delivery at a time when relevant housing supply policies are out-of-date. Therefore, whilst the indicative layout shown on the Illustrative Masterplan may be subject to change, and subject to the above site constraints and site requirements being satisfied, the quantum of development proposed is considered to be achievable without causing a significant detrimental impact upon visual amenity or the character and appearance of the locality. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle and the 'appearance', 'landscaping', 'layout' and 'scale'; would be considered in detail as part of reserved matters should outline permission be granted.

7.81 The proposal has been assessed against the relevant policies of the development plan and the NPPF. Matters relating to highway safety, access and parking have been considered with particular regard to the Local Highway Authority response. The proposal is forecast to generate fewer vehicle movements than the established equestrian use; however, pedestrian connectivity improvements are required to ensure the development provides safe and suitable access for future residents. These works are capable of being secured through a Grampian-style condition preventing development until a 2m footway link to the existing network is provided, together with any associated highway works.

7.82 The submitted technical information demonstrates that the development can be made acceptable in respect of flood risk and surface water drainage, land contamination, ecology/biodiversity net gain, and impacts on trees, subject to the imposition of

appropriately worded planning conditions and the approval of detailed reserved matters.

- 7.83 The Archaeological Officer also raises no objection subject to a condition securing a programme of archaeological investigation and recording.
- 7.84 In applying the tilted balance, officers have identified material benefits including: the delivery of up to seven dwellings; the effective reuse of previously developed land; the removal of existing large-scale equestrian buildings; a reduction in daily vehicle trips compared to the existing use; and the delivery of biodiversity net gain secured through a Biodiversity Gain Plan and management arrangements.
- 7.85 The NPPF (2024) has at its heart the presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The presumption in favour of sustainable development requires proposals to achieve economic, social and environmental gains; as such a balancing exercise has to be undertaken to weigh the benefits of the scheme against its disadvantages. When considered in the round, the proposal would contribute to the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainability with a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.86 In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposal would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation - during the construction phase and in the longer term through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. There will also be Council Tax and New Homes Bonus receipts arising from the development.
- 7.87 Regarding the social dimension, the site appears to have no significant constraints and is deliverable. It would also increase the supply of housing. There is a local and district wide identified need for both private and affordable housing and the provision of market housing, albeit a small quantum of development would amount to a benefit in terms of provision towards the supply of housing.
- 7.88 In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, the proposal offers potential for the incorporation of energy efficiency measures (to be considered in detail at reserved matters stage) as well as the delivery of green space and a net gain in biodiversity. The visual impacts of the development are considered to be acceptable. It is therefore considered that there will be a net benefit in environmental terms.
- 7.89 Against these benefits, the main potential harm relates to the site's countryside location and the need to ensure safe pedestrian access along New Road. The pedestrian safety concern is capable of being adequately addressed through the

recommended Grampian condition requiring delivery of the footway link prior to occupation. Other potential impacts (including ecology, trees, drainage, contamination and archaeology) can be controlled through conditions.

7.90 Officers have also had regard to the Town/Parish Council objections and third-party representations, including matters of policy compliance, pedestrian safety, and local character. These concerns have been taken into account in the assessment above. Subject to the recommended conditions (including the off-site pedestrian works, drainage, ecological safeguards and tree protection/landscaping), officers consider that the proposal would represent a sustainable form of development in NPPF terms.

7.91 Having regard to the policies of the development plan (with reduced weight applied where relevant), and the NPPF (2024) taken as a whole, officers consider that the adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The planning balance therefore weighs in favour of the proposal.

7.92 Accordingly, taking national and local planning policies into account and having regard to all relevant material considerations, it is concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and can be made acceptable in all other respects through reserved matters and the imposition of conditions. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be approved, subject to conditions and completion of the necessary planning obligations.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS**

### **Outline / Reserved Matters**

- Time limit for submission of Reserved Matters applications.
- Time limit for commencement following the approval of the final Reserved Matters.
- Reserved Matters to include appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, with access as approved.
- Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved site location plan and access drawing only.

### **Highway Safety, Access and Movement**

- Grampian-style pre-commencement condition requiring the submission, approval and implementation of a scheme for a 2m wide pedestrian footway linking the site to the existing footway adjacent to The Glebe, including any necessary off-site highway works, prior to first occupation.
- Detailed access construction details including access gradient, width, kerb radii, surface construction and a

- minimum 20m metalled surface, to be submitted and approved.
- Provision, clearance and retention of visibility splays.
- Details of internal estate roads and associated infrastructure, including layout, construction and turning areas.
- Off-site highway improvement works, to be completed in accordance with approved details.
- Traffic Management Plan covering construction traffic routing, contractor parking and deliveries.
- Temporary construction facilities to be kept clear of the public highway at all times.

#### **Construction Management and Amenity**

- Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), including dust, noise, vibration, lighting controls and pollution prevention measures.
- Restrictions on construction and delivery times in the interests of residential amenity.

#### **Drainage and Flood Risk**

- Submission and approval of a surface water drainage scheme.
- Construction drainage arrangements to prevent pollution and manage surface water during works.
- Surface water drainage system completion and sign-off prior to occupation.
- Establishment of a management company and long-term maintenance scheme for drainage infrastructure.

#### **Ecology and Biodiversity**

- Development to be carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- Submission and approval of details demonstrating a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, to be delivered and maintained in accordance with approved details.

#### **Trees and Landscaping**

- Submission of a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of Reserved Matters relating to layout or landscaping.
- Tree protection and compensatory planting to be implemented in accordance with approved details.

#### **Design and Sustainability**

- Submission and approval of an external lighting scheme as part of Reserved Matters.
- All dwellings to meet Building Regulations M4(2) – Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings.
- Compliance with water efficiency standards in accordance with Approved Document G.

Other

- Provision of fire hydrants in accordance with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service requirements.

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquires about this report to **Saffron Loasby, Senior Development Management Officer** [saffron.loasby@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:saffron.loasby@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 29 July 2025 12:16  
**To:** DMAAdmin  
**Subject:** RE: Planning Permission Consultation - Northbrook Equestrian Centre New Road Offord Cluny (ref 25/01237/OUT)

The Parish Council discussed this application at length at it's recent planning meeting and has the following comments to make.

25/01237/OUT - Northbrook Equestrian Centre - 7 dwellings including revised access from New Road Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy Parish Council has long had a policy of supporting sympathetic housing developments in the villages that conform to the Local Plan. We note that this application has differences from the recent application and appeal for 28 homes (23/00023/NONDET) that was refused. It is still separate from the villages and thus not well-related and will not be connected to the built-up form of the Offords, but as a much smaller development principally on the footprint of existing buildings will have less of an impact.

Looking at the appeal decision this application however does nothing to overcome the 'Suitability of the site' reasons for refusal of the previous application. Indeed, that application included a proposal to upgrade New Road to provide pedestrian access which has been left out of this one. There is no provision for Sustainable Travel at all. In the Policy Guidance Checklist, the application has the box for LP16 – Sustainable Travel ticked but, apart from a revised access onto New Road, there is no mention of how sustainable travel will be supported. The reasons for refusal of the previous application relating to travel and transport have not been addressed in any way, nor some of the other reasons relating to the separation of the site from the villages (paragraphs 5 to 14). As the application points out New Road is a single track, national speed limit road and thus there is a complete lack of consideration for pedestrians and cyclists. The Parish Council notes the data provided to demonstrate the reduction in traffic but, although it has no formal data, is considerably surprised and sceptical about the current levels of traffic supplied.

The Parish Council **recommends refusal** of the application as it stands as it clearly contravenes LP 9b and LP 16 of the existing local plan.

Offord Cluny & Offord Darcy Parish Council  
The Village Hall  
158 High Street  
Offord Cluny  
Cambs PE19 5RR  
[REDACTED]

[www.offords-pc.gov.uk](http://www.offords-pc.gov.uk)

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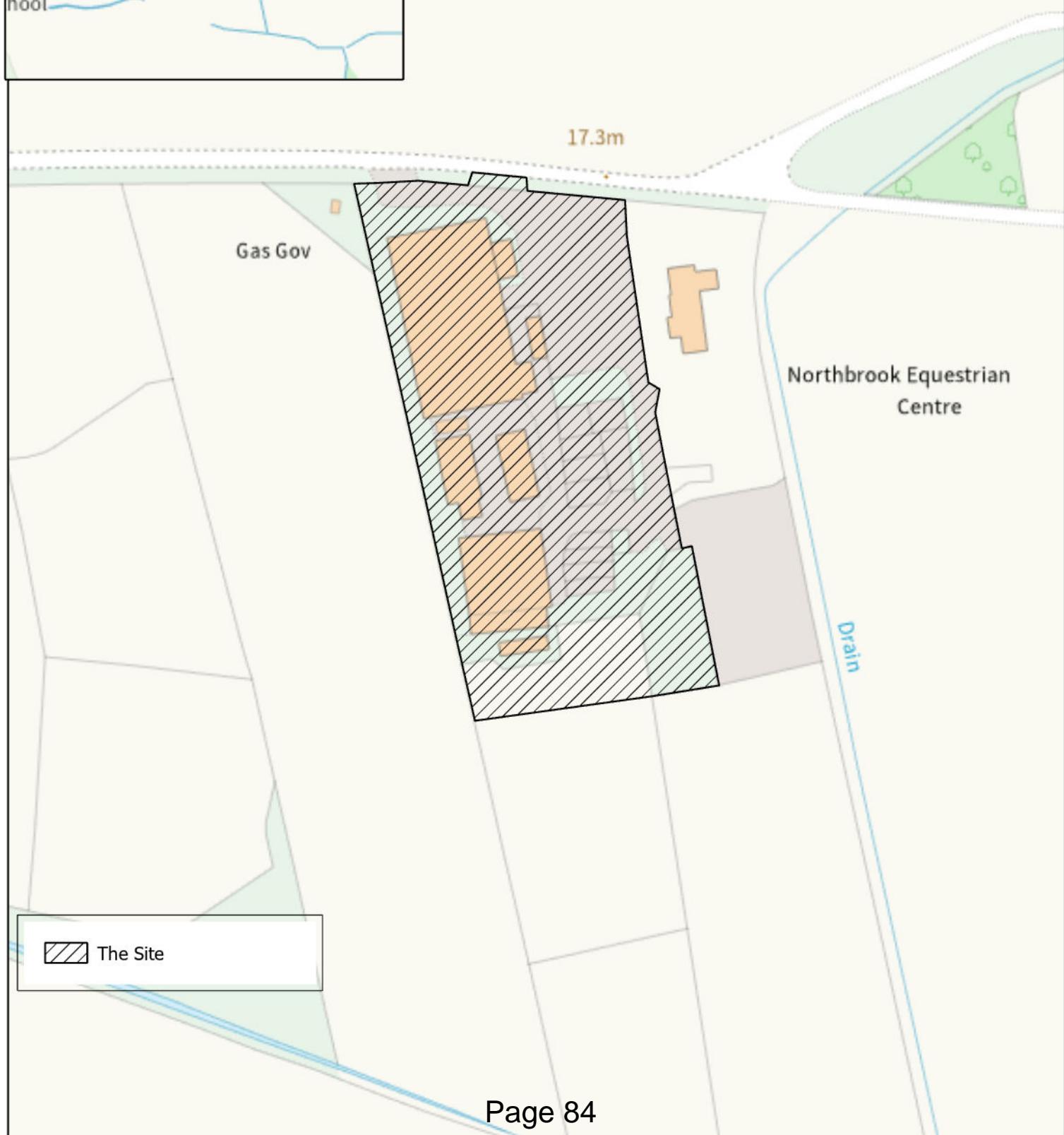
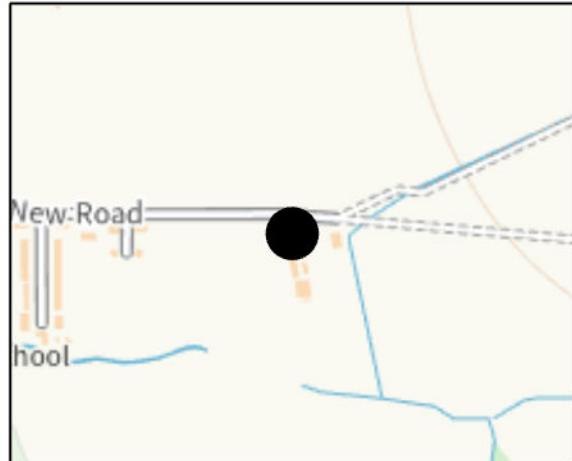
# Development Management Committee

Application Ref: 25/01237/OUT



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Date Created: 08/01/2026



Northbrook Equestrian Centre, Northbrook Equestrian Centre, New Road, Offord Cluny, St. Neots PE19 5RP

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created on **edozo**

Plotted Scale - 1:1,250

This map is published for convenience of identification only and although believed to be correct, is not guaranteed and it does not form any part of any contract



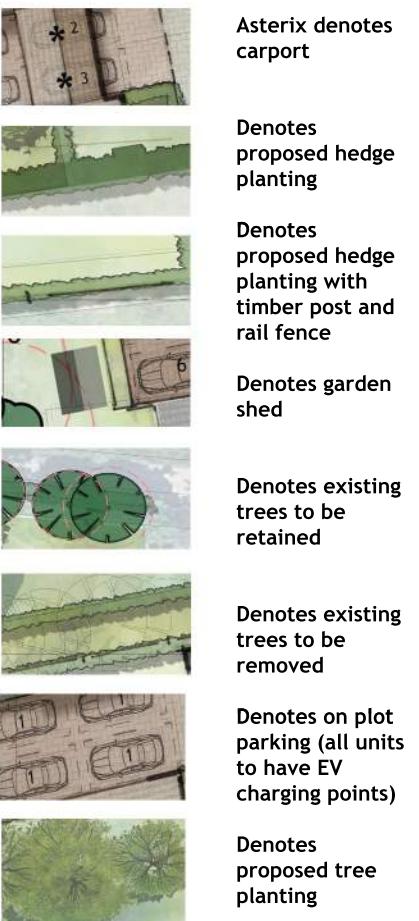
#### SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

- Plot 1: 152 sqm 1636 sqft 4 Bed
- Plot 2: 90 sqm 968 sqft 3 Bed (carport as flyover for smaller breaks in built form)
- Plot 3: 90 sqm 968 sqft 3 Bed (carport for smaller continual frontage)
- Plot 4: 150 sqm 1614 sqft 4 Bed
- Plot 5: 130 sqm 1237 sqft 4 Bed (1.5 Storeys) (carport for continual frontage)
- Plot 6: 160 sqm 1614 sqft 4 Bed
- Plot 7: 165 sqm 1776 sqft 4 Bed (carport with accommodation above)

**NOTES**

- Contractors must check all dimensions on site. Only figured dimensions are to be worked from. Discrepancies must be reported to the Architect or Engineer before proceeding. © This drawing is copyright.
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#### LEGEND

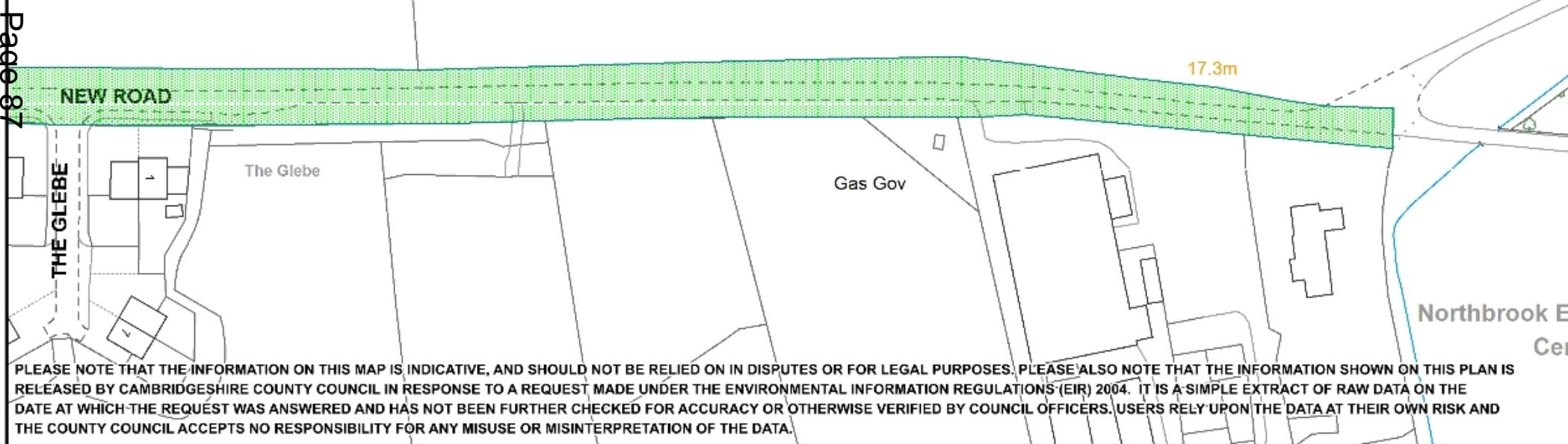


# DRAFT

REV	DESCRIPTION	DRN	CHD	DATE
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<input type="checkbox"/>	CONSTRUCTION	<input type="checkbox"/>	AS BUILT	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCALE	1:500 @ A3	DATE	JUNE-2025	
DRAWN	JPG			
DRAWING NO.	NORTHBROOK-1001	REV		-
TITLE	NORTHBROOK-EQUESTRIAN-CENTRE			
DETAILS	OUTLINE-APPLICATION LAYOUT-PLAN			



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Scale: 1:1250

Date: 26/08/2025

By: CCC739752890

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## Legend

Public highway (green)



Highway boundary plans are determined using Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500. Please refer to OS's Statement of Accuracy when comparing with a site survey. It is possible that the OS mapping for the area searched does not show features that typically form part of the highway boundary, such as (but not limited to) ditches, hedges, fences or embankments. Therefore, please note that owing to the tolerance of accuracy that must be applied to OS maps, the highway boundary 'on the ground' may not be in exactly the same position as the boundary features displayed by OS. If you require a site visit to determine the physical highway extent please contact [searches@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:searches@cambridgeshire.gov.uk). This service is provided on a cost-recoverable basis in accordance with our Schedule of Charges.

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## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026

**Case No: 25/01875/FUL**

**Proposal:** Erection of four dwellings and associated works

**Location:** Land Adjacent 31 Luke Street, Eynesbury

**Applicant:** AWJ Usher & Sons Ltd

**Grid Ref:** 518419 259610

**Date of Registration:** 26.09.2025

**Parish:** St Neots

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### RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

**This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) as the officer's recommendation is contrary to that of the Town Council**

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 The application site is located within the built-up area of St. Neots. The site is also located within the St. Neots Conservation Area. The plot is an irregular shaped parcel of land with a narrow frontage to Luke Street and was previously a market garden with an existing access from Luke Street that is shared with the access to the adjacent Sandy Court residential development. The site is entirely surrounded by existing residential development.
- 1.2 The site is generally flat and lies within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency Maps for Flooding and as designated within the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024. There are no other designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the site.
- 1.3 This application seeks approval for the erection of four, three-bedroom dwellings comprising a mixture of 1.5-storey and two storey buildings on land adjacent to No. 31 Luke Street, Eynesbury.
- 1.4 There has been extensive planning history on the site, most notably, an appeal for non-determination that was dismissed and planning permission refused for the erection of six bungalows and associated works (23/01164/FUL), a refusal of planning permission for the erection of six dwellings (22/01642/FUL) and a refusal of planning permission for seven dwellings (21/00212/FUL) that was subsequently dismissed at appeal.

1.5 Most recently, a planning application for the proposed erection of four dwellings and associated works was refused by Members at Development Management Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2025 (25/00596/FUL). There was 1 reason for refusal which related to heritage harm on the wider St. Neots Conservation Area which was not outweighed by any public benefit. The reason for refusal is set out in full within paragraph 7.20 of this report.

1.6 This current application similarly seeks planning permission for four dwellings and are submitted with the same position, materials, footprint, overall form, layout and location as the previous application with the following notable differences:

- Hardstanding reduced to accommodate soft landscaping to the front of the plots. The materials were block paving and are now gravel.
- Additional landscaping and paving have been provided to the front of plots 1, 2 and 4.
- 1 parking space is now shown to the front of Plot 1.
- The roof of the integrated garage to the north of Plot 1 has changed from a pitched roof to a double gable roof reducing this elements ridge height from 4.790m to 4.320m.
- Plots 1, 2 and 3 has bedroom 4 now annotated as a study.
- Plots 1 and 2 have the ground floor study now annotated as a sitting room.
- Plot 3 has a study now a sitting room.
- An additional rooflight has been provided to the southern front roof plane to Plot 3.

1.7 This application has been accompanied by:

- A Planning, Design and Access (Inc Heritage) Statement and appendices document;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Report;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;

1.8 Amended plans have been submitted during the course of the application in an attempt to address the comments of the Conservation Officer. However, these have not been accepted and have not been formally consulted upon.

1.9 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as

follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

- 2.2 The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
  - delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
  - building a strong, competitive economy;
  - achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
  - conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment
- 2.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, 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
  - LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
  - LP5: Flood Risk
  - LP6: Waste Water Management
  - LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
  - LP11: Design Context
  - LP12: Design Implementation
  - LP14: Amenity
  - LP15: Surface Water
  - LP16: Sustainable Travel
  - LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
  - LP25: Housing Mix
  - LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
  - LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerow
  - LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings
  - LP37: Ground Contamination
- 3.2 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 – adopted February 2016
  - A3: Design
  - PT1: Sustainable Modes of Transport
  - PL2: Parking
  - P4: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- 3.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:
  - Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017)

- Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)
- LDF Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
- Annual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply (2024)
- St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment (2006)

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

3.4 The National Design Guide (2021):

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

For full details visit the government website

#### 4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 25/00596/FUL - Erection of four dwellings and associated works, refused.

4.2 23/01164/FUL - Erection of six bungalows and associated works – Non-determination appeal dismissed and planning permission refused.

4.3 22/01642/FUL - Erection of six dwellings and associated works – Disposed of.

4.4 21/00212/FUL – Erection of seven dwellings and associated works – Refused then appeal dismissed.

4.5 20/01378/FUL – Erection of seven dwellings and associated works – Refused.

4.6 19/01238/FUL - Erection of Eight Dwellings - 1 x Farmhouse, 2 x Bungalows and 5 x Cottages, Car Barn and associated access and landscaping works – Refused.

- 4.7 17/02681/FUL - Erection of eight dwellings; 1 x farmhouse, 1 x cottage, 1 x detached barn & 5 x sub-divided barn style properties, detached car barn and associated access and landscaping works – Refused then appeal dismissed.
- 4.8 16/01313/FUL - Clearance of existing remaining Market Garden structures to allow erection of nine dwellings (5 houses, 2 bungalows & 2 coach houses) and associated works – Refused then appeal dismissed.

## 5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 St Neots Town Council – Support the proposal, noting it is in keeping with the locality and minimum impacts on neighbours. Notes that Members would like to see the archaeological investigations on the site as recommended by Cambridgeshire County Council's Archaeological Officer.
- 5.2 Cambridgeshire County Council Highway Authority – No objections to the proposal. The site access is the same as that submitted for previous applications which the Highway Authority had no objections to. Internal parking and turning have been provided and look to be adequate. Accordingly recommend conditions on any planning permission granted.
- 5.3 Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology – No objections to the proposal, subject to the imposition of a condition on any planning permission granted. The site is the same as that submitted for previous applications which the Archaeology Team had no objections to. Due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary.
- 5.4 Huntingdonshire District Council Conservation Officer – Object. The proposed development will result in harm to the special architectural and historic interest of this part of the St Neots Conservation Area.

The proposals do not have regard to the preservation and enhancement of the St Neots Conservation Area, and is therefore not in accordance with ss. 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, and policy LP 34 of the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

In line with the contents of paras 215 of the NPPF, the development will result in harm that falls in the category of less than substantial harm.

The presumption against the avoidance of harm to the conservation area is a statutory one, it is not irrefutable but can only be outweighed only if there are material considerations that are powerful enough to do so.

- 5.5 Huntingdonshire District Council Urban Design Officer – No objections subject to conditions relating to materials, architectural details, hard and soft landscaping, street lighting and delineated parking space for Plot 1.
- 5.6 Huntingdonshire District Council Environmental Health Officer – No objections to the proposal, subject to the imposition of conditions on any planning permission granted. Records show that the site previously held allotments and/or a small holding. A land contamination strategy (and if necessary a remediation strategy) is therefore recommended proper to the commencement of development. Also recommend a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) be submitted in order to protect the very close residential neighbours from noise, vibration, light and air pollution etc during construction works.
- 5.7 Huntingdonshire District Council Arboricultural Officer –No objections conditional to a Tree Protection Plan that shows the location and specification of fencing around the root protection areas of off-site trees that could be affected.
- 5.8 Cadent Gas – No objections, informative note required.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 During the course of the application, six letters of objection from four neighbouring residential properties were received. The material concerns raised have been summarised below:

- Cramped form of development;
- Negative impact on heritage assets including Conservation Area and nearby listed building;
- Impact on neighbouring properties amenities (overlooking, noise and disturbance, loss of light);
- Highway safety (increased traffic and parking and manoeuvring issues, including access for emergency vehicles, refuse collection vehicles and other larger vehicles
- Ground contamination; and
- Impact on trees, Impact of trees on neighbouring properties / boundaries
- Impact to wildlife.
- Impact to underground services
- Proposal omits dimensions of cycle stores.

## 7. ASSESSMENT

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

7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".

7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan (relevant to this application) consists of:

- Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
- St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029

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

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

- The Principle of Development
- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety, Access and parking provision
- Flood Risk and Surface Water
- Biodiversity
- Impact on Trees
- Accessible and Adaptable Homes
- Water Efficiency
- Developer Contributions

## **The Principle of Development**

7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12 December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).

7.7 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old, it is necessary to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires the provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test, a 5% buffer is required here. The 5-year housing land requirement, including a 5% buffer, is 5,907 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,345 homes, equivalent to 3.68 years' supply.

7.8 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the titled balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications. Each planning application will be considered on its own merits and the degree of weight to be attached is a matter for the decision maker. Where an application is situated within a parish with a made Neighbourhood Plan NPPF paragraph 14 should also be taken into account.

### Location and suitability of the site

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

- Concentrate development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities;
- Direct substantial new development to two strategic expansion locations of sufficient scale to form successful, functioning new communities

- Provide opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations for housing, employment, commercial or community related schemes
- Support a thriving rural economy;
- Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside;
- Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and
- Provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation.

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

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

7.12 The site is located within the built-up area of Eaton Socon, which is located within the St Neots Spatial Planning Area as defined by the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. As such, Policy LP7 (Spatial Planning Areas) is considered relevant in this instance. Policy LP7 of the adopted Local Plan states that a proposal for housing development on a site which is additional to those allocated in the Local Plan will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area.

7.13 Given the proposal seeks approval for the erection of four residential dwellings within the built-up area of St Neots, the development is therefore considered to be situated in an appropriate location and acceptable in accordance with LP7 of the Local Plan.

7.14 NPPF Para 84 states: Planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside. NPPF Para 110 states: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made

sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

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

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

- 7.17 The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 at Section 72. This is also reflected in Policy LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.18 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape. This is also reflected in Policy LP10 and LP33 of the adopted Local Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.19 The proposal seeks approval for the erection of four dwellings on land adjacent to No. 31 Luke Street. The site is located within the St Neots Conservation Area.
- 7.20 There have been a number of previous applications on this site as outlined in the planning history section of this report. The most recent of which is HDC reference 25/00596/FUL which was refused at Development Management Planning Committee by Members in August 2025 for the following reason:

1. The site sits within the St Neots Conservation Area. The development would appear unduly cramped, due to the lack of space around the buildings, which with the undue dominance of hard landscaping for vehicles and a lack of space for adequate soft landscaping would result in a poor quality development which would detract from the appearance of the site, the special character and appearance of the St Neots Conservation Area and surrounding area. The proposal does not conserve or enhance the historic environment or respond positively to its context or appear to draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings or contribute positively to the area's character and identify or successfully integrate with adjoining buildings and spaces.

The harm to the designated heritage asset would be less than substantial as set out in the NPPF and therefore the harm has to be weighed against the public benefits but the limited public benefit of the development that include the tidying of the site, the provision of additional market dwellings and the employment opportunities associated with the construction, would not outweigh the harm caused.

As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, and Section 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

7.21 The scheme under consideration by members in the current application proposes the same amount of dwellings in the same position with the same footprint, materials and overall form as that submitted under HDC reference 26/00596/FUL. This current application has been amended to show the central courtyard reduced in size now in gravel (from block paving) to accommodate front gardens with soft landscaping and paving to the front of Plots 1, 2 and 4, with a delineated parking space the front of Plot 1. Plot 1 also has its garage changed from a pitched roof to a double gable roof reducing this elements ridge height from 4.790m to 4.320m. In addition, the floorplans have been re-annotated so that Plots 1-3 are now three bedroom, with the 4<sup>th</sup> bedroom in the previous application now each annotated as a study. Plots 1 and 2 have the ground floor study now annotated as a sitting room. Plot 3's original study is now annotated as a sitting room and an additional rooflight has been provided to the southern front roof plane of this dwelling.

7.22 At this point, it is also worth noting that HDC reference 23/01164/FUL for the proposed erection of six bungalows and associated works was dismissed in an appeal against non-determination, with the Inspector concluding that there would be significant harm arising to the character and appearance of the area and adverse effects on the significance of a designated heritage asset. This remains a material consideration.

7.23 Similarly, Paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Planning Inspectorate's report following the refusal of HDC reference 21/00212/FUL for the erection of seven dwellings and associated works (Appeal Ref: APP/H0520/W/21/3282319) stated that for the purposes of this application site, the significance of the Conservation Area is, in part, derived from the presence of a more open building pattern and provides a less developed character which reflects the former, more rural, setting of Eynesbury. Although Luke Street is part of an irregular network of streets, the pattern of development is clearly defined with buildings that face the highway in a linear form.

7.24 As proposed within the refused proposal for the erection of four dwellings and associated works (HDC reference 25/00596/FUL, refused at Development Management Committee in August 2025), the proposed development for this application comprises four, one-and-a-half storey dwellings arranged around a central courtyard. Ridge heights are a maximum of 6.75m, with Plots 1 and 2 (3-bed units) enclosing the southern side, and Plots 3 and 4 (3-bed) enclosing the northern side. Plots 1, 2 and 3 include attached car ports with ridge heights of 4.79m, enclosing the courtyard's eastern and western edges. Plot 4 features on-plot tandem parking adjacent to the access from Luke Street. The proposed dwellings would be constructed with a buff brickwork, black weatherboarding and red pan tiles – specific details of finishing materials have not been provided as part of this application and would be conditioned.

7.25 The overall architectural approach and visual appearance (including the finishing materials) of the proposed dwellings are considered to be acceptable in principle as they would be consistent with a contemporary barn-style appearance. However, an additional rooflight has been provided to the southern front roof plane to Plot 3. As raised within refused reference 25/00596/FUL, the proposal would include a large number of rooflights on each dwelling that would create a cluttered visual composition. Therefore officers consider that this current application, with the addition of 1 extra rooflight represents a more visually detrimental scheme to that already refused. In addition, the previous report (25/00596/FUL) raised that the northern elevation of Plot 1 featured areas of unmitigated cladding which would need to be addressed to make the proposal acceptable. This has not been addressed and remains as previously submitted and therefore concerns regarding materials remain on this current scheme.

7.26 The reduction in bedroom numbers from 15 to 12, the soft and hard landscaping and provision of an undelineated parking space to the front of Plot 1 are supported. However, whilst on the surface this may appear to be a reduction in the scale of the development, it is considered that given the footprint, positioning and massing of the dwellings remain as that previously submitted. The layout has just been reconfigured with minimal landscaping provided. Therefore, officers regard the detrimental impact to the wider conservation area in terms of a cramped development dominated by hard landscaping equally remains. Therefore, as set out in the previous report for residential development on the site 25/00596/FUL in August 2025, the current proposal would represent an intensification of the site from the previous appeal, and proposes no changes to the footprint of the application 25/00596/FUL, refused at Committee on 18 August 2025. It is also noted that previous applications have each in turn been refused on grounds of over intensification.

7.27 It is also considered that the central courtyard remains dominated by hard surfacing with limited planting, although it is acknowledged that approximately 4 metres of additional grassed and hedge soft landscaping has been provided via front gardens from the previous 25/00596/FUL application. While this is welcome, it does not sufficiently address the previous reason for refusal and continues to conflict with previous Inspector concerns regarding visual amenity and landscape integration. The Inspectors in each appeal have raised similar concerns regarding the quantum of development resulting in a cramped layout alongside the amount of hard surfacing and corresponding lack of space for soft landscaping. Further concerns related to the lack of harmony with the prevailing linear development pattern and long verdant gardens within this part of the St Neots conservation area which remain in this current scheme.

7.28 Para 10 of the most recent appeal decision (Appeal Ref APP/H0520/W/23/3333921, for HDC reference 23/01164/FUL, which proposed six bungalows and associated works) stated that the proposal would retain a number of elements previously found to be harmful. ‘The layout would still be dominated by hard surfaced areas for vehicle access and parking through the centre of the site. In particular the parking and turning arrangements to the rear appear convoluted and prone to indiscriminate parking that would cause potential cluttered environment dominated by parked cars.’

7.29 Para 12 and 13 go on to state that ‘The layout would differ significantly from the established pattern of linear housing in front of and to the rear of the site and the extensive use of hardstanding would jar with the generous verdant gardens of the properties on Luke Street. Although there would be limited visibility of the dwellings from the public realm on Luke Street, the cramped layout

and extent of hard surfacing and parking on the site would be readily visible from the upper floors of several surrounding properties. It would form a conspicuous development that would fail to respect the prevailing characteristics of the surrounding built form or positively reference the historic use of the site or its longstanding open character.‘

7.30 The Inspector therefore concluded that the development was cramped and out of character with the surrounding area, with excessive hard surfacing, minimal landscaping, and a layout that lacked visual harmony. It failed to respect the historic, verdant pattern of development and caused less than substantial harm to the significance of the St Neots Conservation Area, contrary to Policies LP11, LP12, LP34 and the NPPF.

7.31 It is acknowledged that the applicant has attempted to improve the scheme to that already refused at Committee (18 August 2025, under reference 25/00596/FUL). It is also acknowledged that third parties have raised concerns in regards to a cramped form of development and negative impact on heritage assets. These concerns are addressed below. Whilst some elements of these amendments are welcomed, it is considered that it still represents a cramped form of development, and the layout will still be dominated by hard surfacing, with excessive use of rooflights and unmitigated cladding resulting in a cluttered visual composition. The development will also still differ significantly from the established historic pattern of linear housing surrounding the site. It is therefore considered that the proposal does not overcome the cramped form of development reasons for refusal as the similar scheme refused at Development Management Committee in August 2025 or Inspectors previous concerns relating to residential development on the site, or indeed historic previous reasons for refusal for residential development on the site. Overall, therefore, officers consider that the proposal will still form a conspicuous development that would fail to respect the prevailing characteristics of the surrounding built form or positively reference the historic use of the site.

7.32 As was the case in the previously refused application determined by Members in August 2025 (25/00596/FUL), the application proposes a carport to Plot 1, located adjacent to the site entrance. It was raised in the 25/00596/FUL report that this carport led to a reduction in soft landscaping from the previously refused planning application (23/01164/FUL) and contributed to a sense of enclosure and a poor vista, reflecting previous concerns raised by the Inspectorate in appeal reference APP/H0250/W/21/3282319. The current application retains this carport and similarly reduces the opportunity for landscaping and results in a poor vista and sense of enclosure as set out in previous applications.

7.33 Plans submitted within this current application show the car port for Plot 1 to have changed roof form from gable-fronted to a double gable roof form with its ridgeline reduced in height now parallel with the proposed courtyard. These changes are noted by officers, but are considered relatively minor alterations that do not overcome previous design concerns or satisfy previous reasons for refusal on design grounds. The northern elevation of this carport is shown wholly clad in weatherboarding. As outlined in the previous report (25/00596/FUL), no amendments have been made to break up the unmitigated weatherboard elevation of the car port visible from the site entrance and therefore remains unacceptable.

7.34 Overall, in comparison with the proposed scheme for four dwellings on the site refused by Members in August (25/00596/FUL), it is considered that the scheme is still cramped and contrived, with the retention and addition of multiple rooflights creating a cluttered visual composition. Hard surfacing still predominates the core of the scheme. No visitor parking is provided and the potential for indiscriminate parking would result in a cluttered urbanised environment. The development will differ significantly from the established historic pattern of linear housing surrounding the site. Whilst the size of gardens has been increased this is still small in contrast to the generous gardens to properties on Luke Street.

7.35 It is acknowledged that backland development exists nearby, most notably that immediately next to the site at Sandy Court (approved in 2008) and also Pawley Court (approved in 2016) a short distance away. While these developments provide landscaping to the front of the dwellings to offset to some degree the hard surfaced areas and prominence of parking areas, it must also be acknowledged that these developments were approved when now-superseded policies were in place and do not justify poor quality development in the current scheme.

7.36 Notwithstanding the amended scheme following the previously refused planning application, the Council's Conservation Officer has fully assessed the current scheme and has concluded that the proposed development would result in less than substantial harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the St Neots Conservation Area due to the proposal resulting in a cramped contrived development that fails to respect the prevailing characteristics of the surrounding built form.

7.37 Overall, it is not considered that the amended scheme has addressed the previous reasons for the refusal and the concerns raised by the Planning Inspectorate in relation to its overall design and impact on the St Neots Conservation Area.

## **Residential Amenity**

7.38 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings. Neighbour concerns relating to residential amenity and contamination are addressed in this section.

7.39 Previous iterations of the proposal have raised concerns regarding impacts on neighbouring properties amenities, however, the associated appeal decision for 21/00212/FUL concluded that the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring properties amenities. The most recent appeal decision, 23/01164/FUL, which was an appeal against non-determination, was dismissed and whilst the residential amenities of neighbouring properties were not considered to be adversely affected, the Inspector concluded in his report (APP/H0520/W/23/3333921) that the proposal would fail to provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation for future occupants in terms of the private external space to plots 1, 2, 3 and 4.

7.40 As is the case in the previous application (25/00596/FUL), the proposed dwellings and car ports within this current scheme are sited closer to the western boundary than the previously refused application (23/01164/FUL). Plot 3 and its attached car port are positioned approximately 3.4m and 2m, respectively, from the boundary with No. 47 Luke Street (compared to 4.4m-5.8m previously). However, the building height and the length of No. 47's garden are considered sufficient to mitigate any overbearing impacts.

7.41 Nevertheless, the first-floor side-facing windows serving bedroom 3 and the first-floor study to Plot 3 would result in overlooking impacts on the private rear amenity space of No. 47 Luke Street. Accordingly, a condition may be applied to any consent given to the application to ensure that the first-floor windows to bedroom 3 and the study of Plot 3 are obscure glazed fixed pane (non-opening) windows which are annotated on the proposed elevations as such. This is considered to address concerns with regard to overlooking and loss of amenity to the western neighbour at No.47 Luke Street.

7.42 In regard to amenity of the future occupiers, the layout, orientation and fenestration positioning will ensure privacy of all properties is maintained to a good level in accordance with planning policy. It is also considered that each property would include a suitably sized amenity space for future owners/occupiers with the depths of rear gardens ranging from 9.75m to 11.15m. In addition, Plot 2 benefits

from access to a long triangular section of the site extending behind Nos. 47–65 Luke Street.

7.43 As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

### **Highway Safety, access and Parking Provision**

7.44 Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles. Policy PT2 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan states that all development proposals which include an element of residential development must provide adequate space for vehicle parking to meet the expected needs of residents and visitors.

7.45 The applicant has submitted access details which indicate visibility splays for the combining of access for the subject site and adjoining plot (Sandy Court). Although neighbours have raised concerns regarding highway safety and incorrect drawings, Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority have reviewed the proposals and advise they have no objections to the proposed development subject to conditions.

7.46 With regard to car parking, it is recognised that in terms of floorplans, the scheme as submitted features similar floorplans as already refused with the notable difference that Plots 1, 2 and 3 each have a room annotated as a study rather than a fourth bedroom. Furthermore, the plans also show an un-delineated car parking space to the front of Plot 1. While this attempts to prove that the amount of car parking requirements have been addressed, given the car space is not formal and that each study could reasonably be used as a bedroom, these changes carry little weight in terms of improvements. Vehicle tracking plans have been submitted to demonstrate the turning space requirements, however these plans do not take into account the situation where visitors are parking or negotiating the site.

7.47 On balance, given that Cambridgeshire County Council Highway Authority have confirmed that internal parking and turning have been provided and look to be adequate, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that adequate off-street car parking provision is provided with sufficient turning space to ensure that vehicles can enter the public highway in a forward gear.

7.48 Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 and the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2017) seeks the provision of secure and covered cycle parking on the basis of 1 space per bedroom. The proposed development would provide policy compliant cycle parking provision and plans and elevations of the proposed cycle stores have been submitted and would be secured by condition if planning permission were to be granted.

7.49 It is also worth noting that the Planning Inspectorate concluded in the most recent appeal decision (Ref: APP/H0520/W/21/3282319) that the proposed development is unlikely to have an adverse effect upon matters including highway safety.

7.50 Therefore, subject to appropriate conditions the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and therefore accords with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

## **Flood Risk and Surface Water**

7.51 The site is at the lowest risk of flooding according to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024 and Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zone 1) and the proposal is for minor development. Accordingly the sequential and exceptions tests for flooding nor the submission of a flood risk assessment are considered necessary in this instance in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG.

7.52 It is proposed to manage surface water from the proposed development through the use of soakaways with the disposal of foul sewage via the mains sewer. The proposed methods are considered to be acceptable in this instance, and officers are satisfied that full details of the surface and foul water drainage can be secured as part of building regulations and other relevant legislative requirements in this instance.

7.53 Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water and therefore accords with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy P4 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

## **Biodiversity**

7.54 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on

biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development. Neighbours have raised concerns regarding impact of the development upon wildlife.

- 7.55 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been submitted and identifies no significant ecological constraints within the site. The report concludes that the proposed development will not impact any protected species. The Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the recommendations set out in the submitted PEA are appropriate and satisfactory and recommend planning conditions securing the recommendations are annexed to any planning permission.
- 7.56 As well as the above (and separate from the requirements of LP30) as of the 2nd April 2024 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) is required, 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.
- 7.57 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been submitted with the application which confirms that the baseline habitat value of the site is 0.42 units and the post development habitat value of the site is 0.28 units. This results in a net loss for low distinctive habitats of 34.08%. Accordingly a total of 0.19 off-site units will be required in order for the proposal to achieve a 10% net gain in habitat units as set out in the Environment Act (2021). A Biodiversity Net Gain Management Plan including recommendations for the implementation, management and monitoring of the site for at least 30 years is also required. Therefore it is considered that off-site area habitat units to meet the deficit should be conditioned for purchase prior to development commencing along with the submission of the required management plan.
- 7.58 Overall, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied with the findings of the submitted PEA and BNG Assessment and as such the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy LP30 and the NPPF (2024) subject to the imposition of conditions.

### **Impact on Trees**

- 7.59 Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and that a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to

conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development.

7.60 The Arboricultural Officer (AO) has been consulted on the proposal who notes that the site is within a designated conservation area (CA), with no trees subject to a Tree Protection Order. Stating that there are very few trees on or near the site, and with the houses located where they are, the AO concludes that the likelihood of any significant impact to the neighbours' trees is slight. The site is within a conservation area and all qualifying trees are therefore afforded legal protection. The canopies of two mature trees to the southern end of the site overhang the boundary, and their root protection areas could be affected by the development. In addition, the cycle stores nearby may be heavily shaded and subject to falling debris throughout the year. Tree T7 may also be impacted so will need to be protected during works. It is also likely that these trees would prevent the establishment of the proposed new trees that appear to be planted directly underneath their canopies. As the proposal does not currently indicate the protective measures to be used to avoid damage to the Root Protection Areas (RPA's) of adjoining trees, conditions should be imposed to secure a Tree Protection Plan showing protective fencing around the RPA's and a comprehensive landscape plan should be appended to any consent given to the application. These comments address neighbour concerns relating to impact to trees on and close to the site.

7.61 Therefore, notwithstanding the required condition, the proposals are considered to accord with Policy LP31 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

### **Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings**

7.62 Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 states that proposal for new housing will be supported where they meet the optional Building regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' unless it can be demonstrated that site specific factors make this impractical or unviable.

7.63 To ensure that the development can meet these standards a condition would be imposed on any permission that may be granted in this regard in accordance with Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

### **Water Efficiency**

7.64 Policy LP12 (j) of the Local Plan to 2036 states that new dwellings must comply with the optional Building Regulation requirement for water efficiency set out in Approved Document G of the Building Regulations. A condition will be attached to any consent to ensure

compliance with the above, in accordance with Policy LP12 (j) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

## **Developer Obligations**

### Bins

7.65 Part H of the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) requires a payment towards refuse bins for new residential development. A Unilateral Undertaking Form in respect of wheeled bins has been received by the Local Planning Authority dated 8th October 2025. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Policy LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Developers Contributions SPD (2011).

### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

7.66 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.

### **Other**

#### Archaeology

7.67 Records indicate that this site lies in an area of very high archaeological potential, situated to the south of 13<sup>th</sup> Century Saint Mary's Church.

7.68 Due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is therefore required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and the establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary.

7.69 Accordingly Archaeology have requested a condition requiring a programme of historic building recording in advance of any demolition or alteration taking place. This is considered reasonable and necessary should planning permission be granted.

#### Contamination

7.70 Records show that this site was previously allotments and/or a small holding. Accordingly, Huntingdonshire's Environmental Health Officer has been consulted and has advised that if minded to approve the application, conditions should be imposed requiring

a land contamination assessment, and if necessary a remediation strategy, prior to the commencement of development. Such conditions are considered reasonable and necessary should planning permission be granted.

#### Impact to underground services

7.71 It has been raised that the proposed development may impact services that are located on the site. Cadent Gas were formally consulted on the application and raised no objections subject to an informative note being appended to any consent given to the application.

#### Cycle Stores

7.72 It has been raised that the proposed cycle stores are not dimensioned. Drawing JLG506/CYD/05 'Plans and Elevations Cycle Store', received by the Local Planning Authority on 26/09/25 include measured plans and elevations.

#### **Conclusion**

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

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

7.75 A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS). While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

7.76 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to

applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the titled balance'.

7.77 NPPF para 11 states:

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

*For decision-taking this means:*

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

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

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

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

7.78 As outlined in the report, there is a strong reason for refusal in relation to designated heritage assets. Therefore, there is a reason to not move forward to test d (ii) as per above and thus the 'titled balance' is disengaged.

7.79 Less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area has been identified. Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

7.80 While it is recognised that the site constitutes previously developed land and there would be benefits to bringing it back into use, the public benefits of the erection of four, private residential

dwellings in this instance are not considered to outweigh the previously identified harm that would arise from the proposal.

7.81 Overall, the proposed development is considered to be of a poor design by virtue of its cramped form of development, quantum of hardsurfacing within the site, site layout and lack of soft landscaping that would result in harm to the character and appearance of the site and less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the St Neots Conservation Area. The public benefits of the proposal are not considered to outweigh the identified harm. As such, the proposed development is considered to be contrary to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies LP11, LP12, LP14 and LP34 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

7.82 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. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be refused.

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

1. The site sits within the St Neots Conservation Area. The development would appear unduly cramped, due to the lack of space around the buildings, which with the undue dominance of hard landscaping for vehicles and a lack of space for adequate soft landscaping would result in a poor quality development which would detract from the appearance of the site, the special character and appearance of the St Neots Conservation Area and surrounding area. The proposal does not conserve or enhance the historic environment or respond positively to its context or appear to draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings or contribute positively to the area's character and identify or successfully integrate with adjoining buildings and spaces.

The harm to the designated heritage asset would be less than substantial as set out in the NPPF and therefore the harm has to be weighed against the public benefits but the limited public benefit of the development that include the tidying of the site, the provision of additional market dwellings and the employment opportunities associated with the construction, would not outweigh the harm caused.

As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act

1990, Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, and Section 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

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:**

Enquires about this report to **Marie Roseaman, Senior Planning Officer** [marie.roseaman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:marie.roseaman@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

Schedule of Planning Applications – 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
The following application/s are for listed building consent				
S1	25/01205/LBC	<b>Mr and Mrs Lee</b> <b>17 Cambridge Street St Neots PE19 1JL</b> Proposed limewash to external elevations, removal of decorative timber work to rear, removal and replacement of modern door and rear windows. Installation of log burner and flues to chimneys and installation of new partition to dining room.	SUPPORT	Within a sustainable location. Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape and character of the area.
The following application/s are in a conservation area				
S2	25/01839/FUL	<b>Mr Jonathon Ironson Irons</b> <b>Montagu Square Day Nursery Montagu Street Eynesbury</b> Demolition of an existing derelict outbuilding at the rear of Montagu Square Day Nursery and the erection of a new single-storey building to increase capacity and enhance facilities. Insertion of bollards to increase safety around the nursery	SUPPORT	Makes efficient use of the site.
S3	25/01875/FUL	<b>AWJ Usher &amp; Sons Ltd</b> <b>Land Adjacent 31 Luke Street Eynesbury</b> Erection of four dwellings and associated works	SUPPORT Abstained RS	Members would like to see the archaeological investigations on the site as recommended by Cambridgeshire County Council archaeological officer.  In keeping with locality. Minimum impact on neighbours.
S4	25/01865/HHFUL	<b>Mr and Mrs Tozer</b> <b>22 Rycroft Avenue St Neots PE19 1DT</b> Single storey rear infill extension	SUPPORT	Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.
S5	25/01890/S73	<b>AWJ Usher &amp; Sons Ltd</b> <b>38 Ackerman Street Eaton Socon PE19 8HR</b> Variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) of 24/01165/FUL	SUPPORT	We consider the proposal assimilates itself to the existing part of the town.  Satisfactory in terms of scale and pattern of development.
S6	25/01894/FUL	<b>AWJ Usher &amp; Sons Ltd</b> <b>Land Rear Of 34 To 38 Ackerman Street Eaton Socon</b> Erection of bungalow with garage and associated works	SUPPORT RS Abstained	We consider the proposal assimilates itself to the existing part of the town.  Satisfactory in terms of scale and pattern of development.
S7	25/01539/FUL	<b>Mr Jeyaseelan Thambirajah</b> <b>The Bulls Head 96 Cambridge Street St Neots</b> Demolition of single-storey structure, change of use from former public house (Sui Generis) to convenience store (Use Class E) with ancillary first-floor residential accommodation and associated access and car parking area.	OBJECT  RS did not participate in discussion or voting	Demonstrable harm to the amenity of the residents.

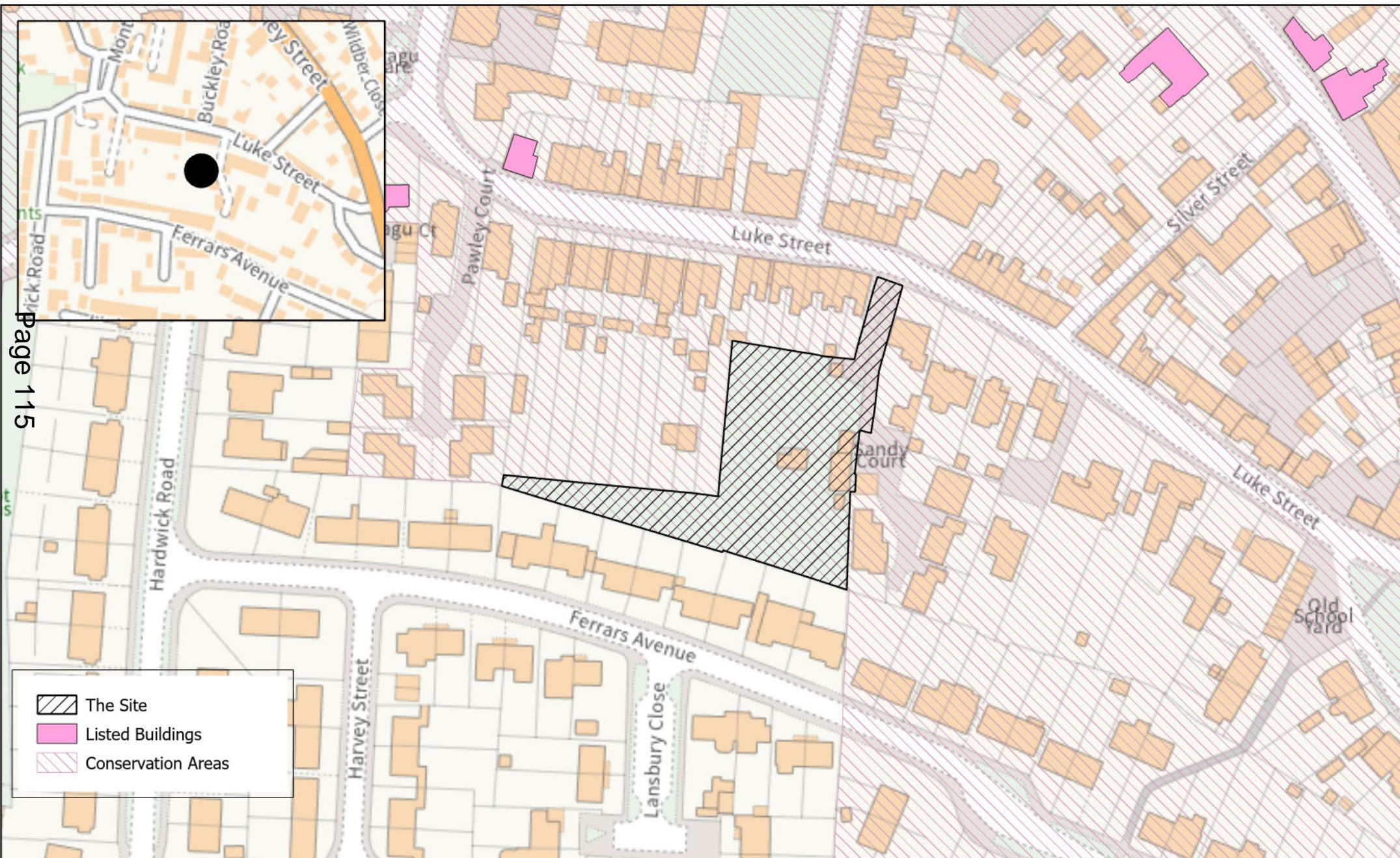
# Development Management Committee

Application Ref: 25/01875/FUL



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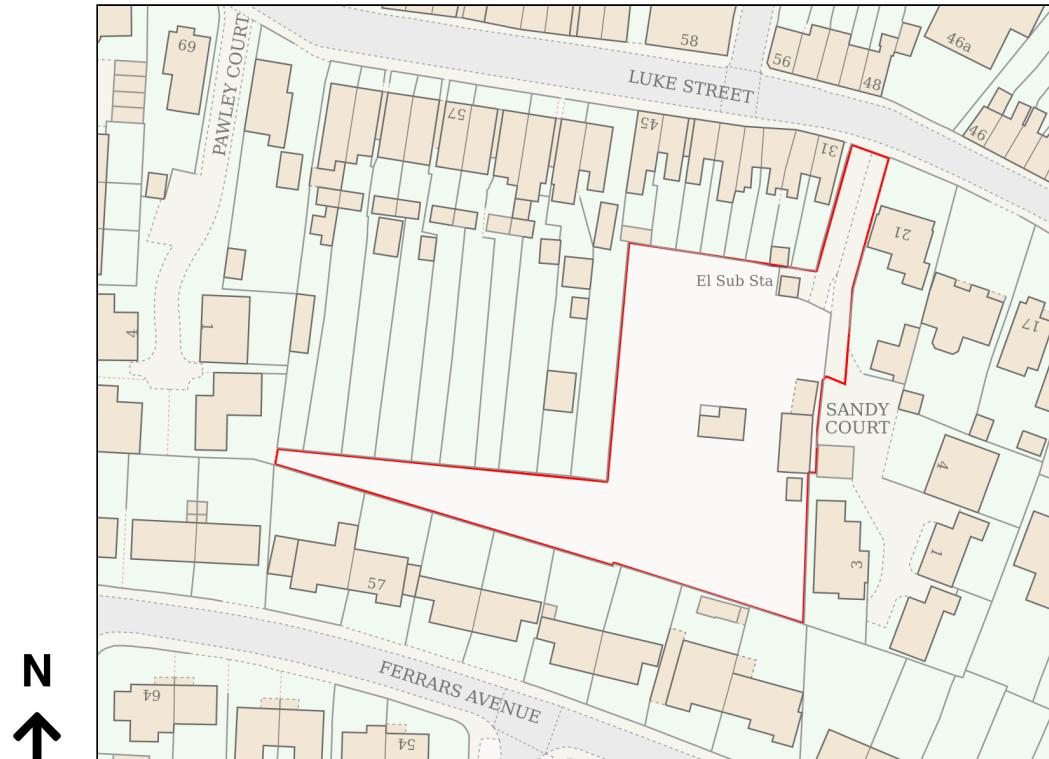
Date Created: 08/01/2026



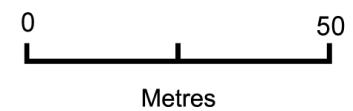
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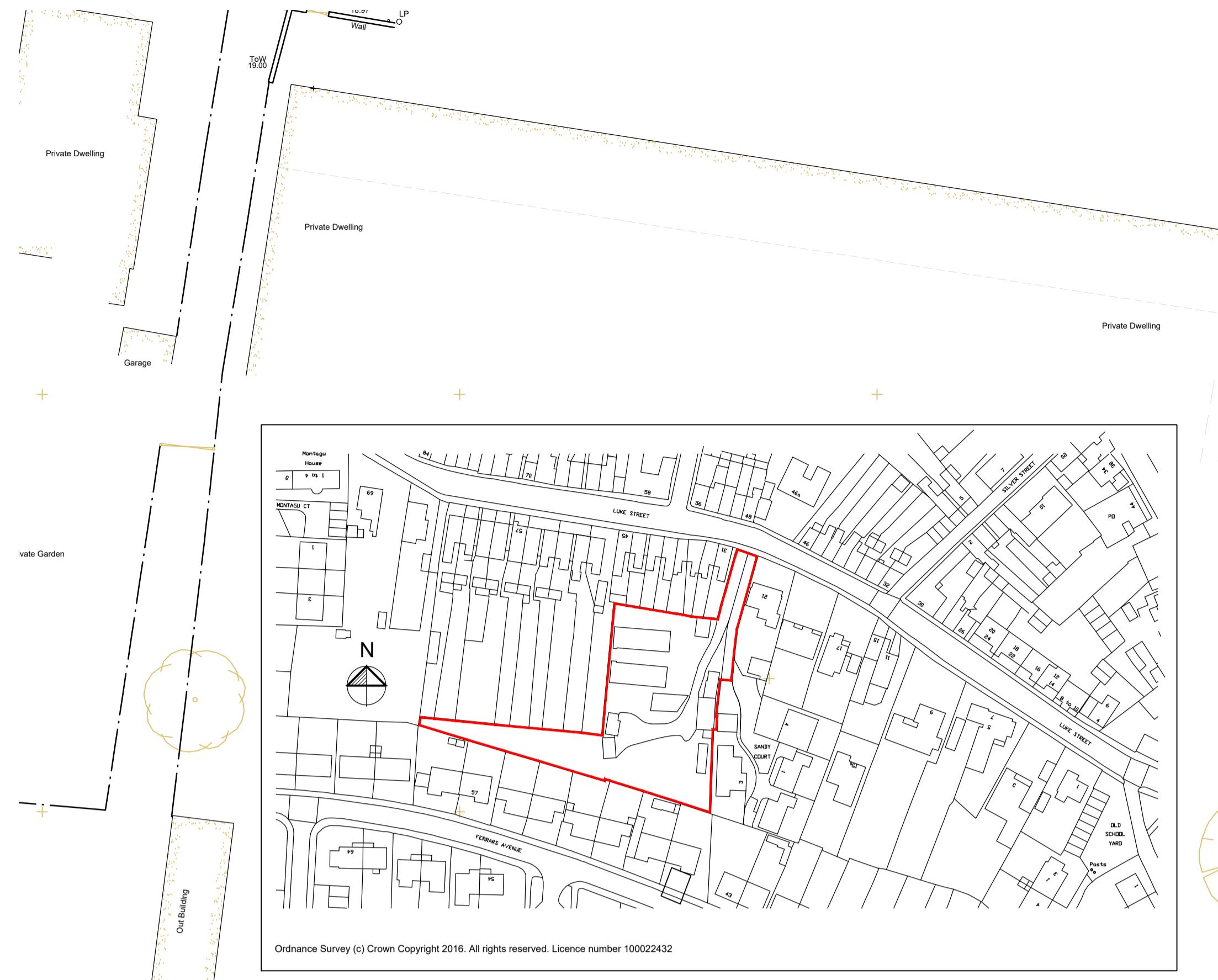
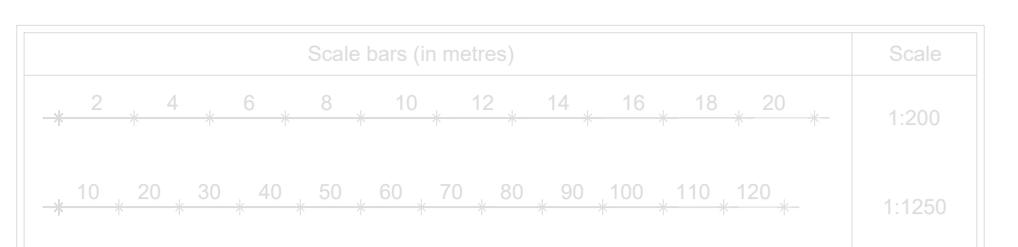
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Planning Portal Reference: PP-14356599v1





Location Plan 1:1250

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Rev C - JG 10.0.2E - Plot 1 carport ref amended  
Rev B - JG - 24.7.25 - Soft landscaping increased to court yard area  
Rev A - JG - 26.6.25 - Double carport to plot 1 changed to single



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

Project:  
Proposed Development adj. to  
Sandy Court, Eynesbury,  
St Neots, Cambs. PE19 2TW.

Drawing:  
Site Layout

Drawn by:  
JG  
Scale: 1:200; 1:1250 Date: 3.2.25  
This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.  
Drawing no: JLG506/CYD/01 Revision C



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Rev C - JG 19.9.25 - Plot 1 carport roof amended  
Rev B - JG - 24.7.25 - Soft landscaping increased to court yard area  
Rev A - JG - 26.6.25 - Double carport to plot 1 changed to single



**JLG Design**  
.co.uk

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8 Tennyson Place  
Eaton Ford  
St. Neots  
Cambridgeshire  
PE19 7LL

## Project: Proposed Development adj. to

Proposed Development adj. to  
Sandy Court, Eynesbury,  
St Neots, Cambs. PE19 2TW.

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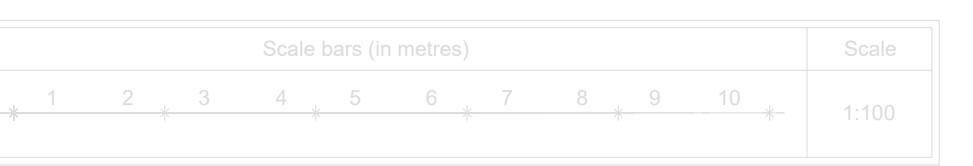
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JG

Scale: 1:200; 1:1250	Date: 3.2.25
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purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

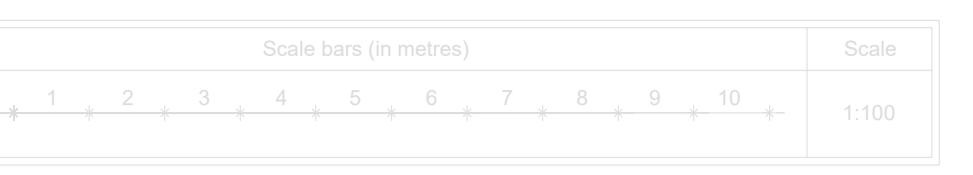
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Drawing no: **JJ G506/CYD/OSP C** Revision



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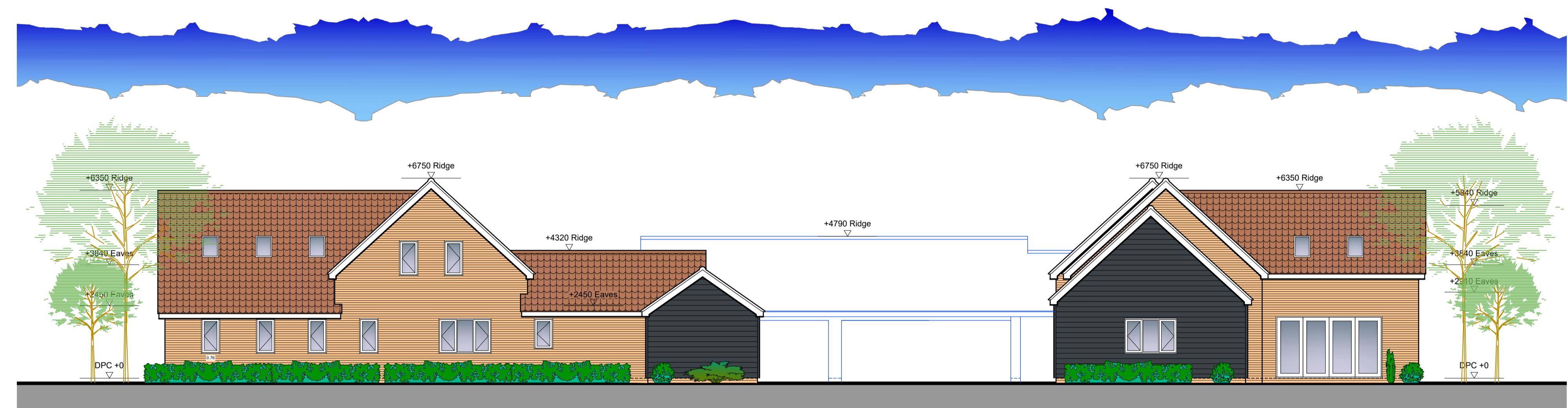




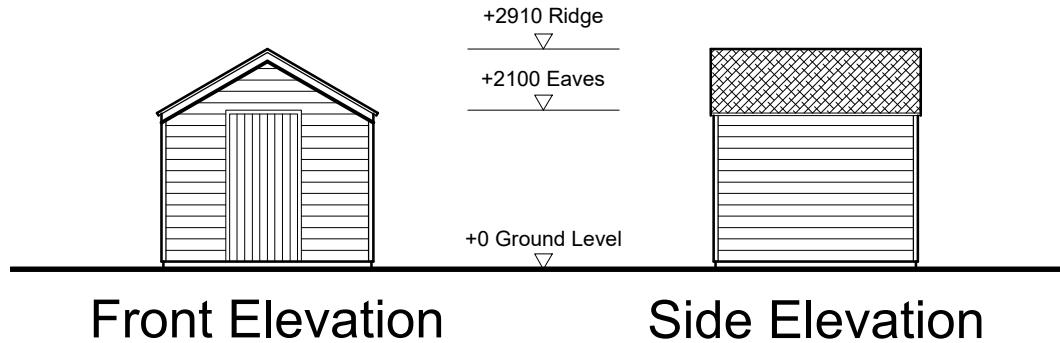
Elevation b - b



Rev B - JG 19.9.25 - Plot 1 carport roof amended  
Rev A - JG - 26.6.25 - Windows to Bedrooms 3 & 4 - Plot 3 noted as fixed pane obscure. Rooflight added to Bed 4 - Plot 3. Double carport to plot 1 changed to single

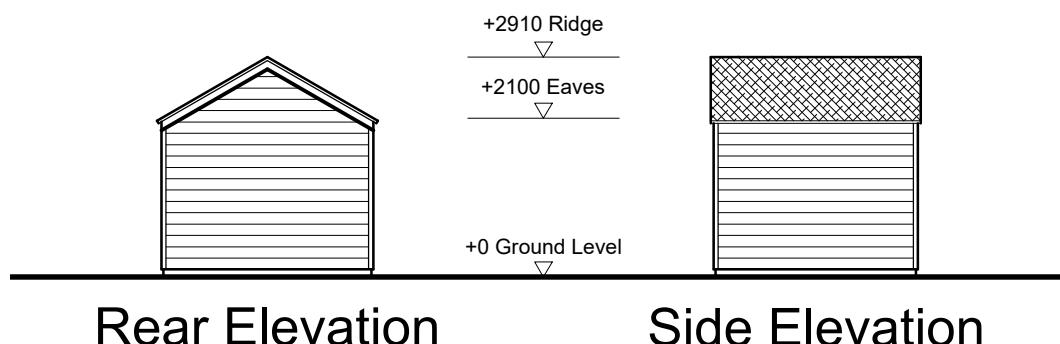


Elevation h - h



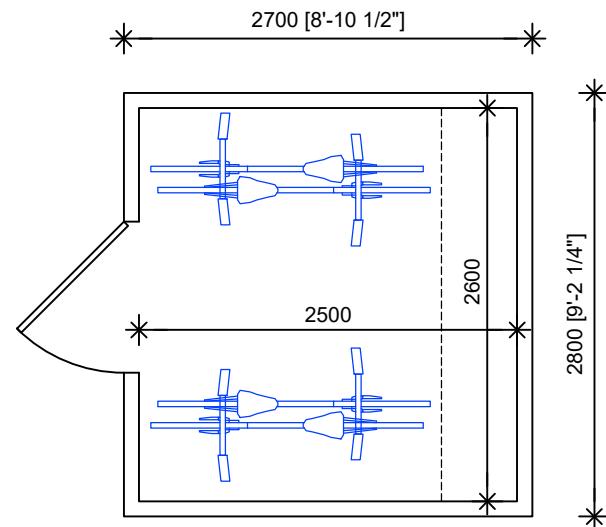
Front Elevation

Side Elevation



Rear Elevation

Side Elevation



Cycle Store Plan

## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2026

**Case No:** 25/01894/FUL

**Proposal:** Erection of three-bedroom bungalow with garage and associated works

**Location:** Land to the rear of 34-38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon

**Applicant:** AWJ Usher & Sons Ltd

**Grid Ref:** 517098 258654

**Date of Registration:** 24.04.2025

**Parish:** St Neots

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### RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

**This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) as the officer's recommendation is contrary to that of the Town Council and the site is within a Conservation Area.**

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 This application seeks approval for the erection of one bungalow with a garage and associated works on land to the rear of Nos 34-38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon. The submitted Design and Access Statement indicates that the site has previously been in use as a pub garden but has seen more built development (additional toilets, 'cellar' and stores, smoking shelters etc) with areas of hardstanding.
- 1.2 The application site is within the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan boundary and is located within the St Neots Conservation Area. The application site is also directly south of the Grade II Listed Building of No. 36 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon.
- 1.3 This application has been accompanied by the following:
  - Planning, Design and Access Statement (including Heritage Statement);
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
  - Biodiversity Net Gain Report.
- 1.4 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 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 places;
- conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment

2.3 Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, 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
- LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
- LP5: Flood Risk
- LP6: Waste Water Management
- LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
- LP11: Design Context
- LP12: Design Implementation
- LP14: Amenity
- LP15: Surface Water
- LP16: Sustainable Travel
- LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- LP21: Town Centre Vitality and Viability
- LP22: Local Services and Community Facilities
- LP25: Housing Mix
- LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
- LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

3.2 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 – adopted February 2016

- Policy A3: Design
- Policy PT1: Sustainable Travel
- Policy PT2: Vehicle Parking Standards for Residential Development
- Policy P4: Flooding
- Policy SS1: Introduction
- Policy SS2: Utilising Historic Buildings
- Policy SS3: Service and Provision

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

- Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017)
- Developer Contributions SPD 2011
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017
- Annual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply (2024)
- St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment (2006)

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

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

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

For full details visit the government website

## 4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 24/01165/FUL - Change of use from public house to residential dwelling – Approved – No. 38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon.

25/00756/FUL - Erection of three-bedroom bungalow with garage & associated works (inc new planting and creation of off-street parking & turning to both existing and proposed properties) –

## 5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 St Neots Town Council – Support the proposal noting that it assimilates itself to the existing part of the town and is a satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development.
- 5.2 Cambridgeshire County Council Highway Authority – The proposed development is acceptable, subject to the imposition of conditions on any planning permission granted. It is noted that the existing dropped kerb will need to be widened and reconstructed.
- 5.3 Huntingdonshire District Council Conservation Officer - Objects to the proposed development noting it would cause less than substantial harm to the St Neots Conservation Area and adjacent Listed Building. More detailed comments are included in the main body of the report.
- 5.4 Huntingdonshire District Council Environmental Health Officer – No objections to the proposal with regards to environmental health matters.

## 6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 One letter of objection was received during the course of the application. The concerns raised are summarised below:
  - Highway safety concerns - lack of off-street car parking with only 3 parking spaces provided, rather than 5 as previously promised.
  - Ideally the site should be used for parking rather than a bungalow to ease parking and congestion within the narrow street.

## 7. ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 When determining planning applications, it is necessary to establish what weight should be given to each plan's policies in order to come to a decision. The following legislation, government policy and guidance outline how this should be done.
- 7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".

7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan (relevant to this application) consists of:

- Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
- St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029

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

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

- The Principle of Development
- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety, Access and parking provision
- Flood Risk and Surface Water
- Biodiversity
- Accessible and Adaptable Homes
- Water Efficiency
- Developer Obligations

## **The Principle of Development**

### Housing Land Supply

7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).

7.7 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test a 5% buffer is required here. The 5 year

housing land requirement including a 5% buffer is 5,586 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,345 homes, 3.68 years' supply.

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

#### Location and suitability of the site

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

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

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

7.11 Policy LP2 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential

development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP2 given that it directs development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities which is consistent with the NPPF.

- 7.12 The site is located within the built-up area of Eaton Socon, which is located within the St Neots Spatial Planning Area as defined by the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. As such, Policy LP7 (Spatial Planning Areas) is considered relevant in this instance. Policy LP7 of the adopted Local Plan states that a proposal for housing development on a site which is additional to those allocated in the Local Plan will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area.
- 7.13 Given the proposal seeks approval for the erection of 1 residential dwelling within the built-up area of Eaton Socon, the development is therefore considered to be situated in an appropriate location and acceptable in accordance with LP7 of the Local Plan.
- 7.14 NPPF Para 84 states: Planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside. NPPF Para 110 states: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.
- 7.15 It is considered that the development would have access to services and facilities within Eaton Socon, and also the means to access larger settlements such as the market town of St Neots through sustainable modes of transport. The development would therefore not result in the development of isolated homes in either the edge of settlement or countryside, nor would the future occupiers have an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle as other options are available in the settlement.
- 7.16 It is determined therefore that the site is considered to be sustainable for the amount of development hereby proposed.

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

- 7.17 The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that special regard is given to preserving the listed buildings and their settings in relation to Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Local Planning Authority is also required to ensure that with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the

desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 at Section 72. This is also reflected in Policy LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.18 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape. This is also reflected in Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

7.19 This application seeks approval for the erection of a bungalow and associated works on land to the rear of Nos. 34 to 38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon. The site is located within the St Neots Conservation Area and is directly to the rear of the Grade II Listed Building of No. 36 Ackerman Street.

7.20 This application follows the previously refused application (25/00756/FUL) for a single bungalow and differs in the following ways:

- The orientation of the L shaped bungalow is flipped, moving the dwelling away from the rear amenity garden of 36 Ackerman Street, providing the only amenity space for the building.
- The front porch has been removed.
- The location of some doors and windows has been changed
- The garage for the bungalow is retained in the same location and size, it is 3.96m to ridge with a 6.51m gable and a dominant roof overlooking the fencing to the listed building at 36 Ackerman Street.
- The footprint is bigger than previously submitted at 15.29m x 15.63m instead of the 14.84m x 15.54m of the refused scheme.
- The scheme has varying ridge heights, with a maximum ridge height of 4.2m, with the previously submitted scheme at a maximum height of 4.41m to ridge, showing a slight reduction in height.
- The post and rail fence forming the eastern boundary permits views into the site, within the Conservation Area. The incongruous and hard landscaped appearance of the site will be very evident and will not preserve the existing character of the Conservation Area.

7.20 The proposed dwelling would be in an 'L' shape, of a hipped roof design and constructed using local facing brick walls and matching roof tiles to those used nearby. The proposed detached garage

would be of a gable-end design and constructed of matching materials to the main dwellinghouse. The proposed dwelling would measure 15.29m by 15.63m with an eaves height of 2.49m and a ridge height of 4.02m.

- 7.21 In principle, a hipped roof design dwelling with a gable-end garage is considered to be acceptable, given the varied street scene and surrounding area, which includes properties and associated buildings of both a gable-end and hipped roof designs. Furthermore, given the mixed finishing materials of properties in the locality, the Local Planning Authority consider that detailed finishing materials to the proposed dwelling could be secured via a suitably worded condition.
- 7.22 Numbers 32, 36 and 38 Ackerman Street are recorded on the 1880 Ordnance Survey map so are all historic buildings which pre-date 1880 and stand within the village of Eaton Socon not far from its historic centre near the Parish Church and village green. Number 38 is a historic public house, formerly The Millers Arms, approved for conversion into a dwellinghouse under 24/01165/FUL.
- 7.23 The St Neots Conservation Area Character Statement describes the streets around the old village green as a complex grain which preserves the rural character. The village centre preserves the elements of its origins as an ancient agricultural settlement which is typified by buildings of a suitable scale to their place in the village hierarchy. It states that such considerations should continue to inform future development decisions and that “further infilling should be resisted if the traditional grain of the historic settlement is to be preserved.”
- 7.24 The proposal site is an undeveloped area which was the beer garden of The Millers Arms, 38 Ackerman Street. Ordnance Survey maps of 1900 and 1924 show no buildings on the proposal site and whilst the Agent has argued that the site has been developed over the years with numerous buildings associated with the public house and beer garden (outside bar, smoking shelter etc) these were predominantly to the rear of the public house along the eastern edge of the application site.
- 7.25 As an area of undeveloped open land, the application site contributes to the setting of the Listed Building at 36 Ackerman Street as an element which allows space around the Listed Building for it to be seen and also seen within the group of historic buildings. The application site is considered to provide a backdrop within which to experience the Listed Building in its historic setting without the intrusion of modern housing. The application site also provides a buffer which creates a physical separation between the historic group of buildings containing the Listed Building and the modern housing estate to the south and east.

7.26 The Conservation Officer has been consulted on the application and considers that the proposed introduction of a modern bungalow in the revised location, would not maintain the existing contribution which the application site makes to the setting of the Listed Building. In addition, the scale of the proposed bungalow, despite the changes, is large in comparison to the scale of the Listed Building and the existing historic buildings, which lie directly north of the site. The proposed bungalow is also of a standard design which is not considered to be sympathetic to the location nor the relationship of the proposal site with the adjacent Listed Building, the group of historic buildings nor the character of the Conservation Area.

7.27 The existing modern housing of Simpkin Close to the south and east of the Listed Building and group of historic buildings on Ackerman Street is laid out in such a way as to respect the space between the modern housing and historic buildings, leaving an area of open ground to the south of the proposal site (in use as an area of single garages serving the modern housing). However, this proposal, despite the change to the location of the proposed dwelling within the plot, infills the space adjacent to the Listed Building and the group of historic buildings, bringing modern development within a few metres of the buildings and removing the existing open space from the setting of the Listed Building.

7.28 The proposed changes to the bungalow location and design are also, still not considered to sustain the significance of the Conservation Area because it proposes the infilling of the site, and this does not maintain the traditional grain of the historic settlement so is contrary to the advice within the Conservation Area Character Statement to resist such infilling. The proposed infilling of the open site is also in conflict with the character of the group of historic buildings as it brings a dwelling into the backlands of the buildings which does not maintain the existing ribbon development pattern of the existing historic buildings nor of the modern housing development.

7.29 For these reasons, the proposed development is considered harmful to the significance of the adjacent Listed Building and harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is not considered to preserve the Conservation Area's character or appearance as it does not maintain the historic grouping of buildings along Ackerman Street nor the grain, scale or character of the historic agricultural settlement. The Council's Conservation Officer has therefore concluded that the level of harm in this instance is less than substantial. Given the nature of the proposed development, any public benefits are considered to be negligible and would not outweigh the identified harm in this instance. As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the

## Residential Amenity

7.30 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

7.31 The neighbouring properties that are most likely to be impacted upon as a result of the proposed development are Nos 32, 34, 36 and 38 Ackerman Street and No. 54 Simpkin Close.

7.32 Due to the change in location within the site more of the proposed dwelling is closer to the shared boundary with No. 32 Ackerman Street. The upright of the L-shaped (measuring 15.29m in total) bungalow follows the shared boundary, at a distance ranging from approximately 2m to 1.3m from the boundary (comprising a 1.8m high fence and proposed hedgerow planting). It is acknowledged that this is a large expanse of wall and roof, however the proposal will be single storey in height only and with the roof sloping away from the neighbouring property the Local Planning Authority consider there is adequate distance and screening to ensure the proposed dwelling does not result in any detrimental impacts on the rear garden of this neighbouring property.

7.33 With regard to no. 34, the proposed dwelling would measure a total width of 6.4m and be approximately 1.9m from the shared boundary which comprises an existing 1.8m high fence that would be retained as part of the proposal. The eaves height of the proposed dwelling would measure 2.49m in height and therefore would exceed that of the boundary fence by approximately 0.69m with the roof sloping away. The full length of the shared boundary with no. 34 is approximately 12.7m long, with the proposed dwelling impacting half of the length of the boundary. The proposed dwelling is directly opposite the built form of no. 34, (rather than no. 34 garden), resulting in sufficient remaining open space for no.34, mitigating the overbearing and overshadowing impact of the proposed building. Whilst it is acknowledged that there will be some overbearing and overshadowing impact on the neighbouring property to the north (no.34), due to the revised layout of the site, from the previous application, it is considered that the impact is mitigated and therefore the proposed dwelling would not result in a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the neighbouring property to the north, such to warrant refusal of the application.

7.34 It is worth noting that whilst the proposed garage would be closer to the shared boundary, it would not result in harm to the neighbouring property of No. 36 Ackerman Street as the eaves

height (1.68m) would be lower at the point of the shared boundary and would not exceed the height of the boundary fence. The dwelling is 9.6m from the shared boundary with no.36. As the proposal is single storey, with the roof moving away from no. 36 it is considered that the previous impacts are mitigated and therefore the proposed dwelling would not result in a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of no. 36 to the north, such to warrant refusal of the application.

- 7.35 The proposed detached garage would be approximately 0.6m from the shared boundary of the private rear amenity space of No. 38 Ackerman Street and would measure 6.5m in length, eaves heights of 1.68m and 2.44m and a ridge height of 3.96m. While it is recognised that the proposed garage would extend the length of the private rear amenity space of No. 38, given the off-centre gable with lower leaves height to the north with the boundary treatments to screen the majority of the proposal, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposed garage would not result in significantly detrimental impacts in this instance. Furthermore, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposed dwelling, in the location proposed, would be an appropriate distance from the shared boundary to No. 38 Ackerman Street.
- 7.36 The access to proposed dwelling would be approximately 1.25m to the shared boundary with No. 54 Simpkin Road – which comprises an existing 1.8m high fence to be retained. While it is recognised that the proposed dwelling would result in some impacts on the neighbouring properties private rear amenity space, given the single storey scale, distance, the roof sloping away from the boundary, existing boundary treatments and being located north-west of the neighbouring property, any impacts are considered to be negligible.
- 7.37 It is also worth noting that given the single storey height and existing boundary treatments to be retained, the proposal would not result in any detrimental overlooking impacts on any other neighbouring properties amenities.
- 7.38 Furthermore, given the proposed development seeks approval for the erection of one dwelling in a predominantly residential area, and the previous use of the site as a pub beer garden, the proposal is not considered to result in any general noise or disturbance impacts on any neighbouring property.
- 7.39 In regard to amenity of the future occupiers, it is considered that property would include a suitably sized amenity space for future owners/occupiers.
- 7.40 Overall, taking the above factors into consideration, namely the revised layout from the previous scheme (25/00756/FUL), the Local Planning Authority consider that the proposal would not

result in unacceptable overbearing, overshadowing and loss of light impacts on the neighbouring properties amenities and therefore the proposal accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard.

### **Highway Safety, access and Parking Provision**

7.41 Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.

7.42 The proposed access has not changed from the previous application (25/00756/FUL). The proposed dwelling would be accessed via an existing vehicular access point off Ackerman Street. Alongside access to the proposed dwelling, the development would include two off-street car parking spaces for No. 38 Ackerman Street. Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority have reviewed the proposals and advise that they have no objections to the proposed development subject to conditions. The existing access is therefore considered to be of an acceptable width and would provide appropriate vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays in both directions. It is noted that the existing dropped kerb will need to be widened and reconstructed. A condition would be imposed on any planning permission granted to ensure the removal of the existing gate.

7.43 The proposed three-bedroom dwelling would include a detached garage for one off-street car parking space with hardsurfacing to the front of the garage for a second car parking space and a secure cycle store to the west of the garage. The proposed off-street car parking and cycle provision are considered to be acceptable and would be secured via a suitably worded condition. It is also worth noting that the proposal would also include two turning heads within the site to ensure that vehicles can enter the public highway in a forward gear.

7.44 As such, subject to appropriate conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and therefore accords with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policies PT1 and PT2 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard.

### **Flood Risk and Surface Water**

7.45 The site is at the lowest risk of flooding according to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024 and Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zone 1) and

the proposal is for minor development. Accordingly, neither the sequential and exceptions tests for flooding nor the submission of a flood risk assessment are considered necessary in this instance in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG.

7.46 It is proposed to manage surface water from the proposed development through the use of soakaways with the disposal of foul sewage via the mains sewer. The proposed methods are considered to be acceptable in this instance, and officers are satisfied that full details of the surface and foul water drainage can be secured as part of building regulations and other relevant legislative requirements in this instance.

7.47 As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water and therefore accords with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy P4 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard.

## Biodiversity

7.48 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.

7.49 This application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) which concludes that the site is of no significant ecological value and no evidence of protected and notable species were recorded. As such, further ecological assessment is concluded to be unnecessary. The Local Planning Authority are satisfied with the submitted PEA and a condition would be imposed on any planning permission granted to ensure development is carried out in accordance with the Precautionary Working Methods Statement detailed within the report.

7.50 As well as the above (and separate from the requirements of LP30) as of the 2nd April 2024 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) is required, 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.

7.51 The application has been accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Report which concludes that the proposed development would result in a 51.75% net loss in habitat units and a 0.06 gain in hedgerow units. In order to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain, 0.07 habitat units would be required. As this shortfall cannot be delivered on-site, off-site credits for habitats of the same distinctiveness or better within the same broad habitat category type will be required and will be secured via a suitably worded condition on any permission that may be granted

7.52 Overall, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied with the findings of the submitted PEA and BNG Assessment and as such the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy LP30 and the NPPF (2024) subject to the imposition of conditions.

### **Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings**

7.53 Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 states that proposal for new housing will be supported where they meet the optional Building regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' unless it can be demonstrated that site specific factors make this impractical or unviable.

7.54 To ensure that the development can meet these standards a condition would be imposed on any permission that may be granted in this regard in accordance with Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

### **Water Efficiency**

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

### **Development Obligations**

#### Bins

7.56 Part H of the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) requires a payment towards refuse bins for new residential development. A Unilateral Undertaking Form in respect of wheeled bins has been received by the Local Planning Authority dated 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Policy LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Developers Contributions SPD (2011).

## Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

7.57 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.

## **Conclusion**

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

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

7.60 A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS). While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

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

7.62 NPPF para 11 states:

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

*For decision-taking this means:*

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

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

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

- 7.63 As outlined in the report, there is a strong reason for refusal in relation to designated heritage assets. Therefore, there is a reason to not move forward to test d (ii) as per above and thus the 'titled balance' is disengaged.
- 7.64 Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.65 Given the proposal seeks approval for the erection of one private residential dwelling, the Local Planning Authority do not consider that there would be any public benefits that would outweigh the identified harm in this instance.
- 7.66 By virtue of the scale, design and siting of the proposed dwelling, the proposed development is considered harmful to the significance of the adjacent Listed Building and harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is not considered to preserve the Conservation Area's character or appearance as it does not maintain the historic grouping of buildings along Ackerman Street nor the grain, scale or character of the historic agricultural settlement. Given the nature of the proposed development, any public benefits are considered to be negligible and would not outweigh the identified harm in this instance. The proposal is therefore deemed to be contrary to Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard and planning permission should be refused.

7.67 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. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be refused.

**8. RECOMMENDATION - REFUSAL for the following reasons;**

1. The site is an area of undeveloped open land to the rear of and associated with the Grade II Listed Building, 36 Ackerman Street and sits within the St Neots Conservation Area. As an area of open land, the application site contributes to the setting of the Listed Building at 36 Ackerman Street as an element which allows space around the Listed Building for it to be seen and also seen within the group of historic buildings. The application site also provides a buffer which creates a physical separation between the historic group of buildings containing the Listed Building and the modern housing estate to the south and east. By virtue of the scale, design and siting of the proposed dwelling, the proposed development is considered harmful to the significance of the adjacent Listed Building and harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is not considered to preserve the Conservation Area's character or appearance as it does not maintain the historic grouping of buildings along Ackerman Street nor the grain, scale or character of the historic agricultural settlement. Given the nature of the proposed development, any public benefits are considered to be negligible and would not outweigh the identified harm in this instance. As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, and Section 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

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:**

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Schedule of Planning Applications – 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
The following application/s are for listed building consent				
S1	25/01205/LBC	<b>Mr and Mrs Lee</b> <b>17 Cambridge Street St Neots PE19 1JL</b> Proposed limewash to external elevations, removal of decorative timber work to rear, removal and replacement of modern door and rear windows. Installation of log burner and flues to chimneys and installation of new partition to dining room.	SUPPORT	Within a sustainable location. Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape and character of the area.
The following application/s are in a conservation area				
S2	25/01839/FUL	<b>Mr Jonathon Ironson Irons</b> <b>Montagu Square Day Nursery Montagu Street Eynesbury</b> Demolition of an existing derelict outbuilding at the rear of Montagu Square Day Nursery and the erection of a new single-storey building to increase capacity and enhance facilities. Insertion of bollards to increase safety around the nursery	SUPPORT	Makes efficient use of the site.
S3	25/01875/FUL	<b>AWJ Usher &amp; Sons Ltd</b> <b>Land Adjacent 31 Luke Street Eynesbury</b> Erection of four dwellings and associated works	SUPPORT Abstained RS	Members would like to see the archaeological investigations on the site as recommended by Cambridgeshire County Council archaeological officer.  In keeping with locality. Minimum impact on neighbours.
S4	25/01865/HHFUL	<b>Mr and Mrs Tozer</b> <b>22 Rycroft Avenue St Neots PE19 1DT</b> Single storey rear infill extension	SUPPORT	Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.
S5	25/01890/S73	<b>AWJ Usher &amp; Sons Ltd</b> <b>38 Ackerman Street Eaton Socon PE19 8HR</b> Variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) of 24/01165/FUL	SUPPORT	We consider the proposal assimilates itself to the existing part of the town.  Satisfactory in terms of scale and pattern of development.
S6	25/01894/FUL	<b>AWJ Usher &amp; Sons Ltd</b> <b>Land Rear Of 34 To 38 Ackerman Street Eaton Socon</b> Erection of bungalow with garage and associated works	SUPPORT RS Abstained	We consider the proposal assimilates itself to the existing part of the town.  Satisfactory in terms of scale and pattern of development.
S7	25/01539/FUL	<b>Mr Jeyaseelan Thambirajah</b> <b>The Bulls Head 96 Cambridge Street St Neots</b> Demolition of single-storey structure, change of use from former public house (Sui Generis) to convenience store (Use Class E) with ancillary first-floor residential accommodation and associated access and car parking area.	OBJECT  RS did not participate in discussion or voting	Demonstrable harm to the amenity of the residents.

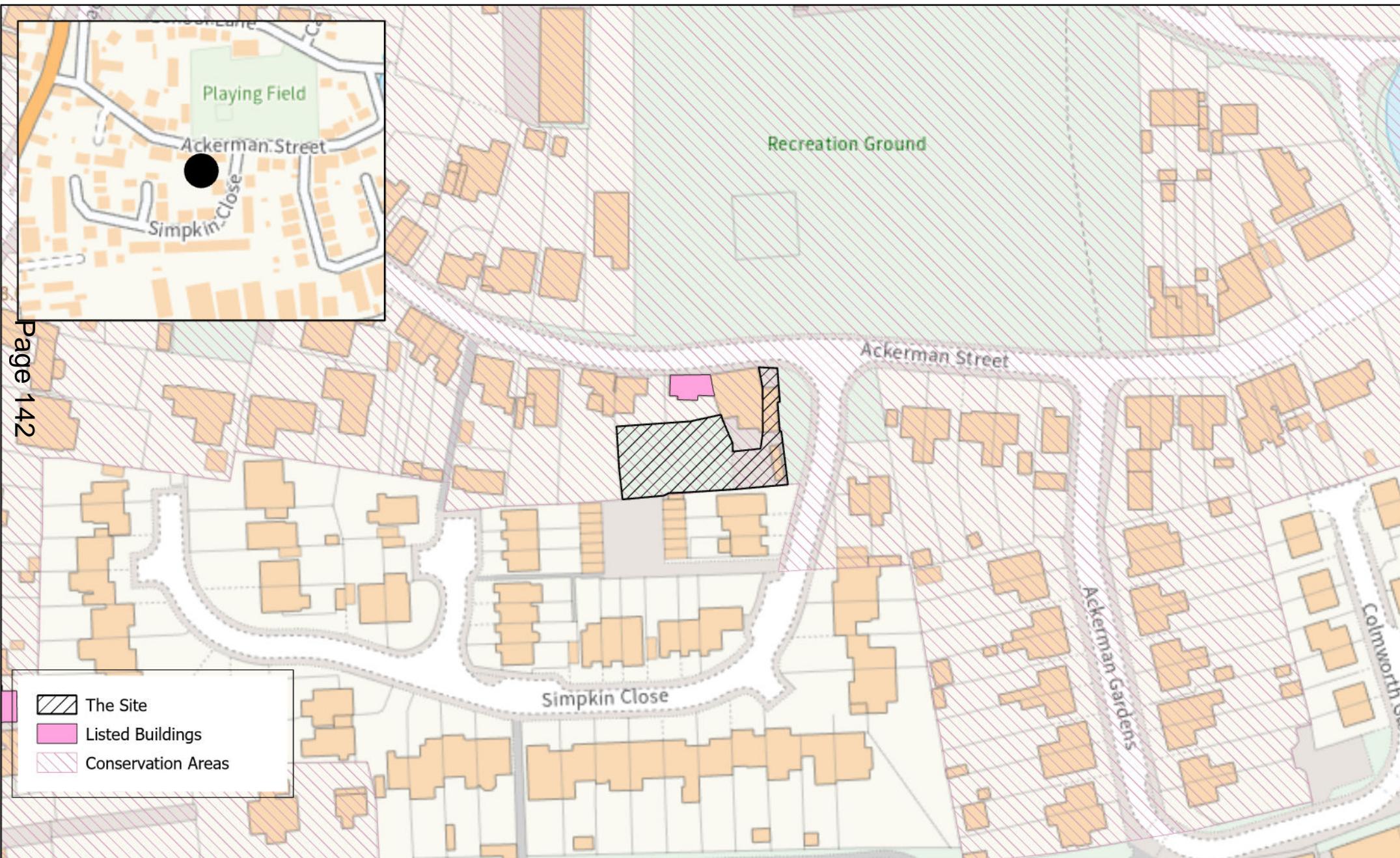
# Development Management Committee

Application Ref: 25/01894/FUL



Scale = 1:1,250

Date Created: 08/01/2026



Date Produced: 30-Sep-2025

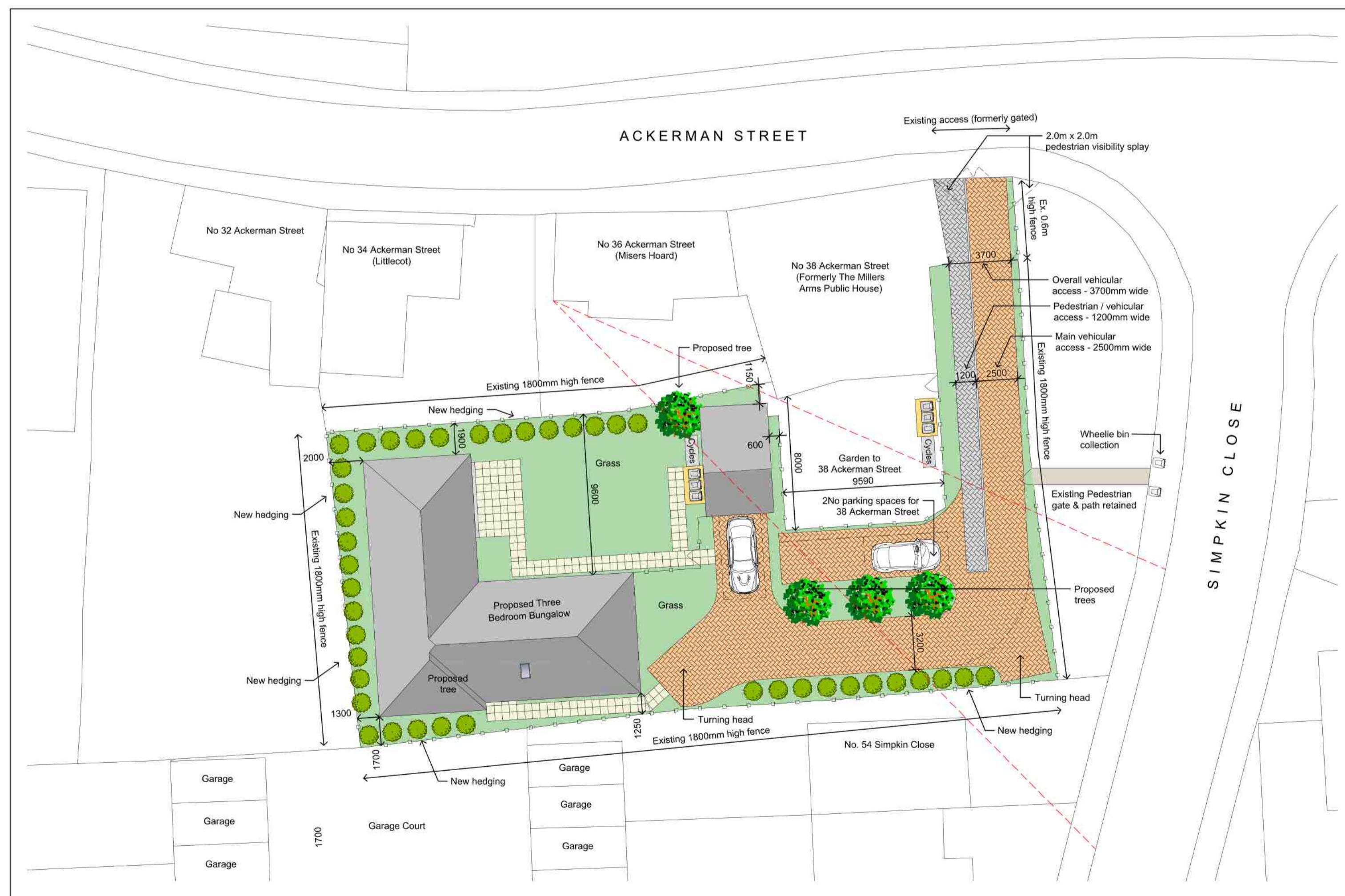
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Page 143

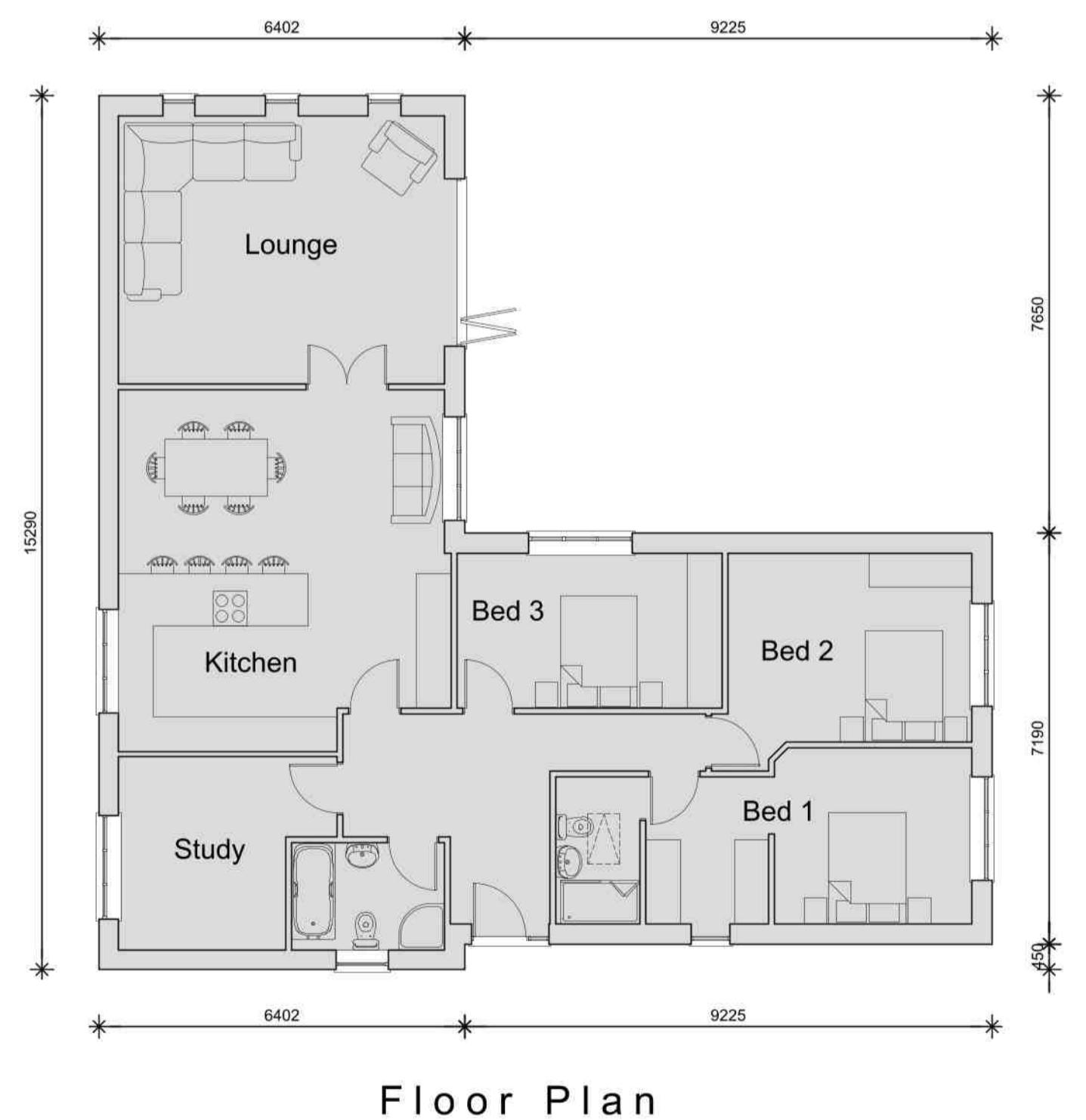
**N**  
↑

Planning Portal Reference: PP-14368890v1

  
0 50  
Metres



Site Layout  
1:200



Floor Plan



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

Project:  
Proposed Bungalow rear of  
38 Ackerman Street, Eaton  
Socon, St Neots. PE19 8HR.

Drawing:  
Plans and Elevations

Drawn by:  
JG

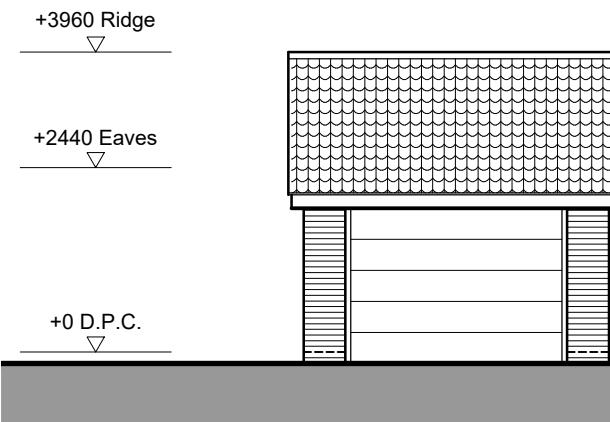
Scale:  
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Date:  
14.9.25

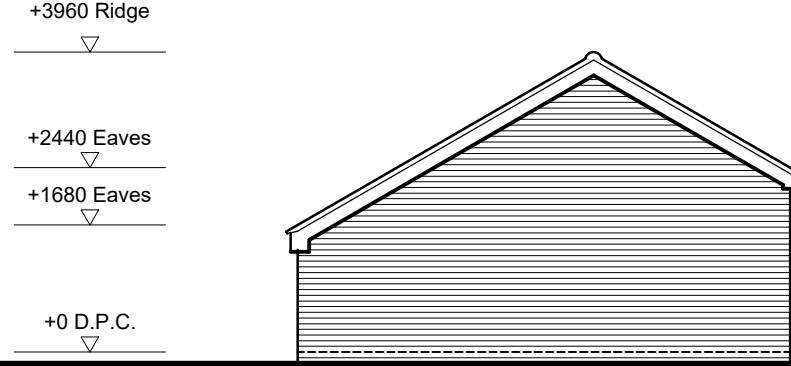
This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

Drawing no:  
JLG1002/NB/S2/01

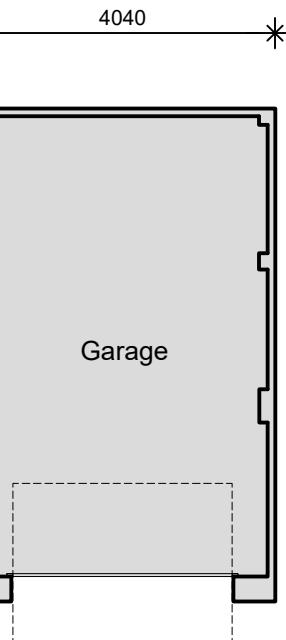
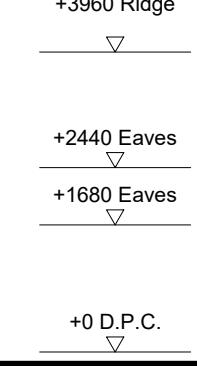
Revision



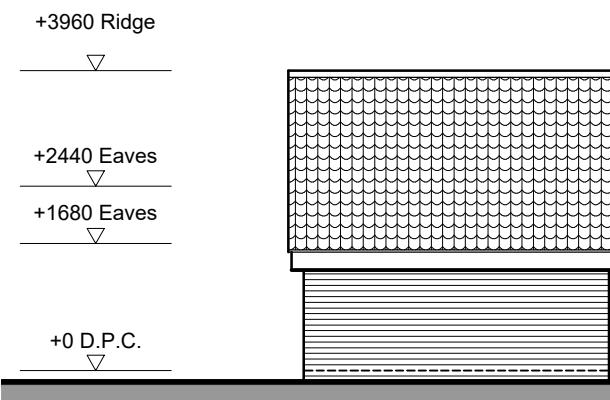
Front Elevation



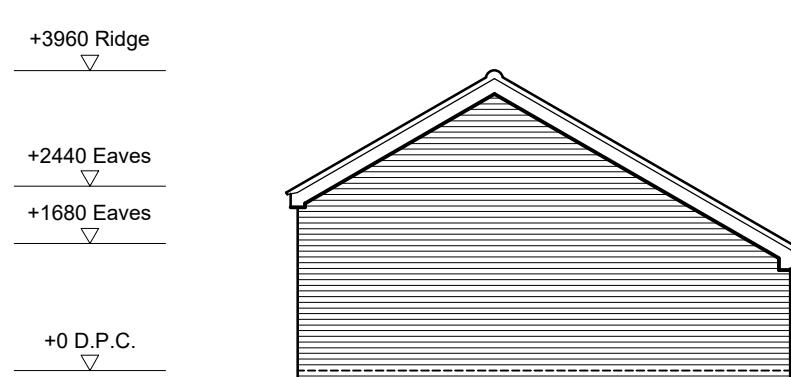
Side Elevation



Plan



Rear Elevation



Side Elevation



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

Project:  
Proposed Bungalow rear of  
38 Ackerman Street, Eaton  
Socon, St Neots. PE19 8HR.

Drawing:  
Single Garage

Drawn by:  
JG

Scale: 1:100	Date: 8.3.25
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This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

Drawing no:  
JLG1002/NB/02

Revision

## Cycle Store Specification

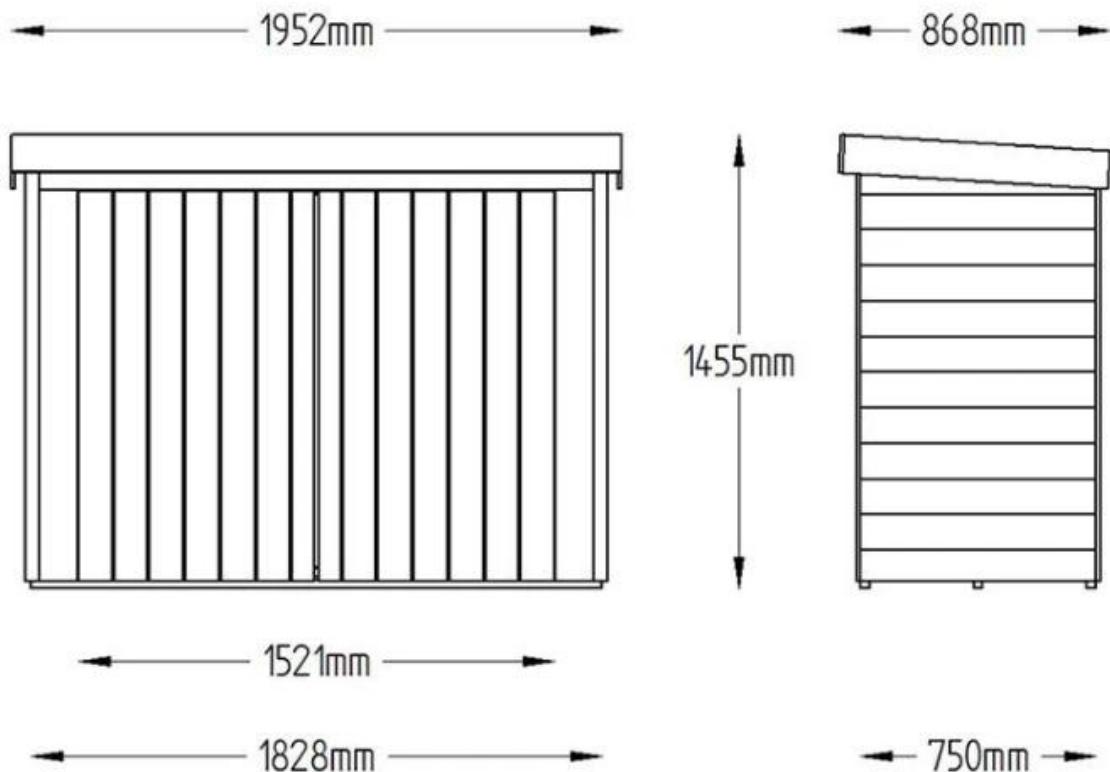
2000-litre capacity - holds 2 adult bicycles

Wide double doors

8mm OSB roof with sand felt covering

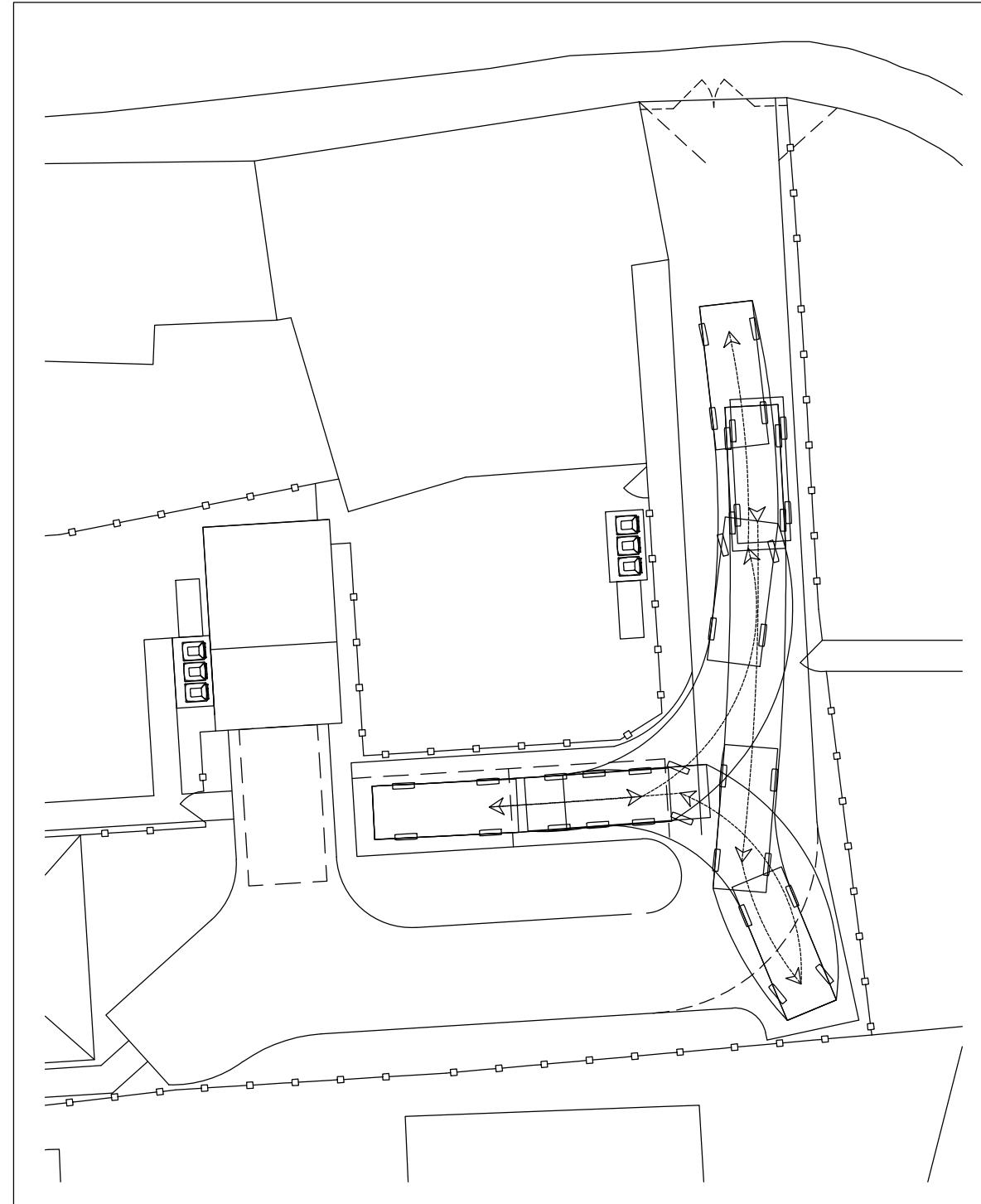
Made in the UK from FSC-certified timber

[6x3 Forest Double Door Overlap Wooden Bike Shed / Mower Store | B&M  
\(bmgardendesigns.co.uk\)](https://www.bmgardendesigns.co.uk/6x3-forest-double-door-overlap-wooden-bike-shed-mower-store)

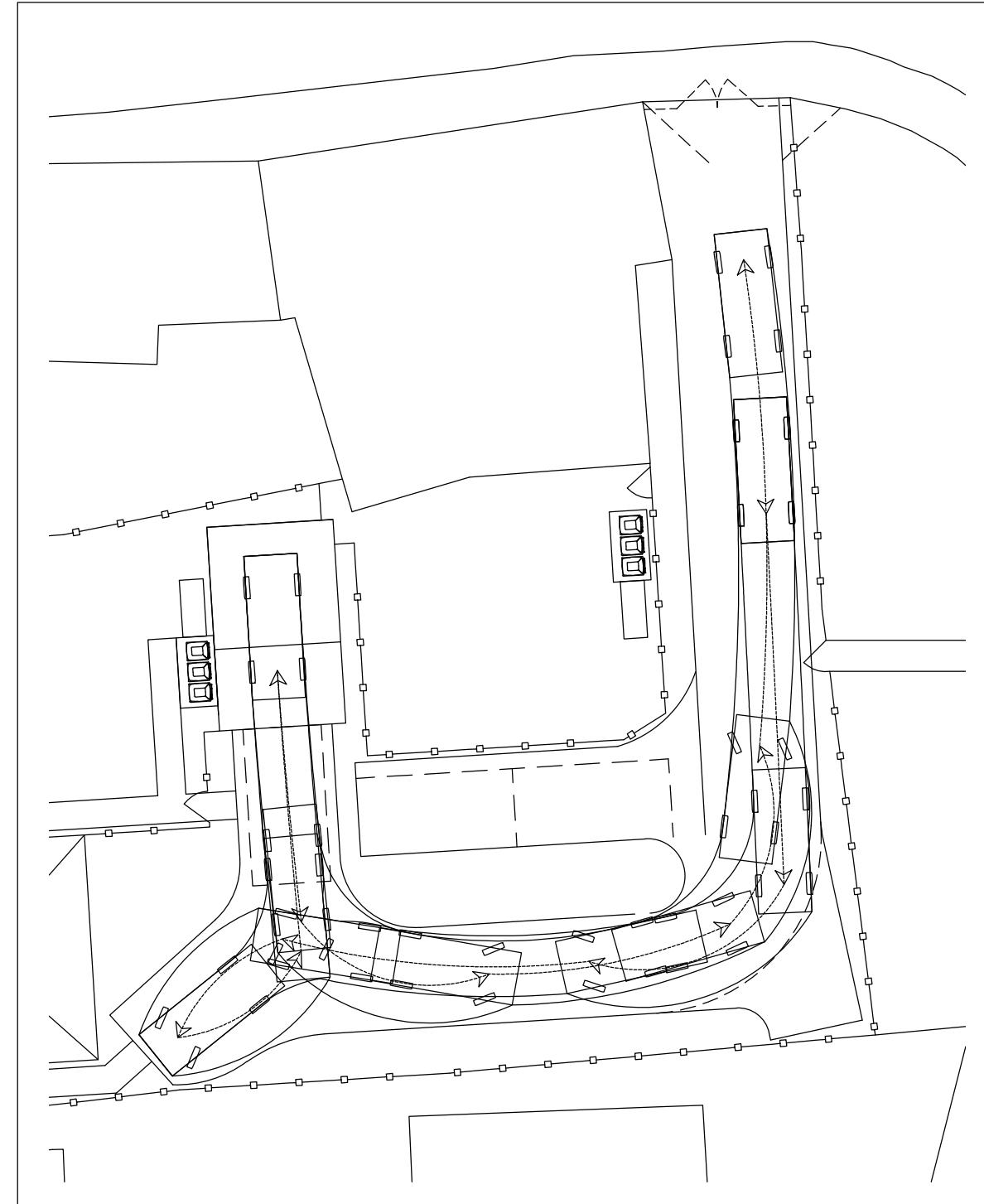


Scale bars (in metres)											Scale
* 2 * 4 * 6 * 8 * 10 * 12 * 14 * 16 * 18 * 20 *											1:200

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Tracking for  
Converted Public House  
1:200



Tracking for  
Proposed Bungalow  
1:200



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St. Neots  
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Project:  
Proposed Bungalow rear of  
38 Ackerman Street, Eaton  
Socon, St Neots. PE19 8HR.

Drawing:  
Vehicle Tracking

Drawn by:  
JG

Scale: 1:100	Date: 15.9.25
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This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

Drawing no:  
JLG1002/NB/10

Revision

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## Planning Appeal Decisions Since December 2025 Committee

Ref No	Appellant	Parish	Proposal	Site	Original Decision	Delegated or DMC	Appeal Determination	Costs
25/006 52/ FUL	Wessex Solar Energy	Haddon / Elton / Chesterton	Installation of a solar park to export up to 25 MW (AC) electricity, comprising up to 40,000no. photovoltaic panels, up to 7no. inverters & transformers, 2no. electrical buildings, 1no. onsite control building, boundary fencing and gates, security cameras, and associated infrastructure and engineering operations.	Land East of Billing Brook and North and South of Peterborough Road, Haddon.	Non-Determination	Committee	Dismissed	No
24/022 30/ LBC	Mr J Hampson	Elton	Single storey extension.	33 Duck Street, Elton, Peterborough	Refusal	Delegated	Allowed	No

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