A meeting of the **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in **THE CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **MONDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 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 AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. **MINUTES** (Pages 7 - 16)

   To approve as correct records the Minutes of the meetings held on 19th and 26th October 2026.

2. **MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

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

3. **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - ST NEOTS - 25/01694/OUT** (Pages 17 - 142)

   Outline planning application for the erection of up to 600 dwellings including 40% affordable, a community hub site including car parking and mobility hub. Public open space including green and blue infrastructure, incorporating footpaths, cycle ways, biodiversity improvements and habitat creation; associated drainage and landscaping including new and existing trees and hedgerows, utilities and other infrastructure. All matters reserved except for means of vehicular access from Priory Hill Road and associated highways works to Mill Lane/Priory Hill/Huntingdon Road - Land Adjacent St Neots Reservoir, Priory Hill Road, St Neots.

4. **APPEAL DECISIONS** (Pages 143 - 144)

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

LATE REPRESENTATIONS (Pages 145 - 152)

16 day of November 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 Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution

Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings

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

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

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

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

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

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website.

Emergency Procedure

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

Attending Council and Committee Meetings

Huntingdonshire District Council welcomes members of the public to attend meetings that are open to the public.

Members of the public may attend, film, photograph, and report on meetings that are open to the public. *

In some circumstances, a meeting may resolve to exclude the public and press to consider confidential or exempt information. Where this occurs, members of the public and press will be asked to leave the meeting room for that part of the meeting.

Most public meetings are webcast live, and recordings are available afterwards. This means you do not need to attend in person to follow proceedings.

The council permits public speaking at the Development Management Committee (planning) meetings.

View further information about **public speaking at Development Management Committees [PDF, 0.5MB]**

The council permits public questions at full council meetings. View further information about **submitting a question [PDF, 0.1MB]**.

Public access and seating

Meetings that are open to the public can be attended by anyone.
Seating in public areas is limited. Where demand exceeds the number of seats available, admission will be managed on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given in the following order:

1. People who live, work or own property within the Huntingdonshire District
2. Other interested members of the public.

This means that attendees within each priority group will be admitted in the order they arrive, subject to the number of seats available.

Reserved seating

Council Meetings - If you have registered in advance to ask a public question at a meeting of Full Council in accordance with the Council's **Constitution [PDF, 1.5MB]**, a seat will be reserved for you.

Development Management, Licensing and Other Regulatory Hearings - If you have registered to speak or make representations in relation to an application or matter being considered by the Committee, a seat will be reserved for you.

You do not need to arrive early to secure your place.

When seating is full

Once all public seats are occupied, no further admission will be possible.

Standing is not permitted in meeting rooms. Additional seating cannot normally be provided, except where required as a reasonable adjustment for accessibility needs, including carers or support workers.
For meetings of the Development Management Committee, Licensing Committee and other regulatory hearings, priority will be given to applicants, objectors, registered speakers and other parties directly involved in agenda items.

Arrival, sign-in and security

All visitors must sign in on arrival.

If attendance is expected to exceed capacity, you may be asked to provide evidence that you live, work or own property within the Huntingdonshire District so that seating priority can be allocated fairly. In these circumstances, we would request a photographic ID and evidence of your address or work premises
We recommend bringing only essential items.

Bags and personal belongings may be subject to security checks. Where necessary, security staff may also conduct further searches.

These arrangements apply equally to all public attending and are intended to help ensure meetings can take place safely and without disruption.

Any personal information collected as part of the sign-in process will be used only for meeting management and safety purposes in accordance with the **Council's Privacy Notice**. Information will be retained no longer than is necessary.

Items not permitted

- Placards, banners, flags or similar items
- Knives, scissors or other sharp objects
- Whistles, air horns, loudhailers or other noise-making devices
- Bottles or other containers containing liquids, except drinking water intended for personal use during the meeting
- Any item that security staff reasonably believe could compromise safety or disrupt the meeting.

If you wish to bring large or specialist equipment into the meeting, such as recording equipment, please contact **Democratic Services** in advance via email to help avoid delays when entering the meeting.

Behaviour at meetings

Everyone attending a meeting is expected to treat others with courtesy and respect. Any form of verbal or physical abuse will not be tolerated. Anyone presenting such behaviour will be asked to leave immediately.

Accessibility

If you have any accessibility requirements, it would be helpful to contact **Democratic Services** before the meeting so we can fully support you.

Speaking at a meeting or asking a question

Members of the public may ask questions at meetings of Full Council.

Members of the public may also speak or make representations at meetings of the Development Management Committee, Licensing Committee, and other regulatory hearings where public participation arrangements apply.

Please note that this must be arranged in advance in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Feedback

If you have concerns about how these arrangements were applied at a meeting, please contact **Democratic Services**.

Legal framework

*Public access to meetings, and the right to film, photograph, record and report proceedings, are governed by legislation including the Local Government Act 1972, Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulation 2014.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held in THE CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Monday, 19 October 2026

PRESENT: Councillor W Smith – Chair.

Councillors L Davenport-Ray, P Gammons, P J Hodgson-Jones, J E Kerr, D McIlwain, D L Mickelburgh, J Neish, T D Sanderson, G Seeff and A Wood.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Hodgson-Jones, A Hunt, J Hunt, D N Keane and L M Simpson.

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors G Seeff and A Wood

22 MINUTES

Subject to the deletion of Minute No 20 (b), to be replaced with:

b) Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for means of access) for the development of up to 70 dwellings, open space, play area, landscaped areas and associated infrastructure - Land south of Blenheim Grove, Offord Darcy - 25/01738/OUT

(Councillor S Young, Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy Parish Council, B Mickelburgh, Ward Member, and A Wright, Agent, addressed the Committee on the application).

A proposal to approve the application was moved by Councillor Sanderson and seconded by Councillor McIlwain. On being put to the vote the proposal was declared to be TIED

At 8.48 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 8.58 pm the meeting resumed.

Upon the Chair's casting vote, the proposal was declared to be LOST.

Following further discussion, a proposal to approve the application was moved by Councillor Sanderson and seconded by Councillor McIlwain. On being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED

that the application be approved subject to conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement, with delegated authority

being given to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection to approve any amendments to conditions as deemed necessary or refused in the event that the Section 106 agreement 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,

the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st September 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor D McIlwain declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 25 by virtue of the fact that that he knew the applicant and had previously been a Member of Ramsey Town Council and served in the capacity of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of the Planning Committee but he had not discussed the application.

Councillor McIlwain also declared a Non-Registrable Interest in Minute No 26 (a) by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward he represented.

Councillor P Gammons declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 25 by virtue of the fact that the application related to the Ward in which he lived.

Councillor A Wood declared an Other Registrable Interest in Minute No 25 by virtue of the fact that he represented the Council on the Middle Level Commissioners.

Regarding Minute No 26 (b), Councillors L Davenport-Ray, P Gammons, S Hodgson-Jones, J Kerr, D McIlwain, D Mickelburgh, J Neish, T Sanderson and W Smith placed on record that they were present when the application was considered at the Development Management Committee meeting on 17th August 2026.

24 APPLICATION REQUIRING REFERENCE TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - CHANGE OF USE FROM DAY SCHOOL TO RESIDENTIAL, DEMOLITION OF ANCILLARY BUILDINGS TO THE REAR AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW REAR EXTENSIONS AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS - THE OLD DAY SCHOOL, HIGH STREET, BLUNTISHAM - 26/00903/FUL & 26/00904/LBC

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

25 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - SECTION 106 AGREEMENT - OUTLINE APPLICATION WITH ALL MATTERS RESERVED SAVE FOR ACCESS FOR ERECTION OF UP TO 199 DWELLINGS INCLUDING OPEN SPACE, PLAY SPACE, CAR PARKING, DRAINAGE, UTILITIES CONNECTIONS, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ACCESS OFF STONEMAN WAY AND BIGGIN LANE - LAND SOUTH OF THE MALTING, RAMSEY - 25/01382/OUT

(Councillor S Corney, Ramsey Town Council, Councillor D Masterson, Bury Parish Council, Councillors H Tobias and K Maheshwari, Ward Members, S

Harrington, Objector, and D Bainbridge, Agent, addressed the Committee on the application).

See Minute No 23 for Members' interests.

Consideration was given to a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on an outline application with all matters reserved save for access for erection of up to 199 dwellings including open space, play space, car parking, drainage, utilities connections, and the construction of a new access off Stoneman Way and Biggin Lane on land south of The Malting, Ramsey. Members were advised of further representations, which had been received since the report had been prepared.

Following a detailed introduction by the Case Officer, Councillor Neish reported on the views expressed on the terms of proposed S106 obligations considered necessary to make the application acceptable at meeting of the Section 106 Advisory Group held the previous week. It was reported that:

- no specific projects had yet been identified for funding, but these would come forward at a later date based on the number of houses constructed. Given the scale of the proposal, available funding was unlikely to be sufficient to deliver entirely new facilities and would more likely be directed towards enhancing existing provision.
- Anglian Water had been consulted and had not requested any Section 106 contributions.
- Contributions towards allotments and community gardens would be offered first to Ramsey Town Council and, if declined, passed to Bury Parish Council.
- Consideration had been given to whether the development should be linked to a neighbouring development for contribution purposes, but Legal advice had confirmed that this was not possible owing to the elapsed time between submissions.
- The Advisory Group supported the terms of the proposed obligations in so far as they complied with the legal requirements on the Council

Councillor D Masterson, Bury Parish Council, addressed the Committee and stated that whilst the Parish Council was not opposed to housing development in principle, it objected to the application because of the impact it would have on the remaining separation between Ramsey and Bury and the long-term identity of the two settlements. He highlighted significant housing growth that had already occurred in the area and the conflict with the protected settlement break policy contained within the Bury Neighbourhood Plan. He also outlined the Council's concerns regarding the future highway connection shown on indicative plans.

Members questioned Councillor Masterson on the precise location of the separation gap and the implications of future highway links through adjacent land.

Councillor S Corney, Ramsey Town Council, addressed the Committee on the application. He stated that insufficient weight was being given to neighbourhood planning policies, particularly given the advanced stage reached by the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan and that both Ramsey and Bury Neighbourhood Plans

opposed further coalescence between the settlements. He also referred to concerns regarding traffic levels on Biggin Lane, school place capacity, future access arrangements and flood risk and drainage pressures. Finally, Councillor Corney questioned the reduction of dwelling numbers from 220 to 199 and suggested this avoided additional contribution requirements.

Members asked questions of clarification about the southern access shown on plans, settlement gap distances and flooding concerns arising from the comments of the Middle Level Commissioners.

Councillor K Maheshwari, Ward Member, highlighted the significant housing growth in Ramsey and Bury since 2011, historical references to a proposed Ramsey-Bury relief road that had never materialised, the pressure on local school places, NHS capacity and healthcare provision, the Integrated Care Board's request for mitigation measures, the absence of dedicated contributions towards education and healthcare and conflict with the settlement gap policy.

Councillor Howard Tobias, Ward Member, argued that Ramsey carried a disproportionate burden in meeting housing targets, the distinction between Ramsey and Bury was being eroded, infrastructure had failed to keep pace with housing growth, there were insufficient schools, doctors, dentists and other community facilities, valuable farmland would be permanently lost and reliance on a single access point raised concerns regarding emergency access and public safety.

S Harrington, Objector, drew the Committee’s attention to the fact that residents had submitted additional legal and planning representations earlier that day. She then stated that she had concerns regarding infrastructure deficits, the proposal avoided approximately £6 million of site-specific infrastructure contributions, school and healthcare services were under pressure, access arrangements represented a single point of failure and delaying junction signalisation until occupation, rather than prior to construction, increased risks associated with construction traffic.

Members asked questions about her highway safety concerns associated with construction traffic, proposed traffic signal timings and the calculation of infrastructure funding requirements.

D Bainbridge, Agent, stated that over two years had been spent on engagement with council officers and consultees and there had been multiple revisions to the scheme in response to technical and environmental issues. He also referred to the absence of technical objections from consultees, with the exception of the Middle Level Commissioners, the extensive conditions proposed and the landscape buffers incorporated along sensitive boundaries.

Members questioned Mr Bainbridge regarding the reduction in dwelling numbers from 220 to 199. He advised that the reduced unit count reflected design-led changes and the need to provide wider landscape buffers. Questions also were asked about highway access arrangements, potential future access through RAF Upwood land, the timing of the junction signalisation, ground contamination investigations and historic land uses.

At 8.40 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 8.48 the meeting resumed.

Members then sought clarification from Officers on a range of issues. Regarding highways, Officers from the Highways Authority advised the application had been assessed solely on the basis of a single access point, no evidence existed to support refusal on highway safety grounds, there was insufficient justification for requiring the signalisation of the Biggin Lane/Bury Road junction before commencement, Fire and Rescue Services had no objection to the proposal and roads were considered to be capable of accommodating emergency vehicles.

On the subject of Section 106 contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Members were advised that developments below 200 dwellings contributed through CIL and larger developments might also be subject to additional Section 106 requirements. Adoption of the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan would increase the local proportion of CIL from 15% to 25%.

Following questions on flood risk, Officers advised that the Lead Local Flood Authority had no objection to the application, that surface water runoff would be lower than existing greenfield rates and that the Middle Level Commissioners' concerns related primarily to wider strategic drainage issues rather than site-specific failings.

Questions on the settlement gap established that the Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan carried material weight, settlement gaps were not formally defined within national policy and assessment of them involved professional judgement.

During the debate on the application, Members discussed the cumulative impact of development on Ramsey, transport infrastructure, pressures on schools and healthcare and the loss of agricultural land. Reference also was made to the strength of local opposition and concerns about infrastructure. The Committee acknowledged the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the lack of technical objections from statutory consultees and the provision of 40% affordable housing.

Detailed discussion focused on the settlement gap between Ramsey and Bury, the emerging Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan and the weight that should be attributed to the Middle Level Commissioners' objection. Members had particular concerns over reliance on a single access point, cumulative dwelling numbers resulting from development already accessed via Stoneman Way and future resilience of vehicle access in emergency situations.

Members also discussed the implications of an appeal if the application was refused and the possibility of Secretary of State intervention.

A proposal to approve the application was moved by Councillor Seeff and seconded by Councillor Mickelburgh. On being put to the vote the proposal was declared to be LOST.

While Members recognised the weight that should be given to the National Planning Policy Framework, they also acknowledged the need to review Officers' assessment of the harms that that had been identified. They also discussed the implications that approval of the proposal would have for the District Council's

emerging Local Plan, local landscape character and the Bury Neighbourhood Plan.

A proposal to refuse the application was then moved by Councillor Wood and seconded by Councillor Davenport-Ray.

At 10.21 pm the meeting was adjourned for reasons to be prepared in policy terms.

At 10.56 the meeting resumed.

On resumption, it was proposed that the application be refused on the grounds that the development would result in an unsustainable pattern of development, contrary to NPPF 2026 S5 j (i) requirement to be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure, where adverse effects are not substantially outweighed by the benefits. Specifically, the material adverse effects of:

- Settlement coalescence, settlement identity and loss of settlement gap – LP11, LP12 and Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan (Developing) Policy 2
- Loss of BMV – LP10
- Surface level water drainage, system capacity and flood risks identified by the Middle Level Commissioners – LP5, LP6, LP15
- Lack of infrastructure (or contributions) to mitigate the effects of additional 199 homes – specifically in response to the ICB consultee – LP4f
- Developing local plan (Land Availability Assessment) – this evidence base found the site to be not suitable for development – NPPF 2026 DM4

On being put to the vote the proposal was declared to be CARRIED. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

that, contrary to the recommendation, and subject to referral to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2026, the application be refused because the development would result in an unsustainable pattern of development, contrary to NPPF 2026 S5 j (i) requirement to be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure, where adverse effects are not substantially outweighed by the benefits. Specifically, the material adverse effects of:

- Settlement coalescence, settlement identity and loss of settlement gap – LP11, LP12 and Ramsey Neighbourhood Plan (Developing) Policy 2
- Loss of BMV – LP10
- Surface level water drainage, system capacity and flood risks identified by the Middle Level Commissioners – LP5, LP6, LP15
- Lack of infrastructure (or contributions) to mitigate the effects of additional 199 homes – specifically in response to the ICB consultee – LP4f

- Developing local plan (Land Availability Assessment) – this evidence base found the site to be not suitable for development – NPPF 2026 DM4.

26 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) Erection of 8 dwellings at Land North of 20 to 26 Heath Road and North of Heath Farm Heath Road, Warboys - 26/00344/FUL

(D Mead, Agent, addressed the Committee on the application).

See Minute No 23 for Members' interests.

that the application be approved subject to conditions to include those listed in Section 9 of the report now submitted with delegated authority being given to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection to approve any amendments to conditions as deemed necessary.

b) Demolition of the existing cattery and kennels buildings and the erection of 4 detached dwellings, together with associated works including access and infrastructure - Fields View, Fenstanton Road, Hilton - 6/01048/FUL

(Councillor P Balicki, Hilton Parish Council, and J Aldridge, Objector, addressed the Committee on the application).

See Minute No 23 for Members' interests.

that the application be refused because the development would result in the provision of isolated homes outside a settlement and group of dwellings, with no sustainable links to the nearby settlements, resulting in an unsustainable pattern of development, where adverse effects are not substantially outweighed by the benefits, contrary to the requirements of NPPF, in particular Polices S5(3) and HO11.

At 11.58 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 12.01 am the meeting resumed.

c) Variation of condition 8 (deliveries and dispatches) of 25/02081/S73 to alter delivery/collection times on weekdays to 04:00 to 20:00 and 07:00 to 13:30 on Saturdays to reflect the operational requirements of the site at The Orchard - Garden Farm, The Town. Great Staughton, St Neots - 26/01169/S73

(Councillor N Yates, Great Staughton Parish Council, and A Newell and B Jewell, Objectors, addressed the Committee on the application).

that, contrary to the recommendation, the application be refused because it is considered that the variation in the hours of operation from 7 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. will create an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance to residential properties within the vicinity of the application site, which is contrary to policy LP14 of the Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan which requires applications to maintain a high standard of amenity to neighbouring residential occupiers.

27 APPEAL DECISIONS

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

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

Chair

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, 26 October 2026

PRESENT: Councillor W Smith – Chair.

Councillors S W Ferguson, P Gammons, S Hodgson-Jones, D N Keane, J E Kerr, D McIlwain, J Neish, T D Sanderson, L M Simpson and A Wood.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors L Davenport-Ray, A Hunt, J Hunt and D L Mickelburgh.

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors S W Ferguson and A Wood.

28 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

In respect of Minute No 29 Councillor J Neish placed on record the fact that he had received an unsolicited e-mail from the applicant but he had not responded to it and came to the meeting with an open mind.

Councillor S Hodgson-Jones declared a Non-Registrable Interest in Minute No 29 by virtue of the fact that she lived near to the application site but did not know the applicant.

29 APPLICATION REQUIRING REFERENCE TO DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - CHANGE OF USE FROM DAY SCHOOL TO RESIDENTIAL, DEMOLITION OF ANCILLARY BUILDINGS TO THE REAR AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW REAR EXTENSIONS AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS - THE OLD DAY SCHOOL, HIGH STREET, BLUNTISHAM - 26/00903/FUL & 26/00904/LBC

Consideration was given to a report by the Planning Service Manager (Development Management) on the application (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). The Committee discussed the building’s listing description, the Conservation Officer’s view on the application, the extent to which the proposal would cause harm to the listed building, the preservation of the building, the proposed layout, the extent to which subdivision of the school room was reversible and the material proposed to be used.

At 8.12 pm the meeting was adjourned.

At 8.19 pm the meeting resumed.

Having taken into account relevant local and national policies and legislation, it was

RESOLVED

a) that, contrary to the recommendation, application 26/00903/FUL be approved that the application be approved subject to conditions to include time, approved plans, cycle store details, tree protection plan, agriculture method statement and water efficiency, with delegated authority being given to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection to approve any amendments to conditions as deemed necessary; and

b) that, contrary to the recommendation, application 26/00904/LBC be approved subject to conditions to include time, approved plans, subdivision, sun room glazing, extension materials, timber window repairs, non-timber window details, removal, cleaning and relocation of the coat of arms, window reveals details, details of the partition of the main school hall including appearance, materials, how it is attached to the Listed Building, its reversibility and details of the glazing, method of drylining and skirting details, with delegated authority being given to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection to approve any amendments to conditions as deemed necessary.

Chair

Agenda Item 3

Development Management Committee – 16th November 2026

Application Number:	**25/01694/OUT**
Proposal:	**Outline planning application (phased development) for the erection of up to 600 dwellings including 40% affordable, a community hub site including car parking and mobility hub. Public open space including green and blue infrastructure, incorporating footpaths, cycle ways, biodiversity improvements and habitat creation; associated drainage and landscaping including new and existing trees and hedgerows, utilities and other infrastructure. All matters reserved except for means of vehicular access from Priory Hill Road and associated highways works to Mill Lane/Priory Hill/Huntingdon Road**
Location:	**Land Adjacent St Neots Reservoir, Priory Hill Road, St Neots**
Applicant:	**Bloor Homes Ltd**
Agent:	**Marrons**
Case Officer:	**Hollie Renney**
Parish:	**St Neots, Little Paxton and Great Paxton**
Reason for Referral:	**This is a Schedule 2 Application. By virtue of Regulation 5, it is being reported to Development Management Committee because the Nominated Member and Nominated Officer agree that it is necessary because it raises one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations .**
Committee Date:	**16th November 2026**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: TO DELEGATE POWERS TO THE HEAD OF PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE & PUBLIC PROTECTION TO;

GRANT PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AS SET OUT IN THE REPORT WITH DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO THE HEAD OF PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE & PUBLIC PROTECTION TO APPROVE ANY AMENDMENTS TO CONDITIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY AND SUBJECT TO A S106 LEGAL AGREEMENT

OR

SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE*, REFUSE PERMISSION IN THE EVENT THE S106 AGREEMENT HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED AND THE APPLICANT IS UNWILLING TO AGREE AN EXTENDED PERIOD FOR DETERMINATION, OR THAT THE APPLICANT IS UNWILLING TO COMPLETE THE OBLIGATION NECESSARY TO MAKE THE DEVELOPMENT ACCEPTABLE.

*In accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2026, where a local planning authority proposes to refuse an application for planning permission for development which includes the provision of 150 or more dwellings, the authority must consult the Secretary of State before determining the application.

Proposal

Outline planning permission is sought for the erection of up to 600 dwellings (including 40% affordable housing) on land north of Priory Hill Road, St Neots, with all matters reserved except for access. The application site measures around 87.3ha, however the area proposed for residential development is confined to the south east corner of the application site, spanning an area of around 20.28ha. The remainder of the application site is proposed as green and blue infrastructure including around 43.05 ha of amenity green space/natural and semi natural green space/parks and gardens (including children's play space), 1.31ha of land for allotments and 8.71ha of land for a nature reserve (referred to by the applicant as 'Conservation Island'.

The details of access (for approval at outline stage) include two points of access into the proposed residential development from Priory Hill Road, in addition to works to realign Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane where they meet Huntingdon Road, to create a staggered junction arrangement (and allow removal of the existing double mini roundabouts). A package of complementary highway works are proposed along Priory Hill Road, Mill Lane, and Huntingdon Road to provide traffic calming features and new pedestrian and cycle crossing arrangements.

In addition, off site highways works (within the public highway) to improve pedestrian and cycle infrastructure have been agreed with the Highway Authority at Mill Lane / Great North Road Priority Junction and along Longsands/Hawkesden Road.

Full details of the proposal, including copies of all plans, documents and comments received, are available on the Council's Public Access Website.

Consultations

The following consultees have raised **objections** to the application:

- St Neots Town Council, Little Paxton Parish Council

The following consultees have raised **no objections** to the application subject to conditions and/or obligations:

- Active Travel England (ATE), Anglian Water, Cadent Gas, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System, CCC Education, Libraries and Strategic Waste, CCC Archaeology, CCC Definitive Map Officer (Rights of Way), CCC Highways Development Management, CCC Highways Transport Assessment and Active Travel Team, CCC Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, Environment Agency, HDC Active Lifestyles, HDC Affordable Housing Officer, HDC Arboricultural Officer, HDC Ecology, HDC Economic Development, HDC Environmental Health Officer, HDC Urban Design Officer, Huntingdonshire Ramblers Association, Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), National Highways, Natural England, Network Rail, East of England Ambulance Trust

The following consultees provided neutral comments/deferred to the Case Officer:

- Historic England, HDC Conservation Officer

The following consultees, whilst broadly supporting the proposals, have raised concerns in relation to parts of the scheme:

- HDC Urban Design and Landscape Advisor (raised concern about the proposed highway works)

95 neighbour representations have been received from 72 unique addresses (92no. objections and 3no. neutral representations).

Conclusion

The application has been assessed against the relevant policies in the NPPF, the adopted Local Plan and other relevant guidance as listed in detail at Section 8 of the report.

The key issues arising from the application details are:

- Principle of Development
- Retail Impact (Community Hub)
- Transport Impacts and Highway Safety
- Landscape and countryside character
- Design considerations
- Drainage and Flood Risk
- Heritage Impacts
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Trees
- Residential amenity (including noise and odour and open space provision)

- Contamination and ground pollution risks
- Housing needs (including affordable)
- Financial considerations and contributions
- Planning balance

The report looks into the key planning issues in detail, and Officers conclude that having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the National Decision Making Policies of the NPPF (2026), the benefits of the proposal are not substantially outweighed by its adverse effects. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to planning conditions and completion of a Section 106 Agreement.

Members are advised that the above is a summary of the proposals and key issues contained in the main report below which provides full details of all consultation responses, planning policies, the Officer's assessment and recommendations, and Members are advised that this summary should be read in conjunction with the detailed report.

MAIN REPORT

1 APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY

1.1 The application site extends to approximately 87.3 hectares of predominantly agricultural land located on the northern edge of St Neots.

1.2 The site comprises a series of arable fields together with established hedgerows, mature trees, drainage ditches, ponds and watercourses. Huntingdon Road (B1043) runs broadly north-south through the site, dividing the land into eastern and western parcels, whilst Gallow Brook traverses the northern part of the site, flowing towards the River Great Ouse, which forms the northern / north-western boundary of the site. There are also a small number of unnamed Ordinary Watercourses in the area, including a drain which flows east to west through the application site between a covered reservoir located to the southeast of the site and roadside drains on Huntingdon Road.

1.3 The East Coast Main Line railway corridor defines the eastern boundary, Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane form the southern boundary. In the south west corner, the site is adjacent to the Rowley Allotments on Mill Lane.

1.4 Existing residential development (accessed from Rowley Road and Mill Lane) and Priory Park within St Neots is located to the south on the opposite side of Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane. Development associated with Loves farm is located to the south east. The village of Little Paxton is located to the north west (on the opposite side of the River Great Ouse and Mill Lane) and the village of Great Paxton is located around 1 mile to the north. Open countryside extends east of the railway line and north, including Paxton Pits Nature Reserve.

1.5 The application site is entirely owned by Bloor Homes (the applicant) or Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highway Authority. Brook Farm, which

occupies a central position within the wider landholding is also owned by Bloor Homes but is excluded from the application site (notice was served on the agricultural tenant at the point of the planning application being submitted).

1.6 St Neots Water Recycling Centre (WRC) is located to the west of Huntingdon Road and is enclosed by the application site boundary on three sides. For the avoidance of doubt, the WRC and its access from Huntingdon Road is not included within the application boundary.

1.7 The site exhibits a varied topography, forming part of the transition between the elevated land associated with Priory Hill and the lower-lying Great Ouse Valley. The higher ground is concentrated within the southern and eastern parts of the site adjacent to Priory Hill Road and the railway corridor, whilst levels fall northwards and westwards towards Gallow Brook, the River Great Ouse and associated valley floor landscapes. Areas adjacent to the river corridor and parts of the northern section of the site lie within the flood zones 2 and 3.

1.8 Part of the application site is located within the St Neots Conservation Area.

2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 This application seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to 600 dwellings, including the provision of 40% affordable housing. The application also proposes a community hub and mobility hub, extensive public open space, green and blue infrastructure, allotments, biodiversity enhancements, drainage features, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

2.2 All matters are reserved except for details of vehicular access from Priory Hill Road and associated highway works at the Mill Lane/Priory Hill Road/Huntingdon Road junction and north along Huntingdon Road. Details of the access works proposed for approval as part of the current application are provided below.

2.3 The area proposed for residential development is confined to circa 20.28ha located in the south east corner of the application site (east of Huntingdon Road and south of Brook Farm), with Priory Hill Road adjacent to the south and the East Coad Mainline railway adjacent to the east. The remainder of the application would provide green and blue infrastructure including:

- Parks and gardens (circa 0.95h);
- Amenity green space (circa 9.03ha);
- Natural and semi natural green space (circa 33.07ha);
- An extension to Rowley allotments on Mill Lane (circa 1.31ha);
- Sustainable drainage /attenuation ponds;
- A dedicated area of land within the northern part of the site is proposed to be retained and managed primarily for nature conservation purposes (circa 8.71ha). Referred to by the applicant as "Conservation Island", the area would be inaccessible to the public (it is an island between the two tributaries of the Great River Ouse, with a private access from Mill Lane) and is

intended to provide habitat creation and biodiversity enhancement opportunities associated with the wider green infrastructure strategy.

Officer note: the proposed residential development and associated drainage basins are located to the west of Huntingdon Road. No built development is proposed on the undeveloped land located to the east of Huntingdon Road.

2.4 The exact distribution and design of the blue and green infrastructure would be subject to future reserved matters applications.

2.5 The community hub, including a mobility hub are proposed to serve the immediate local community, meet day-to-day needs of residents and provide amenity and facilities in connection with Priory Park. The mobility hub is envisaged to include facilities like EV charging, cycle parking and repair, a digital information pillar and parcel delivery lockers. The precise uses to be accommodated within the community hub have not yet been confirmed but could include local community uses (Use Classes F1 and F2) and/or retail and other use within Use Class E (Commercial, Business and Service) as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (e.g. a local shop, small scale office space, café, community room/hall). Importantly, as this is an outline application, the delivery of the community and mobility hub will not be secured by the current application. Whilst planning conditions can control the land uses and ensure they are permitted on the site, their delivery will ultimately be market driven and would need to be secured as part of future reserved matters applications (subject to adequate market demand, of which a marketing strategy can be secured within a S106 Agreement).

Access

2.6 The access works sought for approval in full detail as part of the current application can be summarised as follows:

- There will be two points of vehicular access into the proposed residential development from Priory Hill Road. This will facilitate the provision of a primary loop road through the proposed development (albeit the design of the loop road is a matter reserved for future determination);
- Realignment of the western end of Priory Hill Road. The existing straight section of Priory Hill Road will be closed to traffic and will become a pedestrian and cycle route through part of the proposed public open space (details of the open space are reserved for future determination). A new curved section of road will be constructed to allow Priory Hill Road to meet Huntingdon Road at a junction approximately 310m north of the existing double mini-roundabout. Access to the existing disabled parking in Priory Park (currently accessed directly from Priory Hill Road) will be retained via a small spur road.
- Realignment of the eastern end of Mill Lane. The existing straight section of Mill Lane will be closed to traffic and will become a pedestrian and cycle route. Vehicular access to properties on Chamberlain Way will be retained.

A new curved section of Mill Lane will be constructed, allowing Mill Lane to meet Huntingdon Road at a junction approximately 90m (measured to the centre of the junction) north of the current double mini roundabout.

- The above works to Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane allow the removal of the existing double mini-roundabout. Mill Lane and Priory Hill Lane will become a staggered crossroad junction arrangement with Huntingdon Road.

2.7 To complement the above access works, the proposal also includes the following:

- A new 3m wide footway/cycle way along the site frontage with Priory Hill Road (separated from the carriageway by a grass verge);
- A new toucan crossing and an uncontrolled crossing point on Priory Hill Road;
- A new toucan crossing across Huntingdon Road at the location of the existing double mini roundabouts;
- Two pedestrian refuge island crossing points across Huntingdon Road north of the proposed staggered crossroad, to provide pedestrian access to the proposed leisure routes on the western side of Huntingdon Road.
- Enhanced pedestrian and cycle provision on Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane to improve pedestrian and cycle access to key destinations within St Neots.
- The existing non-restricted speed limit on Huntingdon Road is proposed to be reduced to 40mph from south of the Huntingdon Road/Priory Hill Road/Mill Lane junction to c830m north of this. The 40mph stretch will cover all new crossing points across Huntingdon Road (this will need to be subject to separate highway consent).
- A new 5m wide access serving Rowley Allotments from Mill Lane (the existing access to the allotments is to be blocked up)

3 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The following planning history is considered relevant to the current proposal:

- 25/70051/SCRE - EIA Screening opinion for proposed development for significant green and blue infrastructure, open space community facilities and supporting infrastructure alongside a development of approximately 600 dwellings - Negative Screening Opinion issued 03.06.2025.

- 8801035OUT – Residential development, 14.97ha. – Refused 30.06.1988.

  Officer note: the decision notice for 8801035OUT includes 6 reasons for refusal on the following grounds, however it should be noted that this decision, made in 1988, was done so under an entirely different planning policy context to that which currently applies:

  - *The land is not allocated for residential development in the Development Plan*
  - *The proposal is premature of the County Structure Plan*
  - *The site is high quality Grade II agricultural land*
  - *The proposal would put greater pressure upon the receiving sewage works*

- *Satisfactory disposal of foul drainage has not been demonstrated*
- *The site is within an Area of Best Landscape, as defined by Cambridgeshire Structure Plan*

- 88/01034/REFUSL - Residential development, 14.97ha. Appeal against LPA refusal withdrawn 22.02.1988.

- 8700013REFUSL - Residential development, 14.97ha. Withdrawn 22.02.1988.

- 8601541OUT - Residential development, 14.97ha. Refused 13.11.1986.

4 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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

- LP1 Amount of Development
- LP2 Strategy for Development
- LP3 Green Infrastructure
- LP4 Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
- LP5 Flood risk
- LP6 Waste Water Management
- LP7 Spatial Planning Areas
- LP10 The Countryside
- LP11 Design Context
- LP12 Design Implementation
- LP13 Placemaking
- 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
- LP23 Tourism and Recreation
- LP24 Affordable Housing Provision
- LP25 Housing Mix
- LP29 Health Impact Assessment
- LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP31 Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
- LP34 Heritage Assets and their Settings
- LP36 Air Quality
- LP37 Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 predates the NPPF 2026. In accordance with Annex A, paragraph 2 of the NPPF (2026), development plan policies should not be given reduced weight simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the Framework. However, development plan policies

(or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in the Framework should be given very limited weight.

For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise stated within this report, policies of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 are afforded full weight.

4.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)

- Policy 5: Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAS).
- Policy 16: Consultation Areas

Officer note: the majority of the application site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for sand and gravel. Parts of the site lie within the Consultation Area for Little Paxton Quarry and St Neots Water Recycling Centre (WRC).

4.3 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan (Adopted February 2016)

- Policy A2 – Gateway into St Neots
- Policy A3 – Design
- Policy A4 – Landscape Backdrops
- Policy PT1 – Sustainable Travel
- Policy PT2 – Vehicle parking standards
- Policy P1 – Local Green Spaces
- Policy P2 – Open Space
- Policy P3 – River Setting
- Policy P4 – Flooding
- Policy SS3 – Service and Provision

The St Neots Neighbourhood Plan predates the NPPF 2026. In accordance with Annex A, paragraph 2 of the NPPF (2026), development plan policies should not be given reduced weight simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the Framework. However, development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in the Framework should be given very limited weight.

For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise stated within this report, policies of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan are afforded full weight.

Officer note: There is no 'Made' or emerging Neighbourhood Plan covering Little Paxton or Great Paxton Parish Council areas.

4.4 Supplementary Planning Documents

- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment – Adopted 2022
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide – Adopted 2017
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted 2017
- RECAP Waste Management Design Guide – Adopted 2026
- Development Contributions – Adopted 2011 (costs updated annually)

- Huntingdonshire District Council Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy Document – Adopted December 2022
- Environmentally Sustainable Design & Construction Technical Advice Note (TAN) - Adopted November 2025

4.5 National Planning Policy Framework 2026 (NPPF)

- DM1: Preparing Development proposals
- DM3: Determining development proposals
- DM4: Emerging Development Plan proposals
- DM6: Use of planning conditions and obligations
- DM7: Relationship with other regulatory regimes
- S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- S5: Principle of development outside settlements
- S6: Neighbourhood plans and the presumption
- CC2: Mitigation of climate change
- CC3: Adaptation to climate change
- HO7: Meeting the need for homes
- HO8: Providing affordable homes
- HO13: Build out of residential and strategic sites
- TC3: Main town centre uses outside town centres
- TC4: Assessing the impact of development on town centres
- M6: Safeguarding mineral resources and infrastructure through decision-making
- L3: Achieving appropriate densities
- DP3: Key principles for well-designed places
- DP4: The design process
- TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations
- TR4: Street design, access and parking
- TR6: Assessing transport impacts
- TR8: Public rights of way
- HC3: Community facilities and public service infrastructure serving new development
- HC4: Proposals for new and improved community facilities, public service infrastructure and development providing public health benefits
- P2: Ground conditions
- P3: living conditions and pollution
- P4: Impact of development on existing activities
- P5: Maintaining public safety and security
- F4: Assessing flood risk for decision-making
- F5: The sequential test
- F6: Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea
- F7: Ensuring development is safe from flooding
- F8: Sustainable drainage systems and watercourses
- N2: Improving the natural environment
- N3: Trees in new development
- N6: areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity
- HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets

- HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
- HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets
- HE7: Decisions on non-designated heritage assets
- HE9: Conservation areas
- HE10: Loss or removal of heritage assets

4.6 National Planning Guidance

- National Planning Practice Guidance
- National Design Guide 2019 (NDG)

4.7 Housing land supply position

- Plan Making Policy H03 (1.a.i.) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires the Council to identify a sufficient supply of specific deliverable sites to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against the Council's housing requirement figure, with an appropriate buffer.
- The methodology for calculating local housing need, with an appropriate buffer, is set out within Annex D of the NPPF and associated National Planning Policy Guidance ('the standard method').
- 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 figure set using the standard method, with an appropriate buffer.
- 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.

4.8 Huntingdonshire emerging Local Plan to 2046

- In October 2025 the Council issued its Preferred Options consultation on the emerging Local Plan. Paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and their degree of consistency with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- The Preferred Options Draft Local Plan (October 2025) identified three allocation sites for St Neots (St Neots East (which is already ongoing), East of Loves Farm (Tithe Farm) and Land South West of Potton Road).
- A consultation on additional site allocations to be included in the proposed submission version of the Local Plan to 2046 was undertaken in May and June 2026. This did not include the application site.
- Consultation on a Pre-Submission Draft of the Local Plan to 2026 commenced on 16th September 2026 and closed at 23:59 on Wednesday 28th October
- Subject to agreement the plan will be submitted for Examination.

- Policy DM4 of the NPPF identifies three matters relevant to the weight of emerging policies: (i) the stage of preparation; (ii) the significance of unresolved objections; and (iii) the degree of compliance with the Framework's plan-making policies.
- At the time of writing, the emerging Local Plan remains at a relatively early stage in its preparation meaning that limited weight can be attributed to the Pre-Submission version document. That position may evolve once responses to the Pre-Submission consultation have been collated and published.
- Having regard to the scale of development proposed and the stage reached by the emerging Local Plan, refusal of the proposal on the grounds of being premature of the emerging Local Plan could not be sustained having regard to NDMP DM4 of the NPPF (2026).

Statutory Duties and Relevant Legislation

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

4.10 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

4.11 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development that affects the setting of a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

4.12 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

4.13 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that public authorities, in exercising their functions must, among other things, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equal opportunities and foster good relations.

4.14 The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2026, requires that where a local planning authority proposes to refuse an application for planning permission for development which includes the provision of 150 or more dwellings, the authority must consult the Secretary of State before determining the application.

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

4.15 Below is a summary of the consultation responses received at the time of writing this report. Responses are available to view in full on the Council's website.

Consultee	Position	Comment
Little Paxton Parish Council	Objection 06.10.2025	Little Paxton Parish Council does not support application 25/01694/OUT (Land at Priory Hill, St Neots), on the following planning grounds: - **Flood Risk**: Parts of the site are in Flood Zones 2 & 3. Sequential Test not met. Increased downstream risk to Little Paxton (Local Plan LP5 & LP6). - **Ecology**: No secured management or funding for the 'Conservation Island' within Little Paxton (LP30). - **Highways**: Severe residual traffic impacts on Priory Hill, Mill Lane roundabouts, Little Paxton bridge and A1 junction. Mitigation is inadequate (LP17). - **Infrastructure and Obligations**: No firm provision for healthcare, and no S106 or CIL for Little Paxton despite direct impacts. Obligations are not fair or reasonable (LP4 & LP25) - **Increased traffic congestion on Huntingdon Road**.
	Objection 11.09.2026	The Parish Council reiterates comments previously made and expresses concerns that the double roundabout has been redesigned as two T-junctions. What studies have been carried out to ensure the T-junctions will be effective as this is a very busy & popular route? The Council's concerns regarding the Mill Lane Bridge and access to A1 have not been addressed. The footbridge to Nature Reserve is still showing as part of the outline plan.
St Neots Town Council	Objection 30.09.2025	The site is not suitable for development. **Sewage and Wastewater Infrastructure** - Existing network is under pressure. No clear plan to manage additional demand from this proposed development and the 4,000+ Other

	Objection 29.09.2026	homes recently built/approved. Risks pollution, overflows, and service failures. **Healthcare Provision** - St Neots already struggles with GP and NHS dental access. - No firm commitments to new services. 600 new households will worsen pressure on overstretched infrastructure. - Conflicts with LP4, LP25 and NPPF para 57. **Traffic and Roads** - Existing congestion at Priory Hill, Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road roundabouts, Little Paxton bridge, and A1 southbound junction. - Priory Park's regular use for football and other activities already contributes to traffic issues. - Developer's proposed changes lack evidence of effectiveness. Hundreds of extra daily car journeys will worsen congestion. - Breaches LP17 and NPPF para 111. **Flood risk and drainage**. It has not been demonstrated that the development can be accommodated without increasing flood risk on or off site. **Wastewater capacity**. The Town council remains concerned that adequate foul and surface water drainage arrangements have not been fully demonstrated. **Highways and transport**. It has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the transport impacts can be satisfactorily accommodated or mitigated. Particular concern is raised about the Litte Paxton Bridge junction at Huntingdon Road/Mill Lane. **Impact on community infrastructure.** Additional pressure will be placed on local services and infrastructure, particularly existing secondary school provision. **Landscape impact and loss of agricultural land**. The scale of development would cause unacceptable harm to the local landscape.
Active Travel England (ATE)	Conditional approval	ATE recommends approval of the application, subject to the agreement and implementation of planning conditions

		relating to: - Details of site access points for pedestrians and cyclists; - Travel Plan; - Cycle parking.
Anglian Water	No objection subject to conditions and S106	Subject to an area of safeguarded land around the existing St Neots Water Recycling Centre (WRC) (which would be used to secure any future expansion of the WRC), and conditions, AW has no objection to the proposed development.
Cadent Gas	No objection	Informative recommended
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	No objection subject to conditions	The Illustrative Layout appears acceptable. Welcome early engagement once further details are available, which should include details of: • How the proposal complies with Secured by Design • External lighting (adoptable and private) including calculations and lux levels; • Cycle storage design; • Fencing/boundary treatments; • Vehicle Parking and EV Charging • Public Footpaths/Open Space/ LEAP & linked footpaths • Suds/Attenuation Ponds • Construction Phase Security
Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service	No objection subject to condition	Fire hydrant provision will need to be secured by condition
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System	Contributions sought	Mitigation is sought in the form of a financial contribution towards the capital cost of delivering the additional primary care floorspace required to serve residents of the new development
CCC Archaeology	No objection subject to conditions	An archaeological evaluation has been undertaken across the areas where the application will have the most sub surface impact. The fieldwork element of this work is now complete although post excavation work and full reporting is awaited. The archaeological work undertaken shows that significant archaeology will be impacted by the development but that it is not of a level that cannot be mitigated through design considerations and archaeological investigation.
CCC Education,	Contributions	Financial contributions are sought towards:

Libraries and Strategic Waste	sought	early years places, the expansion or remodelling of Longsands Academy, specialist educational provision, and library services.
CCC Definitive Map Officer (Rights of Way)	No objection	Support extension and improvements to the PRoW network including construction of a bridge across the River Great Ouse to connect the development with Public Footpath 8, Little Paxton. PRoW must remain open and unobstructed at all times. Informatives recommended. *Officer note: the current planning application does not include the delivery of a bridge across the River Great Ouse. It identifies the potential for such to be delivered in the future (if desirable).*
CCC Highways Development Management	No objection subject to conditions	The Highway Authority supports the principle of the proposed on-site access and off-site highway mitigation works subject to conditions requiring detailed design approval, Stage 2 Road Safety Audits, construction traffic management measures, and the delivery of highway improvements prior to first occupation.
CCC Highways Transport Assessment and Active Travel Team	No objection subject to mitigation secured by S106 and conditions	Following detailed discussions, informed by transport modelling and an active travel audit, the Highway Authority is satisfied that transport impacts can be adequately mitigated via the proposed on and off site highway works, and active travel and public transport improvements which can secured by S106 and conditions.
CCC Minerals and Waste Planning Authority (MWPA)	No objection subject to an informative	Subject to no objections from the Council's EH Officer and Anglian Water, the proposal complies with Policy 16 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021). If the Planning Authority is of the view that there is an overriding need for the development, the MWPA will be content that Policy 5 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021) has been addressed subject to an informative.
East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST)	Contributions sought	In order to meet the additional needs for ambulance services and defibrillators associated with the additional population growth at the development location mitigation is sought through financial S106

		contributions. EEAST also provides general advice relating to health and wellbeing, sustainable design, transport safety and flood resilience.
Environment Agency	No objection	The Environment Agency raises no objection to the proposed development. It advises that all built development should be demonstrated to lie within Flood Zone 1 (with the exception of essential infrastructure), encourages opportunities to reduce flood risk through the design of the scheme, and notes that the application's compliance with the Sequential Test remains a matter for the Local Planning Authority. The Environment Agency also highlights local wastewater treatment capacity constraints and advises that the Council should be satisfied that growth can be accommodated without adverse impacts on the water environment.
Historic England	No comment	Defer to the Council's Conservation Officer
HDC Active Lifestyles	Contribution sought	The required off-site contribution for formal outdoor sports provision is £362,007.00. This contribution should be secured through a Section 106 Agreement and allocated to enhance existing sports facilities at Priory Park which is well-used and will experience increased demand as a direct result of this development which is to be built opposite.
HDC Affordable Housing Officer	No objection subject to condition and S106	The proposal as submitted confirms an intention to conform to Local Plan policies in respect of affordable housing. 40% affordable housing should be provided with the mix and tenure to be secured by condition and S106. All the homes should conform to M4(2) and a proportion as M4(3) will be required in accordance with LP25.
HDC Arboricultural Officer	No objection subject to a condition	The assessment of trees is considered acceptable and no arboricultural objections are raised subject to a condition securing tree protection measures.
HDC Conservation Officer	Defer to Case Officer	The proposal would give rise to less than substantial harm to the significance of the St Neots Conservation Area. This harm must be weighed against the benefits by the Case Officer.
HDC Ecology	No objection subject to conditions	Sufficient ecological information has been submitted to allow the application to be determined. The proposed extensive open space provision and biodiversity

		enhancements are supported. The development can be made acceptable from an ecological perspective provided the proposed mitigation, habitat creation and biodiversity measures are secured and delivered
HDC Economic Development	No objection	The proposed community hub is supported in principle as it aligns with Huntingdonshire District Council's Economic Growth Strategy by promoting place-making, supporting local business opportunities, improving connectivity through the inclusion of a mobility hub, and contributing to sustainable and inclusive growth.
HDC Environmental Health Officer	No objection subject to conditions	Having reviewed the information submitted, no objection is raised in relation to odour. No objection in relation to noise and vibration associated with the railway line, subject to conditions securing a noise mitigation scheme and vibration monitoring and mitigation. A Construction Environmental Management Plan and further assessment of potential land contamination should be secured by condition.
HDC Landscape Advisor (Place Services)	Objection	In landscape terms, the proposed residential development is supported, subject to conditions. The proposed highway works which are proposed for approval at outline stage are not supported owing to the loss of mature trees which make a contribution to the landscape character and the impact of the highway work upon the historic parkland context and former landscape character.
HDC Urban Design Officer	No objection subject to conditions	The Council's Urban Design Officer is broadly supportive of the proposed development, recognising the benefits of the landscape-led approach, extensive green infrastructure, active travel network and overall placemaking strategy. Whilst a number of concerns are identified, principally relating to the alignment of Priory Hill Road, the integration of proposed public open space provision, movement connections and aspects of the parameter plans, the Officer's comments largely focus on matters of refinement and detail which are considered capable of being addressed through the Design Code and future Reserved Matters

		submissions (to be secured by condition).
Huntingdonshire Ramblers Association	No objection	The potential footbridge over the River Great Ouse to the west and path under the railway line to the east must be carefully considered to avoid causing damage, or causing a long-term detrimental impact, to existing paths, natural habitats and amenities.
Internal Drainage Board	No comment	The site is located outside of the Board's district.
Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)	No objection subject to conditions	Subject to conditions the LLFA are satisfied that surface water associated with the proposed development can be managed and maintained without adversely impacting water quality.
National Highways	No objection	The proposed development is considered unlikely to have a severe impact upon the strategic road network in this location. Development proposals should demonstrate how they are in line with the necessary transition to net zero carbon and this should be weighed alongside any relevant Local Plan Policies.
Natural England	No objection subject to mitigation being secured	In order to mitigate adverse effects and make the development acceptable, the following mitigation measures are required and should be secured by condition or obligation • Phasing plan showing that a sufficient quantity and quality of accessible greenspace will be delivered prior to first occupation, and at suitable trigger points thereafter. • Green Infrastructure management and maintenance strategy, secured in-perpetuity • Production and implementation of an ecologically sensitive lighting scheme.
Network Rail	No objection subject to conditions and informatives	No objection subject to conditions and informatives relating to: construction and drainage arrangements in proximity to the railway (to ensure asset protection); boundary treatments, landscaping and lighting (to ensure no impact upon operational railway safety). Given the size and proximity of the development in relation to St Neots Rail Railway Station it is considered appropriate that a contribution is sought from the developer towards station facility

		improvements. This could include improved passenger waiting facilities, cycle parking facilities or customer information systems.
UK Power Networks	No comment	NA

5 RESPONSE TO PUBLICITY

5.1 At the time of preparing this report, 95 neighbour representations have been received from 72 unique addresses (92no. objections and 3no. neutral representations), raising the following summarised material points. Officer notes are *italicised* for explanation where necessary.

Infrastructure, Services and Community Facilities

- Local schools, GP surgeries, NHS dental services and community facilities lack sufficient capacity, with no equivalent new provision proposed as part of the development.
- Concerns have been raised regarding the capacity of utility infrastructure, including water supply, wastewater treatment and sewerage networks.
- Housing growth around St Neots is outpacing infrastructure delivery, placing additional pressure on employment opportunities, shops, public transport, emergency services and other local facilities.
- Insufficient retail and community facilities are proposed to meet the needs of future residents. Additional pressure may be placed on existing shops and services within Little Paxton and St Neots.

Highways and Access

- Little Paxton Bridge, key junctions and local roads are considered to be operating at or near capacity, with concerns regarding congestion, delays and highway safety.
- Objections have been raised to proposed highway alterations, including the removal of the existing mini-roundabouts and changes to junction layouts. Representations suggest that the revised junction arrangements could worsen congestion, alter established travel routes and create highway safety issues for existing residents.
- Concerns regarding highway safety impacts for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, including the suitability of the southbound A1 access due to visibility, merging difficulties and perceived accident risk.
- Some representations consider the development to be overly reliant on private car travel, with doubts that proposed walking and cycling improvements would significantly reduce vehicle use.

Flood Risk, Drainage and Wastewater

- Concerns that development of the greenfield site would increase surface water runoff and exacerbate flooding both within the site and in surrounding areas.

- Particular concerns have been raised regarding existing flooding issues around Little Paxton Bridge and the potential for increased flood risk elsewhere, including neighbouring land, roads and open spaces.
- Doubts have been expressed regarding the effectiveness of the proposed drainage and attenuation measures during extreme weather events and whether sufficient allowance has been made for climate change.
- Concerns that existing sewerage infrastructure and wastewater treatment facilities may lack capacity to accommodate the development, potentially worsening existing drainage, sewage flooding and odour issues.

Landscape, Settlement Character and loss of agricultural land

- Objections relate to the loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land and development of a greenfield site currently forming part of the countryside setting of Little Paxton.
- Concerns that the proposal would reduce the perceived separation between St Neots and Little Paxton, contributing to urban sprawl and settlement coalescence.
- It is considered that the development would have a significant visual impact on the surrounding landscape and erode local distinctiveness and village character. The proposed landscaping and mitigation measures would not adequately offset these effects.
- Concerns have also been raised regarding the loss of countryside used for walking, cycling and informal recreation, together with increased pressure on nearby green spaces including Paxton Pits and Priory Park.
  Officer note: The application site is in private ownership, does not contain any Public Rights of Way and is not subject to any open access or permissive access arrangements.
- Impacts upon the existing agricultural tenant and their agricultural business, including loss of land for farming and conflict between the proposed future residents and agricultural practices/machinery (including noise and odour).

Ecology and Biodiversity

- Concerns have been raised regarding the loss and fragmentation of habitats and the potential effects on protected and notable species, including birds, bats and badgers.
- Specific concerns relate to a bat colony within Brook Farm House.
- Objections have been raised regarding wildlife disturbance during construction and occupation and whether proposed biodiversity net gain measures would adequately compensate for habitat losses and ecological impacts.

Heritage and Archaeology

- Concerns have been raised that construction of the development and associated infrastructure could result in the loss or damage of archaeological remains.
- Harm to St Neots Conservation Area.
- The proposal would erode the historic rural setting and open character on this edge of St Neots and adversely affect views towards St James Church from Priory Hill Road.

- Harm to Brook Farm House, which is a non-designated heritage asset.
  Officer note: Brook Farm House has not been identified by the Council's Conservation Officer as a non-designated heritage asset.

Residential Amenity and Living Conditions

- Loss of views and visual amenity for existing residents.
- Concerns have been raised regarding increased air pollution and deterioration in local air quality arising from additional traffic movements.
- Construction activity is expected to cause temporary disturbance through noise, dust, traffic and general disruption.
- Future residents would experience poor living conditions due to odour from St Neots WRC and noise.
- Concerns have been raised that the scale of the development could result in increased levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and perceptions of reduced community safety.

Sustainability and Planning Policy

- Conflict with Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plan and NPPF policies relating to infrastructure capacity, sustainable transport, landscape character, flood risk, biodiversity, heritage, residential amenity and the protection of the countryside.
- Objectors consider that the cumulative adverse impacts of the development would conflict with principles of sustainable development and would not be outweighed by any benefits.

5.2 A representation from Cllr Claffey (District Councillor for Great Paxton and a member of Great Paxton Parish Council) was received 25.09.2026 raising the following matters of concern:

- The scale of the proposal and its potential impacts on the village on Great Paxton and how these have been assessed.
  Officer note: The catchment schools for the proposed residential development are all located within St Neots. The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care Board identified impacted surgeries as Almond Road surgery in St Neots and Buckden & Little Paxton surgeries.
- The impacts of additional traffic travelling north from St Neots through Great Paxton and onwards towards Huntingdon.
  Officer note: the applicant's trip distribution (agreed with the Highway Authority) determines that traffic generated by the development and heading north towards and from Huntingdon in the AM and PM peaks will route via the A1 taking into consideration shorter distance and better journey times during peak periods.
- Cycling and pedestrian safety on the route.
  Officer note: No pedestrian or cycle improvements are proposed along Huntingdon Road north of the applicant's boundary, as the key desire lines and destinations for development-related pedestrian and cycle trips are towards the existing facilities, amenities, and schools within St Neots. The Highway Authority advise that Great Paxton is beyond reasonable walking distance from the residential area of the proposed development.

- A lack of supporting infrastructure for the level of housing growth taking place in St Neots.
- Why excavation works have recently been undertaken on the site.
  Officer note: during the course of this application excavation works were undertaken on the application site by Anglian Water to lay a new pipe and the applicant undertook archaeological evaluation trenching (overseen by the County Archaeologist).

5.3 A representation in support of the proposal was received from Cllr Hyams (Ward member for St Neots East Ward (adjacent ward to this application) and member of St Neots Town Council) on 30.09.2026 raising the following summarised material points:

- The development is well located for access to the town centre and railway station.
- The proposal will contribute to the regeneration and prosperity of St Neots town centre and High Street.
- No adverse impacts are expected upon highways in and around St Neots.
- All the residential development will be located in Flood Zone 1.
- There is capacity within local doctor and dentist services within St Neots.
- CIL payments will assist with infrastructure requirements, including education.
- The proposal includes a considerable amount of public open space.

6 APPRAISAL

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

6.2 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 provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within Paragraph 3 of the NPPF (2026). 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”.

6.3 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)
- Made Neighbourhood Plans

6.4 The starting point for proposals, in accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is that developments shall be

determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.5 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.

6.6 Whilst accepting that the NPPF (2026) does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraphs 1 and 3 of the NPPF confirm that the national decision-making policies (NDMPs) within the NPPF are a material consideration of critical importance and should be read alongside the policies in the Development Plan. Paragraph 2, Annex A of the NPPF confirms that where Development Plan policies (or parts of those policies) are materially inconsistent with the NDMPs, they should be given "very limited weight", unless they have been examined and adopted or made against the NPPF 2026.

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

- Principle of Development
- Retail Impact (Community Hub)
- Transport Impacts and Highway Safety
- Landscape and countryside character
- Design considerations
- Drainage and Flood Risk
- Heritage Impacts
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Trees
- Residential amenity (including noise and odour and open space provision)
- Contamination and ground pollution risks
- Housing needs (including affordable)
- Other matters
- Financial considerations and contributions
- Planning balance

Principle of Development

Development Plan Policies:

<u>Local Plan Policies LP2 and LP7 (Spatial Planning Areas)</u>

6.8 The application site is located on the edge of St Neots. Policy LP2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 sets out the overarching development strategy for Huntingdonshire through the plan period.

6.9 St Neots is identified as one of four 'Spatial Planning Areas', which represent the most sustainable centres for development. Approximately three quarters of

the objectively assessed need for housing identified by the Local Plan to 2036 is directed to the four spatial planning areas.

6.10 St Neots therefore represents one of the more sustainable locations for residential development within Huntingdonshire, albeit the application site is not allocated for development by the Local Plan to 2036.

6.11 Local Plan Policy LP7 supports development proposals for housing development on unallocated sites within a Spatial Planning Area where it is appropriately located within a built-up-area. No settlement boundary for St Neots is defined by the Huntingdonshire Local Plan or St Neots Neighbourhood Plan. The Local Plan defines a 'built-up-area' as a distinct group of 30 or more homes. Land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area.

6.12 The application site is greenfield land which contains no existing development. It therefore represents undeveloped land adjacent to but outside the built-up area/settlement of St Neots.

6.13 Local Plan Policy LP7 is silent on development proposed outside of the built-up area. Local Plan Policies LP10 and LP28 (considered below) apply to land within the countryside.

6.14 NDMP S3 of the NPPF 2026 is clear that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for proposals located outside a settlement means that NDMP S5 should be applied. NDMP S3 and S5 are a material consideration of critical importance which must be taken into account in decision making. An assessment against NDMP S5 is undertaken below.

<u>Local Plan Policies LP28 (Rural Exceptions) and LP10 (agricultural land quality)</u>

6.15 Local Plan policy LP10 restricts opportunities for development in the countryside to those that are provided for in other policies within the Local Plan. This policy pre-dates the NPPF 2026 and therefore does not acknowledge the opportunities provided for by NDMP S3 and S5 (considered below).

6.16 The only Local Plan policy which supports a proposal for housing on a site outside of, but well related to, the built-up area is Policy LP28 (Rural Exceptions Housing). The current proposal includes 40% affordable housing and does not qualify as a rural exceptions housing site.

6.17 Local Plan Policy LP10 also states that all development in the countryside must seek to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value, avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible and avoiding Grade 1 land unless there are exceptional circumstances.

6.18 The Natural England Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) defines the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land as Grades 1, 2 and 3a with lower grade land included in Grades 3b, and 4, defined by wetness and gradient of the land.

6.19 NDMP N2 of the NPPF (2026) states that development proposals should "Take into account the quality of agricultural land (including that classified as best and most versatile agricultural land, and its grade), and if significant development of agricultural land is necessary, use areas of poorer quality land where possible".

6.20 A detailed Agricultural Land Classification Survey of the area of the application site proposed for residential development (and other land surrounding St Neots) was completed by the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA) for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) in January 1999. This shows that the land is largely Grade 2 agricultural land, with some Grade 3a agricultural land.

6.21 More recent 'Predictive Agricultural Land Classification' data held by Defra (published October 2025 and revised March 2026) suggests that the application site is largely Grade 3a agricultural land (including the area proposed for residential development), with some Grade 3b and Grade 4 land adjacent to the River Great Ouse (including 'Conservation Island'). Notably, no Grade 2 land is predicted within the application site. In addition, all of the land surrounding the existing town of St Neots is predicted as either Grade 2 or Grade 3a agricultural land, therefore the application site represents the lowest agricultural grade land possible adjacent to the built up area.

6.22 Contrary to Local Plan Policy LP10, the proposed development will result in the loss of best and best and most versatile agricultural land (approximately 65ha) – whilst a significant proportion of this land will remain undeveloped it is proposed as amenity space or allotment land (as opposed to being in agricultural use). However, Local Plan Policy LP10 is more restrictive than NDMP N2 and Annex A of the NPPF is clear that development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in this Framework should be given very limited weight.

6.23 NDMP N2 of the NPPF (2026) does not prohibit the use of BMV land, it simply requires decision makers to take agricultural land quality into account and direct significant development to poorer quality land where possible.

6.24 Whilst the loss of approximately 65ha of BMV agricultural land is significant locally, when considered in the context of the overall proportion of BMV land surrounding St Neots and within the wider district, its significance is reduced. Ultimately, it would not materially impact UK food production/security. Nevertheless, it is a sizeable loss and should be afforded commensurate weight as a harm arising in the overall planning balance.

6.25 On this basis, the principle of development is not considered to conflict with national planning policy and the conflict arising with Local Plan Policy LP10 can

be afforded very limited weight. Nevertheless, the loss of BMV agricultural land can be afforded modest negative weight in the overall planning balance.

Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) Policies 5 (Mineral Safeguarding Areas) and 16 (Consultation Areas)

6.26 In accordance with NDMP M6 of the NPPF, the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority (MWPA) were consulted on this planning application and account has been taken of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

6.27 The majority of the application site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for sand and gravel. Policy 5 of the MWLP states that within a MSA, development on an unallocated site outside of a settlement will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that one of the following criteria applies:

- (i) the mineral can be extracted where practicable prior to development taking place; or
- (j) the mineral concerned is demonstrated to not be of current or future value; or
- (k) the development will not prejudice future extraction of the mineral; or
- (l) there is an overriding need for the development (where prior extraction is not feasible)

6.28 The MWPA are satisfied that complete prior extraction is unlikely to be feasible as part of this development. Consequently, if the Planning Authority is of the view that there is an 'overriding need' for the development, the MWPA will be content that Policy 5 has been addressed, subject to an informative.

6.29 'Overriding need' for the purposes of Policy 5 is defined as a judgement "in the planning balance when any planning application is assessed, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy. That judgement should also consider the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the MSA, or meeting the need for it in some other way.

6.30 The overriding need for the proposed development, including any economic impacts, will be demonstrated throughout the remainder of this report.

6.31 Policy 16 of the MWLP identifies Consultation Areas around existing waste and mineral sites. Parts of the application site lie within Consultation Area for Little Paxton Quarry Mineral Development Area and St Neots WRC.

6.32 Policy 16 seeks to safeguard minerals and waste facilities. It states that development within a Consultation Area will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the development will not prejudice the existing or future use

of the area, i.e. the quarrying (and restoration) operation for which the Consultation Area has been designated; and not result in unacceptable amenity issues or adverse impacts to human health for the occupiers or users of such new development, due to the ongoing or future use of the area for which the Consultation Area has been designated.

6.33 The MWPA is content Policy 16 is satisfied in this respect with regards to Little Paxton Quarry Mineral Development Area.

6.34 St Neots WRC is located on the western side of Huntingdon Road and is enclosed by the application site and during the course of this planning application, Anglian Water undertook works (which commenced September 2025) to install a new pipeline which connects St Neots WRC to Loves Farm Phase 2 (required to support planned growth in the area), which included laying part of the pipeline east to west across the current application site (note: the route of the new pipeline is in the north of the application site and does not cross the area proposed for residential development).

6.35 Noting that the application site entirely surrounds the St Neots WRC, Anglian Water initially expressed concern that the proposal could 'landlock' the WRC and therefore prevent any future expansion of the WRC (if required). Following discussions between the applicant and Anglian Water, the applicant has agreed to safeguard an area of land to the immediate north of the WRC (shown on the Land Use Parameter Plan) for use by Anglian Water in the event that it is required in future. This is a matter which would also be addressed within the S106 Agreement.

Officer note: in the event that any future expansion is required to St Neots WRC this would be subject to relevant planning controls at that time.

6.36 Whilst this safeguarded land is not required to provide a foul water drainage connection for the proposed development (discussed in detail elsewhere within this report), it is required to satisfy the requirements of Policy 16 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough MWLP (2021) and therefore meets the relevant legal tests for a planning obligation. As the expansion of St Neots WRC may be required to support further planned growth in St Neots (one of the districts largest and most sustainable settlements) as envisaged by the Council's emerging Local Plan to 2046, it is considered that moderate positive weight may be afforded to the Anglian Water safeguarded land in the overall planning balance.

6.37 On this basis, Anglian Water are satisfied that the proposal will not prejudice the existing or future use of the WRC. Beyond the safeguarded land being secured by S106, a planning condition is requested to ensure Anglian Water assets within the application site are considered in detail at reserved matters stage.

6.38 On the basis of no objections being received from Anglian Water and the Environmental Health Officer in respect of odour and amenity (discussed in more details below) Officers are content that Policy 16 of the Minerals and

Waste Local Plan and NDMP P4 of the NPPF are satisfied in respect of St Neots WRC.

6.39 As will demonstrated by this report, LPA Officers are satisfied that there is an overriding need for the proposal and therefore the principle of development is not in conflict with the relevant policies of the MWLP.

NDMP S5

6.40 As established above, the application site lies outside the settlement of St Neots.

6.41 NDMP S5 contains a list of certain forms of development which should be approved outside settlements, "unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework".

6.42 NDMP S5(1)(j) applies to development addressing an evidenced unmet need. For housing, the policy expressly recognises the absence of a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as such evidence.

6.43 As noted above at paragraph 4.7, HDC cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The proposal for up to 600 dwellings would therefore address an evidenced unmet need for the purposes of NDMP S5(1)(j).

6.44 S5(1)(j)(i) also requires the development to be physically well related to an existing settlement and of a scale which can be accommodated, taking account of existing or proposed infrastructure. These are matters of planning judgment.

6.45 The application site is located on the northern edge of the built-up area of St Neots. It is well related to existing residential development and Priory Park, located on the south of Priory Hill Road, and is within walking/cycling distance of local schools, St Neots train station and the town centre. As recognised by the spatial strategy of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, St Neots represents one of the most sustainable locations for housing development in Huntingdonshire district.

6.46 The proposal includes significant on-site green space provision (around 44.36ha), including informal green space, children's play and allotments. Financial contributions can be secured towards off-site provision of outdoor sports, education and health facilities.

6.47 Having regard to the application site's relationship with the adjoining settlement, Officers consider that it is physically well-related to the settlement and is of a scale which can be accommodated, taking account of the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure.

6.48 As these requirements are satisfied, NDMP S5(1) directs that the proposal should be approved unless the benefits would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects, assessed against the national decision-making policies.

6.49 NDMP S5 (2) of the NPPF clarifies that the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include, but are not restricted to, situations where the development proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.

6.50 The remainder of this report assesses the proposals against the relevant development plan policies, national decision making policies and any other material considerations before coming to a conclusion about whether the benefits of the proposal would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects.

Retail impact (Community Hub)

6.51 The description of development includes reference to a “community hub site including parking and mobility hub”. The application is submitted in outline with all matters except access reserved, therefore details of the community hub (including proposed uses) would be for determination at reserved matters stage. The applicant has confirmed that Bloor Homes would not deliver the Community Hub themselves and therefore its delivery (and the detail/uses) will be dependent upon market interest/demand.

6.52 The precise uses to be accommodated within the Community Hub are not therefore currently known, however, at this outline stage, the intention is for the Community Hub to provide services which would meet day-to-day needs of residents and provide facilities in connection with the proposed green infrastructure space (which is envisaged as an extension to the existing Priory Park). The applicant suggests this could include a café, small convenience store and office/meeting spaces to be used by local community groups or the town council and a mobility hub (which could include cycle hire/parking, EV charging, parcel lockers and pop-up shops e.g. bicycle repair shop). Such uses would comprise community uses (Use Classes F1 and F2) and/or retail and other uses within Use Class E (commercial, business and service), as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

6.53 Community facilities, as defined by the NPPF includes meeting places, public houses, places of worship, cultural venues, youth centres, allotments, cemeteries and burial grounds, and facilities for play, sport and informal recreation. ‘Main town centre uses’ as defined by the NPPF (2026) includes retail development, leisure uses and offices

6.54 The uses envisaged for the Community Hub include both community facilities (specifically meeting space for community groups) and main town centre uses (specifically, a café, convenience store and office space). In light of the main

town centre uses, it is necessary to apply national and local planning policies which apply to such.

Local Plan Policy LP22 and NDMP TC3 (retail sequential test)

6.55 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP22 supports the provision of local facilities and services, including main town centre uses (up to a maximum of 600 sqm net internal floorspace) to meet the needs of a local community within a built-up area. The applicant confirmed during the course of the application that any Community Hub floorspace given over to a main town centre use would fall below 600 sqm. In the event that this application was deemed acceptable in all other regards, and approved, the proposed developable area would become part of the built-up area. In such a scenario, subject to conditions to control the amount of floorspace given over to 'main town centre uses' to below 600 sqm the proposed Community Hub could be supported by Local Plan Policy LP22. However, Local Plan Policy LP22 pre-dates the NPPF (2026).

6.56 NDMP TC3 of the NPPF (2026) specifically states that a 'sequential test' should be applied to proposals for main town centre uses where these are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an allocation for that purposed in an up-to-date development plan. There is no size threshold for the application of the sequential test. This means that main town centre uses involving new development should be located within town centres; then, if this is not feasible, within edge of centre locations; and only where suitable and available sites are not available, or are not expected to become available within a reasonable period, should out-of-centre sites be considered. The sequential test supports the viability and vitality of town centres by placing existing centres foremost in decision taking.

6.57 As per Annex A of the NPPF, the NPPF is a material consideration of critical importance and development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in this Framework should be given very limited weight. In light of NDMP TC3, regardless of Local Plan Policy LP22 (which makes no mention of a sequential test needing to be satisfied, subject to main town centre uses being limited to less than 600sqm), given that the proposed Community Hub could result in main town centre uses being provided outside of an established town/local centre, it is necessary for the sequential test to be applied.

6.58 Following publication of the NPPF 2026, the applicant therefore undertook a retail sequential test which was submitted in support of the planning application. This document confirms that any proposed retail or leisure element of the Community Hub is envisaged as a modest local facility serving the immediate community and visitors to Priory Park. It is not intended as a destination to attract visitors from wider St Neots or beyond and any floorspace proposed for main town centre uses would be limited (under 600sqm). On this basis, a search area of 800m from the proposed development (representing a reasonable 10 minute walking distance) was applied.

6.59 There are no existing town/local centres within the defined search area. The approximate distances of existing centres from the proposed development are as follows:

- St Neots town centre – 1.32km
- Little Paxton Great North Road Local Centre (proposed to be identified as a Local Centre by the Pre-submission Local Plan, September 2026) – 1.71km
- Kester Way (Love's Farm), St Neots (proposed to be identified as a Local Centre by the Pre-submission Local Plan, September 2026) – 830m
- Longsands Parade Local Centre, St Neots (proposed to be identified as a Local Centre by the Pre-submission Local Plan, September 2026) – 930m.

6.60 Given the intervening distance and the proposed purpose of the Community Hub (to serve some of the day-to-day needs of local residents of the proposed residential development) it is accepted that existing premises within St Neots town centre and the local centre at Little Paxton Great North Road could not reasonably accommodate the proposed Community Hub.

6.61 In the interest of applying flexibility, whilst they fell outside the 800m search area, the applicant did undertake a detailed assessment of the units within Kester Way (Loves Farm) Local Centre and Longsands Parade Local Centre – both located within the built up area of St Neots, south of the application site. The assessment concludes that all units within both local centres are currently occupied and there is no available evidence to suggest that these units would become available in the near future. Accordingly, there are no existing premises within an existing town or local centre which could reasonably accommodate the proposed Community Hub.

6.62 The applicant's Sequential Test goes on to consider existing edge of centre and out of centre premises but finds no reasonably available units within 800m of the proposed development or within a location which is sequentially preferable to the application site.

6.63 In accordance with NDMP TC3(4) Officers are satisfied that the retail sequential test is passed, however, it is also necessary to consider whether the proposal could have any adverse impact on one or more of the considerations set out by NDMP TC4.

NDMP TC4 and Local Plan Policy LP7 (retail impact assessment)

6.64 NDMP TC4 requires that development proposals for retail and leisure uses located outside town centres should be accompanied by an impact assessment if the proposal exceeds a floorspace threshold set out in an up-to-date development plan and is not on a site which is allocated for the proposed use in the plan. If no threshold for impact assessments has been set in the development plan, a default threshold of 2,500 sqm gross floorspace should be applied.

6.65 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP7 includes a threshold of 600 sqm of net internal retail floorspace for application of a retail impact assessment.

6.66 In this case, the applicant has confirmed that the cumulative gross floorspace given over to main town centre uses within the Community Hub will not exceed 600 sqm and is willing to accept a planning condition which would control this. On this basis, subject to imposition of a planning condition, the proposal would not trigger the need for a retail impact assessment and would accord with NDMP TC4 and Local Plan Policy LP7 in this regard.

6.67 The proposed Community Hub will not adversely impact upon any established or existing retail/local centres. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

6.68 In accordance with NDMP CC2(b) and HC4, the proposed community hub will provide new community facilities which are of benefit to future, as well as existing residents and will help to reduce the need to travel on a daily basis. This is a benefit which NDMP HC4 states should be afforded substantial weight in the planning balance.

Transport Impacts and Highway Safety

6.69 Local Plan Policy LP16 seeks to promote sustainable travel by requiring development to maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport, provide safe access, protect or enhance public rights of way, and ensure that transport impacts are appropriately assessed and mitigated without resulting in severe residual cumulative impacts. Policy LP17 requires development to provide safe access, adequate vehicle and cycle parking, and sufficient space for vehicle movements, having regard to accessibility, user needs, amenity and highway safety, whilst encouraging cycle parking and facilities for cyclists.

6.70 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan Policies PT1 and PT2 require that development proposals should maximise opportunities for sustainable travel, particularly walking and cycling and improved access to St Neots railway station, while providing well-designed and adequately integrated vehicle parking that meets the needs of residents and visitors. Supporting text to Policy PT2 encourages provision of an average of at least 1.5 car parking spaces per 1 and 2 bedroom properties and an average of at least 0.5 spaces per bedroom for properties with 3 or more bedrooms.

6.71 NDMP (NPPF, 2026) TR3, TR4 and TR6 seek to ensure development is located in sustainable locations, designed to prioritise active and sustainable travel, and supported by appropriate transport evidence demonstrating that it would not result in severe transport or highway safety impacts.

6.72 The application has been subject to extensive consultation with the Cambridgeshire County Council Highway Authority, National Highways and Active Travel England (ATE). In accordance with NDMP TR6 of the NPPF, the

application was supported by a Transport Assessment and several Transport Technical Notes prepared in response to comments provided by consultees.

Access from Priory Hill Road

6.73 Two points of access are proposed into the residential development from Priory Hill Road supported by traffic calming measures including reduced carriageway widths and improved road markings. The proposed traffic calming measures aim to reduce vehicle speeds and facilitate a change to a 30mph speed limit for the length of Priory Hill Road (currently the speed limit is 40mph, which reduces to 30mph as on the approach to Hawkesden Road). A new bus stop and a toucan crossing are also proposed to improve accessibility, encourage sustainable travel, and enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety adjacent to the development. A detailed drawing (drg no: 332611695-STN-HGN-XX-DR-CH-0107 received 25.08.2026) showing the access points has been submitted as part of the application for approval (access is for approval at outline stage). This drawing has been subject to amendments made in response to comments from the Highway Authority and ATE before being subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.

6.74 Subject to vegetation being cut back to secure visibility splays (all vegetation required to be cut back is within the control of the applicant or within the public highway), suitable street lighting being provided, and speed limit signage placement along Priory Hill Road being agreed (details of which can be secured by condition / will be subject to a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit), the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has demonstrated that the proposed access arrangements are acceptable in terms of highway safety. The Highway Authority are satisfied that the capacity assessment models confirm that the proposed site access junctions will operate within capacity under all future year assessment scenarios.

6.75 On this basis, ATE and the Highway Authority have no objection to the two points of access and associated works proposed on Priory Hill Road, subject to conditions securing further design details and delivery / maintenance of the proposed visibility splays.

6.76 As envisaged by the Illustrative Masterplan and Design and Access statement the two proposed access points will facilitate provision of a tree lined primary loop road through the proposed development (details to be secured as part of future reserved matters). This is supported by NDMP N3 of the NPPF which states that new streets should be tree lined unless there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate. However, the Council's Urban Design Officer notes that as shown on drg no: 332611695-STN-HGN-XX-DR-CH-0107 received 25.08.2026 provision is made for a grass verge on only one side of each access road proposed from Priory Hill Road. This would not facilitate a grass verge and tree planting on both sides of the primary street. To ensure this addressed at reserved matters stage a condition is recommended which, (notwithstanding the approved details) requires the provision of a grass verge to be provided both

sides of the carriageway for both points of access into the site from Priory Hill Road.

Works to Priory Hill Road / Mill Lane / Huntingdon Road

6.77 As existing, where Priory Hill Road, Mill Lane and Huntingdon Road meet there are two mini-roundabouts. This arrangement has previously been identified as being a safety concern by the Highway Authority.

6.78 Notably, minor safety improvement works to the mini-roundabouts were approved as part of the planning permission for the St Neots Wintringham Park development), however, complete replacement of the mini-roundabouts is favoured in highway safety terms. The land surrounding the mini roundabouts is controlled by the applicant and therefore a comprehensive solution can be secured as part of the current application which would supersede the limited works approved as part of the Wintringham Park planning permission.

6.79 In preparing the current application the applicant explored several options to replace the double mini roundabout, including staggered priority T-junctions, staggered signalised T-junctions and a full size priority roundabout. Following a review with the Highway Authority the staggered priority T-junction with ghost island right turns was progressed as the preferred option for several reasons including: prioritising pedestrian and cycle movements; reducing vehicle speeds; reducing tree removals; limiting extensive 'online' traffic works which would limit the need for road closures whilst work is completed; avoiding signals which are not favoured by the Highway Authority where other feasible options exist.

6.80 As part of the wider site access strategy, it is therefore proposed that Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane be realigned and the existing double mini-roundabouts redesigned to a staggered T junction arrangement with ghost island right turns onto Huntingdon Road. The existing Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane carriageways where realigned will be stopped up and repurposed as a shared use footway/cycleway (full details of which can be secured as part of any reserved matters application). In addition, new pedestrian and cycle crossing arrangements are proposed along Priory Hill Road, Mill Lane, and the B1043 Huntingdon Road, along with traffic calming features on the B1043 Huntingdon Road and a new 5m wide access serving Rowley Allotments from Mill Lane (the existing access to the allotments is to be blocked up). Access to all existing houses accessed from Mill Lane (including Chamberlain Way) is maintained.

6.81 Two detailed drawings (drg nos: 332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0109 and 332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0115 received 25.08.2026) showing the proposed works to Priory Hill Road/Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road have been submitted as part of the application for approval (access is for approval at outline stage). These drawings have been subject to amendments made in response to comments from the Highway Authority and ATE before being subject to a Stage 1 Road safety Audit.

6.82 Subject to matters of detailed design being agreed with the Highway Authority (which can be secured by condition / a stage 2 Road safety Audit), including drainage and lighting details, the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has demonstrated that the proposed works to Priory Hill Road/Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road are acceptable in terms of highway safety. The Highway Authority are satisfied, based on the junction capacity assessment modelling that the proposed junction layout will operate within capacity under all future year assessment scenarios and the right turn lanes are of sufficient length to accommodate queues.

6.83 On this basis, the Highway Authority and ATE have no objection to the works proposed to Priory Hill Road/Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road, subject to conditions securing minor revisions which can be secured as part of further design details to be submitted.

Transport network impacts and proposed off site works

6.84 NDMP TR6(4) of the NPPF states that development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement.

6.85 The applicant, as agreed with the Highway Authority, undertook a manual traffic impact assessment of traffic impacts associated with the forecast trip generation of the proposed development. This allowed the applicant to take account of ongoing and planned development around St Neots, including the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet improvement scheme.

6.86 Under the agreed approach, the development is anticipated to generate 294 two-way vehicle trips in the AM peak and 253 two-way vehicle trips in the PM peak. The development is also anticipated to generate up to 76 pedestrian trips, 35 cycle trips, and 72 public transport trips in the peak periods. The impacts of these trips upon the wider transport network, including the A428, A1 (principally the A1 northbound merge and southbound diverge junctions), Little Paxton Bridge and junctions within St Neots were assessed in detail and reviewed by National Highways and the Highway Authority. As a result, the applicant identified the following off-site junctions would operate over capacity and therefore mitigation works are proposed to address this where justified:

- Mill Lane / Great North Road Priority Junction: the applicant proposes to widen the Mill Lane approach, widen and realign the existing footway around the junction bellmouth to 2m, and relocate the existing pedestrian crossing point further southeast with tactile paving.
- B1041/Mill Lane signalised T-junction: the majority of the forecast increase in queuing on the B1041 (N) approach arm at this junction is attributable to background and committed development traffic, rather than traffic

associated with the proposed development. Following extensive discussions with the County Council Signals Team no mitigation is proposed at this junction as it is considered that the existing intelligent traffic signal control which exists at this junction can be monitored and updated to sufficiently manage future queues.

- B1428 / Station Rd / Cambridge Rd / Cromwell Rd Double Mini Roundabout: due to physical constraints significant vehicular capacity improvements at this junction are not feasible. Mitigation for this junction must therefore focus on reducing traffic demand through the junction by promoting sustainable travel. The applicant proposes an £850,000 contribution to reroute and enhance the existing Stagecoach 905 bus service through the development site, providing improved connections to Bedford, Cambridge and St Neots railway station, which the Highway Authority considers will adequately mitigate the development's traffic impacts at this junction.
- B1428/Cambridge Street/B1043 Huntingdon Street signalised junction: the applicant proposes mitigation in the form of signal cycle time optimisation, to be delivered via a S106 contribution of £3,000 to CCC.

6.87 National Highways confirmed, having reviewed the submitted details, that they have no objection to the proposed development. Whilst the development will contribute additional trips to the Strategic Road Network it is considered unlikely to have a severe impact.

6.88 The Highway Authority are satisfied that the proposed off-site mitigation is generally acceptable, deliverable and can be secured by condition / S278 or in the case of financial contributions to bus service improvements, secured by the S106 Agreement.

Officer note: The Highway Authority questioned the applicant's proposed placement of the relocated pedestrian crossing points on the Mill Lane / Great North Road Priority Junction, however they are satisfied that a workable solution can be agreed via details to be secured for future submission by condition.

6.89 On this basis, taking account of mitigation measures, the proposal will not result in a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway safety. The Highway Authority have confirmed that there is no sound reason to justify refusal of the application on the basis of highway impacts or safety.

Active Travel (including leisure routes and bus strategy)

Pedestrian and cycle routes to key destinations

6.90 A detailed Active Travel Audit report was submitted and was amended during the course of the application to respond to comments from ATE and the Highway Authority – the audit provides a detailed analysis of the existing

infrastructure and current user experience of pedestrians and cyclists in the local area.

6.91 The site benefits from access to existing walking and cycling infrastructure which provides links to a number of local services/facilities, including:

- Priory Junior School - 12 minute walk / 4 minute cycle
- St. Neots Railway Station - 12-minute walk / 4 minute cycle
- Longsands Academy – 17 minute walk / 5 minute cycle
- Priory Park Infant School – 19 minute walk / 6 minute cycle
- Almond Road Surgery – 19 minute walk / 6 minute cycle
- St Neots town centre – 30-minute walk / 10 minute cycle

6.92 Where the Travel Audit has identified existing deficiencies in routes to key local education, employment, and leisure destinations, the applicant is proposing off site mitigation as follows:

- Footpath widening of Priory Hill Road/Hawkesden Road to 3m – this width currently varies between 2.0 - 2.5m wide;
- Redesign Hawkesden / Longsands junction to become a cycle priority junction;
- Zebra crossing to assist key walking movements on Longsands Road;
- Provide approximately 300m of fencing to prevent anti-social parking adjacent Priory Junior School on the eastern and western verges;
- Tactile paving to be added to assist crossing of minor road junctions along Longsands Road;
- Reduce junction widths and add tactile paving to Longsands Road / Rowley Road junction and Longsands Road / Raven Close junction.

6.93 These off-site mitigation works to the public highway, as shown on submitted drawings 332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0116 Rev P03 and 332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DRCH-0117 Rev P03 (received 30.09.2026), have been reviewed by and agreed in principle with the Highway Authority. These works are to be delivered by the applicant, with full details secured by condition and subject to a S278 Agreement.

Leisure routes

6.94 Local Plan Policy LP3 supports proposals which maintain and where appropriate enhance the public rights of way (PRoW) network. NDMP TR8 of the NPPF (2026) requires development proposals to protect and enhance rights of way and take opportunities to extend or improve the quality of existing routes where this would provide improved countryside access and new circular routes.

6.95 There are no existing PRoW within the application site. The nearest PRoW are located to the north east of the application where a PROW through Paxton Pitts Nature Reserve (on the opposite side of the Great River Ouse to the application site), to the east of the application site, through Hawkesden Keys Plantation and to the south of the application site, around the edge of Priory Park. In addition,

there are recreational walking routes through Priory Park located to the south of the application site, on the opposite side of Priory Hill Road.

6.96 The current proposal includes 43.05 ha of amenity green space/natural and semi natural green space/parks and gardens which it is envisaged will function as an extension to Priory Park. Throughout the proposed informal amenity space, the Access Parameter Plan indicates informal walking routes being provided, creating circular walking routes within the site which provide access to the banks of the Great River Ouse (in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy P3) and also link into Priory Park (in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan Policy P1) and the wider PRoW network. The details of these walking routes (including surfacing) can be secured by condition as part of subsequent Reserved Matters applications. Whilst these routes would not necessarily be formal PRoW, they would offer valuable recreational walking opportunities.

Officer note: no recreational routes are proposed within 'Conservation Island' which is to be dedicated to wildlife with no public access.

6.97 In addition, the applicant has agreed in principle to make a S106 contribution of £415,000 towards path provision and access improvements at Priory Park noting the increased population and pressure on the facility.

6.98 Whilst the application as submitted makes reference to a potential footbridge crossing across the Great River Ouse, into Paxton Pitts Nature Reserve, the provision of this bridge would need to be subject to a separate planning application (utilising land within Paxton Pits Nature Reserve, which is owned by HDC). The potential for this bridge (and an offer of S106 contributions towards such from the applicant) was discussed during the course of this application with the Council's Active Environments Team, however concern was raised about the impact of a bridge (and increased footfall) through the nature reserve and a financial contribution towards the improvement of paths within Priory Park was considered to better meet the relevant tests for financial obligations.

6.99 It is possible that a footbridge could come forward in the future and therefore the Highway Authority requested that the leisure routes through the site (linking to the location of a potential footbridge) be safeguarded through the S106 agreement. Officers consider that the footpaths can reasonably be secured through condition / Design Code, as opposed to a S106 requirement.

Bus Strategy

6.100 Following discussions with the Highway Authority the applicant proposes a phased bus strategy to improve public transport accessibility and mitigate transport impacts of the development. The strategy provides for the diversion and enhancement of existing bus services, new bus infrastructure within the development, and contributions towards wider public transport improvements.

6.101 During the initial occupation phase, the existing Central Connect 61 service (a local town circular bus route) would be diverted via Rowley Road and Priory Hill Road, with a temporary bus stop provided adjacent to the site. The bus operator has confirmed that these initial arrangements can be accommodated within the existing contract and would not require additional funding.

6.102 From the occupation of 200 dwellings, the Central Connect 61 service would be routed through the development via the proposed spine road. At this stage, service frequencies would be increased to between 30 and 60 minutes, operating hours extended to between 07:00 and 19:00, and four permanent bus stops delivered within the site. These stops would include real-time passenger information facilities, and potentially shelters, with bus lay-bys provided adjacent to the proposed community/mobility hub. The applicant has agreed to provide a financial contribution of £500,800 over a five-year period to support these service enhancements.

Officer note: Cambridgeshire County Council will not be responsible for maintenance of bus shelters. The provision of bus shelters will therefore be dependent upon either the Town Council agreeing to take on the maintenance of the shelters (funded by a S106 maintenance contribution) or the developer siting the bus shelters outside of the public highway (to be maintained by a management company). If neither can be secured, bus shelters will not be provided. The S106 will include a cascade mechanism to this effect for bus shelter provision.

6.103 The bus strategy also includes provision for the site to be served by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Demand Responsive Transport service (Tiger 11/Ting). In addition, as discussed above, an £850,000 contribution is to be provided to reroute and enhance the existing Stagecoach 905 bus service through the development site, providing improved connections to Bedford, Cambridge and St Neots railway station (specifically required to mitigate the impact of the development upon the B1428 / Station Rd / Cambridge Rd / Cromwell Rd Double Mini Roundabout).

6.104 The Highway Authority considers the proposed Bus Strategy to be feasible and acceptable in principle. Whilst some final routing details remain to be agreed, these can be secured through a planning condition. The required financial contributions towards the enhanced bus services are considered to meet the relevant legal tests would be secured through a Section 106 Agreement.

6.105 A Residential Travel Plan and Welcome Travel Packs including bus vouchers/active travel vouchers are also proposed (to be secured by condition).

6.106 Overall, it is considered that the proposed measures would provide an appropriate level of public transport provision for future residents of the development and would support travel by sustainable modes in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP16, Neighbourhood Plan Policy PT1 and NDMP TR4 of the NPPF.

St Neots Railway Station

6.107 As noted, the site is within walking and cycling distance of St Neots Railway station. Network Rail were consulted on this application and requested a S106 obligation towards station facility improvements. The applicant confirmed they are agreeable to this in principle subject to any contribution meeting the relevant tests.

6.108 Discussions between the applicant and Network Rail are currently ongoing around the scope of this contribution.

Parking and waste collection arrangements

6.109 As the application is submitted in outline, with all matters except access reserved for future determination, the detailed layout and design of streets, including parking provision and waste collection arrangements, are matters for future consideration.

6.110 Based on the submitted Parameter Plans, Officers are satisfied that these are matters which can be adequately addressed at reserved matters stage, to ensure compliance with HDC Local Plan Policy LP17, Neighbourhood Plan Policy PT2 and NDMP TR4.

6.111 To address the sites proximity to St Neots Railway Station and known issues with on-street commuter parking in the area the applicant proposes to implement parking restrictions within the site in the form of single yellow lines or implementing a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) to prevent all-day on-street commuter parking. Given this application is for outline planning consent, the final details of on-site parking restrictions can be discussed further with Highways Development Management Officers at the reserved matters stage, however, a £125,000 S106 contribution is to be secured part of this outline application to fund the installation of the on-site parking restrictions.

Conclusion on transport impacts and highway safety

6.112 The application has been subject to extensive scrutiny by the Highway Authority, Active Travel England and National Highways, supported by a Transport Assessment, Active Travel Audit and subsequent technical work. Subject to planning conditions (including securing S278 works) and obligations secured through the Section 106 Agreement, the consultees raise no objection to the proposed development.

6.113 The proposed access arrangements from Priory Hill Road, including the proposed on-site works to Priory Hill Road/Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road, and the identified off-site highway mitigation measures have been demonstrated to operate within capacity and to be acceptable in highway safety terms. The Highway Authority and National Highways are satisfied that the development would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety and that residual

cumulative impacts on the transport network would not be severe. In accordance with NDMP TR6, Local Plan Policies LP16 and LP17, and Neighbourhood Plan Policies PT1 and PT2, the absence of unacceptable highway safety impacts or severe transport impacts is afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance. The removal of the existing double mini roundabout, which has been flagged as a highway safety concern, is a public benefit of the proposal which should be afforded significant weight in the planning balance (given that this application is the only feasible means to secure removal of the double mini roundabout).

6.114 The proposal would also deliver wider transport and active travel benefits. These include improvements to walking and cycling connections to local facilities, schools and the railway station; enhanced crossing facilities and pedestrian and cycle infrastructure; on-site recreational walking routes linked to the wider network; and a Section 106 contribution of £415,000 towards path and access improvements within Priory Park. The development would also secure enhanced public transport provision through the diversion and upgrading of local bus services, the delivery of on-site bus infrastructure, and financial contributions towards improved bus connectivity, including services linking the site with St Neots town centre, the railway station, Bedford and Cambridge. These measures would improve opportunities for travel by sustainable modes and provide enhanced recreational access for existing and future residents which promote good health and interaction within the community. These benefits are afforded substantial positive weight in the overall planning balance, in accordance with HC4 of the NPPF.

Landscape and Countryside Character

6.115 Local Plan Policy LP11 requires development proposals to respond positively to their context and draw inspiration from the key characteristics of their surroundings. In doing so, regard should be had to the guidance contained within the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD.

6.116 The majority of the application site is located within the Great Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area. Local Plan Policy LP3 supports proposals within this area where it contributes to the landscape, wildlife, cultural and historical value of the area.

6.117 Neighbourhood Plan Policies A2 and A4 seek to secure soft landscaping on the approach into the town and require that development for 50+ dwellings include landscape backdrops around the site for screening and wildlife.

6.118 The NPPF (2026) requires development proposals to consider landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced. Development should respond positively to its context and integrate with and enhance its surroundings, whilst existing natural features of visual value such as trees and hedgerows should be conserved and enhanced where possible.

6.119 The application site comprises predominantly agricultural land on the northern edge of St Neots which sits within both the South East Claylands Landscape Character Area and the Great Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area (as defined by the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD), and includes land known as the former "Priory Piece", a remnant of the historic parkland landscape associated with Priory Park that contributes positively to local landscape character.

6.120 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), and additions (in response to consultee comments) was submitted in support of the application, and reviewed by the Council's Landscape Advisor during the course of the application.

6.121 The LVIA concludes that landscape effects and visual impact effects are largely localised to the site and its immediate surroundings, with effects reducing rapidly beyond the development area due to topography, woodland, hedgerows, the River Great Ouse corridor and the East Coast Main Line. The development is considered to be located on the valley side in a position that reflects the existing pattern of growth at St Neots.

6.122 In terms of landscape character impacts (upon the South East Claylands Landscape Character Area and Great Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area), the LVIA does not find any 'major' adverse harm arising. Some 'moderate' adverse harm is anticipated, but this is localised to the proposed highway works and development edge and considered to be capable of mitigation over time (as new planting matures). The LVIA also identifies some long-term beneficial landscape effects arising from habitat creation, structural planting, enhanced public access and the establishment of an extensive green infrastructure network.

6.123 In terms of visual receptors, the LVIA again concludes that adverse impacts would be localised and concentrated on those closest to the site. The highest levels of visual impact are identified for users of:

- Priory Hill Road, particularly where the proposed development would form a prominent new urban edge on land currently experienced as open countryside.
- Huntingdon Road, particularly on approaches to and departures from St Neots, where views of development would replace views of agricultural land.
- Mill Lane, where receptors will experience views across the valley towards the development site.
- Residents immediately adjoining the site and users of local roads and footpaths in the vicinity of the development.

6.124 Whilst neighbour concerns about the impact of the proposal upon the separate identities of St Neots and Little Paxton are noted, the proposals retain a substantial green infrastructure corridor associated with the Great Ouse Valley, helping to maintain the physical distinction between St Neots and Little Paxton whilst enhancing ecological connectivity and public access.

6.125 The Council's Landscape Adviser agrees with the LVIA's assessment and is satisfied that the proposed residential development can be successfully assimilated into the local landscape. The extensive green infrastructure enhancements proposed, and principles of green grid, green corridor and green avenue, as set out in the application documents, are sound foundations and respond to the aims of Local Plan Policies LP3 and LP11, the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape DPD and Neighbourhood Plan Policies A2 and A4. The principles of design set out should be secured through conditions, including a requirement for a Design Code to be prepared prior to submission of any Reserved Matters.

6.126 The Council's Landscape Adviser remains unsupportive, in landscape terms, of the highway works proposed to realign Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane (to replace the double mini roundabout) as it will result in the loss of existing trees (which contribute positively to the landscape) and the fragmentation of the historic parkland character associated with the former 'Priory Piece', reducing the legibility of this historic landscape as it transitions into the proposed informal amenity space.

6.127 Whilst the Council's Landscape Adviser was in favour of retaining the existing historical alignment of Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane, for the reasons already set out above (in the transport section of this report), in highways terms, such an alignment was not the favoured option to address the existing highway capacity and existing safety concerns associated with the double mini roundabouts.

6.128 Informed by verbal discussions with the Council's Landscape Advisor, Officers judgement is that the localised landscape impacts associated with the highway works are not considered to be so significant as to justify refusal of the proposal in their own right. Nevertheless, the identified adverse effects on mature landscape features and historic parkland character weigh against the proposal and are matters to be weighed in the overall planning balance.

Design considerations

6.129 Policy LP11 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 requires new development to respond positively to its context. Policy LP12 requires new development to contribute positively to the area's character and identity and to successfully integrate with adjoining buildings.

6.130 Neighbourhood Plan Policy A3 requires development to be well designed and reflect local character. Proposals should respond to the site's surroundings, provide high-quality buildings and landscaping, incorporate appropriate parking and servicing arrangements, and ensure variation and visual interest, particularly on the edges of larger developments.

6.131 NDMP L3 requires that outside of settlements, development footprints should make the best use of a sites development potential, taking into account the policies in the Framework.

6.132 NDMP D3 sets out key design principles and advises that development proposals should be refused, if without clear justification they conflict with relevant aspects of the design principles. Substantial weigh should be given to compliance with relevant development plan policies when assessing design quality.

6.133 As previously highlighted, this application is for outline consent with matters relating to appearance; landscaping; layout; and scale being reserved for future applications.

6.134 Nevertheless, the application is accompanied by an Illustrative Masterplan and Illustrative Landscape Masterplan which demonstrates how the 600 dwellings could be accommodated on the site, alongside the green and blue infrastructure. In addition, four Parameter Plans relating to: Land use, Access, Building Heights and Green Infrastructure were submitted. The application is also accompanied by a detailed Design and Access Statement and Design and Access Statement Addendum which commits to the preparation of a comprehensive Design Code in the event of an approval (submission and approval of a Design Code would be secured by condition).

6.135 The Council's Urban Design Officer was consulted on the application and provided comments which have been addressed by the applicant through amendments being made to the submitted Design and Access Statement and Parameter Plans. In addition, the applicant provided indicative site sections and topographical details.

6.136 Based on a developable area of 20.28ha, a development of up to 600 dwellings would equate to an average gross density of 29.5 dwellings per hectare. This is considered acceptable having regard to the sites edge of settlement location and would make effective use of the site in accordance with NDMP L3 of the NPPF.

6.137 Whilst only illustrative, the masterplan demonstrates that the site can accommodate up to 600 dwellings in accordance with recognised good design and placemaking principles. These include a landscape-led approach with significant green infrastructure retained throughout the site, a connected network of public open spaces, active travel routes linking residential areas with key facilities and the wider countryside, and a clear street hierarchy focused around tree-lined primary routes and small perimeter blocks of outward facing development. The Design and Access statement provides the basis for a future Design Code and illustrates how the residential development can be designed to provide a range of character areas and a logical density gradient, with higher density development focused around the proposed community hub and key

movement corridors and lower density development towards sensitive landscape edges. This approach is very much supported in urban design terms.

6.138 The Council's Urban Design Officer raises no objection in principle to the proposed development and supports the broad landscape-led design approach, green infrastructure strategy, active travel connections and commitment to a Design Code. Whilst a number of the concerns raised by the Urban Design Officer remain outstanding, it is not considered that these would justify refusal of the application on design grounds and/or could be satisfactorily addressed through a Design Code and at Reserved Matter stage (subject to conditions):

- The Urban Design officer questions the proposed realignment of Priory Hill Road which results in a severance of the proposed on-site amenity space, however, for the reasons already set out above (in the transport section of this report), the proposed realignment of Priory Hill Road has been carefully considered in the round, taking account of all constraints. Priory Hill Road is an existing road and it is not possible for it to be diverted outside of the proposed amenity space/parkland. Subject to careful design and landscaping, it is considered that the removal of the existing Priory Hill Road carriageway will allow the proposed open space south of the realigned Priory Hill Road to be read and experienced as an extension of the existing Priory Park to the south.
- The extent and usability of the proposed on-site public open space was questioned, taking account of the attenuation basins and flood zones. The quality and quantity of open space provision has been considered in detail at the ‘Residential Amenity’ section this report.
- Whilst the Urban Design Officer requested the provision of direct active travel connectivity towards Loves Farm via the northern side of Priory Hill Road and Priory Hill, there is insufficient public highway land to deliver this. Safe pedestrian and cycle connections to Loves Farm are available, via the existing controlled crossing point on Hawkesden Road and via St Neots railway station (the station footbridge is accessible without the need for a train ticket) and demand along these routes is predicted to be low (the application site is not in the catchment area for the primary school located within Loves Farm). This matter was discussed in detail with highways who are satisfied that adequate safe routes between the application and Loves Farm are available.
- Some inconsistencies between submitted plans were noted, however, the only plans for approval at this outline stage are those relating to the proposed access works along Priory Hill Road, Huntingdon Road and Mill Lane. All other plans, including the drainage strategy and parameter plans are illustrative and intended to provide guiding principles to inform more detailed plans which will come forward at reserved matters stage or by discharge of condition.
- Whilst the Urban Design Officer would have preferred more detailed parameter plans, to provide greater certainty regarding landscape structure, drainage infrastructure and tree-lined streets, it is considered that the submitted Design and Access Statement provides adequate guiding

principles and such details can be secured by a Design Code (to be secured by condition).

6.139 Officers are satisfied that a scheme of up to 600 dwellings could be achieved on the site and the Design and Access Statement provides a suitable framework within which a more detailed Design Code can be generated to inform the reserved matters stage and satisfy the design principles set out by NDMP DP3. A condition is recommended to ensure a Design Code is submitted and approved prior to the submission of the first reserved matters application, informed by the principles set out in the submitted documents.

6.140 The Council's Urban Design Officer broadly supports the proposals and subject to conditions, the proposal complies with Local Plan Policies LP11 and LP12. In accordance with NDMP SP3 of the NPPF, compliance with relevant development plan polices when assessing design quality is a matter to be afforded substantial weight in the overall planning balance.

Drainage and flood risk

6.141 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment, which includes a surface water drainage strategy, and a Drainage Maintenance Plan. The LLFA, and Anglian Water were consulted on this planning application (as discussed below). There is no Internal Drainage Board in this location.

6.142 Local Plan Policy LP5 requires that proposals pass the sequential and exception tests as relevant and all reasonable opportunities to reduce flood risk are taken. The policy also requires that development proposals on a site of 1ha or more be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment which includes consideration of the impact of climate change and complies with the requirements of relevant bodies, including the LLFA. Local Plan Policy LP15 supports proposals where sustainable drainage systems are proposed.

6.143 NDMP F4 of the NPPF requires site specific flood risk assessment to be appropriate to the scale, nature and location of development, and where relevant support an assessment of whether the proposal satisfies the exception and sequential tests as set out in NDMP F5 and F6.

6.144 NDMP F7 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that development is safe from flooding for its lifetime

6.145 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan Policy P4 and NDMP F8 of the NPPF require the use of sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff.

Location of development in relation to flood risk (sequential and exception test)

6.146 Environment Agency (EA) mapping shows that parts of the application site are located within Flood zones 1 (low probability of flooding), 2 (medium probability of flooding) and 3 (high probability of flooding / functional floodplain). The submitted Flood Risk Assessment has considered EA mapping in addition to modelled flood extent and levels associated with the River Great Ouse and Gallow Brook, and other sources of flooding (surface water, groundwater, reservoirs and sewers).

6.147 Notably, the areas of Flood Zone 3 are directly adjacent to the River Great Ouse and the areas of Flood Zone 2 are largely confined to land west of Huntingdon Road. The majority of the site is at very low risk of flooding from surface water and groundwater and no other known sources of flooding have been identified which would pose a risk to the site (this included an assessment of any past flooding that can be attributed to capacity limitations in the public sewerage system, noting the presence of St Neots WRC).

6.148 Importantly, as confirmed by the Land Use Parameter Plan, no residential development is proposed within the areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 or areas at medium or high risk of surface water flooding. The area proposed for residential development is all located within Flood Zone 1 or at low risk of flooding and sits at a minimum of 18m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) which is more than 3m above the modelled 1 in 100 year plus climate change flood level. Both points of access into the site from Priory Hill Road will be located in Flood Zone 1 and are not at risk of flooding from other sources.

6.149 In summary, the submitted Flood Risk Assessment has demonstrated that:

- The proposed residential development, including the associated two access routes from the public highway on Priory Hill Road and attenuation basins for surface water, will all be located on land which is not at risk of flooding.
- No land raising or potentially vulnerable uses are proposed on land which is at medium or high risk of flooding (this can be controlled by condition).
- The land identified as being at medium or high risk from flooding is largely proposed to be used as green infrastructure comprising informal amenity space and an extension to the existing Rowley allotments on Mill Lane – such uses are defined as ‘water-compatible development’ by NPPF Annex F, Table 2.
- The realigned Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane will be located within Flood Zone 2; however, these roads are already located within Flood Zone 2 and it is accepted that works to improve these roads cannot be undertaken outside of Flood Zone 2. The works proposed to Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane are location specific (they could not reasonably be accommodated elsewhere whilst continuing to address the identified highway safety and capacity issues at the Mill Lane/Priory Hill Road junction) and they are not a requirement for providing safe ‘dry’ access and egress for the proposed residential development - access to Priory Hill Road from the proposed residential development is in Flood Zone 1 and to the east Priory Hill Road, leading to Hawkesden Road, is located entirely within Flood Zone 1.

6.150 The Environment Agency has been consulted on the application and raises no objection on flood risk grounds, subject to the Local Planning Authority being satisfied that the sequential test has been passed.

6.151 Whilst no residential development, safe access/egress routes serving the residential development, land raising or other vulnerable development are proposed within Flood Zone 2, built development associated with the realignment of Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane would nevertheless be located on land at medium flood risk. Officers therefore consider that the exemption in NDMP F5(2)(b)(i) does not apply and that a proportionate sequential assessment is required.

6.152 National Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 027a Reference ID: 7-027a-20220825) states that the application of the sequential should be proportionate and governed by local circumstances relating to the catchment area for the type of development proposed and the needs it is proposing to address. The focus must be on realistic alternatives in areas of lower flood risk that could meet the same development need.

6.153 In this case, the only works proposed within Flood Zone 2 are those seeking to address the existing highway safety/capacity issues associated with the double mini roundabouts located where Mill Lane meets Huntingdon Road and Priory Hill Road. To remove the double mini roundabouts, it is proposed to realign the two roads to create a staggered junction arrangement. It is accepted that the works proposed to Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane are location specific and could not reasonably be accommodated on land with a lower risk of flooding. Flood mapping confirms there is no realistic means of realigning these roads so as to address the identified highway safety and capacity issues whilst avoiding land within Flood Zone 2. Whilst the works are necessary to accommodate the cumulative highway impacts of the proposed development, they are not required to make the proposed residential development safe from flood risk and will also provide wider highway capacity and safety benefits to the existing road network.

6.154 Applying the sequential test proportionately and realistically, Officers accept that the residential development (and associated works required to make the residential development safe from flooding) have been sequentially located within the site to avoid flood risk. There are no realistic alternatives in areas of lower flood risk that could address the need to remove the existing mini roundabouts. The effect is that all vulnerable components of the scheme have been directed to land at the lowest flood risk, whilst the limited works within Flood Zone 2 are confined to location-specific highway infrastructure for which no lower-risk alternative exists. The works within Flood Zone 2 do not increase the flood exposure of future or existing residents and do not undermine the objective of directing vulnerable development to areas of lowest flood risk. Officers are therefore satisfied that the sequential test is passed in accordance with the aims of NDMP F5 and Local Plan Policy LP5.

6.155 In accordance with NDMP F6 and Local Plan Policy LP5, it is also now necessary to consider whether the ‘exception test’ should also apply. Annex F,

table 3 of the NPPF (2026), identifies certain forms of development which will only be appropriate where an 'exception test' is satisfied (in addition to satisfying the sequential test in NDMP F5).

6.156 In this case, the works proposed to realign Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane are considered to represent 'essential transport infrastructure'. Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane are existing public highway infrastructure which already cross the area at risk of flooding and serve wider movement functions beyond the proposed residential development. The works comprise alterations to existing public highway infrastructure rather than the creation of a new transport route through an area at risk of flooding. As established above, there is no realistic alternative to realign the existing route through land which would be at a lower risk of flooding; it is accepted that given the location of the existing highway network, the crossing of land within Flood Zone 2 is unavoidable. As essential infrastructure within Flood Zone 2 is identified by Annex F, Table 3 as development for which the exception test is not required, the exception test does not apply in this case

6.157 The location of the proposal accords with the aims of Local Plan Policy LP5 and NDMP's F5, F6 and F7.

Surface Water Drainage

6.158 A preliminary surface water drainage strategy for the proposed residential development has been submitted in support of the outline planning application and has been reviewed by the Lead Local Flood Authority. As existing, the proposed area for residential development naturally drains towards the unnamed Ordinary Watercourse which crosses the proposed developable area east to west and the Gallow Brook which traverses the northern part of the site.

6.159 The proposed drainage strategy utilises attenuation basins located to the immediate west and northwest of the proposed developable area (on land not susceptible to flooding) which will collect and store surface water runoff from the proposed residential development. Site levels will direct water away from buildings and towards open space, landscaping and storage areas, which will include source control measures such as permeable paving, rain gardens and swales. Source control measures, which include treatment stages (to clean surface water collected), are considered by the LLFA to be a fundamental element of the drainage strategy and therefore full details of these measures would be required at reserved matters stage (and can be secured by condition).

6.160 The attenuation basins will be capable of accommodating water generated during a 1 in 100 year storm plus 40% climate change allowance and will discharge to the unnamed Ordinary Watercourse and Gallow Brook, and ultimately the Rive Great Ouse (infiltration has been discounted as unfeasible in this location). In accordance with Local Plan Policy LP15(f), Neighbourhood Plan Policy P4 and NDMP F8, the proposal will incorporate sustainable water retaining features as part of the drainage system and the LLFA is satisfied that

surface water discharge from the attenuation basins to the watercourses will be restricted to existing greenfield runoff rates for all storm events.

Officer note: discharge to an ordinary watercourse will require separate consent under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 (a separate consenting regime to the Town and Country Planning System).

6.161 Subject to conditions securing further details, the LLFA is satisfied that surface water from the proposed residential development can be adequately managed by the preliminary drainage strategy. In addition, the LLFA is satisfied with the outline maintenance and management strategy proposed for the surface water drainage system. NDMP F8 of the NPPF requires that for major development proposals, decision makers take account of advice from the Lead Local Flood Authority.

6.162 The evidence submitted in support of the application demonstrates that the proposed residential development will be safe for its lifetime and can incorporate sustainable drainage systems which will control flow rates and reduce volumes of surface water runoff to ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

6.163 Surface water drainage measures associated with the proposed works to the public highway will need to be agreed with the Highway Authority at detailed design stage (to be secured by condition) and will also be subject to separate consent under highway legislation.

6.164 The proposal is compliant with NDMP F4, F5, F7 and F8 of the NPPF and Local Plan Policies LP5 and LP15 in relation to flood risk and surface water drainage. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Foul water and water quality

Officer note: Impacts of the proposal upon St Neots WRC are considered above in relation to Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policy 16 and odour impacts from St Neots WRC are considered under the 'Residential Amenity' section of this report.

6.165 Local Plan Policy LP6 (Waste Water Management) supports proposals where: a sustainable foul water strategy has been agreed with Anglian Water; where the Environment Agency and Natural England have not raised concerns that the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive could be compromised; and the Middle Level Commissioners or other internal drainage board do not object on the basis of flood risk in the system they manage.

6.166 NDMP P3(2)(f) of the NPPF states that development proposals should assess and mitigate impacts where the development could have an unacceptable adverse effect on water quality, especially in relation to sensitive water bodies. In applying this policy, it should be assumed, unless there is clear evidence to

the contrary, that separate regulatory regimes for the control of pollution will operate effectively, as set out in NDMP DM7.

6.167 Anglian Water has confirmed that the site falls within the catchment of St Neots WRC, which currently lacks capacity to accommodate the additional wastewater flows generated by the development. As noted by the Environment Agency, St Neots WRC is currently operating in exceedance if its environmental permit for discharge volume into the River Great Ouse, which is classified as 'moderate' (as opposed to 'good') ecological status as defined within the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England & Wales) Regulations 2017. The EA advised that Anglian Water are best placed to advise on its proposed investment plans for St Neots WRC relative to the proposed development but the LPA should be satisfied that any growth can be delivered without harm to the water environment.

6.168 St Neots WRC has been identified as a growth scheme by the Anglian Water Business Plan 2025-2030. During the course of this application Anglian Water confirmed that it is satisfied that the necessary wastewater infrastructure upgrades can be planned and delivered in line with the applicant's proposed development trajectory, which anticipates construction commencing in 2027/28 and completion by 2032/33. This would enable the phased delivery of the development without causing unacceptable environmental pressures. A condition is therefore recommended which requires the proposed development to be carried out in accordance with the agreed housing trajectory (unless a revised trajectory is agreed in consultation with Anglian Water).

6.169 Appendix E of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment included a Technical Note on the Foul Drainage Strategy which was based on a new on-site pumping station being installed to divert the recently installed pipeline and provide a connection between the application site and St Neots WRC. Over the course of the planning application, following detailed discussions between the Applicant and Anglian Water, this strategy has been superseded.

6.170 The foul drainage strategy now proposed, and agreed with Anglian Water, is based on a connection being made to the existing public sewer network which exists for Rowley Road. The exact pump rate and configuration of the connection is a matter to be secured by conditioning the submission of a strategic foul water strategy, however the applicant considers it likely that any connection at this point would be gravity fed, thus removing the need for an on-site pumping station. In the event that an on-site pumping station is required, its location and appearance would be carefully considered at reserved matters stage.

6.171 In accordance with Local Plan Policy LP6, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency and Natural England have no objection to the proposal. Subject to the conditions recommend by Anglian Water, Officers are satisfied that the proposal can be accommodated without placing undue pressure on St Neots WRC, and subsequently water quality.

6.172 The proposal complies with NDMP P3(2)(f) and Local Plan Policy LP6. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Heritage Impacts

6.173 The decision on this application has to be made in accordance with section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 General duty as respects listed buildings and Conservation Areas in exercise of planning functions. Section 66(1) states, "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority … shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses". Section 72(1) imposes a duty on local planning authorities "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."

6.174 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 protects the archaeological heritage of Great Britain by making provision for the investigation, preservation and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest.

6.175 Local Plan Policy LP34 and NDMP HE4 to HE7 of the NPPF require heritage assets to be conserved in a manner proportionate to their significance, with development seeking to avoid or minimise harm and any impacts being clearly justified. Any identified harm to designated assets must be afforded considerable importance and balanced against the public benefits arising from the proposal. For non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the significance of the asset and the scale of any harm.

6.176 NDMP HE9 specifically relates to conservation areas and requires development within or affecting a conservation area to preserve those buildings, features and elements that make a positive contribution to its character and appearance.

6.177 A desk based Historic Environment Assessment has been undertaken and submitted in support of the application. In addition, a geophysical survey and trial trenching for archaeology has been undertaken at the application site during the course of this planning application.

6.178 The Council's Conservation Officer, Historic England and Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology were consulted on the planning application.

Officer note: Historic England deferred comments to the Council's Conservation Officer.

Built form

6.179 Part of the application site is located within St Neots conservation area, however this is restricted to the area proposed as 'Conservation Island' (an island between the two tributaries of the Great River Ouse, with a private access from Mill Lane) which is proposed to be given over as a wildlife conservation area and a small section of Mill Lane where no works are proposed (the works proposed to Mill Lane are all outside of the conservation area).

6.180 St Neots conservation area includes Priory Park, located adjacent to the southern boundary of the application site and Rowley Allotments located adjacent to the western corner of the application site. Priory Park itself is a remnant of historic parkland which originally would have included the application site and land to the east of the railway line.

6.181 There are no listed buildings on or immediately adjacent to the application site. The closest notable listed buildings are the Parish Church of St James (Grade II* Listed; NHLE 1130278) located in Little Paxton, to the north east of the site, and Paxton Hill House (Grade II Listed; NHLE 1130273), Paxton Hill, to the north west of the site. Views towards the church through the developable area are noted by the Design and Access Statement and the alignment of streets and buildings can be carefully designed to frame these views at reserved matters stage.

6.182 The desk based assessment undertaken by the applicant concludes that the proposed development will result in no harm to any listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. The Council's Conservation Officer agrees with this owing to the intervening distance and the fact that the application site does not contribute to their setting.

6.183 With regards to St Neots conservation area, the applicant's assessment concludes that the overall character and appearance of St Neots Conservation Area would be preserved as those areas of the application site which fall within the designated area (principally 'Conservation Island') would continue to make a positive contribution. They note that whilst there will be a number of views out of the conservation area which will change from open landscape to views of a development site, the area of the site proposed for built development is limited and the parameter plans illustrate green infrastructure being designed to reflect the local landscape character, retaining the existing field system, landscape pattern and grain. For the purposes of Local Plan Policy LP34 and NDMP HE5(2) of the NPPF, the overall level of harm resulting to the conservation is concluded to be 'less than substantial harm' through change to its setting.

6.184 The Council's Conservation Officer agrees with the applicant's assessment that the development will result in 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of the St Neots conservation Area. This is principally linked to the impact of the development on views out of the Conservation Area, including from public routes within the conservation area, which will erode the positive contribution that the undeveloped application site currently makes to the significance of the conservation.

6.185 Notably, in accordance with NMDP HE9 which specifically relates to conservation areas, the proposal does conserve the features of the application site which are located within the conservation area – 'conservation island' – and this is to be commended. However, as established above, the wider application site currently makes a positive contribution to views out of the conservation area, and this contribution will be eroded by the proposed development.

6.186 Having applied the special duties at Sections 66 and 72 of the P(LBCA) Act, and in line with and in line with the NPPF and Policy LP34, the identified harm to the setting of St Neots conservation area requires clear and convincing justification and must also be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. This is a matter which will be addressed at the end of this report to allow the weighing and balancing of all potential public benefits.

Archaeology

6.187 There are no designated assets of archaeological interest on the application site.

6.188 The application is supported by a desk based assessment of archaeology, in addition to a geophysical survey and the results of targeted archaeological evacuation trenching (as agreed with and overseen by CCC Archaeology).

6.189 A total of 156 evaluation trenches were opened across the site to explore the area proposed for residential development and areas outside the proposed developable area which were flagged on the geophysical survey as having archaeological potential. The results of the evaluation trenching were discussed in detail with the County Archaeologist and whilst a full written report of the findings is being prepared, an 'Archaeological Evaluation' report dated September 2026, which summarises the key findings, was submitted in support of the current application.

6.190 The trial trenching confirmed archaeological remains associated with a Roman Age settlement to the west of Huntingdon Road, an isolated Barrow feature of likely Bronze Age date in the north of the site, close to Brook Farm, and an Iron Age string settlement, including burials, in the south east of the application site.

6.191 The County Archaeologist advises that whilst significant archaeology will be impacted by the development, it is not of a level that cannot be mitigated through design considerations and archaeological investigation. The applicant has agreed to two 'no dig areas' to protect the substantial Roman settlement to the west of Huntingdon Road and the ring ditch feature close to Brook Farm (both of these features are located in areas of the site proposed to be used a green infrastructure).

6.192 Subject to conditions the County Archaeologist is satisfied that the proposal is acceptable. The archaeology conditions required will secure a site-wide Archaeological Management Plan to ensure the protection of archaeological

assets identified for preservation in situ, Archaeological Evaluation and mitigation for the remainder of the site which has not already been subject to evaluation trenching (where required).

6.193 Having regard to the requirements of NDMP HE7 of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy 34, it is considered that, subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal will not directly harm any non-designated heritage assets of archaeological significance. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Ecology and Biodiversity

6.194 Local Planning Authorities have a Statutory Duty to ensure that the impact of development on wildlife is fully considered during the determination of a planning application under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (Habitats Regulations 2010). Local Plan Policies LP30 and LP31 also require all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity to be investigated and where possible avoided, or where unavoidable, mitigated.

6.195 NDMP N2 of the NPPF requires proposals to contribute positively to the natural environment and avoid, mitigate or then compensate for significant harm to biodiversity. NDMP N6 protects designated sites and irreplaceable habitats.

6.196 The application is supported by an Ecological Assessment Report, climbing inspection for bat roosts, and a Recreational Impact Assessment which have been reviewed by the Council's Ecologist and Natural England.

Designated sites

6.197 There are no internationally or nationally designated sites of ecological importance on the site itself.

6.198 Given the scale of development proposed, as the Competent Authority, HDC has completed a Recreational Pressure Habitats Regulations Assessment, however the site is not within the Impact Risk Zone of any internationally designated site.

6.199 There are 2 nationally designated sites within 300m of the application site:

- Litte Paxton Pits Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (which is also locally designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR)) located around 300m to the north west (on the opposite side of the Great River Ouse to the application site;
- St Neots Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located around 300m to the south west

6.200 In addition, land around Little Paxton Pits SSSI and the River Great Ouse are designated as County Wildlife sites.

6.201 The submitted Ecological Assessment concludes that direct impacts to Little Paxton Pits SSSI and St Neots Common SSSI are unlikely to occur as a result of the Proposed Development. Indirect effects (during construction and operation) including recreational impacts have been considered in accordance with NDMP6, and Natural England guidance.

6.202 Because development is concentrated in the south-eastern part of the application site and well away from the designated sites, no direct impacts upon either SSSI are expected, subject to pollution prevention measures and sediment controls to protect the River Great Ouse during construction. The increase in air pollution associated with increase car trips in the vicinity would not be of a level to trigger a significant impact on either SSSI indirectly. The principal concern as flagged at the outset by Natural England is increased recreational pressure upon the SSSI from increased visitors, including dogs.

6.203 To mitigate for any potential increases in recreational pressure on Little Paxton Pits SSSI and St Neots Common SSSI, the proposals include a significant area of public open space (approx. 43.05 Ha) which is capable of accommodating a 2.3- 2.5 km circular walk in accordance with Natural England's Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) guidelines. As this will be delivered in combination with wider habitat improvements associated with the delivery of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) within the site, and management for a minimum of 30 years secured by the mandatory BNG planning condition, the council's Ecological Advisor (Place Services) is satisfied that this should be sufficient to divert and deflect daily recreational visits and would not result in a significant increase in recreation pressure to any sensitive SSSI. Likewise, Natural England offer no objection, subject to conditions securing further details of the proposed green infrastructure (including appropriate phasing for its delivery and details of management and maintenance) coming forward as part of any subsequent reserved matters applications

6.204 Subject to conditions, the proposal complies with Local Plan Policy LP30 and NDMP N4 and N6 of the NPPF (2026). This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Protected Species and Priority Habitats

6.205 The Ecological Assessment has been informed by surveys for bats, otters, water voles, breeding birds, reptiles, amphibians, badgers, terrestrial mammals, invertebrates and invasive non-native species.

6.206 The Ecological Assessment identifies the following important ecological features on the application site:

- Existing native hedgerows onsite: the majority of these are to be retained and incorporated into the developable area as green corridors. In addition, new species rich native hedgerow are proposed to be planted;
- Gallow Brook runs through the application site which is a priority habitat likely to support water voles, otter, grass snake and common lizard: a 50m offset is provided between the Gallow Brook corridor and any proposed residential development. Enhancement works are proposed along the brook corridor including removing bramble, planting marginal native species and providing hibernacula;
- One tree was identified within the site which has features with the potential to support a bat roost: a climbing inspection survey undertaken did not identify the presence of any bats, however further climbing inspections are proposed (to be undertaken prior to any commencement of development) to confirm that no bats have begun to roost in this tree since the last inspection was completed;
  Officer comment: Whilst ordinarily three surveys for bats are recommended, in this instance because a recent survey has confirmed no presence of roosting bats, the council's ecologist is satisfied that it would be unreasonable to delay determination of the application for a further two surveys to be undertaken for a single tree. The further surveys can be reasonably secured by a pre-commencement condition in this instance given that the mitigation (if required) would be relatively standard and easily implemented. On this basis there are no foreseeable constraints to obtaining a licence from Natural England if required.
- Confirmed brown eared bat roost at Brook Farm (outside of, but immediately adjacent to the application site boundary): as Brook Farm is located outside of the application there will be no direct impact upon the identified bat roost. Conditions are proposed to secure best practice during construction and a sensitive lighting scheme. The application site currently supports low numbers of foraging bats. New planting includes a woodland belt adjacent to the railway line along the sites eastern boundary which will provide enhanced foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. In addition, bat boxes are proposed throughout the application site;
- Presence of farmland bird species and Skylark (a priority bird species): a Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy is proposed to be secured by a condition of any consent to deliver measures to conserve and enhance bird species on land under the control of the applicant. Bird boxes are proposed across the site, particularly within Conservation Island, which will not be subject to public access.

6.207 In addition, Himalayan Balsam was identified within the application site, which is a non native invasive species. Appropriate control measures are proposed to prevent its spread.

6.208 The development has been designed to retain and enhance the majority of higher value habitats and the Council's Ecological Advisor is satisfied that that significant impacts during construction and operational phases to retained habitats of ecological value, Gallow Brook, the River Ouse County Wildlife Site and populations of bats, breeding birds, reptiles and water voles are limited,

with impacts avoided through adherence to best practice construction measures outlined in the Ecological Assessment report (to be secured by condition).

6.209 The proposal also incorporates extensive mitigation and compensation measures, including habitat creation, riparian corridor enhancement, reptile hibernacula, bat and bird boxes, ecological lighting controls and measures for farmland birds (to be secured by condition).

6.210 Place Services, the Environment Agency and Natural England raise no ecological objection subject to the proposed mitigation, enhancement and long-term management being secured by condition. On this basis, the proposal is not considered likely to result in significant adverse effects on protected species, priority species or priority habitats

6.211 Subject to conditions, the proposal therefore complies with the aims of Local Plan Policy LP30 and NDMP N2 and N6 of the NPPF (2026) in terms protected species and priority habitats. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Biodiversity net gain and biodiversity enhancements

6.212 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a statutory requirement set out under Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain. in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 All planning applications are required to deliver a mandatory 10% measurable BNG, unless exempt under paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

6.213 The application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Report and a completed BNG metric, based on the Illustrative Masterplan. The assessment demonstrates a habitat unit gain of 47.90% and a hedgerow unit gain of 60.21%, both of which exceed the statutory minimum requirement of 10%. In terms of watercourse units, the assessment concludes that there is limited scope to achieve the necessary uplift solely through on-site measures. Whilst enhancement works to Gallow Brook are being explored, the report advises that off-site watercourse biodiversity units are likely to be required, either wholly or in combination with on-site enhancement works, to secure the statutory minimum 10% gain.

6.214 The Council's Ecological Advisor is satisfied that appropriate information with regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains has been supplied for the application prior to determination. The proposal would be subject to the statutory biodiversity gain condition under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A Biodiversity Gain Plan will therefore be required prior to commencement and must demonstrate how the required biodiversity gains, including the mandatory 10% gain for watercourse units, will be achieved and secured for a minimum period of 30 years.

6.215 A monitoring fee for BNG is to be secured by S106. Based on the size and distinctiveness of habitat created onsite, a monitoring fee of £67,987.50 (to be index linked) broken up into instalments is required to cover a period of 30 years. This has been calculated using the Huntingdonshire District Council Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring Fee Calculator.

6.216 In addition to the statutory BNG requirement, the proposal incorporates a wide range of ecological enhancement measures across the site including species-rich grassland, native hedgerow planting, woodland and scrub planting, wetland habitats, sustainable drainage features, reptile refugia and hibernacula, bird and bat boxes, hedgehog passes, habitat management for farmland birds, habitat management within the Conservation Island (8.71ha of land dedicated to nature) and measures to improve habitat connectivity across the site.

6.217 The proposed green infrastructure would provide substantial ecological enhancements beyond those necessary to mitigate the effects of the development and would contribute towards the wider objectives of enhancing habitat connectivity within the River Great Ouse corridor.

6.218 Subject to a condition to secure finalised details of a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy the Council's Ecological Advisor is satisfied that the proposal will deliver wider biodiversity enhancements (beyond the statutory BNG). A monitoring fee for BNG is to be secured by S106.

6.219 On this basis the proposal is therefore considered to comply with the aims of the Development Plan and the NPPF with regards to adequately avoiding and mitigating any impacts on biodiversity. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

6.220 The proposal is predicted to deliver Biodiversity Net Gains for both habitat and hedgerow units substantially in excess of the statutory minimum requirement (47.90% and 60.21% respectively, compared to the required 10%). This represents a material environmental benefit of the scheme which attracts significant positive weight in the planning balance.

Trees

6.221 Local Plan Policy LP31 supports proposals which seek to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development.

6.222 NDMP N3 of the NPPF requires that new streets are tree-lined and that species selection and their placement is carefully considered.

6.223 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment including Tree Survey Schedule, Tree Constraints Plan and Tree Protection Plan, which have been reviewed by the Council's Tree Officer.

6.224 There are no Tree Preservation Orders on or immediately adjacent to the application site. As noted above in relation to heritage, part of the application site is located within St Neots Conservation Area, however this is restricted to the area proposed as 'Conservation Island' and a small section of Mill Lane where no built development is proposed.

Officer note: trees within a conservation area that are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order are protected by the provisions in section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

6.225 Existing trees on the application site are largely limited to existing field boundaries and an area of woodland located in the northeast of the application site. The tree survey confirms that the majority of trees on the site are of moderate or low quality, with only 5 individual Category A (high) quality trees identified. A veteran crack willow (T128) was identified within the application site, however, this is located within the area proposed as Conservation Island, which is an area to be dedicated to wildlife, with no public access or built development proposed in this area.

6.226 The proposed development has been designed to retain the significant majority of existing trees and woodland features. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies the need for the removal of 12 tree features in total, comprising one Category B tree (T43), seven Category C trees and groups, and four Category U trees and groups. In addition, partial removal of 20 tree groups is proposed, including two Category B groups (G16 and G19), with the remainder comprising Category C and U vegetation.

6.227 A limited number of retained trees would experience incursions within their Root Protection Areas (RPAs) associated with indicative pedestrian routes shown through the on-site green infrastructure. These impacts affect a small number of Category A, B and C trees, including a Category A oak (T18). The assessment concludes that, subject to the implementation of specialist construction techniques, tree protection fencing, ground protection measures, arboricultural supervision and restricted excavation methodologies, these impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. However, these footpaths are shown indicatively at this stage and therefore the exact routes of these paths would be refined and assessed in detail at the reserved matters stage (with the potential to avoid or further reduce encroachment into the RPAs of higher-quality trees where possible).

6.228 The indicative landscaping scheme includes the planting of 55 new trees and wider biodiversity enhancements across the site. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment concludes that, taking account of the number, quality and location of retained trees, including the veteran tree and riverside tree belts, the overall arboricultural impact of the development would be low and would not result in significant harm to the principal arboricultural features of the site or its surroundings.

6.229 The Council's Arboricultural Officer concurs with the findings of the submitted Arboricultural Assessment and raises no objection to the proposal.

6.230 Subject to a condition securing the protection of retained trees in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Assessment and Tree Protection Plan, and details of proposed new planting (including replacement as required) to be submitted at RM stage, the proposal is considered to be acceptable against the aims of Local Plan Policy LP31 and NDMP N3 of the NPPF (2026). This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Residential Amenity (including noise and odour impacts and open space provision)

6.231 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.

6.232 NDMP P3 of the NPPF (2026) requires development to be located and designed so that it does not cause, exacerbate, or expose people, property or the environment to unacceptable pollution impacts (including cumulative impacts)

6.233 NDMP P5 of the NPPF (2026) requires development to provide a safe and secure environment for occupiers by appropriately addressing potential risks from crime, public safety and physical hazards through the design and layout of the scheme.

Future residents

6.234 As the application has been submitted in outline with all matters reserved except access, the detailed layout and design of the proposed dwellings and public open space would be subject to future reserved matters applications. The requirements of Local Plan Policy LP14 and NDMPs P3 and P4 would be assessed in detail at that stage.

6.235 Notably, the application site is adjacent to the East Coast Main Line railway to the east, Priory Hill Road to the south (which have the potential to generate noise and vibration) and St Neots WRC is located along the western edge of the application site, albeit excluded from the red line boundary (with the potential to generate odour).

6.236 The application is supported by a Noise and Vibration Assessment (which is informed by the results of environmental sound and vibration surveys), an Air Quality and Odour Assessment and Odour Modelling Assessment which have been reviewed by the Council’s Environmental Health Officer.

Noise and vibration

6.237 Using noise modelling, based on the illustrative masterplan, the majority of the proposed residential development falls within the low or negligible noise risk categories. Any dwellings located within 200m of the railway line and 70m of Priory Hill Road fall within the medium noise risk category and their layout, including building orientation, and design will require careful consideration at reserved matters stage to ensure acceptable noise levels internally and within private gardens. This may include the use of acoustic screening, trickle vents and mechanical ventilation (to prevent overheating in summer where target noise levels cannot be achieved with windows fully open) if necessary.

6.238 Any noise associated with plant required for the proposed community hub would also need to be reviewed in detail at Reserved Matters stage, however, in principle, subject to good acoustic design principles it is considered that the Community Hub could be accommodated within the proposed development, without negatively impacting upon the residential amenity of any residents.

6.239 In respect of vibration, the submitted assessment concludes that, based on a worst-case scenario, vibration levels associated with railway operations are likely to remain below recognised guidance thresholds for residential occupiers. However, a more detailed assessment of ground-borne vibration is recommended at reserved matters stage, when more details regarding the setback distance and construction of dwellings overlooking the East Coast Main Line are available.

6.240 It is recognised that the detailed layout and design necessary to demonstrate compliance in terms of noise and vibration standards are reserved for subsequent approval, however in principle the council's Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that adequate levels of residential amenity can be achieved across the proposed developable area. The Environmental Health Officer therefore has no objection on grounds of noise or vibration, subject to the imposition of a planning condition requiring the submission of a detailed vibration and noise assessment for proposed housing closest to the railway line and community hub, together with any necessary mitigation/ventilation measures.

6.241 In relation to the noise generated by the adjacent farm use, it is noted that the proposed development would be offset from buildings associated with Brook Farm by a minimum of approximately 56m. Having regard to the intervening distance, prevailing wind direction and the fact that development will be outward facing along the northern boundary (with private outdoor amenity space to the rear) it is considered that the proposed development could co-exist with the existing Brook Farm buildings without undue harm – this is not an unusual arrangement in a rural edge location.

Odour

6.242 The odour modelling assessment utilised odour emission rates provided by Anglian Water and five years of meteorological data to model odour concentrations associated with the St Neots WRC.

6.243 The submitted assessment adopts industry standard methodology and guidance published by the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) and the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) to assess the potential effects of odour emissions associated with the operation of the St Neots WRC.

6.244 Odour concentrations are measured in European Odour Units per cubic metre (ouE/m³) per 98th percentile (recognising that odour annoyance is driven by short-duration peaks, as opposed to annual averages). Complaints associated with wastewater treatment facilities are highly likely for receptors experiencing odour concentrations larger than 10 European Odour units per cubic metre (ouE/m3) for more than 2% of the hours in a year (around 175 hours).

6.245 The odour modelling assessment identifies contour lines representing predicted odour concentrations of 10, 5, 3 and 1.5 ouE/m³. The submitted modelling demonstrates that the proposed residential development lies outside both the 3 ouE/m³ and 1.5 ouE/m³ contours. The assessment concludes that future residents would therefore experience negligible odour effects

6.246 Whilst portions of the proposed green infrastructure, including areas of public open space and habitat creation immediately adjacent to the wastewater treatment works, fall within some of the odour contours, these areas are regarded as less sensitive receptors where users would not be expected to spend prolonged periods of time. The assessment concludes that any odour impacts within these areas would range from negligible to slight adverse and would not be significant.

6.247 The assessment therefore concludes that odour complaint levels associated with wastewater treatment facilities are highly unlikely to arise within the proposed residential areas and within the vast majority of the proposed amenity space. On this basis the Council's Environmental Health Officer has no objections in terms of odour.

On site open space provision

6.248 Policies LP3 and LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Part B of the Developer Contributions SPD require proposals to provide the development specific land for informal/community green space. Such provision seeks to ensure residents benefit from adequate green space provision and the associated health and recreational benefits.

6.249 In accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD (2011), all schemes are required to provide the land required for informal open space contributions. Large Scale Major developments are also required to include the capital cost of children and young people's play equipment, parks and gardens,

allotments/community gardens layout such as fencing and laying water to the site and outdoor sports provision. All other requirements will be met by the Community Infrastructure Levy charge.

6.250 In total, the illustrative plans submitted include the following on site open space provision, compared to the SPD requirements (based on projected population associated with 600 dwellings):

Typology	SPD requirement (ha)	Provision made (ha)
Parks and Gardens	0.6222	0.95
Natural and Semi-natural green space	0.298	33.77
Amenity green space (includes casual and equipped children's play space)	1.413 (to include 0.713ha of casual play space and 0.324ha equipped play)	10.23 (to include 0.78ha of casual and 0.40ha equipped children's play space
Allotments and community gardens	0.415	1.31

6.251 The above 'Provision made' figures exclude attenuation basin areas required for up to 1 in 30 year flood event, ponds, watercourses and their margins, field drains, the railway edge and 8.71ha of land associated with Conservation Island (where no public access is proposed).

6.252 Annex F, Table 2 of the NPPF (2026) identifies amenity open space as water compatible development. Whilst the Developer Contributions SPD requires water bodies to be excluded from open space provision; it does not require the exclusion of land within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

6.253 Nevertheless, in response to comments provided by the Council's Urban Design Officer, the applicant provided equivalent open space provision figures, excluding land located within flood zones 2 and 3, and all land required for drainage basins (up to the 1 in 100 year flood event plus climate change) – recognising that during a time of flood these may be unavailable for use. In this scenario the provision made (ha) figures reduce as follows:

Typology	SPD requirement (ha)	Provision made (ha) excluding all land within Flood Zone 2/3 and land within an attenuation basin
Parks and Gardens	0.6222	0.95
Natural and Semi-natural green space	0.298	7.24
Amenity green space (includes casual and equipped children's play space)	1.413 (to include 0.713ha of casual play space and 0.324ha equipped play)	4.73 (to include 0.78ha of casual and 0.40ha equipped children's play space

Allotments and community gardens	0.415	0

6.254 Notably, all children's play space is to be provided outside of flood zones/attenuation basins and the proposal continues to provide an oversupply of open space in all categories except allotments.

Officer note: allotments are a water compatible use and the proposed allotments are an extension to the existing Rowley allotments which are already within Flood Zone 2.

6.255 Overall, Officers are satisfied that the proposal provides adequate on site open space to satisfy the requirements of the SPD and secure a good level of residential amenity for future residents (and also benefit existing residents).

6.256 In fact, the proposal results in a significant over provision of green space on the site compared to the Developer Contributions SPD requirement, however, this level of on-site open space is required to satisfy Natural England and HDC that the proposal can adequately mitigate for potential recreational pressure upon Little Paxton Pits SSSI and St Neots Common SSSI. The significant on-site open space provision will provide walking routes and day-to-day recreational opportunities for future residents (including dog walks) and this is a benefit to be afforded substantial weight in the overall planning balance, in accordance with NDMP HC4 of the NPPF.

Existing residents

6.257 The nearest existing properties to the proposed residential development are the farm house associated with Brook Farm, located to the north, and properties located on the opposite side of Priory Hill Road, located to the south.

6.258 Having regard to the intervening distances between any proposed and existing dwellings and noting that properties on the southern side of Priory Hill Road largely back onto the application site, it is not considered that the proposal, once occupied, would cause any undue harm to the residential amenity of existing dwellings in terms of overlooking, loss of light or disturbance. Whilst some existing dwellings will have views over the application site from first floor windows, a change in outlook (from agricultural land to residential development) does not automatically equate to harm in terms of residential amenity.

6.259 The submitted Air Quality and Odour Assessment demonstrates that additional traffic generated by the proposed development would not generate additional air pollution capable of exceeding National Air Quality Objectives.

6.260 Beyond the proposed residential development, the impacts of the proposed highway works, including the realignment of Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane upon existing residents has also been considered.

6.261 Whilst the realignment of Priory Hill Road and Mill Lane will change the access/egress arrangements for some existing properties, particularly those accessed directly off of Mill Lane (via Chamberlain Way), it is not considered that these works would be harmful to their residential amenity once completed. Removal of the existing double mini-roundabouts is considered to be beneficial for existing residents in terms of highway capacity and highway safety.

6.262 Whilst there will be noise and highway disturbance for some residents during the construction phase, this would be for a limited period and a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), including appropriate working / delivery times can be secured by condition and would help to mitigate this impact. A Dust Management Plan (DMP), can also be conditioned as part of the CEMP, outlining specific instructions on managing dust and air pollutant emissions. As such, any impact associated with the construction phase would not be so great to justify withholding permission. No objections have been received from the Council's Environmental Health Officer.

Conclusion on residential amenity

6.263 At this stage, based on the proposed parameter plans, Illustrative Masterplan and supporting technical assessments, it is considered that, subject to conditions, the proposed quantum of development could be achieved in a way that would provide an adequate level of residential amenity for all future residents, including adequate noise and odour conditions, adequate separation distances between properties (to prevent overlooking and maintain adequate natural light) and access to adequate private amenity space, as well as on site public open space.

6.264 It is not considered that the proposed development would be harmful to the residential amenity of existing residents once operational and any disturbance during the construction period would be temporary and capable of being mitigated through a CEMP.

6.265 Subject to the imposition of conditions to secure details at reserved matters stage the proposal is therefore acceptable with regards to residential amenity and accords with the aims of Local Plan Policy LP14 and NDMP P3 and P5. This is a matter which attracts neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Contamination and ground pollution risks

6.266 NDMP P2 (NPPF, 2026) and Local Plan Policy LP37 require development proposals to demonstrate, through appropriate investigation, risk assessment and where necessary remediation, that land contamination, ground stability and groundwater pollution risks can be effectively mitigated so that the site is suitable for its intended use and does not harm human health, controlled waters or the wider environment.

6.267 The application is supported by a Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment which has been reviewed by the Council's Environmental Health Officer. The Environment Agency did not comment on ground contamination/pollution.

6.268 The site is largely greenfield land and historically been in agricultural use. There is potential for contaminants to be present on site associated with the agricultural use.

6.269 Several localised sources of potential contamination, with potential for contaminants to migrate onto the site have been identified: St Neots WRC, which continues to be located within the west of the application site (albeit outside the application boundary), a historical paper mill (the former Samuel Jones Papermill) to the west of the application site (which is no longer in existence) and Brook Farm buildings located within the north of the site (albeit outside the application boundary).

6.270 The assessment concludes that contamination risks to current and future users of the site (post construction) users are very low to low. It is considered that risks of contamination can be managed and reduced through: further ground investigations (including a programme of chemical analysis of soil and gas monitoring wells) to identify any contamination and determine if remediation ahead of development is required; and during construction through adoption of good hygiene practices for workers coming into contact with the soil or groundwater and the employment of dust suppression measures.

6.271 The Council's Environmental Health Officer does not disagree with the findings and recommendations of the Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment and raised no objection, subject to a condition securing further investigation.

6.272 Subject to an appropriate pre-commencement condition which secures further investigation of possible land contamination and, where required, a remediation scheme, the proposal is acceptable against the aims of Local Plan Policy LP37 and NDMP P2. This is a matter which attracts neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Housing needs (including affordable)

6.273 As evidenced by the council's current housing land supply position there is currently a shortage of housing delivery within the district, relative to the identified needs, including affordable housing.

6.274 The proposal will deliver up to 600 homes, including 40% affordable homes, as required by Local Plan Policy LP24 and NDMP HO8. The delivery of affordable housing, including the split of social versus affordable rented units and suitable clustering of units, can be secured by a S106 agreement.

6.275 Whilst this application has been submitted in outline form, with all matters reserved except for access, the applicant is an established house builder who

owns the application site outright. A housing trajectory submitted in support of the application (principally to inform Anglian Water comments) shows development commencing in 2027/2028. To demonstrate their commitment to bringing this development forward the applicant has confirmed that they are agreeable to a planning condition which requires submission of the reserved matters within 12 months of outline planning permission being granted (the standard condition allows 3 years for the submission of reserved matters after grant of an outline planning permission). This is consistent with NDMP HO13 of the NPPF (2026).

6.276 Policy LP 25 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires a major development to provide mix of sizes, types and tenures, which help, achieve sustainable, inclusive, and mixed communities. The policy outlines that a proposal should set out how it responds to evidence and guidance including the Cambridge sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment and local assessments of housing need and demand. The Huntingdonshire Local Housing Needs Assessment (2025) guidance on the mix of housing required for Huntingdonshire up to 2046. This gives broad ranges reflecting the variety of properties within each bedroom category.

6.277 In terms of the mix of market dwellings, this is a matter which would be assessed and agreed at reserved matters; however, should planning permission be granted, a condition would be imposed to secure compliance with the Local Plan Policy LP25 and ensure an appropriate mix of market dwelling sizes is delivered, whilst also taking account of NDMP HO8(3) which requires a flexible approach be taken to the application of any development plan requirements relating to the number of bedrooms provided in market homes, where development proposals meet or exceed up-to-date development plan requirements for the proportion and mix of affordable housing tenures.

6.278 In accordance with NDMP HO7 of the NPPF (2026), substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of the community in the overall planning balance.

Other Matters

Agricultural tenant

6.279 The application site is currently subject to an Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 Tenancy. The tenancy includes Brook Farm House and associated buildings which are in the applicant's ownership but excluded from the current application site.

6.280 Objections received directly from the agricultural tenant of Brook Farm raise two issues which have been considered by Officers: the first being the impact of the proposal upon the operation and viability of the existing agricultural holding/business; and the second being the impact of the agricultural tenancy upon the deliverability of the proposed residential development.

Impact of development upon Brook Farm

6.281 The tenant notes that the loss of the majority of their agricultural land holding would have a significant adverse effect on the viability and operation of the existing farming business. The objection also raises concerns regarding the adequacy of compensation arrangements. These matters are considered material planning considerations insofar as they relate to the impact upon an existing rural business and agricultural enterprise, and the human rights of the tenant. The detailed compensation and contractual arrangements between landlord and tenant are matters of private interest covered by separate legislation to the planning system, and cannot therefore be material considerations of relevance to the determination of this planning application.

6.282 NDMP P4 of the NPPF (2026) seeks to ensure that existing lawful activities are not subject to unreasonable restrictions as a result of new development. In assessing proposals, consideration should be given to whether development can coexist with existing uses and whether it could adversely affect the continued operation of an established business or activity.

6.283 Officers understand that in the event of this planning application being permitted, the applicant would be entitled to serve notice to terminate the existing agricultural tenancy.

6.284 Case B of the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 allows notice to be served upon an agricultural tenant once a planning permission (outline is sufficient) has been granted and the land is needed for a use other than agriculture. The agricultural tenant would be entitled to 12 months notice to terminate the tenancy at the end of a tenancy year.

6.285 On this basis, the existing agricultural business may not continue/coexist alongside the proposed residential development. In this scenario the proposal would result in the loss of the existing agricultural business (rather than an operational conflict between existing and proposed uses). Noting that this is a matter outside of planning control, in the event that the tenancy is not terminated on the wider land, matters of amenity impacts arising between the two land uses have been addressed above. In relation to the viability of the farming enterprise, it is noted that the application site forms a substantial part of the agricultural tenant’s landholding and this could impact negatively upon the viability of a continued agricultural business (in the event that the applicant allowed the tenant to continue their tenancy on the remainder of the landholding).

6.286 Officers acknowledge the significant impact of this application upon the personal circumstances of the agricultural tenant and their family (given that Brook Farm also represents their home). The negative impact upon the viability of the business or the total loss of an established agricultural enterprise runs counter to the NPPF's objectives of supporting a prosperous rural economy and maintaining rural businesses. This conflict should be afforded substantial weight

against the proposal in the overall planning balance and weighed against the benefits of the proposal.

Impact of the agricultural tenancy upon the deliverability of the proposal

6.287 The agricultural tenant contends that the existence of the tenancy creates uncertainty regarding the deliverability of the proposed development.

6.288 The existence of a protected tenancy under the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 does not in itself prevent development from proceeding where planning permission has been granted and the statutory requirements for possession can be met. As noted above, in principle, mechanisms exist within the legislation to enable possession to be recovered for non-agricultural development purposes following the grant of planning permission.

6.289 Whilst it is accepted that disputes between landlord (the applicant) and the agricultural tenant could influence the timing of implementation and may require negotiation between the parties, the Council has not been provided with evidence demonstrating that the agricultural tenancy represents an insurmountable barrier to delivery of the development in the timescales suggested by the applicant such that this should be given negative weight in the assessment of the application.

Climate Change

6.290 Policy LP12 of the Local Plan states that new dwellings must comply with the optional Building Regulation standard 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 standards in accordance with Policy LP12 of the Local Plan.

6.291 NDMP CC2 and CC3 require development to support the transition to net zero and be designed to adapt to climate change through sustainable, low-carbon and climate-resilient design measures.

6.292 Whilst the detailed design and layout of the proposed development would be assessed at Reserved Matters stage, the application was supported by an Outline Energy Statement which considers opportunities to increase energy efficiency through site layout, building design and energy supply, as well as the suitability of incorporating renewable and low carbon energy technologies. At this stage, beyond layout/building design, the most suitable technologies are anticipated to be photovoltaic solar panels (PV), solar water heating systems (or solar thermal) and heat recovery technologies, however, final details will be worked up as part of the reserved matters stage and covered by Building Regulations.

6.293 For the reasons set out elsewhere in this report, the site is considered to be sustainably located to support sustainable patterns of movement and includes provision for an on-site community hub which would help to meet the day to day

needs of residents (and thus help to reduce the need to travel). In addition, no proposed residential development is located in area which is at risk of flooding and the indicative drainage strategy (incorporating sustainable drainage systems) proposed has been agreed with the LLFA as being capable of addressing flood risks, accounting for climate change.

6.294 The proposal complies with NDMP CC2 and CC3 as far as it can at this stage. Detailed design will be considered at reserved matters stage and will need to demonstrate wider compliance with NDMP CC2 and CC3 at that point. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Accessible and Adaptable Homes

6.295 The requirements within Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 relating to accessible and adaptable homes are applicable to all new dwellings and accord with NDMP HO5. LP25 states that all dwellings should meet Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' and that for all affordable housing an appropriate proportion should meet Building Regulation requirement M4(3) 'wheelchair 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 and those with some disabilities, and also families with young children.

6.296 This is an outline planning application with layout, scale and appearance reserved for future determination. Therefore, a condition will be attached to any approval securing compliance with Policy LP25 and M4(2) standards. Subject to this condition, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Health Impact Assessment

6.297 Local Plan Policy LP29 (Health Impact Assessment) requires large scale major developments to be informed by the conclusions of a full Health Impact Assessment (HIA). A Health Impact Assessment has been submitted with this application, that follows the nationally recognised methodology developed by the London Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU). The results of the HIA indicate the development will largely have positive or neutral impacts on the themes set out. Where negative impacts are predicted, it is recommended that these are addressed through contributions towards off site infrastructure provision including contributions to local healthcare and education infrastructure (S106 contributions are discussed in detail below).

6.298 The requirements of Policy LP29 have been satisfied. This is a matter to be afforded neutral weight in the overall planning balance.

Fire hydrants

6.299 In accordance with the comments of Cambridgeshire Fire Service, a fire hydrant condition is recommended to be imposed given the size and scale of development.

Economic benefits

6.300 The applicant's Planning Statement makes the case for a number of economic benefits which could be delivered by the proposal, including construction jobs, investment in the local economy by future residents of the proposed development and job creation associated with the proposed 'Community Hub'.

6.301 With the exception of the proposed Community Hub, these economic benefits are not unique to the proposed development.

6.302 It is accepted that the proposed Community Hub is unique to the proposed development. The Council's Economic Development Team is supportive of the proposed Community Hub in principle as it aligns with the Council's Economic Growth Strategy by promoting place-making, supporting local business opportunities, improving connectivity through the inclusion of a mobility hub, and contributing to sustainable and inclusive growth.

6.303 As noted above, delivery of the Community Hub will be market driven (as opposed to being delivered by the applicant), however, to ensure the best possible chance of it being delivered, it is proposed that a Marketing Strategy for the community hub is secured by the S106. The Marketing Strategy should be underpinned by a clear delivery and management plan, appropriate viability testing of commercial uses, and commitments to local skills, apprenticeships, and business support, so that the hub complements nearby centres and delivers lasting economic value for the district

6.304 Consistent with the economic objectives of the NPPF, moderate positive weight may be attributed to the economic contribution that the Community Hub, wider construction and occupation of the proposed development would make to the local economy in the overall planning balance.

Public Sector Equalities Duties

6.305 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics, namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Council under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers.

6.306 The Committee must be mindful of this duty inter alia when determining all planning applications. In particular, the Committee must pay due regard to the need to:

(1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;

(2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
(3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6.307 Due consideration has been made to The Equality Act 2010 during the assessment of the planning application and no conflicts are raised.

Human Rights

6.308 Due consideration has been made to The Equality Act 2010 during the assessment of the planning application, no conflicts are raised. There may be implications under Article 1 (protection of property) and Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) of the First Protocol regarding the right of respect for a person's private and family life and home, and to the peaceful enjoyment of possessions; however, these issues have been taken into account in the determination of this application.

6.309 As noted above, the severe impact of the proposed development upon the agricultural tenant's livelihood and home is a matter which must be afforded substantial weight and considered against the benefits of the proposal when considering the scheme as a whole.

7 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

7.1 Local Plan Policy LP4 and Policy SS3 of St Neots Neighbourhood Plan relate to planning obligations. Policy SS3 seeks that new residential development is delivered alongside necessary improvements to /provision of community facilities and services, school places, GPs and dentists.

7.2 NDMP DM6 of the NPPF (2026) states that planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address potential unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.

7.3 Section 106 Obligations may be sought where they meet the tests of Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). Such obligations must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

7.4 The development will be CIL liable in accordance with the Regulations (and exemptions contained within) and the Council's adopted charging schedule. In addition, as the proposal is for in excess of 200 dwellings, contributions beyond CIL may be sought through S106 obligations towards infrastructure in respect of health, education, footpaths, community facilities, libraries and lifelong learning, open space and sport facilities as necessary in relation to the proposal.

7.5 In order to calculate the required obligations, the Developer Contributions SPD requires that dwelling numbers are translated into population. At this time

average household numbers are calculated at 2.19 persons per household. This development, at 600 dwellings, would therefore equate to a population of 1314 people.

Summary of Proposed Heads of Terms

7.6 In summary, the following contributions have been identified as being required by the adopted Developer Contributions SPD, or requested by consultees and are considered to meet the tests in 122 of the CIL Regulations and would accord with policy LP4 of the Local Plan and Policy SS3 of the Neighbourhood Plan:

Affordable Housing:

- That 40% of the dwellings are provided affordable, as defined within the NPPF (with 70% to be provided as social or affordable rented properties and 30% as shared ownership properties).

Education:

- £1,436,630 towards Early Year education provision
- £4,560,000 towards Secondary School provision, namely the expansion or remodelling of Longsands Academy in St Neots
- £987,350 towards Special Educational Needs places

Libraries and Lifelong Learning:

- £77,526 towards Libraries and Lifelong Learning at St Neots library.

Green Space (formal and informal):

- £362,007 towards formal outdoor sports provision.
- £415,000 towards path provision and access improvements at Priory Park
- Public open space provision and maintenance contribution (made up of parks & gardens, natural & semi natural green space, allotments & community gardens and amenity green space, including play facilities)
- Transfer of serviced Allotment Land on site (approx. 1.31 ha with services to the boundary) to the Allotment Nominee (Rowley Allotment Association).
- Transfer of Conservation Island (8.71 ha) to Conservation Island Nominee (Paxton Pits Nature Reserve or Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve) for new habitat creation subject to ecological/biodiversity use restrictions.
- BNG delivery and maintenance for 30 years and monitoring contribution of £67,987.50.

Officer note: it is understood that the applicant has entered into discussions with Rowley Allotment Association and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve / Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve regarding the land proposed for allotments and Conservation Island. The transfer mechanism and nominee(s) will be considered fully within the detailed S106 drafting, but it is welcomed that conversations with these parties have taken place.

Health:

- £595,371 towards the capital cost of delivering additional primary care floorspace.

Wheeled Bins
- £114 per dwelling and £669 per communal bin towards the provision of wheeled bin facilities (mix and total cost to be determined at reserved matters stage).

Safeguarded Land for WRC
- Land adjacent to St Neots Water Recycling Centre safeguarded for potential use by Anglian Water

Transport
- £500,800 towards service enhancement of the Central Connect 61 bus service.
- £850,000 over a 5-year period to reroute and enhance the existing Stagecoach 905 bus service
- £3,000 to fund signal cycle time optimisation and revalidation improvement works at the B1428/Cambridge StreetJB1043 Huntingdon Street signalised junction.
- £125,000 towards on-site Car Parking Restrictions.
- Unspecified contribution towards station facility improvements at St Neots Railway station.
- £40,000 towards the maintenance of 4 bus shelters (subject to being delivered/adopted)
- £42,000 towards the maintenance of the four Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) units to be installed at each of the four new permanent bus stops located within the site

Community hub
- Marketing strategy for the Community Hub Land and transfer it to a Community Hub Nominee if an acceptable offer is received. If following the Marketing Period no acceptable offer is received, the land is released

Other
- Monitoring fees

Officer note: where relevant, the final amounts would need to be reflected as a calculation within any S106, to capture the final outcome of the number and form of dwellings which come forward as part of reserved matters applications. Costs will also be index linked.

7.7 Further details around obligations to be secured have been set out in relevant sections of the report above. For financial considerations not already covered, details are provided below.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

7.8 The development will be CIL liable in accordance with the Council's adopted charging schedule.

Green Space - informal:

7.9 For the reasons set out in the 'Residential Amenity' section of this report It is considered that the on-site provision of informal green space is sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the SPD in terms of parks and gardens, natural and semi natural green space, allotments and amenity space, including children's play provision.

7.10 It is noted that maintenance of the onsite open space has been raised as a concern by Little Paxton Parish Council. 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 Trust/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 open space, excluding the allotment land and Conservation Island (as discussed below). A Landscape Maintenance contribution (using the updated costs for 2025/2026) will be secured through the S106 Agreement in the event that the open space is to be transferred to the Town or District Council.

7.11 In addition to the on-site informal green space provision, as noted in the highways section of this report the applicant has agreed in principle to a contribution of **£415,000** to contribute towards the enhancement, extension and upgrading of the path network and associated infrastructure in Priory Park to improve accessibility, connectivity and year-round use of the site.

7.12 The applicant has agreed in principle to this contribution, subject to exploring whether any of the improvement works could be undertaken directly by the applicant, in lieu of a financial contribution, this can be considered further in the detailed drafting of the S106 Agreement.

7.13 The proposals are therefore considered to accord with Local Plan Policy LP24 and section B of the Developer Contributions SPD.

Green Space - formal:

7.14 As the proposal is for in excess of 450 dwellings, the Developer Contributions SPD requires contributions towards formal sport provision in the form of on-site contributions. In this instance however, site constraints such as the flood zones raised concerns about on-site provision due to potential for flooding during the peak winter playing season which would affect the usability of the pitches. There were also concerns relating to the associated changing facilities, storage, car parking and cycle parking.

7.15 This, and the close proximity of the site to Priory Park which has existing formal outdoor sports facilities has resulted in a request for an off-site contribution of **£362,007** which will be used to increase the capacity and quality of the facilities and accommodate the additional demand generated by the development.

7.16 This obligation is considered to meet the statutory tests and is compliant with policy LP4 and the SPD. The Applicant has agreed to provide a financial contribution towards Formal Green Space in-line with the above request.

Health:

7.17 Policy LP4 of the Local Plan to 2036 relates to provision for infrastructure needs and Part D of the SPD refers to health service facilities.

7.18 The NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board (C&PICB) has advised that the proposed development would have an impact on local NHS services, which if unmitigated would be unsustainable. There is currently no capacity within the local area to accommodate the population growth generated by the development.

7.19 C&PICB advise that Buckden & Little Paxton Surgery (Main), Buckden & Little Paxton Surgeries: Little Paxton (Branch) and Almond Road Surgery are most likely to be impacted by the proposed development given their proximity to the site and predominant patterns of patient access in the area. These practices are part of the A1 Network Primary Care Network (PCN) and within a reasonable walking distance of around 20 minutes from the development site. These three practices are however currently experiencing a health infrastructure deficit and do not have the capacity to absorb any additional residents and are no current plans or approved projects for primary care premises developments that would deliver additional capacity at the impacted surgeries.

7.20 C&PICB have identified that the existing estate within the A1 Network PCN can be extended/refurbished to meet the needs of the population coming forward from this development. In doing so, this would also enable an efficient use of the existing healthcare facilities that are well-located in relation to the proposed scheme. The required S106 contribution is therefore based on delivering the required additional floorspace via refurbishment/extension (build cost of £5,033/sqm) of existing premises within the relevant PCN (or successor body) that provides health services to this development.

7.21 The additional floorspace required is 118.29m2 which equates to a requested contribution of **£5,033 x 118.29 = £595,371**

7.22 This obligation is considered to meet the statutory tests and is compliant with policy LP4 and the SPD. The Applicants have agreed to provide the financial contribution towards healthcare provision in-line with the request from the NHS.

Education and Schools:

7.23 Policy LP4 of the Local Plan to 2036 relates to provision for infrastructure needs and Part G of the SPD relates to the provision of education facilities.

Early Years

7.24 The County Council has advised that the development is expected to accommodate 180 children of early years age, of whom 101 could be entitled to funded childcare provision. There is insufficient capacity within the catchment to accommodate this child yield, so a contribution is requested to enable expansion of the existing provision (currently identified as three childcare providers and four childminders in the town).

7.25 As the details of the specific project are not committed at this stage, in accordance with DfE guidance it is appropriate to secure contributions based on the DfE Scorecard costs, which for the creation of additional early years settings in Huntingdonshire is £22,102 per place. The cost to mitigate the impact is based on 29 children eligible for 30 hours and 72 eligible for 15-hour entitlements. This equates to 65 additional classroom places. Therefore, the indicative cost of mitigation is **£22,102 x 65 = £1,436,630.**

7.26 This is an indicative sum based on the Couty Council's general multiplier due to the housing mix being unknown at this stage; the total contribution will be calculated using the detailed multiplier based on the actual dwelling mix and tenure approved at the reserved matters stage.

7.27 Whilst detailed triggers would be discussed within the formal drafting stages, it is requested that 50% of the cost is paid prior to first occupation and 50% is paid prior to occupation of 50% of the development.

Primary Education

7.28 It is advised that Priory Park Infant School and Priory Junior School currently have a Net Capacity of 630 pupils with the catchment's 4-10-year-old population is forecast to decrease from 386 in 2024/25 to 346 by 2029/30.

7.29 There are forecast to be 240 primary-aged children generated by this development. As there are no other proposed developments in the catchment area, by 2029/30 the total primary-aged population is forecast to be 586 [346+240]. As such, it is advised that there will be sufficient primary provision across Priory Park and therefore**, no contributions are sought** for mitigation.

Secondary Education

7.30 Longsands Academy is the catchment secondary school for St Neots with a current net capacity Of 1,450 pupils (CCC/DfE School Capacity Survey, 2024). The catchment's 11-15- year-old population is forecast to decrease to 1408 by 2029/30.

7.31 There are forecast to be 150 secondary-aged children generated by this development. The other proposed developments in the area will generate an additional 805 secondary-aged children so by 2029/30 the total secondary aged

population is forecast to be 2,363 (1,408+150+805) and there will not be sufficient secondary provision within St Neots.

7.32 The County Council will meet the demand for secondary places from this and other new developments by expanding or remodelling Longsands Academy to enable the creation of places. The details of the specific project are not committed and therefore in accordance with DfE guidance it is appropriate to secure contributions based on the DfE Scorecard costs, which for the new secondary facilities in Huntingdonshire is £30,400 per place. Therefore, the indicative cost of mitigation is **£30,400 x 150 = £4,560,000.**

7.33 This is an indicative sum based on the Couty Council's general multiplier due to the housing mix being unknown at this stage; the total contribution will be calculated using the detailed multiplier based on the actual dwelling mix and tenure approved at the reserved matters stage.

7.34 Whilst detailed triggers would be discussed within the formal drafting stages, it is requested that 50% of the cost is paid prior to first occupation and 50% is paid prior to occupation of 50% of the development.

Special Education Needs

7.35 The number of children that will require special school or a SEN unit / Enhanced Resource Base is calculated based on the County Council's adopted SEND multiplier of 2.17% Of all 4 to 15 year Olds. The County Council have advised that only a general multiplier is used for SEND provision because the numbers are much smaller than mainstream, and it is not possible to accurately access populations to bedroom or tenure level.

7.36 The proposed development generates 240 primary aged children and 150 secondary aged children. Based on the 2.17% multiplier this generates 8.46 children requiring SEND provision.

7.37 A contribution towards Special Education Needs (SEND) is requested which will be used to provide additional capacity at SEND settings serving the development. The details of the specific project are not committed and therefore in accordance with DfE guidance it is appropriate to secure contributions based on the DFE Scorecard costs, which for the provision of new in Cambridgeshire is £116,708 per place. Therefore, the indicative cost of mitigation is **£116,708 x 8.46= £987,350**

7.38 Whilst detailed triggers would be discussed within the formal drafting stages, it is requested that 50% of the cost is paid prior to first occupation and 50% is paid prior to occupation of 50% of the development.

7.39 These contributions for Early Years, Secondary School provision and SEND provision are considered necessary to meet specialised needs of children, in accordance with policy LP4 and section G of the Developer Contributions SPD.

Libraries and Lifelong Learning:

7.40 Policy LP4 of the Local Plan to 2036 relates to provision for infrastructure needs and Part F of the SPD relates to the provision of library facilities.

7.41 The County Council have requested a financial contribution of £59 per person arising from the development towards the cost of resources and fit out for St Neots Library to enhance study/work from home facilities and children' library provision.

7.42 Based on the average household size (of 2.19 people per household) as set out within the Huntingdonshire Developer Contribution SPD, a development of 600 dwellings would generate a population 1,314 people and a contribution of **£59 x 1,314 = £77,526** is requested.

7.43 This obligation is considered to meet the statutory tests and is compliant with policy LP4 and the SPD. The Applicants have agreed to provide a financial contribution towards libraries and life-long learning in-line with the above request from Cambridgeshire County Council.

7.44 Whilst detailed triggers would be discussed within the formal drafting stages, it is requested that 100% of the cost is paid prior to occupation of 50% of dwellings.

7.45 **Huntingdon Ambulance Hub**

7.46 The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) have requested an off-site contribution of £204,000 towards the relocation and expansion of the existing Huntingdon Ambulance Hub to meet the increased local demand for ambulances arising from the proposed development.

7.47 EEAST suggest that the proposed development will generate additional 304 calls to ambulance services per annum (based on applying an average household size of 2.2 persons and a per person incident rate of 0.23 incidents per person per annum). Ambulances responding to calls from the application site will come from the Huntingdon Ambulance Hub which is located 15 minutes from the proposed development. Ambulances start and finish shifts from the local Hub.

7.48 EEAST apply a capital cost of £340 per dwelling, based on £213.50 per sqm estates build cost plus the £126.50 cost of emergency ambulance vehicles. It is not clear how the costs used by EEAST have been derived or how these relate back to the number of 999 calls for an ambulance predicted to be generated by the proposed development.

7.49 999 calls for an ambulance are not linked to a person’s place of residence. Residents of the proposed development could require an ambulance at a location outside of their residence. A direct link between the proposed development and the requirement for increased ambulance services has not

been demonstrated to justify the requested contribution towards the relocation and expansion of the existing Huntingdon Ambulance Hub as being:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

7.50 Any infrastructure requirement for the Ambulance Service could be considered under the appropriate governance arrangements for CIL via a CIL application for funding. HDC hold up to two CIL funding rounds a year and there is a CIL Enquiry form which partners are encouraged to use first. HDC Officers have regular meetings with Police, Fire and Ambulance services and so they are always aware of CIL funding rounds.

Defibrillator

7.51 The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) have requested an unspecified S106 contribution towards the provision of a defibrillator.

7.52 Residents of the proposed development could require a defibrillator at a location outside of their residence. A direct link between the proposed development and the requirement for a defibrillator has not been demonstrated to justify the requested contribution towards a defibrillator as being:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

7.53 Any infrastructure requirement for the provision of a defibrillator in St Neots could be considered under the appropriate governance arrangements for CIL via a CIL application for funding.

Residential Wheeled Bins:

7.54 Policy LP4 of the Local Plan to 2036 relates to provision for infrastructure needs and Part H of the SPD relates to the provision of residential wheeled bins.

7.55 Each dwelling will require the provision of one black and one blue wheeled bin (green bins are payable separately per year as requested by occupiers). The current cost of such provision is £114 per dwelling. For flats, communal 1100 litre bins could be provided rather than individual bins for each dwelling. The current cost for communal bins is £669 each.

7.56 The total amount required would be based on a per dwelling/bin calculation. This would be reflected as a calculation within any S106, to capture the final outcome of the number and form of dwellings which come forward as part of reserved matters applications.

7.57 A contribution towards bins will therefore be secured through the S106 Agreement (£114 per dwelling and £669 per bin for flats), in accordance with policy LP4 and section H of the Developer Contributions SPD.

Financial consideration summary:

7.58 The Applicant has agreed in principle to provide the necessary financial contributions as listed above.

7.59 The terms of the proposed financial contributions as detailed within this report are considered to represent necessary and satisfactory mitigation for the impacts of the proposed development. Taking all these matters into account, Officers consider that the proposed obligations are acceptable mitigation measures necessary to make the development acceptable.

8 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

8.1 The preceding sections identify both benefits and harms arising from the proposal. The final planning judgement requires these competing considerations to be weighed together.

8.2 The proposal is for residential development on the edge of, but outside the built-up area for St Neots (based on the definition of a 'built-up area' in the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036). The NPPF (2026) dictates that the proposal must be assessed against NDMP S5.

8.3 HDC cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The proposal for up to 600 dwellings would therefore address an evidenced unmet need for the purposes of NDMP S5(1)(j).

8.4 As established by this report, the proposal satisfies the tests of NDMP S5(1)(j)(i).

8.5 On this basis, NDMP S5(1) directs that the proposal should be approved unless the benefits would be substantially outweighed by adverse effects, assessed against the national decision-making policies.

8.6 NDMP S5 (2) of the NPPF clarifies that the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include, but are not restricted to, situations where the development proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.

8.7 There are 15 NDMPs which state that proposals should be refused in specific circumstances. These include the following NDMPs which are applicable to the current proposal and have been assessed within this report:

- TC3: Main Town Centre Uses
- L3 (Achieving appropriate densities);

- DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places);
- TR6 (Assessing Transport Impacts);
- F6 (Development in areas at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea);
- F7 (Ensuring development is safe from flooding);
- N2 (Improving the natural environment);
- N6 (Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity).
- HE6 (Proposals affecting designated heritage assets)

8.8 As established by the assessment undertaken in this report, the proposal does not fail to comply with TC3, L3, DP3, TR6, F6, F7, N2 or N6.

8.9 In relation to HE6, the proposal would result in a low level of harm (less than substantial harm) to St Neots conservation area. Very great weight is attached to the harm to this designated asset and the statutory presumption of the avoidance of harm can only be outweighed if there are public benefits that are powerful enough to do so.

8.10 The following public benefits have been identified during the detailed assessment of this application:

- The proposal contributes to meeting an identified housing need, including Affordable Housing
- Delivery of substantial publicly accessible land (43.06ha), plus land for allotments (1.31ha) bringing social, health and recreational benefits
- Ecological benefits including 8.71ha of land given over as a nature reserve (Conservation Island) and a significant BNG (far in excess of the mandatory 10%)
- Realignment of Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road/Priory Hill Road to allow removal of the existing double mini roundabouts which are identified as an existing road safety concern
- Social and economic benefits associated with the proposed community hub.

8.11 Having applied the special duties at Sections 66 and 72 of the P(LBCA) Act, very great weight is afforded to the conservation of the setting of St Neots Conservation Area. However, it is considered that the public benefits outlined, above provide clear and convincing justification for the proposal and outweighs the low level of harm caused to the setting of the conservation area.

8.12 On this basis the proposal complies with NDMP HE6 and there are no NDMPs which state that proposals should be refused.

8.13 It is therefore necessary to consider whether there are there any other material considerations which mean that the benefits of approving the proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by the adverse effects (the planning balance).

8.14 The assessment undertaken by this report has identified harm and benefits arising from the development proposal and the weight which should be applied to these within the overall planning balance.

8.15 The harm arising from the development can be summarised as follows:

Harm:

- Loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land - afforded modest weight
- Adverse harm to mature landscape features and historic parkland character - afforded modest weight
- Adverse impact upon the personal circumstances and agricultural business of the tenant farmer and their family - afforded significant weight

8.16 The public benefits of the proposal have already been summarised above in relation to the assessment of the heritage impacts but are included in the list of wider benefits set out below:

Benefits:

- The application site represents a sustainable location and would represent effective use of land which is well related to the existing settlement - afforded significant weight.
- Compliance has been demonstrated with Local Plan Policies LP11 and LP12 in terms of design principles - afforded substantial positive weight as stipulated by NDMP SP3 of the NPPF.
- The proposal contributes to meeting an identified housing need, including Affordable Housing - afforded substantial weight as stipulated by NDMP HO7 of the NPPF.
- Social and economic benefits associated with the proposed community hub - afforded substantial weight as stipulated by NDMP HC4 of the NPPF.
- Delivery of substantial publicly accessible land (43.06ha), plus land for allotments (1.31ha) bringing social, health and recreational benefits - afforded substantial weight as stipulated by NDMP HC4 of the NPPF.
- Land safeguarded for the potential extension of St Neots WRC if needed to support further planned growth in St Neot - afforded moderate weight.
- Ecological benefits including 8.71ha of land given over as a nature reserve (Conservation Island) and a significant BNG (far in excess of the mandatory 10%) – afforded significant weight.
- Realignment of Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road/Priory Hill Road to allow removal of the existing double mini roundabouts which are identified as an existing road safety concern – afforded significant weight.
- Wider public highway improvements of benefit to pedestrian and cycle routes – afforded moderate weight.
- The general economic contribution that the construction and occupation of the proposed development would make to the local economy (afforded limited positive weight).

8.17 It is clear from the above that the proposal results in a range of benefits, many of which are to be afforded significant or substantial weight. Conversely the harms arising are limited.

8.18 The greatest harm arising is to the personal circumstances of the agricultural tenant, however, on balance it is considered that the public benefits of the development outweigh this specific significant impact.

8.19 On this basis, subject to the imposition of conditions and securing obligations, it is concluded that the benefits of permitting the proposed development would not be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework

9 RECOMMENDATION/CONDITIONS AND REASONS

9.1 GRANT PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AS SET OUT IN THE LIST BELOW WITH DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO THE HEAD OF PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE & PUBLIC PROTECTION TO APPROVE ANY AMENDMENTS TO CONDITIONS AS DEEMED NECESSARY AND SUBJECT TO A S106 LEGAL AGREEMENT

OR

SUBJECT TO CONSULTATION WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE*, REFUSE PERMISSION IN THE EVENT THE S106 AGREEMENT HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED AND THE APPLICANT IS UNWILLING TO AGREE AN EXTENDED PERIOD FOR DETERMINATION, OR THAT THE APPLICANT IS UNWILLING TO COMPLETE THE OBLIGATION NECESSARY TO MAKE THE DEVELOPMEN ACCEPTABLE.

*In accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2026, where a local planning authority proposes to refuse an application for planning permission for development which includes the provision of 150 or more dwellings, the authority must consult the Secretary of State before determining the application.

- Time Limit
- Reserved Matters
- Time limit for Reserved Matters
- Approved Plans
- Scale parameters / Parameter plans compliance / No land raising or vulnerable uses within Flood Zones 2 or 3
- Design code
- Phasing Plan

- Specify the use classes which may be accommodated within the Community Hub and limit (cumulative) floorspace used for any main town centre uses to 600sqm
- Details to be included in reserved matters applications including: details of any earthworks, finished floor levels, market dwelling mix, bin collection points, cycle parking, crime prevention measures, compliance with LTN 1120 Cycle Infrastructure Design (2020) and Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Toolkit for New Developments (2024), access points for pedestrians and cyclists, details of landscaping adjacent to the railway to accord with Network Rail requirements
- Fire hydrants
- Play space strategy (including quantity and design)
- Recreational routes: details to be submitted for approval (including exact routes, surfacing, widths, gradients, landscaping and structures) along with a timescale for their implementation. Routes shall be retained and unobstructed in perpetuity.
- Full details of the highway works hereby approved shall be submitted for approval, including details of drainage, street lighting, stage 2 Road Safety Audit and construction details
- On site access works (including visibility splays) and off-site highway (including off-site active travel improvement works) works to be approved in detail and delivered prior to first occupation
- Notwithstanding approved highway plans, a grass verge shall be provided each side of any section of primary street to facilitate tree planting on both sides of street (unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that it is unfeasible to do so)
- Bus strategy
- Residential Travel Plan and Welcome Travel Packs
- Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) including noise and dust management and construction traffic management plan (CTMP) and protection for biodiversity
- Anglian Water Affected Assets - any proposed asset diversion or build over agreement, to be submitted in support of reserved matters application
- Development to be brought forward in accordance with the approved housing trajectory unless otherwise agreed in consultation with Anglian Water
- Strategic foul water strategy to be submitted for approval
- Trespass Proof Fencing to be provided adjacent to the railway / existing Network Rail fencing protected including vehicle barriers where necessary (Network Rail)
- Tree Protection

- Archaeological Management Plan Condition
- Archaeological Evaluation
- Archaeological Mitigation
- Noise Mitigation Scheme
- Vibration Monitoring and Mitigation
- Land Contamination
- Ecological Appraisal Recommendations / mitigation measures secured, including pre commencement T43 Bat Roost surveys
- Farmland Bird Compensation Strategy
- Biodiversity Measures Strategy for protected, Priority and threatened species
- External Lighting scheme to be submitted, including any lighting of open spaces (must be sensitive to wildlife and Network Rail requirements)
- Details of on site measures to avoid recreational disturbance to SSSI's shall be submitted as part of reserved matters including objectives, quantity and quality of accessible greenspace, timetable for implementation / phasing, details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.
- BNG condition
- Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan
- Water Efficiency
- M4(2) and M4(3)
- Waste management and minimisation
- Detailed Surface Water Drainage Scheme (including details to satisfy Network Rail in relation to land adjacent to the railway line)
- Verification of Drainage Infrastructure as built (prior to their adoption)
- Temporary Surface Water Management During Construction
- Long-Term Maintenance of SuDS

From: clerk@littlepaxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk <clerk@littlepaxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 September 2026 14:20:14 UTC+01:00
To: "Control, Development (Planning)" <Development.Control@huntingdonshire.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning ref 25/01694/OUT Land adjacent St Neots Reservoir Priory Hill St.Neots
Categories: Colette

Dear Planning Officer

I refer your letter of 26th August and wish to advise the following comments from the Parish Council:

Recommend objection.

The Parish Council reiterates comments previously made on 2nd October 2025 and expresses concerns that the double roundabout has been redesigned as two T-junctions. What studies have been carried out to ensure the T- junctions will be effective as this is a very busy & popular route? The Council's concerns regarding the Mill Lane Bridge and access to A1 have not been addressed. The footbridge to Nature Reserve is still showing as part of the outline plan.

- Flood Risk: Parts of the site are in Flood Zones 2 & 3. Sequential Test not met. Increased downstream risk to Little Paxton (Local Plan LP5 & LP6).
- Ecology: No secured management or funding for the 'Conservation Island' within Little Paxton (LP30).
- Highways: Severe residual traffic impacts on Priory Hill, Mill Lane roundabouts, Little Paxton bridge and A1 junction. Mitigation is inadequate (LP17).
- Infrastructure and Obligations: No firm provision for healthcare, and no S106 or CIL for Little Paxton despite direct impacts. Obligations are not fair or reasonable (LP4 & LP25).
Increased traffic congestion on Huntingdon Road.

Kind regards,

Jenny

Mrs Jennifer Gellatly PSLCC MCIBS

Parish Clerk/Proper Officer
Little Paxton Parish Council
Tel: (01480) 470193

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website www.littlepaxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk
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Schedule of Planning Applications – 30th September 2025

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
The following application/s are for listed building consent				
S1	25/01684/HHFUL & 25/01685/LBC	**Ms Nadine Goldsworthy - Admiral Homespace** **2 Ackerman Street Eaton Socon St Neots** Removal of existing uPVC conservatory and replacement with aluminium conservatory. Removal of two windows, enlargement of opening to form single opening to receive patio doors with fixed side lights. Removal of existing external door, including infilling of opening.	**SUPPORT**	In keeping with locality. Minimum impact on neighbours.
S2	25/01755/LBC	**Nationwide Building Society** **5 Market Square St Neots PE19 2AR** Listed Building Consent for partial demolition of existing (modern) internal partition walls and rebuilding, installation of 2No. new closed counters & redecoration of banking hall.	**SUPPORT**	In keeping with locality. Improves the property.
S3	25/01713/LBC & 25/01712/FUL	**OTAA St Neots Property Ltd** **44 Huntingdon Street St Neots PE19 1DU** Conversion of existing building into 7 residential units and erection of 2 bungalows with associated landscaping and drainage works.	**SUPPORT**	We consider the proposal would assimilate itself to the existing part of the town. Makes efficient use of its site.
The following application/s are in a conservation area				
S4	25/01691/HHFUL	**Mr Harrasi** **66A Berkley Street Eynesbury St Neots** Erection of front porch and re-surface existing driveway.	**SUPPORT**	The proposal will enhance the character of the conservation area. Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.
S5	25/01274/FUL	**Mr Paul Goldstraw** **Eaton Ford Methodist Church St Neots Road Eaton Ford** Proposed conversion of Methodist Chapel to 3 bed dwelling.	**SUPPORT**	We consider the proposal would assimilate itself to the existing part of the town. Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.
S6	25/01644/S73	**Churchill Living Ltd** **26 Cambridge Street St Neots PE19 1JN** Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 8 (programme of archaeological work) of 23/01996/FUL (appeal reference APP/H0520/W/24/3346983) Redevelopment for retirement living accommodation comprising 57 apartments, 16 cottages, including communal facilities, access, car parking,	**SUPPORT**	Satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development. Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
		landscaping and associated works.		
S7	**25/01627/HHFUL**	**Mr Robin Shepherd** **118 St Neots Road Eaton Ford St Neots** Erection of single storey front and rear extension, two storey infill rear extensions and render to elevations.	**SUPPORT**	Improves the property. Within a sustainable location.
S8	**25/01663/HHFUL**	**Mr Kyle Chesterman** **27 Rowley Road St Neots PE19 1UF** Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of rear extension.	**SUPPORT**	Within a sustainable location. Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.
S9	**25/00515/HHFUL**	**Mr Vince Fowles** **30 Caernarvon Road Eynesbury St Neots** Retrospective outdoor wooden gazebo with roof.	**NOTED**	The Council had concerns that the gazebo appears overbearing and is located close to adjacent properties. The Council did not feel able to make a resolution on supporting or objecting to the gazebo based on the images and information available and as such resolved to accept the HDC Planning/Enforcement Officer decision.
S10	**25/01694/OUT**	**Bloor Homes Ltd c/o Agent - Marrons** **Land Adjacent St Neots Reservoir Priory Hill Road St Neots** Outline planning application for the erection of up to 600 dwellings including 40% affordable, a community hub site including car parking and mobility hub; public open space including green and blue infrastructure, incorporating footpaths, cycle ways, land for allotments, biodiversity improvements and habitat creation; associated drainage and landscaping including new and existing trees and hedgerows, junction improvements to Mill Lane/Priory Hill/ Huntingdon Road, utilities and other infrastructure. All matters reserved except for means of vehicular access.	**OBJECT** Cllr Slade and Cooper-Marsh abstained	The site is not suitable for development. **Sewage and Wastewater Infrastructure** • Existing network is under pressure. • No clear plan to manage additional demand from this proposed development and the 4,000+ other homes recently built/approved. • Risks pollution, overflows, and service failures. **Healthcare Provision** • St Neots already struggles with GP and NHS dental access. • No firm commitments to new services. • 600 new households will worsen pressure on overstretched infrastructure. • Conflicts with LP4, LP25 and NPPF para 57.

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
				Traffic and Roads • Existing congestion at Priory Hill, Mill Lane/Huntingdon Road roundabouts, Little Paxton bridge, and A1 southbound junction. • Priory Park's regular use for football and other activities already contributes to traffic issues. • Developer's proposed changes lack evidence of effectiveness. • Hundreds of extra daily car journeys will worsen congestion. • Breaches LP17 and NPPF para 111.
S11	**25/01788/HHFUL**	**Jenna Fellows** **69 Bargroves Avenue St Neots PE19 6BH** Garage conversion with the addition of bi folds on the south elevation.	**SUPPORTED**	Will have no negative impact on the wider landscape character of the area.

Chairperson

From: DevelopmentControl
To: DevelopmentControl
Subject: Comments for Planning Application 25/01694/OUT
Date: 06 October 2025 09:48:32

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 06/10/2025 9:48 AM from [redacted].

Application Summary

Address:	Land Adjacent St Neots Reservoir Priory Hill Road St Neots
Proposal:	Outline planning application for the erection of up to 600 dwellings including 40% affordable, a community hub site including car parking and mobility hub; public open space including green and blue infrastructure, incorporating footpaths, cycle ways, land for allotments, biodiversity improvements and habitat creation; associated drainage and landscaping including new and existing trees and hedgerows, junction improvements to Mill Lane/Priory Hill/ Huntingdon Road, utilities and other infrastructure. All matters reserved except for means of vehicular access.
Case Officer:	Hollie Renney

Click for further information

Customer Details

Name:	[redacted]
Email:	clerk@littlepaxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk
Address:	[redacted]

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Town or Parish Council
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	Recommend refusal Little Paxton Parish Council does not support application 25/01694/OUT (Land at Priory Hill, St Neots), on the following planning grounds: - Flood Risk: Parts of the site are in Flood Zones 2 & 3. Sequential Test not met. Increased downstream risk to Little Paxton (Local Plan LP5 & LP6). - Ecology: No secured management or funding for the 'Conservation Island' within Little Paxton (LP30). - Highways: Severe residual traffic impacts on Priory Hill, Mill Lane roundabouts, Little Paxton bridge and A1 junction. Mitigation is inadequate (LP17). - Infrastructure and Obligations: No firm provision for healthcare, and no S106 or CIL for Little Paxton despite direct impacts. Obligations are not fair or reasonable (LP4 & LP25). - Increased traffic congestion on Huntingdon Road.

Kind regards

St Neots Town Council

Steve Van De Kerkhove Community Centre, Cemetery Rd, St Neots, PE19 2BX

T: 01480 388911 E: enquiries@stneots-tc.gov.uk W: www.stneots-tc.gov.uk

30th September 2026

FAO Planning Officer Hollie Renney
Development Management
Huntingdonshire District Council
Pathfinder House
St Mary's Street
Huntingdon
PE29 3TN

Dear Hollie,

Planning Application 25/01694/OUT
Erection of up to 600 dwellings and associated infrastructure on land adjacent to St Neots Reservoir, Priory Hill Road.

St Neots Town Council considered planning application **25/01694/OUT** at its Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 29th September 2026 and **RESOLVED to Object** to this proposal on the following grounds.

St Neots Town Council objects to this application on the grounds that the proposal would place unacceptable pressure on local infrastructure, result in the loss of valuable agricultural land and open countryside, and has not adequately demonstrated that significant environmental and transport constraints can be satisfactorily addressed.

1. Flood Risk and Drainage

The Council has significant concerns regarding flood risk and drainage associated with the site. A substantial proportion of the site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3, with areas also affected by surface water flood risk. Given the extent of these constraints, the Council is not satisfied that it has been demonstrated that development can be accommodated without increasing flood risk on or off site.

The Council also notes that the Lead Local Flood Authority maintains an objection to the application, raising concerns regarding the adequacy of the proposed drainage and flood mitigation measures.

2. Wastewater Capacity

The Council notes that Anglian Water's holding objection has been withdrawn subject to conditions; however, concerns remain regarding the capacity and deliverability of the site's drainage infrastructure. Anglian Water has identified requirements relating to assets affected, wastewater treatment capacity, and used water disposal. Anglian Water has also not assessed the suitability of the proposed SuDS strategy and has advised that this should be considered by the Lead Local Flood Authority and other relevant consultees. The Council therefore remains concerned that adequate foul and surface water drainage arrangements have not yet been fully demonstrated.

3. Highways and Transport

The Council considers that it has not been demonstrated that the transport impacts arising from the development can be satisfactorily accommodated or mitigated. Particular concern is raised regarding the impact on the local highway network, including the Little Paxton Bridge, junction at Huntingdon Road/Mill Lane and surrounding road infrastructure.

Members are not satisfied that the proposal adequately addresses the cumulative impact of additional traffic movements generated by the development and notes that the Local Highways Authority note that further amendments and clarifications would be required to make the proposals acceptable in highways terms. it has not been demonstrated that transport impact can be satisfactorily accommodated or mitigated.

4. Impact on Community Infrastructure

The Council is concerned that the development would place additional pressure on local services and infrastructure, particularly secondary school provision. Members do not consider that the application demonstrates how the needs arising from the proposed development can be accommodated within existing educational capacity.

5. Landscape Impact and Loss of Agricultural Land

The Council objects to the loss of agricultural land and the resulting impact on the character of the landscape. Members consider that the scale of development would have a detrimental effect on the rural setting and approach to the town, resulting in unacceptable harm to the local landscape including:

- Loss of open views and countryside character
- Reduction of green infrastructure and natural habitat
- Loss of agricultural land
- Loss of an important rural setting on the western approach to the town
- The environmental and visual harm arising from the development cannot be adequately mitigated through landscaping measures alone.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, St Neots Town Council objects to the application and recommends that planning permission be refused.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Deputy Town Clerk

Development Management Committee

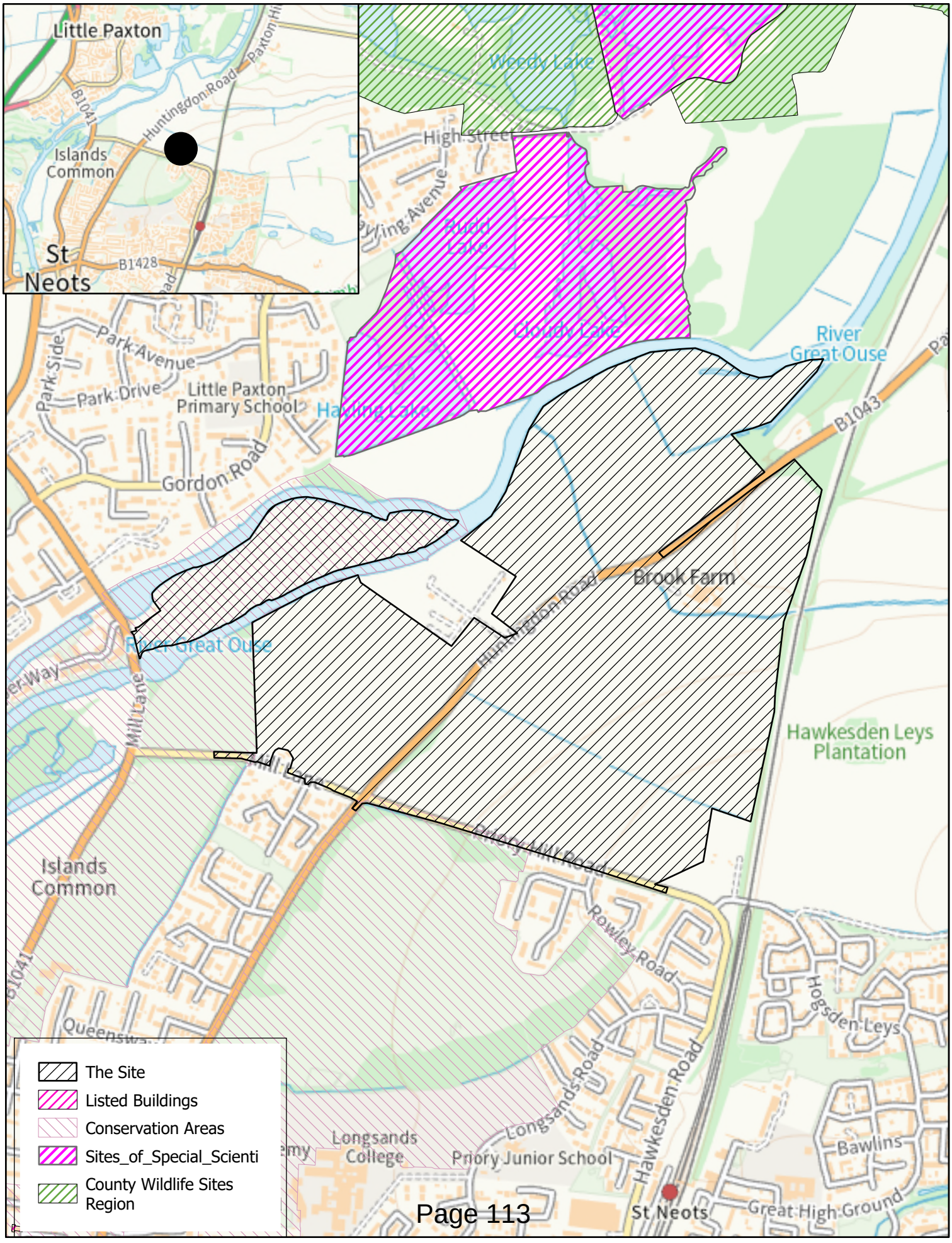
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Scale = 1:10,000

Date Created: 05/11/2026

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Z:\9712 - PRIORY PARK LANDSCAPE VISION\TCAD\DRAWINGS\SK17-22_PARAMETER PLANS\9712_018_APPLICATION_BOUNDARY.DWG

LEGEND

Site boundary (87.30ha)

Land in same ownership

Little Paxton

Paxton Pits

Rudd Lake

Cloudy Lake

Hayling Lake

Priory Park

Hawkesden Leys

Hawkesden Leys Plantation

Recreation Ground

REV.	DESCRIPTION	APP.	DATE
3	Issued for Planning	SaP	29.08.25
2	Issued for Planning	SaP	22.08.25
1	Issued for Planning	SaP	25.07.25

LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE

Land at Priory Hill, St. Neots

DRAWING TITLE

Application Boundary

ISSUED BY	Cambridge	T: 01223 949 054	
DATE	August 2025	DRAWN	BTe
SCALE@A2	1:5,000	CHECKED	SP
STATUS	Planning	APPROVED	SP

DWG. NO 9712_018

No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing.
All dimensions are to be checked on site.
Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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Sources Ordnance Survey

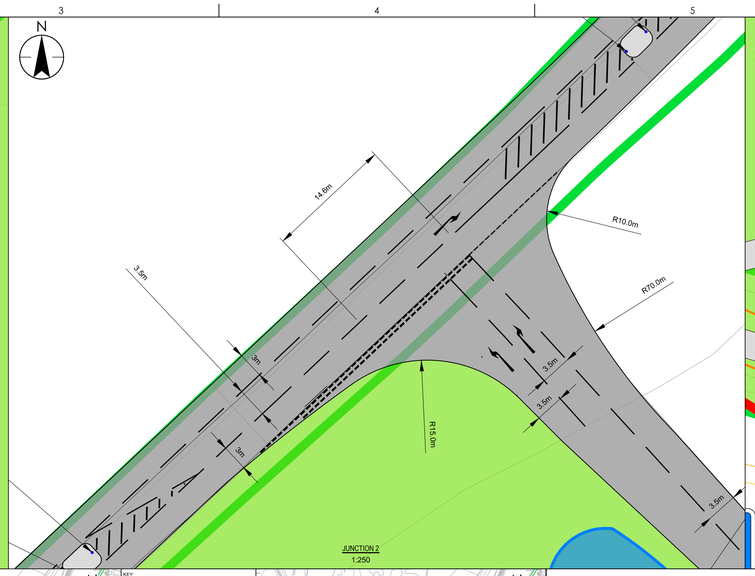
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North

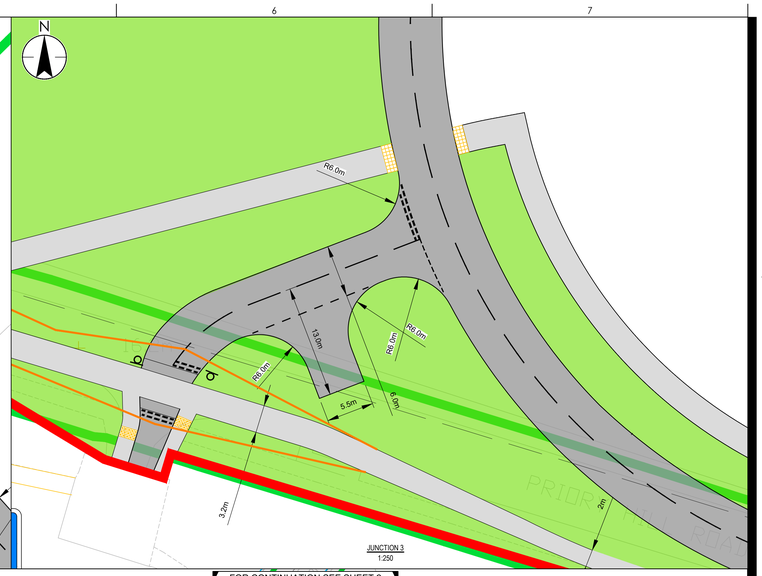
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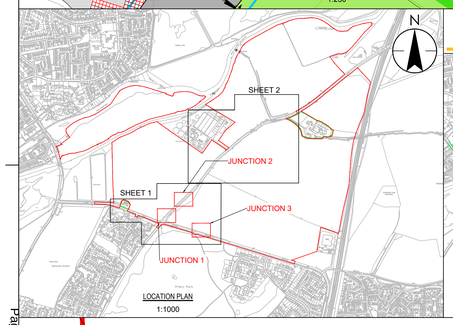
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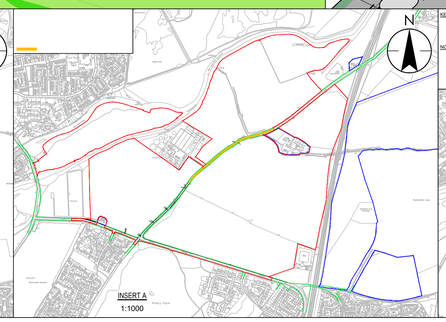
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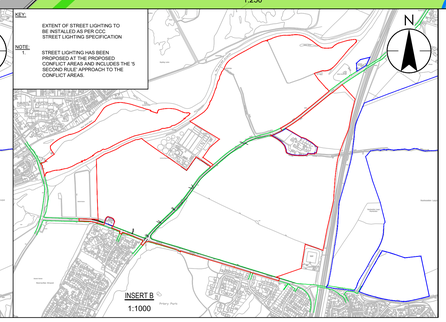
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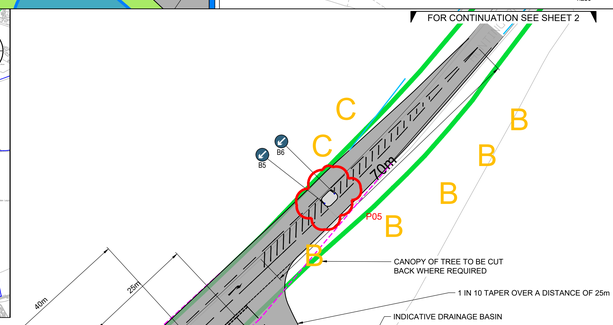
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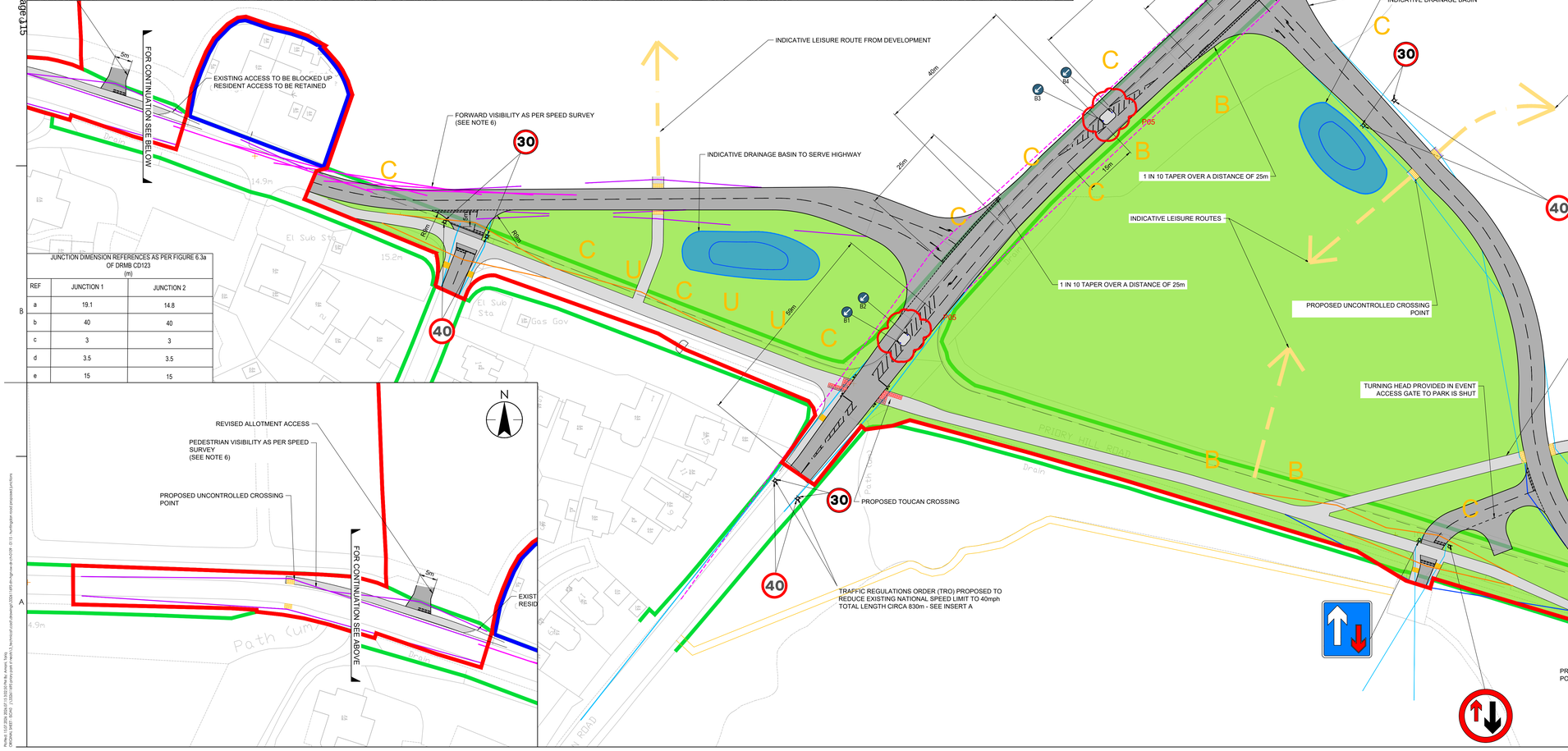


INSERT A
1:1000



INSERT B
1:1000





JUNCTION DIMENSION REFERENCES AS PER FIGURE 6.3a OF DRMB CD123 (m)		
REF	JUNCTION 1	JUNCTION 2
a	19.1	14.8
b	40	40
c	3	3
d	3.5	3.5
e	15	15

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NOTES:-

1. HIGHWAY BOUNDARY HAS BEEN INFERRED VIA INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY GREENHATCH ON 31/03/2025.
2. ALIGNMENT OF SITE ACCESS JUNCTIONS AND INTERNAL LAYOUT SUBJECT TO CHANGE FOLLOWING INTERNAL DISCUSSION.
3. STAGGERED JUNCTION DESIGN UNDERTAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:-
   - DESIGN MANUAL FOR ROAD AND BRIDGES (DMRB) CD109;
   - DMRB CD123;
   - MANUAL FOR STREETS.
4. TREE GRADING INDICATED ON PLAN AS PER STANTEC TREE SURVEY SCHEDULE. GRADES ARE AS FOLLOWS:-
   - CATEGORY A - TREES OF HIGH QUALITY AND VALUE (MUST BE RETAINED);
   - CATEGORY B - TREES OF MODERATE QUALITY AND VALUE (RECOMMEND THAT THESE TREES ARE RETAINED);
   - CATEGORY C - TREES OF LOW QUALITY (NOT ESSENTIAL TO BE RETAINED);
   - CATEGORY U - TREES WITH SERIOUS STRUCTURAL DEFECTS OR DISEASE (NOT A CONSTRAINT).
5. CATEGORY C AND CATEGORY U TREES TO BE REMOVED IF REQUIRED
6. SPEED SURVEY UNDERTAKEN BY ADVANCED TRANSPORT RESEARCH (Q46053) RECIEVED BY STANTEC ON THE 26.01.2026. 85TH PERCENTILE SPEED NOTED AS 35mph. AS PER MANUAL FOR STREETS TABLE 7.1 SSD IS THEREFORE 59m.
7. PROPOSALS ARE TO BE ILLUMINATED BY STREET LIGHTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CCC STREET LIGHTING DEVELOPMENT SPECIFICATION.

KEY:-

- SITE BOUNDARY
- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED CORDUROY TACTILES INDICATING CHANGE OF USE FROM SHARED TO PEDESTRIAN USE
- PROPOSED RED BLISTER TACTILES AT CONTROLLED TOUCAN CROSSING
- PROPOSED BUFF BLISTER TACTILE PAVING AT UNCONTROLLED CROSSINGS
- C B U TREE CLASSIFICATIONS (SEE NOTE 4)
- 30mph PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 1.5m, Y = 43m)
- 40mph PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 1.5m, Y = 59m) (SEE NOTE 6)
- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY
- PROPOSED SHARED USE CYCLEWAY / FOOTWAY
- PROPOSED LANDSCAPED AREA
- PROPOSED TRAFFIC ISLAND
- 30mph JUNCTION VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 2.4m, Y = 43m)
- 40mph FORWARD VISIBILITY AS PER SURVEY (SEE NOTE 6)
- 40mph JUNCTION VISIBILITY SPLAY AS PER SURVEY (SEE NOTE 6) X = 2.4m
- 40mph JUNCTION VISIBILITY (X = 4.5m , Y = 120m)
- 40mph SHARED USE VISIBILITY (X = 2.4m, Y = 120m)
- 50mph SHARED USE VISIBILITY (X = 2.4m, Y = 160m)
- CYCLE VISIBILITY (X = 2.5m, Y = 25m)

0 20 40 60 80 100m
SCALE 1:1000

P05	ADDED ILLUMINATED BOLLARDS	EU	MH	2026.07.15
P04	EXTENT OF STREET LIGHTING UPDATED	TMA	AG	2026.06.26
P03	UPDATES FOLLOWING CCC COMMENTS	TMA	AG	2026.06.24
P02	UPDATE FOLLOWING CCC COMMENTS	AG	MH	2026.06.15
Issued/Revision		By	Appd	YYYY.MM.DD
		TMA	MH	2026.03.23
		Dwn.	Dsgn.	Chkd. YYYY.MM.DD

Issue Status

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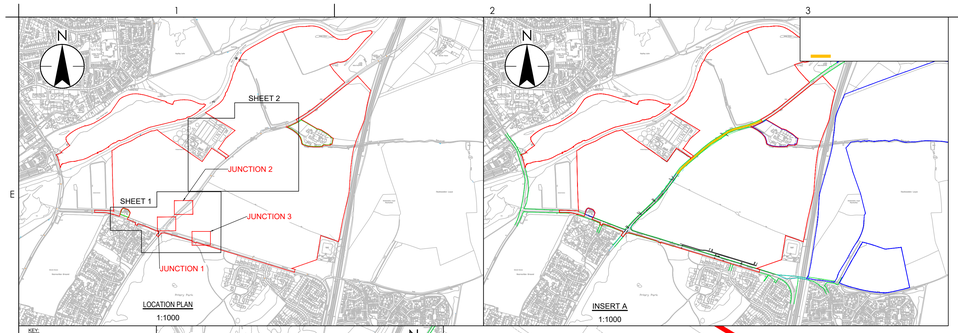
PRIORY PARK - ST. NEOTS

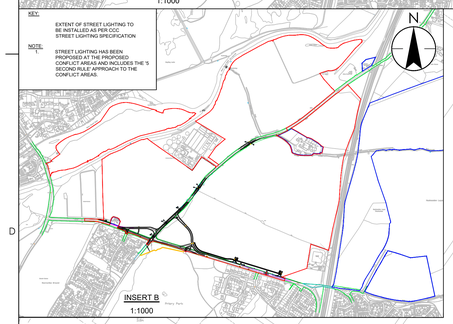
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HUNTINGDON ROAD PROPOSED JUNCTION SHEET 1 OF 2

Project No.	Scale
332611695	1:1000 @ A0
Revision	Drawing No.
P05	332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0109

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- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY
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- PROPOSED RED BLISTER TACTILES AT CONTROLLED TOUCAN CROSSING
- PROPOSED BUFF BLISTER TACTILE PAVING AT UNCONTROLLED CROSSINGS
- C B U TREE CLASSIFICATIONS (SEE NOTE 4)
- 30mph PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 1.5m, Y = 43m)
- 40mph PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 1.5m, Y = 59m) (SEE NOTE 6)
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- PROPOSED LANDSCAPED AREA
- PROPOSED TRAFFIC ISLAND
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- 40mph JUNCTION VISIBILITY SPLAY AS PER SURVEY (SEE NOTE 6) X = 2.4m
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- 40mph SHARED USE VISIBILITY (X = 2.4m, Y = 120m)
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- CYCLE VISIBILITY (X = 2.5m, Y = 25m)

0 20 40 60 80 100m
SCALE 1:1000

P05	ADDED ILLUMINATED BOLLARDS	EU	MH	2024.07.15
P04	STREET LIGHTING EXTENT UPDATE	TMA	AG	2024.06.26
P03	UPDATES FOLLOWING CCC COMMENTS	TMA	AG	2024.06.24
P02	UPDATE FOLLOWING CCC COMMENTS	AG	MH	2024.06.13
Issued/Revision		By	Appd	YYYY.MM.DD
		TMA	MH	2024.03.23
		Dwn.	Dsgn.	Chkd. YYYY.MM.DD

Issue Status

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PRIORY PARK - ST. NEOTS

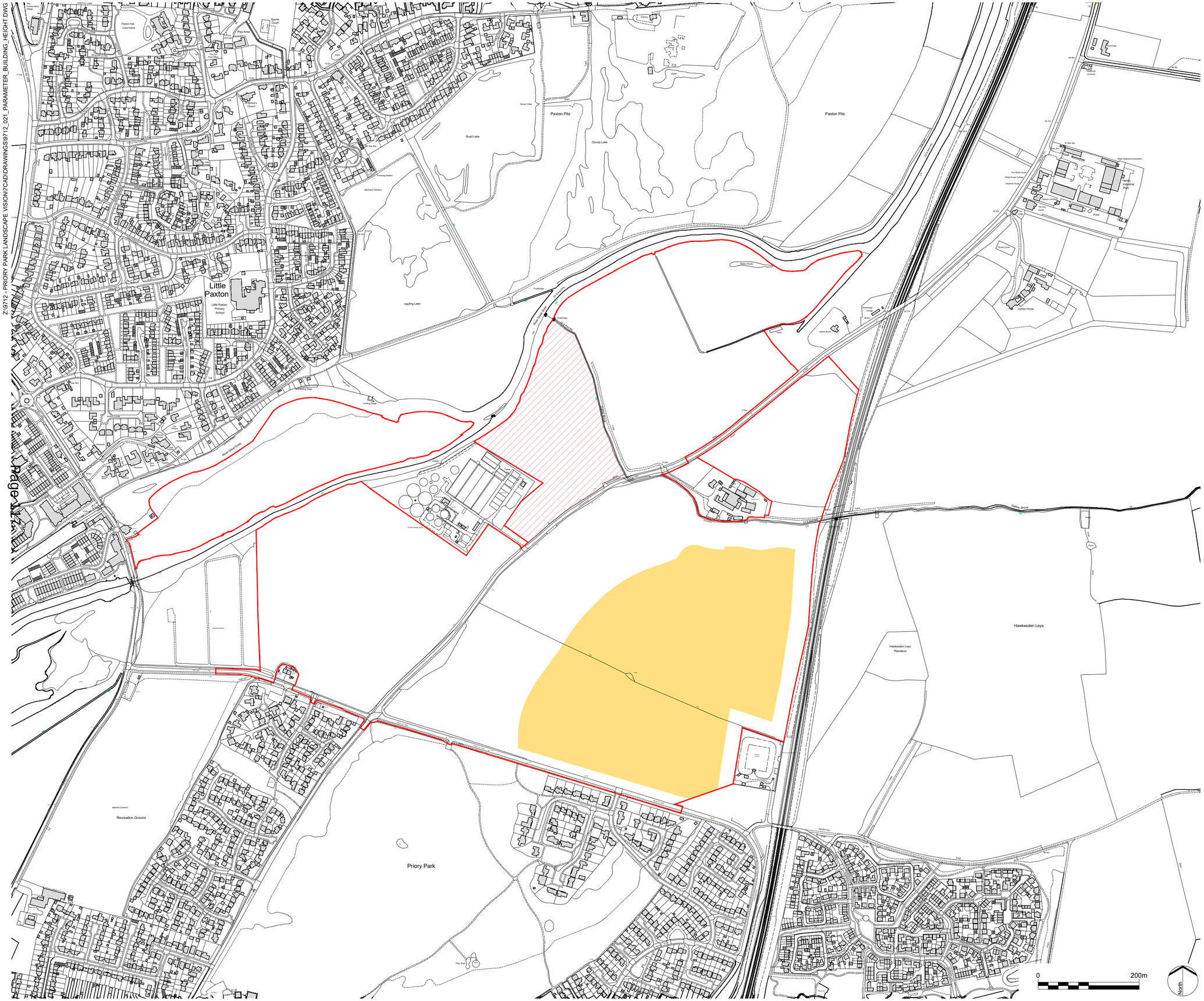
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HUNTINGDON ROAD PROPOSED JUNCTION - SHEET 2 OF 2

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Revision	**Drawing No.**
P05	**332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0115**

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Z:\9712 - PRIORY PARK LANDSCAPE VISION\7CAD\DRAWINGS\9712_021_PARAMETER_BUILDING_HEIGHT.DWG



LEGEND

- Application boundary (87.30 ha)
- Up to 2.5 storey buildings
- Safeguarded land

REV. DESCRIPTION APP. DATE

LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE

Land at Priory Hill, St. Neots

DRAWING TITLE

Parameter Plan - Building Heights

ISSUED BY	Cambridge	T: 01223 949 054	
DATE	June 2026	DRAWN	JYu
SCALE@A2	1:5,000	CHECKED	SP
STATUS	Planning	APPROVED	SP

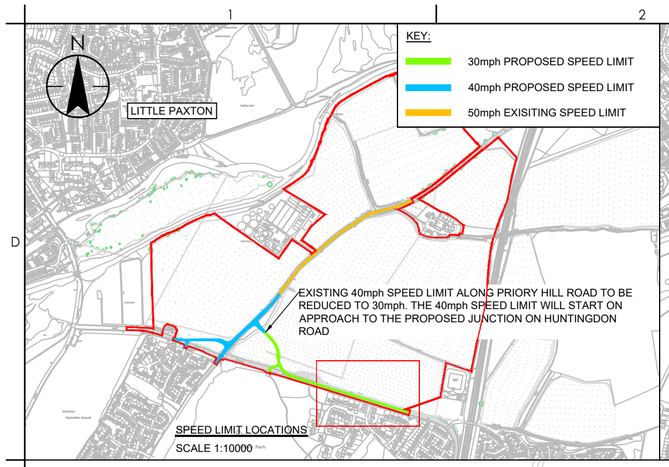
DWG. NO 9712_021_REV 6

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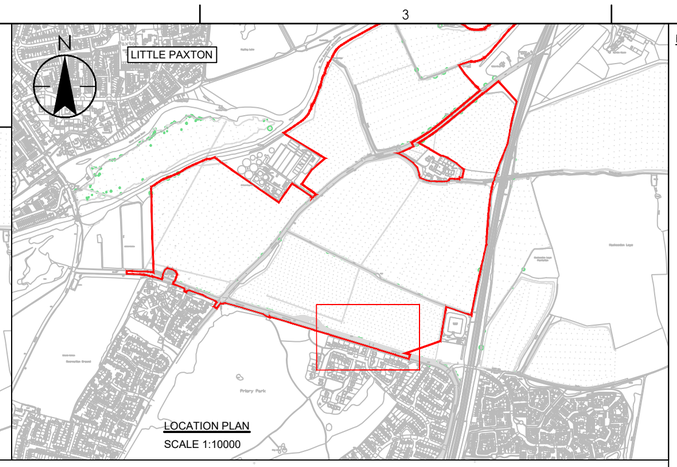
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Sources Ordnance Survey

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SPEED LIMIT LOCATIONS
SCALE 1:10000



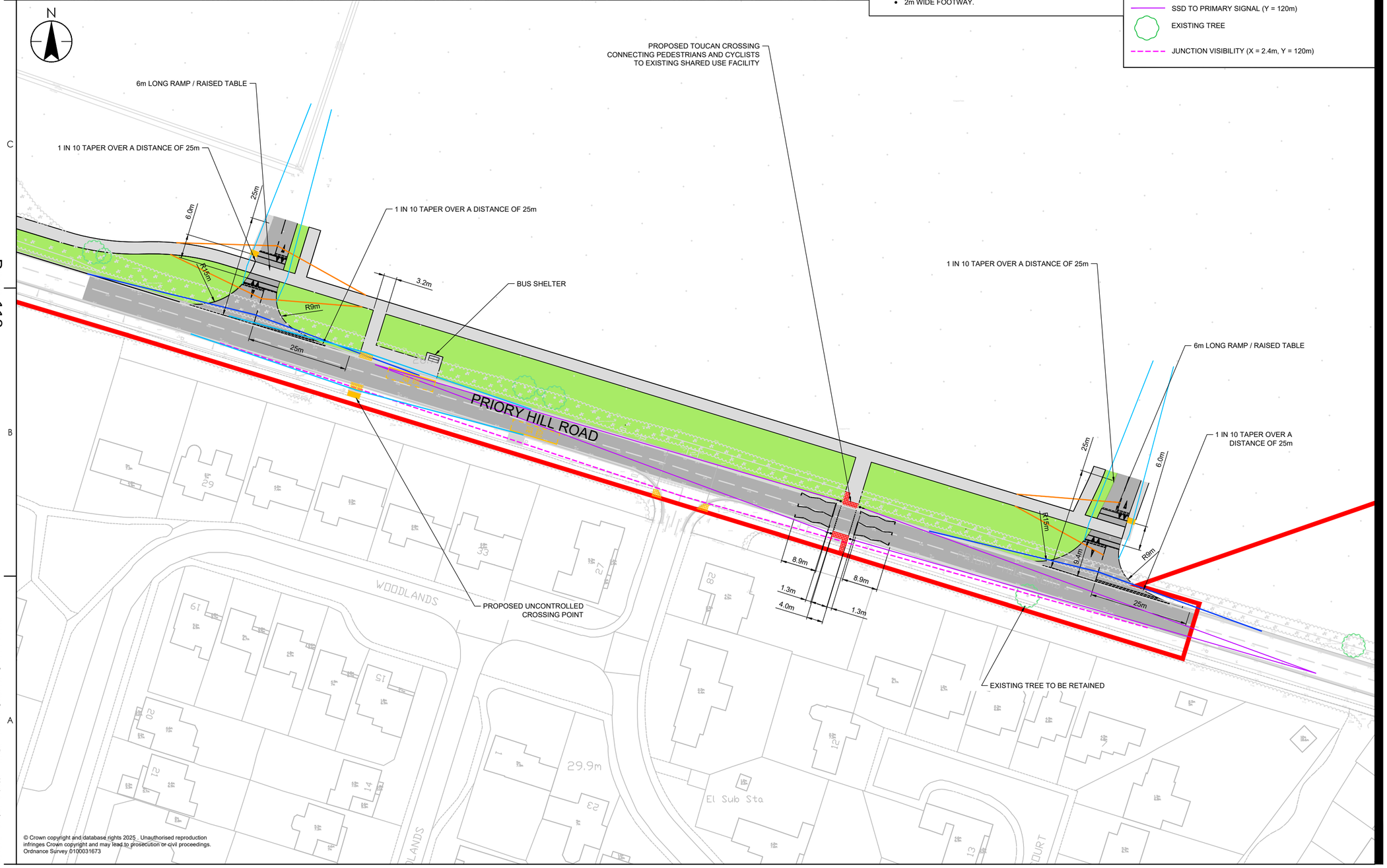
LOCATION PLAN
SCALE 1:10000

NOTES:-

1. SITE ACCESS JUNCTION GEOMETRY HAS BEEN INFORMED BY LT/N 1.20.
2. TOUCAN CROSSING GEOMETRY HAS BEEN INFORMED BY TRAFFIC SIGNS MANUAL 6.
3. JUNCTION GEOMETRY MAY CHANGE DEPENDENT ON POTENTIAL BUS ROUTE ALONG THE INTERNAL SPINE ROAD.
4. SITE ACCESS JUNCTIONS HAVE BEEN POSITIONED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN PROVIDED BY LDA ON 31/03/2025.
5. HIGHWAY BOUNDARY HAS BEEN INFERRED VIA INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY GREENHATCH ON 31/03/2025.
6. ALIGNMENT OF SITE ACCESS JUNCTIONS AND INTERNAL LAYOUT SUBJECT TO CHANGE FOLLOWING INTERNAL DISCUSSION.
7. ALL PROPOSALS TO BE APPROPRIATELY ILLUMINATED AS PER CCC'S STREET LIGHTING DEVELOPMENT SPECIFICATION.
8. SITE ACCESS HIGHWAY CORRIDOR IS AS FOLLOWS:-
   - 6.2m WIDE CARRIAGEWAY;
   - 3m WIDE VERGE;
   - 3m WIDE FOOTWAY / CYCLE TRACK;
   - 2m WIDE FOOTWAY.

KEY:-

- SITE BOUNDARY
- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED CORDUROY TACTILES INDICATING CHANGE OF USE FROM SHARED TO PEDESTRIAN USE
- PROPOSED RED BLISTER TACTILES AT CONTROLLED TOUCAN CROSSING
- PROPOSED BUFF BLISTER TACTILE PAVING AT UNCONTROLLED CROSSINGS
- PROPOSED SIGNAL HEADS AT TOUCAN CROSSING
- 30mph PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 1.5m, Y = 43m)
- PROPOSED BITUMINOUS CARRIAGEWAY / RAISED TABLE
- PROPOSED ASPHALT SHARED USE FOOTWAY / CYCLE TRACK
- PROPOSED LANDSCAPED AREA
- 30mph JUNCTION VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 2.4m, Y = 43m)
- CYCLE VISIBILITY SPLAY (X = 2.4m, Y = 25m)
- SSD TO PRIMARY SIGNAL (Y = 120m)
- EXISTING TREE
- JUNCTION VISIBILITY (X = 2.4m, Y = 120m)



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Issued/Revision	By	Appd	
P04 AMMENDMENTS AS PER RSA AGREED ACTIONS	TMA	MH	2026.04.21
P03 BUS STOP ON PRIORY ROAD REPOSTION	AG	MH	2026.02.16
P02 AMENDMENTS AS PER CCC COMMENTS	TMA	MH	2026.02.04
P01 FIRST ISSUE	TMA	MH	2026.01.13
	Dwn.	Dsgn.	Chkd.
	TMA	TMA	MH
			2026.01.13
			YYYY.MM.DD

Issue Status

PLANNING

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Client/Project Logo

BLOOR HOMES

Client/Project
BLOOR HOMES

LAND AT PRIORY PARK, ST NEOTS

Title
PRIORY PARK

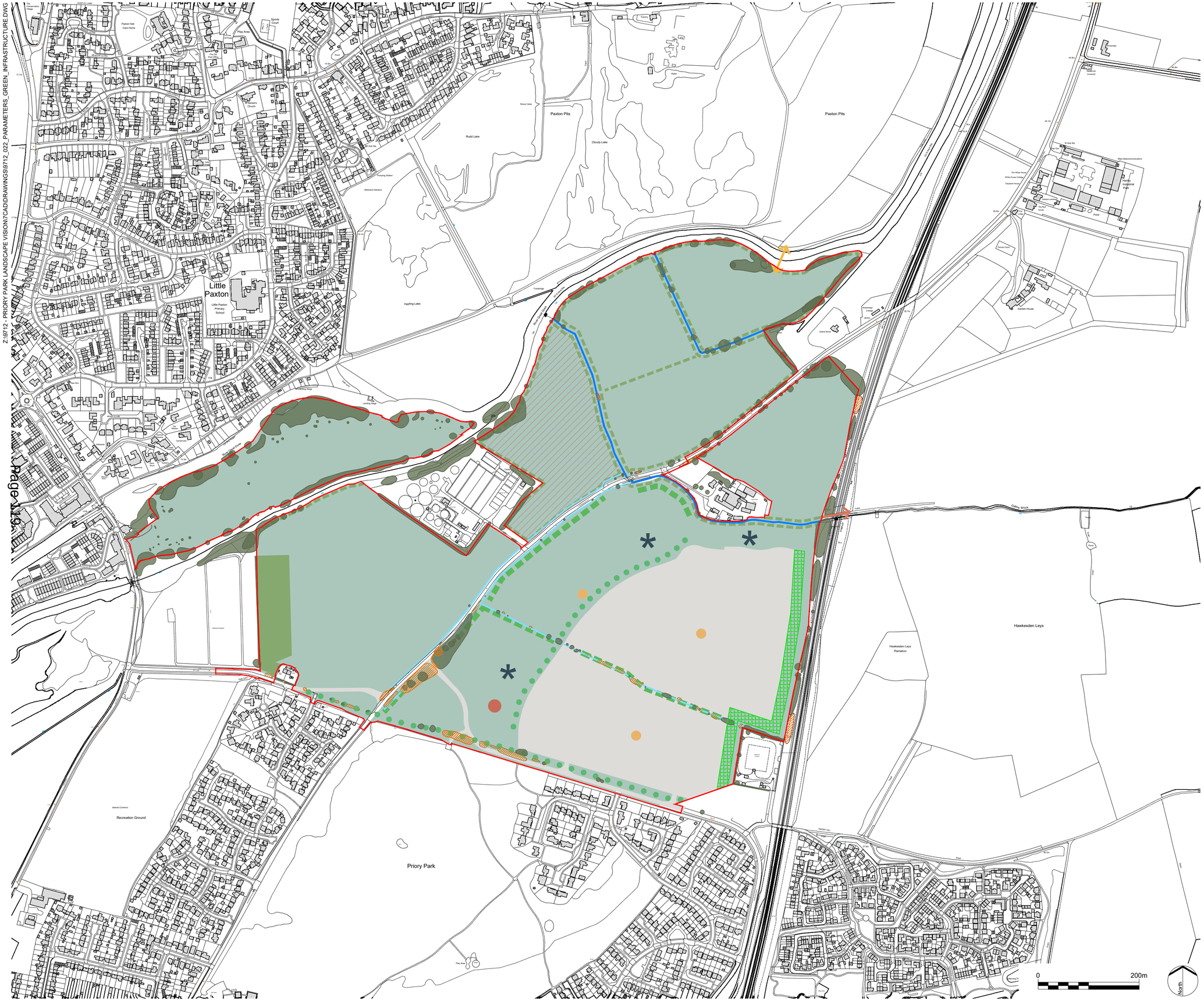
SITE ACCESS JUNCTIONS / TOUCAN CROSSING

Project No.	Scale
332611695	1:500 @ A2

Revision	Drawing No.
P04	**332611695-STN-HGN-XX-DR-CH-0107**

Plotted: 21.04.2026 10:01:24 | 10:07 PM By: Amanda Tang
C:\ROAD\4_SHEET - ISSUE - FT\332611695\Priory park\Planning\3_technical\01.cad\drawings\332611695-stn-hgn-xx-dr-ch-0107 - site access

Z:\9712 - PRIORY PARK LANDSCAPE VISION\7CAD\DRAWINGS\9712_022_PARAMETERS_GREEN_INFRASTRUCTURE.DWG



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LEGEND

- Application boundary (87.30 ha)
- Development area
- Green Infrastructure - includes SuDS, play space, new and existing trees and hedgerows, and biodiversity improvements
- Allotments extension
- Retained vegetation
- Areas for vegetation removal
- Biodiversity improvements to river corridor and field boundaries
- Structural planting including trees
- 20m structural planting
- New tree planting
- Existing watercourse - river
- Existing watercourse - field drain
- Indicative location of attenuation basin
- Indicative location of Neighborhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)
- Indicative location of Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)
- Potential new pedestrian footbridge over River Great Ouse. Indicative location to within +/- 50m
- Safeguarded land

REV. DESCRIPTION APP. DATE

LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
Land at Priory Hill, St. Neots

DRAWING TITLE
Parameter Plan - Green Infrastructure

ISSUED BY	Cambridge	T: 01223 949 054	
DATE	Sep 2026	DRAWN	JYu
SCALE@A2	1:5,000	CHECKED	SP
STATUS	Draft	APPROVED	SP

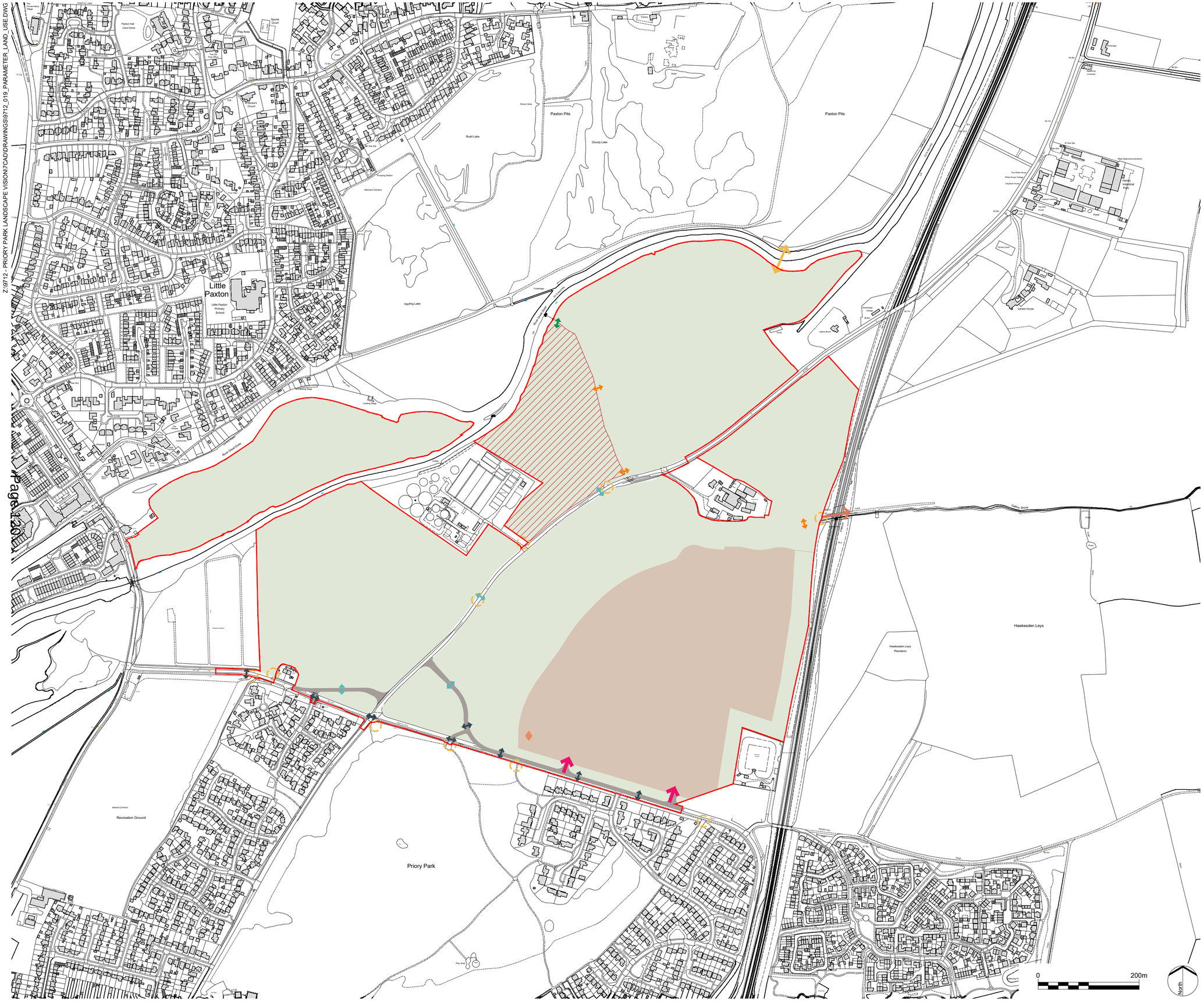
DWG. NO 9712_022_REV 8

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Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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Sources Ordnance Survey

Z:\9712 - PRIORY PARK LANDSCAPE VISION\7CAD\DRAWINGS\9712_019_PARAMETER_LAND_USE.DWG



LEGEND

- Application boundary (87.30 ha)*
- Use Class C3 residential development incorporating community facility, mobility hub, green spaces, tree planting, play, and existing vegetation where possible (18.33ha)
- Indicative location of proposed community facility and mobility hub
- Green Infrastructure - includes SuDS, play space, new and existing trees and hedgerows, biodiversity improvements and new walking routes (64.3ha)
- Road infrastructure (0.34ha)
- Main vehicular site access points
- Pedestrian access point
- Pedestrian / cycle crossing
- Pedestrian crossing
- New pedestrian crossing over Gallow Brook
- Existing pedestrian crossing over Gallow Brook
- Potential new pedestrian footbridge over River Great Ouse. Indicative location to within +/- 50m
- Permissive path under railway line to connect with Hawkseden Leys
- Safeguarded land

* 2.38ha of which is highways

REV. DESCRIPTION APP. DATE

LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
Land at Priory Hill, St. Neots

DRAWING TITLE
Parameter Plan - Land Use

ISSUED BY	Cambridge	T: 01223 949 054	
DATE	November 2026	DRAWN	JYu
SCALE@A2	1:5,000	CHECKED	SP
STATUS	Planning	APPROVED	SP

DWG. NO 9712_019_REV 9

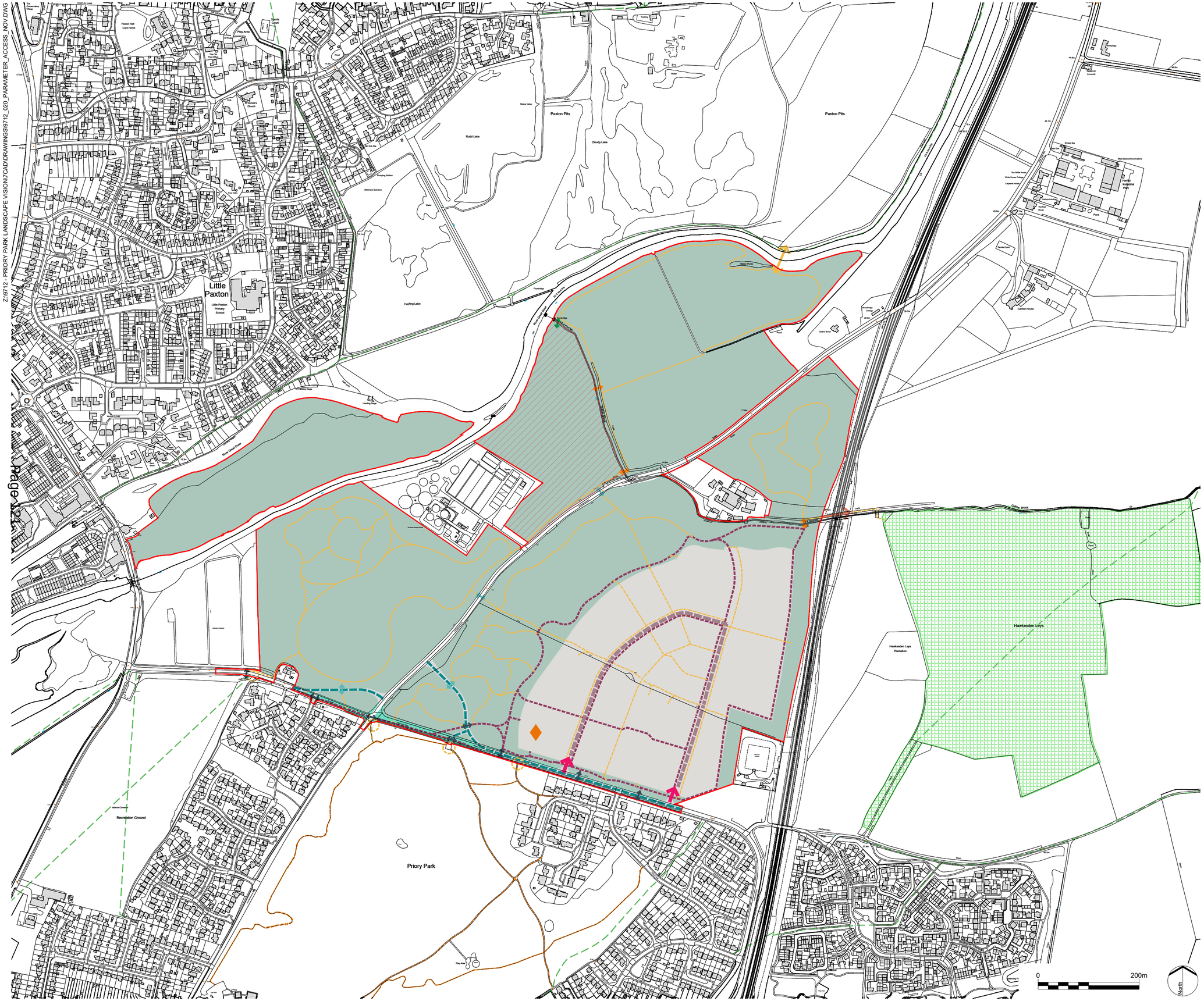
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Z:\9712 - PRIORY PARK LANDSCAPE VISION\7CAD\DRAWINGS\9712_020_PARAMETER_ACCESS_NOV.DWG



LEGEND

- Application boundary (87.30 ha)
- Development area
- Green Infrastructure - includes SuDS, play space, new and existing trees and hedgerows, and biodiversity improvements
- Realignment of Mill Land and Priory Hill Road
- Enhanced streetscape and pedestrian crossings on Mill Lane and Priory Hill Road
- Main vehicular site access points
- Public Right of Way
- Indicative alignment of shared pedestrian and cycle routes
- Indicative alignment of pedestrian routes
- Indicative alignment of primary street
- Pedestrian access point
- Pedestrian and cycle crossing point
- Pedestrian crossing point
- New crossing point over Gallow Brook
- Existing crossing point over Gallow Brook
- Permissive path under railway line to connect with Hawkseden Leys
- Potential for future pedestrian footbridge over River Great Ouse. Indicative location to within +/- 50m
- Indicative location of proposed community facility and mobility hub
- Common land
- Safeguarded land

REV. DESCRIPTION APP. DATE

LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
Land at Priory Hill, St. Neots

DRAWING TITLE
Parameter Plan - Access

ISSUED BY	Cambridge	T: 01223 949 054	
DATE	November 2026	DRAWN	JYu
SCALE@A2	1:5,000	CHECKED	SaP
STATUS	Planning	APPROVED	SaP

DWG. NO 9712_020_REV 11

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Z:\9712 - PRIORY PARK\LANDSCAPE VISION\7CAD\DRAWINGS\9712_024_ILLUSTRATIVE_MASTERPLAN_LANDSCAPE_RECOVER.DWG



LEGEND

- Application Boundary (87.39ha)
- Developable blocks
- Amenity grass
- Meadow grass
- Arable land with mown paths
- Understorey scrub planting
- Structural planting and woodland
- Conservation island
- Common land
- Proposed areas for Play
- Allotments
- Attenuation basins
- Nature ponds
- Shared cycle and footpath
- Footpath
- Permissive footpath under railway line to connect to Hawkesen Leys
- Potential future bridge connection over to Ouse Valley Long Distance Walking route and Paxton Pits
- New crossing point over Mill Lane to connect commons
- Proposed community hub

0 100m

REV.	DESCRIPTION	AFF. DATE
4	Issued for Planning	SaP 29.08.25

LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
Land at Priory Hill, St. Neots

DRAWING TITLE
Landscape Masterplan

ISSUED BY	Cambridge	T: 01223 949 054	
DATE	August 2025	DRAWN	KFi
SCALE@A0	1:2,000	CHECKED	SaP
STATUS	Planning	APPROVED	CMi

DWG. NO **9712_024**

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Z:\9712 - PRIORY PARK LANDSCAPE VISION\CAD\DRAWINGS\9712_023_ILLUSTRATIVE_MASTERPLAN_RECOVER.DWG



LEGEND

- Application Boundary (87.39ha)
- Residential development
- Amenity grass
- Meadow grass
- Arable land with mown paths
- Understorey scrub planting
- Structural planting and woodland
- Conservation island
- Common land
- Proposed areas for Play
- Allotments
- Attenuation basins
- Nature ponds
- Shared cycle and footpath
- Footpath
- Permissive footpath under railway line to connect to Hawkesen Leys
- Potential future bridge connection over to Ouse Valley Long Distance Walking route and Paxton Pits
- New crossing point over Mill Lane to connect commons
- Proposed community hub

REV.	DESCRIPTION	APP.	DATE
4	Issued for Planning	SaP	29.08.25

LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
Land at Priory Hill, St. Neots

DRAWING TITLE
Illustrative Masterplan

ISSUED BY	Cambridge	T: 01223 949 054	
DATE	August 2025	DRAWN	KFi
SCALE@A0	1:2,000	CHECKED	SaP
STATUS	Planning	APPROVED	CMi

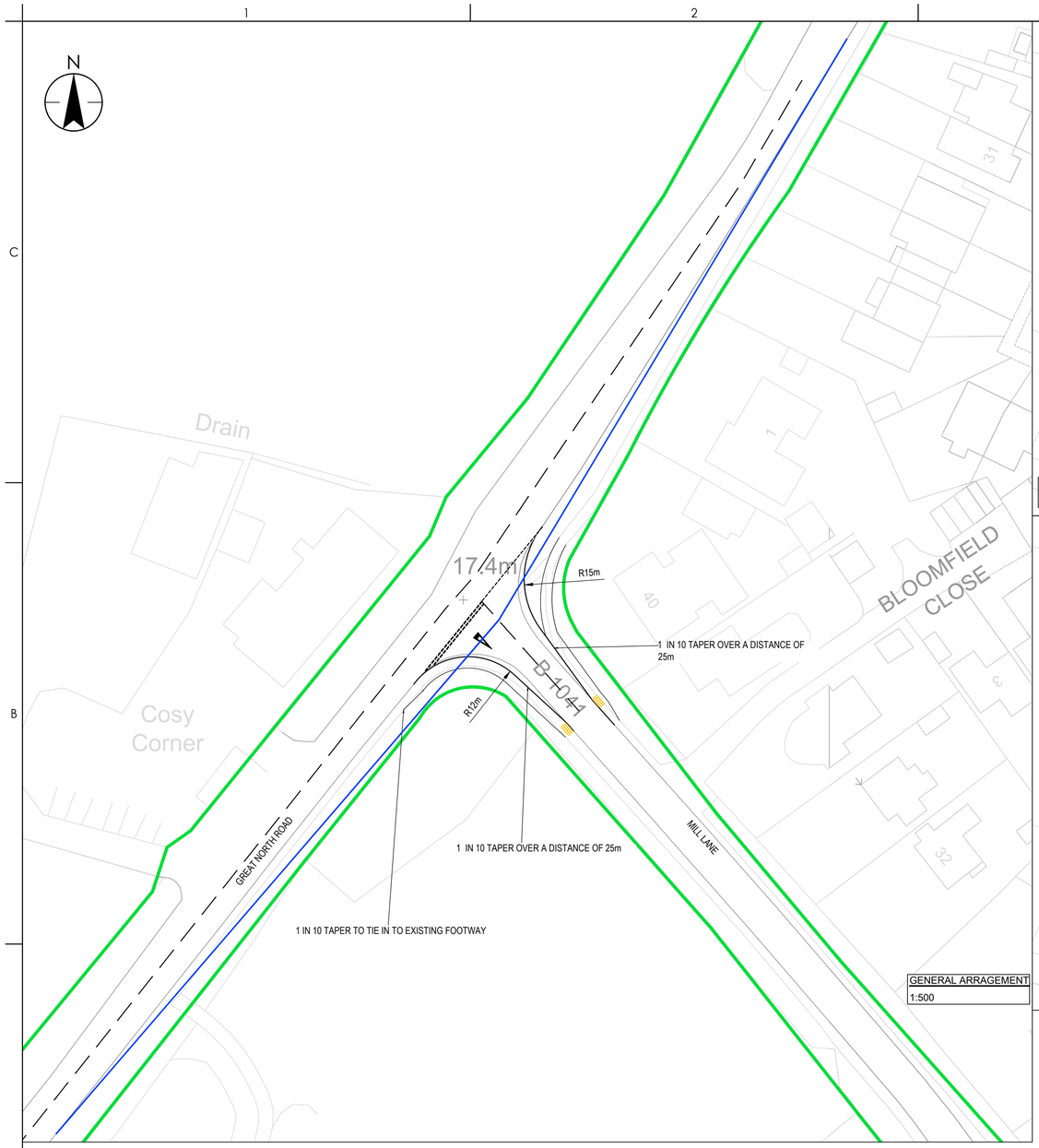
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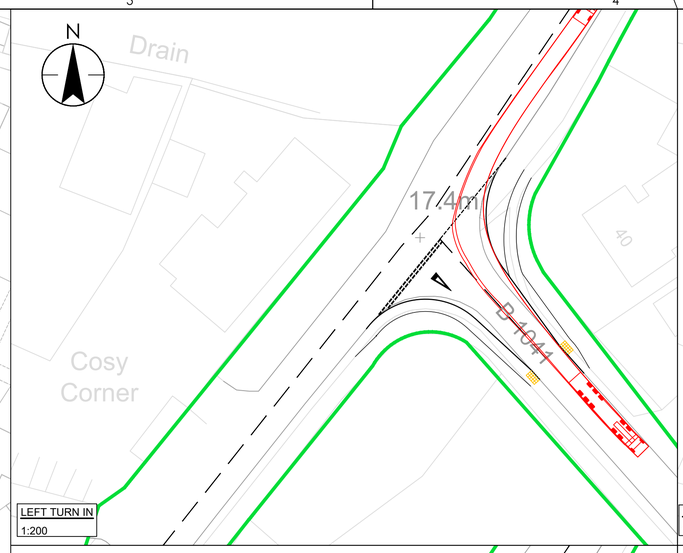
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Sources Ordnance Survey

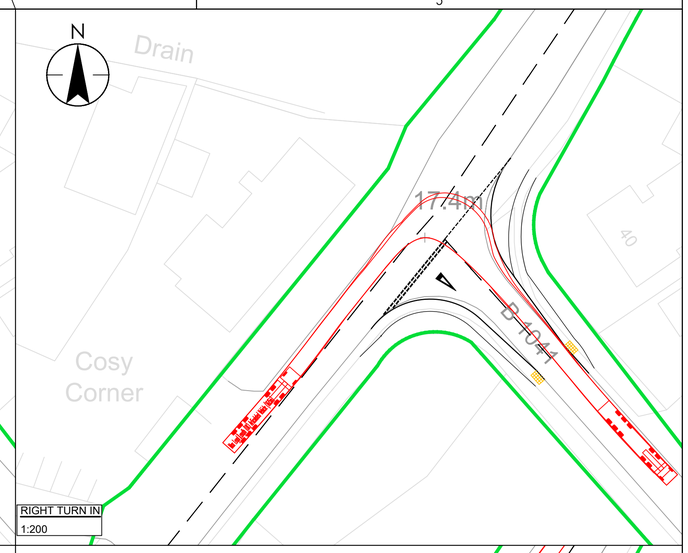
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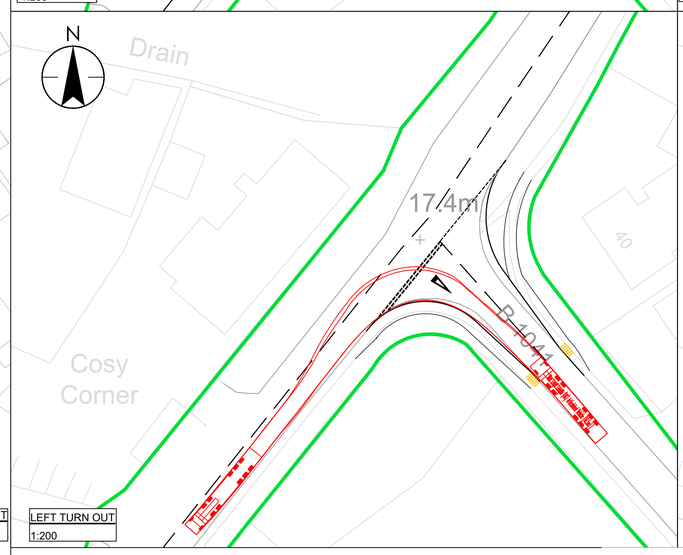
GENERAL ARRAGEMENT
1:500



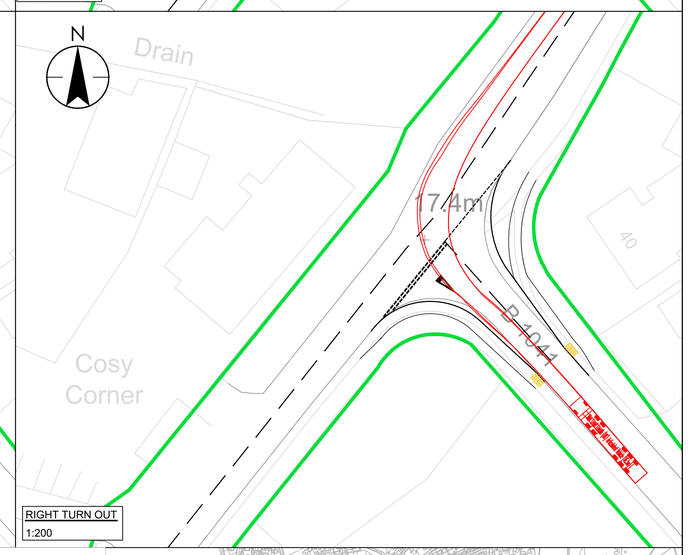
LEFT TURN IN
1:200



RIGHT TURN IN
1:200



LEFT TURN OUT
1:200



RIGHT TURN OUT
1:200

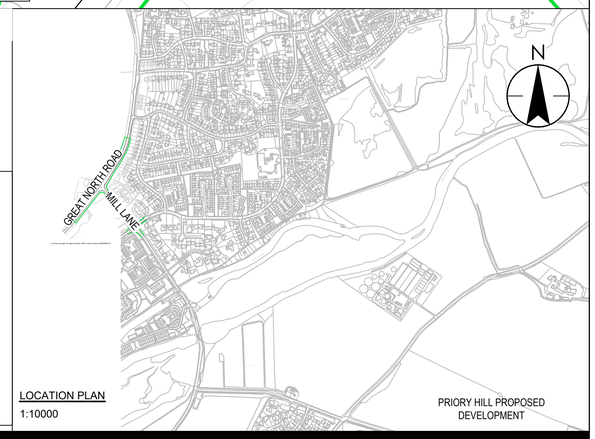
NOTES:-

1. ASSUMED DESIGN SPEED:-
   - GREAT NORTH ROAD - 70kph;
   - MILL LANE - 60kph;
2. 16.5T HGV VEHICLE TRACKING UNDERTAKEN AT 5mph.
3. HIGHWAY BOUNDARY HAS BEEN INFERRED VIA INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ON 05/02/2026 AND TOPOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY GREENHATCH ON 31/03/2025.

KEY:-

HIGHWAY BOUNDARY

40mph JUNCTION VISIBILITY (X = 4.5m , Y = 120m)



LOCATION PLAN
1:10000

Notes:

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Client/Project:

BLOOR HOMES

PRIORY PARK, ST NEOTS

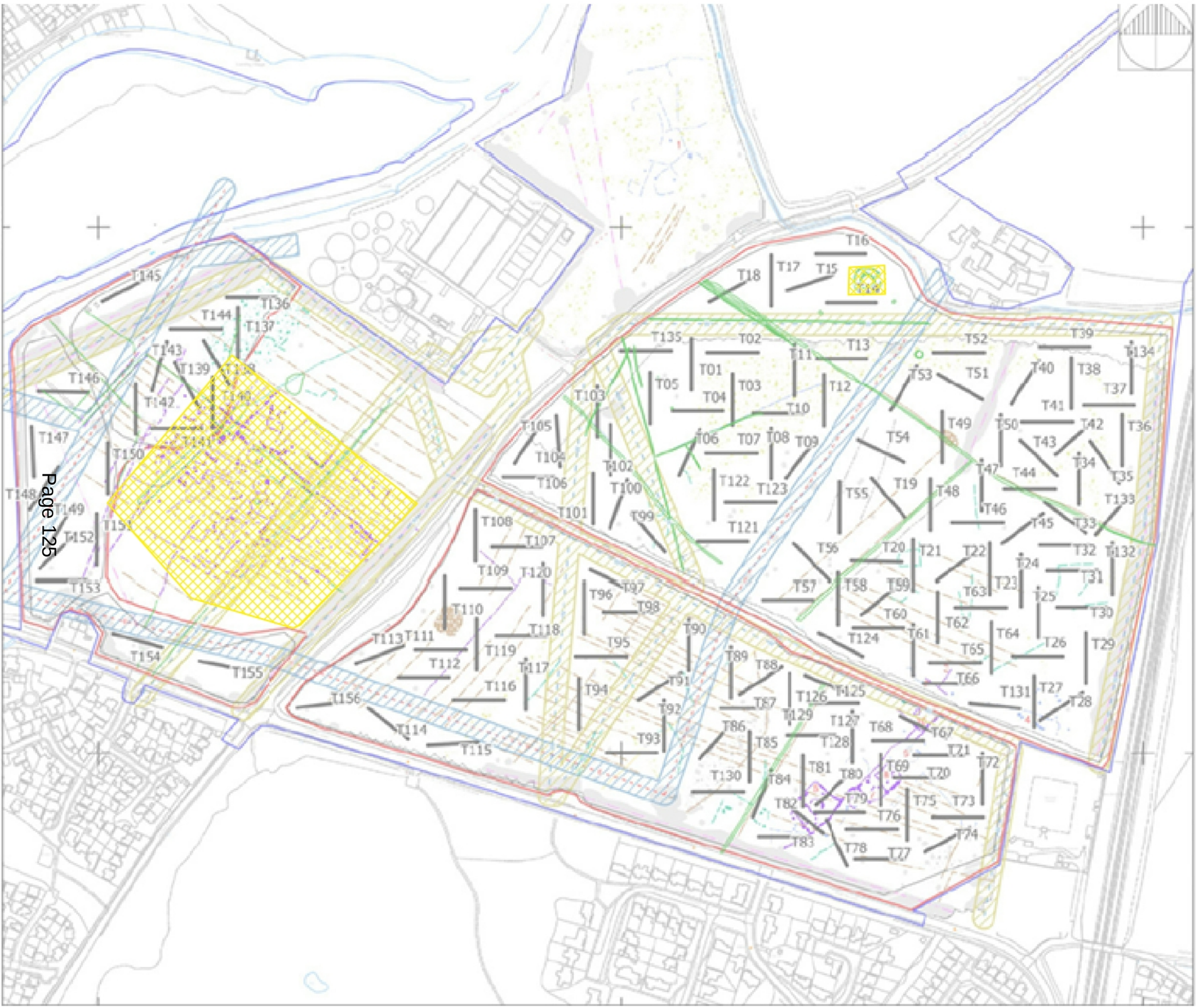
P01 UPDATE FOLLOWING CCC COMMENTS		AG	MH	2026.06.15
Issued/Revision		By	Appd	YYYY.MM.DD
	TMA	AG	MH	2026.03.23
	Dwn	Dsgn.	Chkd.	YYYY.MM.DD

Title

LAND AT PRIORY PARK, ST NEOTS OFFSITE MITIGATION
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT - MILL LANE

Project No.	Scale
332611695	1:500
Revision	Drawing No.
P01	**332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-C-0112**

Plotted: 15.06.2026, 09:06:15 3:30:27 PM By: Coffin, Alex
ORIGINAL SHEET - SCALE 1 | x:\332611695 priory park lf neots\3_technical\cad\drawings\332611695_ph_hgn_sw_dr_c_0112 offsite mitigation mill lane



Page 125

Key

Site

Archaeological No Dig Zones

FIGURE 01

HERITAGE

Bloor Homes

Priory Park, St Neots

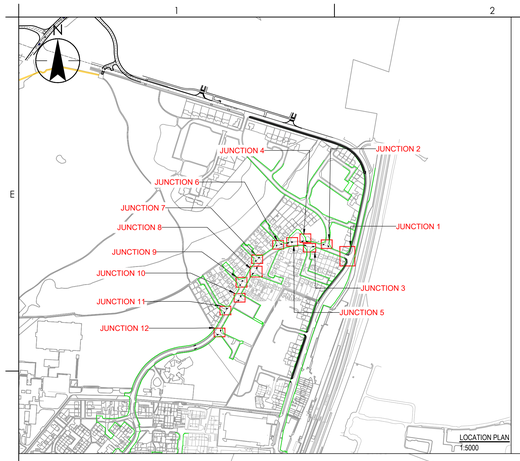
Figure 01. Archaeological No Dig Zone

Scale : 1:3350@A3

Drawn By:	Checked By:	Date:
ET	ET	22-10-2026

0 10 20 30 40 50 m

Marrons



LOCATION PLAN
1:5000

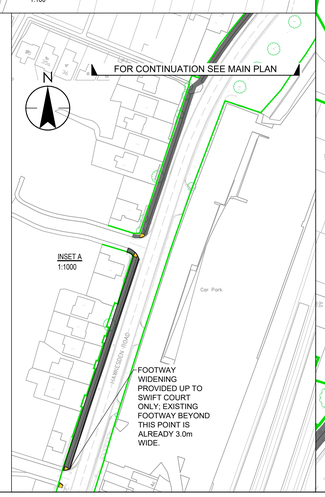




JUNCTION 1
1:100



MAIN PLAN
1:500



INSET A
1:1000

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NOTES:-

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2. PROPOSED JUNCTION DESIGN UNDERTAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:-
   - DESIGN MANUAL FOR ROAD AND BRIDGES (DMRB) CD109;
   - CAMBRIDGESHIRE HIGHWAYS DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT JANUARY 2023;
3. FOR JUNCTION 2 TO JUNCTION 12 REFER TO SHEET 2.

KEY:-

- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY
- 30mph PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY (x = 1.5m, y = 43m)
- 30mph JUNCTION VISIBILITY SPLAY (x = 2.4m, y = 43m)
- PROPOSED 3m WIDE ASPHALT SHARED USE FOOTWAY / CYCLE TRACK
- PROPOSED CORDUROY TACTILES INDICATING CHANGE OF USE FROM SHARED TO PEDESTRIAN USE
- PROPOSED RED BLISTER TACTILES AT CONTROLLED CROSSING CROSSING
- PROPOSED BUFF BLISTER TACTILE PAVING AT UNCONTROLLED CROSSINGS

Issued/Revision	By	Appd	
P03 REVISION UPDATE FOR CLARITY NO CHANGE FROM RSV P01 (RSA STAGE 1 AUDIT)	TMA	AG	2024.09.26
P02 ISSUED IN ERROR	TMA	AG	2024.09.26
P01 UPDATES TO CCC COMMENTS	TMA	MH	2024.09.16
	Dwn.	Dsgn.	Chkd.
	TMA	TMA	MH	2024.08.07
				YYYY.MM.DD

Issue Status

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BLOOR HOMES

Client/Project

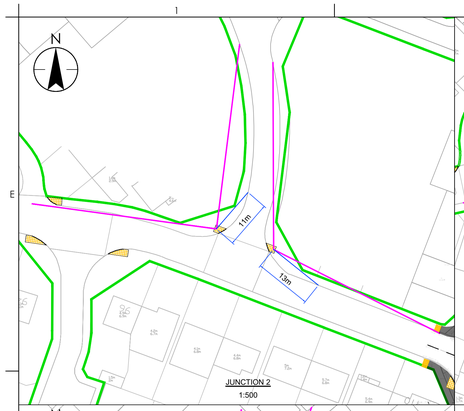
LAND AT PRIORY HILL

Title

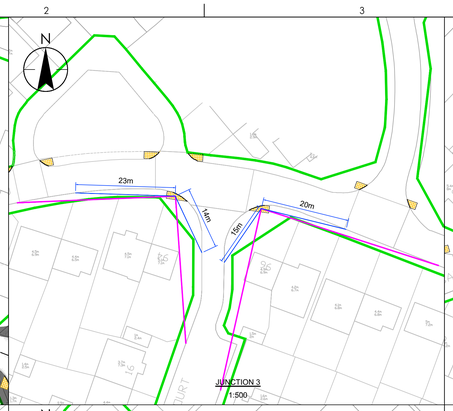
LONGSANDS / HAWKSDEN ROAD
OFFSITE MITIGATON
SHEET 1 OF 2

Project No.	Scale
332611695	AS SHOWN
Revision	**Drawing No.**
P03	**332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0116**

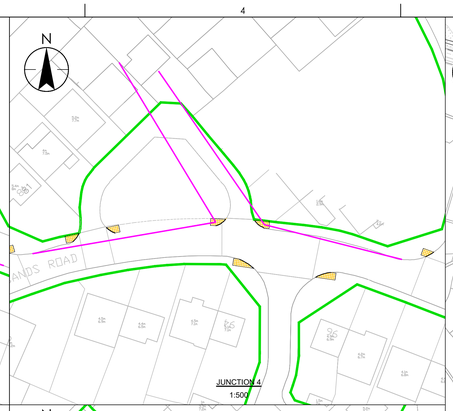
Plotted: 26.09.2025 09:39 | 5137.A1.H.by: Cuffe, Alex
Drawing: 332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0116.dwg | Z:\Stantec\Projects\332611695-Longsands-Hawksden-Priory-Hill\Drawings\332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0116.dwg | Layout: A1



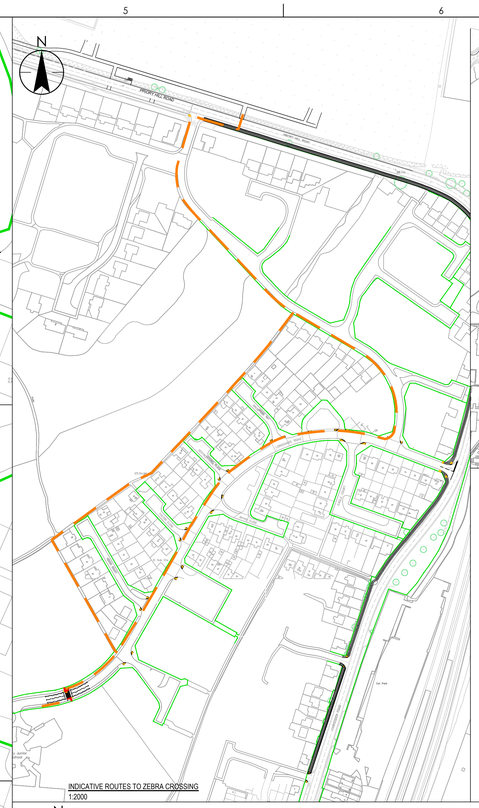
JUNCTION 2
1:500



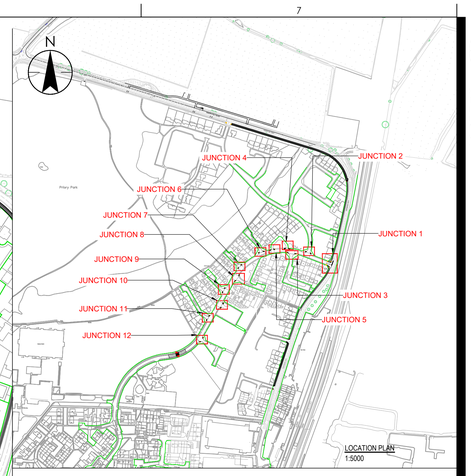
JUNCTION 3
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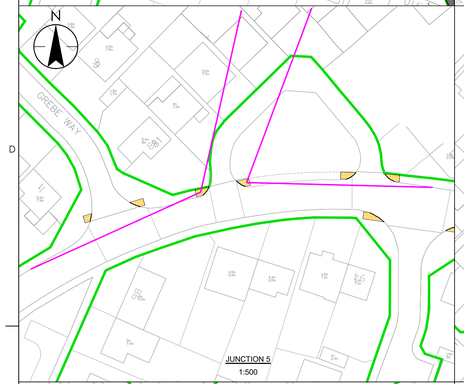
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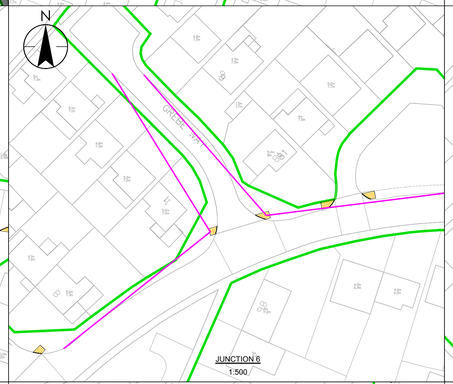
INDICATIVE ROUTES TO ZEBRA CROSSING
1:2000



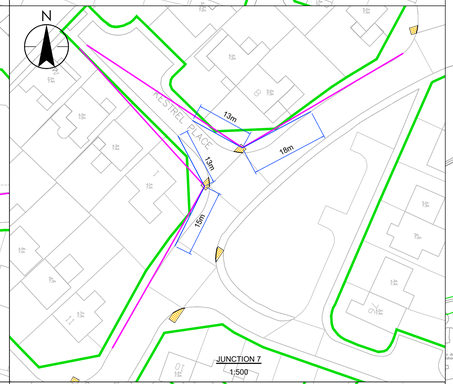
LOCATION PLAN
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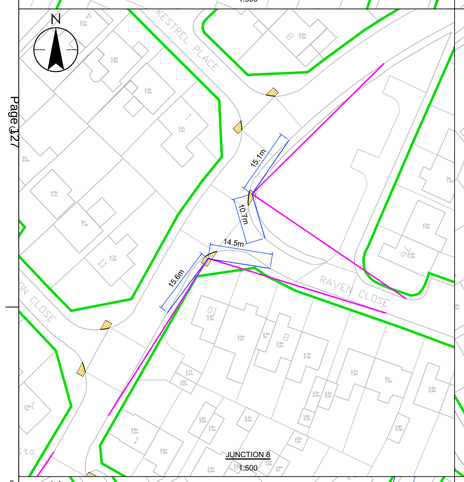
JUNCTION 5
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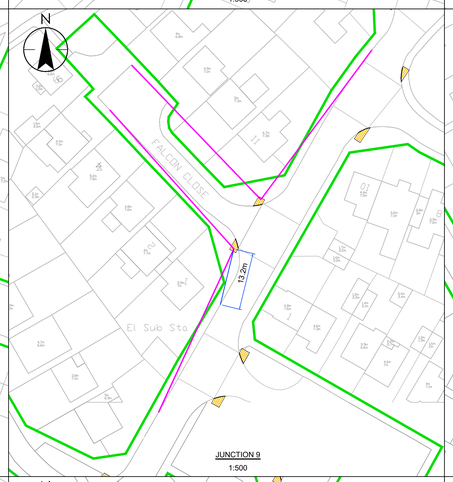
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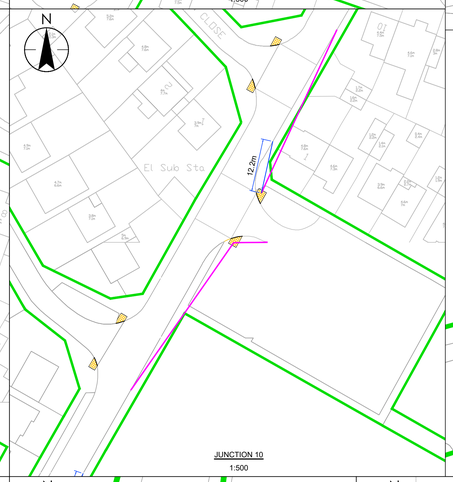
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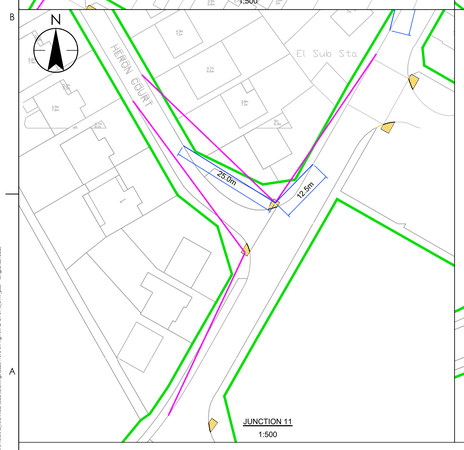
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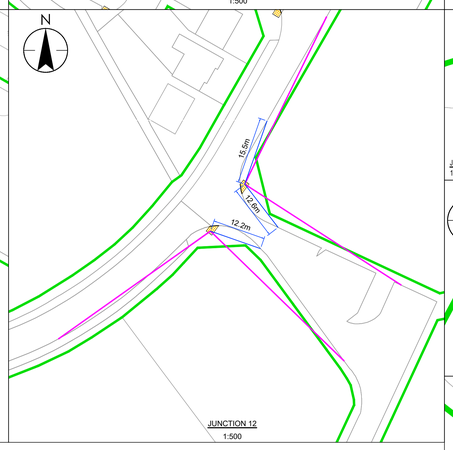
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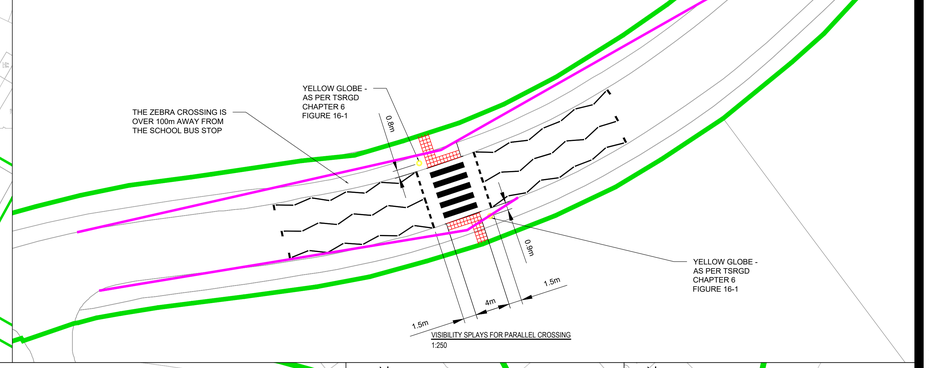
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JUNCTION 11
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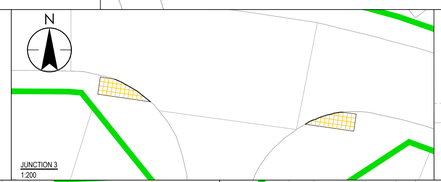
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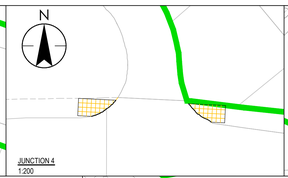
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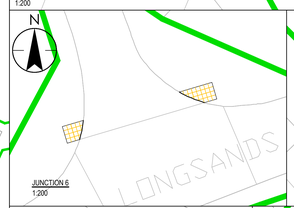
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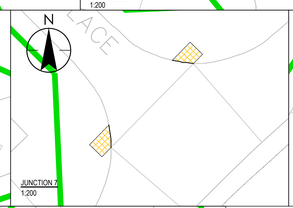
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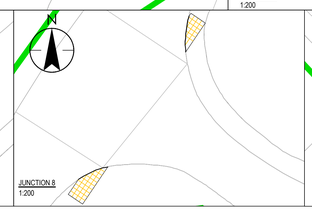
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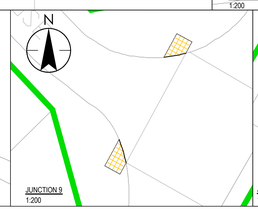
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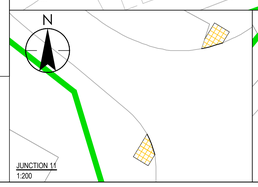
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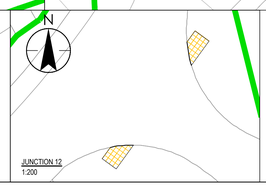
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JUNCTION 11
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JUNCTION 12
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Stantec

Stantec UK Limited
11 Prospect Court, Courteenhall Road, Blisworth
Northampton
NN7 3DG
Tel: +44 1604 878 300
www.stantec.com/uk

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Notes

UTILITIES NOTE: The position of any existing public or private sewers, utility services, plant or apparatus shown on this drawing is believed to be correct, but no warranty to this is expressed or implied. Other such plant or apparatus may also be present but not shown. The Contractor is therefore advised to undertake their own investigation where the presence of any existing sewers, services, plant or apparatus may affect their operations.

NOTES:-

1. HIGHWAY BOUNDARY HAS BEEN INFERRED VIA INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION PROVIDED BY GREENHATCH ON 31/03/2025. FOR COSTING PURPOSES ONLY.

2. PROPOSED JUNCTION DESIGN UNDERTAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:-
   - DESIGN MANUAL FOR ROAD AND BRIDGES (DMRB) CD109;
   - CAMBRIDGESHIRE HIGHWAYS DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT JANUARY 2023;
   - CYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN LTN / 20.

3. FOR JUNCTION 1 AND HAWKSDEN ROAD LAYOUT REFER TO SHEET 1.

KEY:-

- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY
- 30mph PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY (x = 1.5m, y = 43m)
- ACHIEVABLE VISIBILITY PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY (x = 1.5m) (y = AS SHOWN)
- INDICATIVE ROUTE TO ZEBRA CROSSING
- PROPOSED RED BLISTER TACTILES AT CONTROLLED ZEBRA CROSSING CROSSING
- PROPOSED BUFF BLISTER TACTILE PAVING AT UNCONTROLLED CROSSINGS
- BELISHA BEACON FOR THE ZEBRA CROSSING

P03	REVISION UPDATED FOR CLIENTS' AD CHANGE FROM REV P01 (BSA ENGG'T AUDIT)	TMA	AG	2024.09.28
P02	ISSUED IN ERROR	TMA	AG	2024.09.28
P01	UPDATES TO CCC COMMENTS	TMA	MH	2024.09.16
Issued/Revision		By	Appd	YYYY.MM.DD
		MH		2024.08.07
	TMA	TMA		
	Dwn.	Dsgn.	Chkd.	YYYY.MM.DD

Issue Status

PLANNING

This document is suitable only for the purpose noted above. Use of this document for any other purpose is not permitted.

Client/Project Logo

BLOOR HOMES

Client/Project

LAND AT PRIORY HILL

Title

LONGSANDS / HAWKSDEN ROAD
OFFSITE MITIGATON
SHEET 2 OF 2

Project No.	Scale
332611695	AS SHOWN

Revision	Drawing No.
P03	332611695-STN-HGN-SW-DR-CH-0117

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 16th November 2026

LATE REPRESENTATIONS SUMMARY

25/01694/OUT Outline planning application (phased development) for the erection of up to 600 dwellings including 40% affordable, a community hub site including car parking and mobility hub. Public open space including green and blue infrastructure, incorporating footpaths, cycle ways, biodiversity improvements and habitat creation; associated drainage and landscaping including new and existing trees and hedgerows, utilities and other infrastructure. All matters reserved except for means of vehicular access from Priory Hill Road and associated highways works to Mill Lane/Priory Hill/Huntingdon Road - Land Adjacent St Neots Reservoir, Priory Hill Road, St Neots

1. Additional representations

Additional representations have been received as follows:

a) 2 no. further representations from a neighbour;
b) Letters from Rowley Allotment Association and The Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve in relation to the S106 Heads of Terms.

These representations are available to view in full via Public Access.

The matters raised within these representations are summarised below and an officer response is provided where relevant.

a) <u>2 no. further representations from a neighbour</u>

Two further representations from a neighbour have been received by the LPA (received 04.11.2026 and 11.11.2026). The matters raised in these

representations are summarised under the headings below and an officer response is provided.

Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal

The representations:

- Give significant weight to the Sustainability Appraisal prepared as part of the emerging Local Plan process.
- Argue that the Sustainability Appraisal identified the site as performing poorly against a number of sustainability objectives and concluded that development would not contribute positively to sustainable place-making.
- Contend that insufficient weight has been given to these findings in the officer assessment.

The application site was assessed by the Sustainability Appraisal of Sites, which represents an evidence base document for the emerging Local Plan to 2046 (the application site was assessed as ‘St Neots 1’.

The Sustainability Appraisal is one of many evidence base documents which have informed the emerging Local Plan and has not in isolation informed the emerging spatial strategy and site allocations contained within the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan to 2046.

The application site received a limited number of negative scores within the Sustainability Appraisal. Where potential harm has been identified it relates principally to flood risk (due to the presence of flood zones 2 and 3), lack of capacity at St Neots WRC, loss of BMV agricultural land and landscape impacts.

These are all matters which have been assessed in detail as part of the current application and found to be acceptable. It is important to note that the Sustainability Appraisal was based on limited technical evidence. The suite of technical information submitted in support of this application and the views of consultees did not inform the Sustainability Appraisal assessment.

As an example, whilst the Sustainability Appraisal suggests that the site may be highly visible in longer distance views, the LVIA submitted in support of the application (which was reviewed and endorsed by the Council's Landscape Officer) confirms that this is in fact not the case (longer distance views of the site from publicly accessible vantage points are in fact very limited).

The Sustainability Appraisal can be afforded very limited weight as a material consideration in the determination of this planning application.

Archaeology

The representations:

- highlight the discovery of Iron Age archaeological remains, including evidence of settlement and associated burial activity within the area proposed for residential development.
- argue these remains are of considerable significance and that development would result in the destruction of archaeological assets.
- consider the harm arising to archaeology to have been understated.

Impacts on archaeology have been assessed at paragraphs 6.187 – 6.193 of the officer report.

The trial trenching undertaken on site was overseen by the County Archaeologist. Whilst the Iron Age archaeological remains found in the southeast corner of the site are of interest, the County Archaeologist does not consider them to be of national significance. On this basis, it is recommended that this can be adequately mitigated through full archaeological excavation (secured by condition) as opposed to preservation in situ.

This accords with NDMP HE10(2) of the NPPF which states that "Heritage assets with archaeological interest should be preserved in situ where feasible. Where an asset cannot be preserved or managed on-site, appropriate provision should be made for the investigation, understanding, recording, dissemination and archiving of that asset,

which should be undertaken by suitably-qualified individuals or organisations".

Odour from St Neots WRC

Concern is raised regarding:

- the proximity of the site to the St Neots wastewater treatment works and the robustness of the submitted odour assessment.
- odour impacts upon the usability and quality of proposed open spaces and recreational areas.
- The impact of an expanded WRC in terms of odour upon the proposed development

Odour is assessed at paragraphs 6.242 – 6.247 of the Officer report.

The Odour Modelling Assessment submitted with the application has been reviewed by the Environmental Health Officer who raised no concerns about its robustness.

The impact of odour upon green infrastructure is specifically addressed at paragraph 6.246 of the Officer report.

The odour assessment does not consider the odour impacts associated with any future expansion of St Neots WRC. This is not possible as details of any required expansion of the WRC are currently unknown.

Nevertheless, this is a matter which has been discussed between the applicant and Anglian Water during the detailed discussions which took place over the course of this application.

Anglian Water, Bloor Homes and the Council's Environmental Health Officer agree that, in principle, the WRC can be expanded without adversely impacting the residential amenity of any future residents of the proposed development.

Officers understand that in the first instance Anglian Water would seek to keep all odorous processes within the confines of the existing WRC and any expansion would house non-odorous processes. However, even if this was not feasible, the odour contours associated with a WRC are very tight to the WRC and unacceptable odour levels would not reach any

proposed housing. Anglian Water are comfortable, based on their experience of delivering waste waster facilities, that an extension to the WRC can be accommodated on the safeguarded land identified without causing harm to residential amenity. It is on this basis that they raise no objection to the proposed development in terms of safeguarding their assets.

Little Paxton Bridge

The representations state that:

- Little Paxton Bridge is already operating over capacity, and any additional traffic would worsen an existing problem.
- The CCC Transport Assessment Team has placed too much weight on future congestion being attributable to background and committed development rather than the application itself.
- Severe cumulative impacts would arise and the proposed reliance on signal optimisation is not adequate.
- The absence of planned improvements to the bridge indicates the location is not sustainable.

The representations have been reviewed by the Local Highway Authority Transport Assessment (TA) Team who remain satisfied with the applicant's assessment of forecast impacts upon Little Paxton Bridge.

The applicant's assessment reviews existing queuing patterns on the northern arm of Junction 2 - The B1041/Mill Lane signalised junction south of the bridge, and how the addition of future background and committed traffic growth and development traffic will impact passing traffic at Little Paxton Bridge to the north.

The applicant's assessment uses LinSig modelling software which is a nationally recognised model used to assess junction capacity impacts at signalised junctions. The base model for the B1041/Mill Lane signalised junction assessments is suitably representative of the observed queuing at the junction.

Whilst the TA Team's response does state that "the majority of the forecast increase in queuing on the B1041 (N) approach arm at Junction

2 is attributable to background and committed traffic, rather than traffic associated with the proposed development", such comment was included for reference purposes to indeed set out that the majority of the forecast increase in queuing on the northern approach arm of Junction 2 is not attributable to traffic associated with the proposed development.

The modelling assessment for Junction 2 indicates that the cumulative impact of additional queuing from background growth and the development could result in a queue which could impede the progress of Northbound traffic in 2036. However, the maximum queues would not be experienced across the whole peak hour and the impacts at Junction 2 and Little Paxton Bridge can be suitably mitigated to an acceptable level. Thus, with reference to the NPPF, the Highway Authority could not assert that the impacts were sufficiently 'severe' to warrant a refusal.

The Highway Authority considered local concerns regarding impacts at Little Paxton Bridge and explored several options when reviewing mitigation for Little Paxton Bridge including widening the bridge, widening the B1041 (N) approach arm at junction 2 to two lanes, and installing an additional MOVA detector loop. Of which, the two physical mitigation options were not feasible due to physical constraints, and an additional Queue detector loop on the B1041 would not provide significant benefits as it would interfere with the existing MOVA control program.

The Highway Authority consulted the County signals team when reviewing forecast impacts at Junction 2 and Little Paxton Bridge to assess ways Junction 2 can be managed to reduce queuing on the B1041 (N) approach and thus impacts to passing traffic on Little Paxton Bridge. The outcome of the consultation concluded that the existing MOVA controller at the junction would be able to sufficiently manage future queues on the B1041 (N) approach arm at Junction 2 which will help manage traffic flows across Little Paxton Bridge. Given that the forecast impacts are not expected until 3036 (i.e. 10 years from now), the County Council will continue to monitor Junction 2 and, should any issues arise in the future, the existing MOVA controller can be updated as and when necessary.

It is acknowledged that providing more green time on one arm of a signalised junction would transfer delays to another arm of the junction, the MOVA controller would only provide additional green time on the B1041 (N) arm over the period when it is needed to allow traffic to be able to pass on the bridge i.e. when queues are extending back close to the bridge. The delays on other arms will therefore be minimised.

In view of the above, the Highway Authority is not in a position to object to the proposed application.

Other off site highway impacts and NDMP TR6

- Severe cumulative traffic impacts would occur at the Mill Lane/Great North Road priority junction and B1428/Station Road/Cambridge Street/Cromwell Road double mini roundabout.
- The transport assessment evidence is inadequate or based on outdated assumptions.
- The proposal should be refused in line with NDMP TR6.

Mitigation works have been agreed between the Highway Authority and the applicant for impacts upon the Mill Lane/Great North Road priority junction and B1428/Station Road/Cambridge Street/Cromwell Road double mini roundabout (as set out in paragraph 6.86 of the Officer report).

The Highway Authority are satisfied with the applicant's Transport Assessment.

Having regard to local and national planning policy, the Highway Authority have confirmed that there is no sound reason to justify refusal of the application on the basis of highway impacts or safety.

Bat surveys

The representation states that:

- Insufficient ecological information is available to assess impacts on bats and determine the application.

- Necessary bat surveys have not been completed and that sufficient information is not available to properly assess impacts upon bats
- Deferring surveys would be contrary to ODPM Circular 06/2005 and case law (Woolley v Cheshire East BC).
- The Council cannot be satisfied that favourable conservation status will be maintained without further survey work.

This matter has been considered in detail by the Council's Ecologist (Place Services Ecology), who has reviewed the additional representations received and is familiar with the guidance and case law quoted within.

The Council's Ecologist has applied their professional judgement and is satisfied that the position taken (as set out within the Officer report to DMC) is justified.

Importantly, no bat roosts have been identified on the application site. There is no requirement for a licence from Natural England.

There is a single tree on site which contains features that may be suitable for bat roosts, however, a climbing survey undertaken found no evidence of bats using this tree. Regardless of the time of year a climbing inspection is undertaken, any evidence of bats having used the features would be overtly obvious to a professional ecologist. The Council's Ecologist is satisfied that the ecologist who undertook the climbing inspection on behalf of the applicant is well qualified and experienced enough to undertake the survey.

The professional judgement of the applicant's and the LPA's ecologists is that although technically suitable for bats, the features within tree T43 are not likely to be important features for bats (this could be for any number of reasons, including for example their location not being suitable for any local population of bats).

Deferring further surveys is not contrary to ODPM Circular 06/2005 and the case law quoted is not directly applicable to the current situation. ODPM Circular 06/2005 specifically states: "*bearing in mind the delay and cost that may be involved, developers should not be required to*

undertake surveys for protected species unless there is a reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by the development."

Model planning conditions used by the Planning Inspectorate confirm that further surveys can be secured by planning conditions.

In conclusion, the Council's Ecologist remains satisfied, having reviewed the additional representations, that the LPAs position on bats is justified and lawful (the LPA has sufficient certainty on likely bat impacts). The Council's Ecologist also remains satisfied with the condition they recommended to secure the further surveys of tree T43, however, to make 100% clear that further surveys of T43 are required prior to the commencement of development, a specific standalone (model) condition could be included to specifically separate out the bat survey requirement from other species/wider ecological mitigation measures being secured.

Landscape / Design (NPPF DP3 and Local Plan Policies LP2, LP10 and LP11)

The representation states that:

- The proposal would cause significant harm to the historic landscape character and the rural setting of St Neots including the introduction of artificial light.
- The application site is identified as being isolated in terms of landscape and topography – the rural character is a clear landscape boundary separating the village of Great Paxton and town of St Neots.
- Dwellings of up to 3 storeys are inappropriate in this location.

Landscape impact is addressed at paragraphs 6.115 – 6.128 of the Officer report.

Of note, the Council's Landscape Advisor has no objection in principle to the proposed residential development, which they consider can be successful assimilated into the existing townscape/landscape. Significant open space will remain between the village of Great Paxton and the town of St Neots, therefore, the Council's Landscape Advisor raised no concerns about settlement coalescence or settlement identity.

The realignment of Priory Hill Road does result in the loss of mature landscape features (albeit no high quality (Category A) trees are proposed for removal) and an impact upon the historic parkland

character. This harm is a matter weighed in the overall planning balance at section 8 of the Officer report.

Reference is made to 3 storey dwellings; however, it must be noted that this is an outline planning application with all matters reserved except access. Dwelling heights is therefore a matter for future determination; however, the submitted Building Heights Parameter Plan makes reference to a maximum of 2.5 storeys and general compliance with the principles of the Parameter Plans would be secured by condition.

Likewise, details of external lighting would be secured by condition and a lighting scheme which is sensitive to biodiversity is required. It is not considered that the proposal would result in unacceptable levels of artificial light having regard to the requirements of NDMP P3 in this regard.

Impacts on St Neots conservation area (HE9)

The representations suggest that the proposal fails to meet the requirements of NDMP HE9 due to the harm arising to St Neots conservation area.

Impacts upon St Neots conservation area are assessed at paragraphs 6.179 – 6.186, including as assessment against NDMP HE9. As required by local and national planning policies, the harm arising to the setting of the conservation area is weighed against the public benefits of the proposal at section 8 of the Officer report.

Loss of agricultural and impact upon tenant farmer

The representations suggest that the proposal fails to meet the requirements of NDMP N2 and P4 due to the loss of agricultural land and impacts upon the existing tenant farmer/farm business.

Loss of agricultural land and NDMP N2 are addressed at paragraphs 6.15 – 6.25 of the Officer report.

Impacts upon the agricultural tenant are addressed at paragraphs 6.281 – 6.285 of the Officer report including reference to NDMP P4 of the NPPF.

Both of these harms are weighed in the overall planning balance at section 8 of the Officer report.

Pressure on local infrastructure

The representation suggests that the proposal would result in unacceptable pressure upon local infrastructure including schools and GPs.

As set out at Section 7 of the Officer report, S106 contributions are to be secured towards local infrastructure, including local schools and GP surgeries to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development.

NPPF NDMP DM4

The representation suggests that determination of the application would undermine the emerging Local Plan. It is contended that the impacts of this development would make emerging Local Plan allocations unsound, particularly in relation to the capacity of local infrastructure including St Neots WRC.

The status of the Huntingdonshire emerging Local Plan to 2046 is set out at paragraph 4.8 of the Officer report, including a consideration of NDMP DM4.

NPPF NDMP S5

The representation states that the proposal is not:

- within walking distance of St Neots Railway station;
- well related to the settlement and its surroundings;
- capable of being accommodated by existing availability of infrastructure.

An assessment against NDMP S5(1)(j)(i) has been undertaken at paragraphs 6.40 – 6.50 of the Officer report.

Whilst NDMP S5(h) makes reference to residential development which would be within reasonable walking distance of a ‘well-connected station’, St Neots Railway Station does not qualify under the NPPF definition of a

'well-connected station'[1] The applicable paragraphs of NDMP S5 for this application are therefore S5(1)(j)(i).

As set out at paragraph 6.43 of the Officer report, the tests within NDMP S5(1)(j)(i) are matters of planning judgement. For the reasons set out in the Officer report, officers consider that the site is physically well related to an existing settlement and of a scale which can be accommodated, taking account of existing or proposed infrastructure.

Planning balance

The representations consider:

- that the weight afforded to a number of the benefits have been overstated within the planning balance, including the weight afforded to sustainability, housing delivery, biodiversity enhancements, public open space, Anglian Water safeguarded land and the proposed community hub.
- some harms have been missed from the planning balance: harm to bats (due to a lack of surveys), loss of archaeological assets, the site not being within walking distance of St Neots train station.

The weight afforded to benefits and harm in the overall planning balance is a matter of planning judgement. In some instances, the NPPF directly specifies the level of weight which should be afforded to some matters – where this is the case, the Officer report has directly acknowledged this.

The additional harms identified by the objector have not been included in the planning balance by officers for the following reasons:

- As set out in detail above (under the heading 'Bat Surveys') and within the Officer report, no bat roosts have been identified on the application site. The LPA's ecologist is satisfied that subject to

[1] Annex B of the NPPF defines a 'well-connected station' as: Railway stations and underground, tram and light rail stops located within a top 80 Travel to Work Area located partially or fully within England by Gross Value Added (GVA)72 and which, in the normal weekday timetable, are served (or have a reasonable prospect of being served due to planned upgrades or through agreement with the rail operator) throughout the daytime by at least four trains or trams per hour overall, or at least two trains or trams per hour in any one direction. St Neots is not located within a top 80 Travel to Work Area.

mitigation (secured by conditions) the proposal will not result in harm to bats.

- As set out in detail above (under the heading 'Archaeology'), and within the Officer report, the County Archaeologist is satisfied that subject to mitigation (secured by conditions) the proposal will not directly harm any non-designated heritage assets of archaeological significance.
- As set out above, St Neots Railway Station does not qualify under the NPPF definition of a 'well-connected station, NDMP S5(h) does not therefore apply. The Highway Authority consider that reasonable walking distance to a train station is between 800m and 1.2km. Whilst the application site is nearer the upper end of this range, it is considered well-located for access to the train station by foot and cycle, hence off site highways works, include widening the path on the southern/western side of side of Priory Hill Road/Hawkesden Road, are proposed to further facilitate sustainable travel to the station.

b) <u>Letter from Rowley Allotments Association and The Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve</u>

Paragraph 7.6 of the Officer Report Officer states: "*It is understood that the applicant has entered into discussions with Rowley Allotment Association and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve / Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve regarding the land proposed for allotments and Conservation Island. The transfer mechanism and nominee(s) will be considered fully within the detailed S106 drafting, but it is welcomed that conversations with these parties have taken place*."

Letters have been received from the Rowley Allotments Association and The Friends of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve which confirm their respective interest in the land proposed as allotments and the land proposed as 'Conservation Island' nature reserve should this application be approved.

2. Corrections to Committee report

- Harm to the setting of St Neots conservation area (afforded substantial weight) should have included in the list of harms at 8.15. This does not change the conclusions reached at paragraphs 8.17 – 8.19.
- The list of offsite highway mitigation works included at paragraph 6.92 of the report erroneously included works which were discussed with, but ultimately ruled out as unfeasible by the Local Highway Authority. Paragraph 6.92 is therefore amended as follows with **additions** (**bold**) and removals (scored) shown below:

6.92 Where the Travel Audit has identified existing deficiencies in routes to key local education, employment, and leisure destinations, the applicant is proposing off site mitigation as follows:

• Footpath widening of Priory Hill Road/Hawkesden Road to 3m – this width currently varies between 2.0 - 2.5m wide;

• **Improve crossing facilities and provide tactile paving at** Hawkesden / Longsands junction ~~to become a cycle priority junction~~;

• Zebra crossing to assist key walking movements on Longsands Road;

~~• Provide approximately 300m of fencing to prevent anti-social parking adjacent Priory Junior School on the eastern and western verges;~~

• Tactile paving to be added to assist crossing of minor road junctions along Longsands Road;

~~• Reduce junction widths and add tactile paving to Longsands Road / Rowley Road junction and Longsands Road / Raven Close junction.~~

Planning Appeal Decisions Since October 2026 Committee

Ref No	Appellant	Parish	Proposal	Site	Original Decision	Delegated or DMC	Appeal Determination	Costs
25/01747/FUL	Mr Glen Beamson	Leighton Bromswold	Erection of one and half storey dwelling with associated access, amenity space and landscaping	Land Rear Of 66 To 68 The Avenue Leighton Bromswold	Refused	Delegated	Appeal Dismissed	No

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Agenda Annex

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 16th November 2026

FURTHER LATE REPRESENTATIONS SUMMARY

25/01694/OUT Outline planning application (phased development) for the erection of up to 600 dwellings including 40% affordable, a community hub site including car parking and mobility hub. Public open space including green and blue infrastructure, incorporating footpaths, cycle ways, biodiversity improvements and habitat creation; associated drainage and landscaping including new and existing trees and hedgerows, utilities and other infrastructure. All matters reserved except for means of vehicular access from Priory Hill Road and associated highways works to Mill Lane/Priory Hill/Huntingdon Road - Land Adjacent St Neots Reservoir, Priory Hill Road, St Neots

1. Additional representations

Additional late representations/material have been received following publication of the Late Representations Report on 13.11.2026 as follows:

a) 1 no. further representations from a neighbour;
b) Report from Historic England.
c) Emails from Cllr Claffey (Great Paxton Ward and Great Paxton Parish Council) and Cllr Bond (Great Paxton Parish Council) and letter of objection from Great Paxton Parish Council.
d) Email from a resident of the wider district regarding the Screening Opinion

These representations are available to view in full via Public Access and copies have been provided to DMC members directly (electronic copies will be sent by email in advance of the Development Management Committee (DMC) meeting, alongside this report. Hard copies will also be made available at the DMC meeting).

The matters raised within these representations are summarised below and an officer response is provided where relevant.

a) 1 no. further representations from a neighbour

A further representation from a neighbour has been received by the LPA (received 13.11.2026). The matters raised in these representations are summarised under the headings below and an officer response is provided.

Bat surveys

The further late representations continue to suggest that the council has insufficient information relating to bats.

This matter was addressed in detail by the Late Representations report.

To confirm, there are no bat roosts on the application site. Whilst tree T43 contains features which could be suitable for bats, there is no evidence that bats have used the tree to date. Further surveys of T43 are to be secured by condition prior to commencement of any development and the Council's Ecologist is satisfied such a condition is lawful and justified.

Little Paxton Bridge

The further late representations continue to suggest that the application will result in a severe impact upon Little Paxton Bridge.

This matter was addressed in detail by the Late Representations report. The Highway Authority are satisfied that the proposed development will not result in a severe impact upon Little Paxton Bridge. No mitigation for the proposed development is justified for Little Paxton Bridge.

Wastewater Treatment Works

The further late representations continue to suggest that the proposed residential development would prevent the expansion of St Neots Wastewater Treatment Centre.

This matter was addressed in detail by the Late Representations report.

To confirm, Anglian Water, Bloor Homes and the Council's Environmental Health Officer agree that, in principle, the WRC can be expanded without adversely impacting the residential amenity of any future residents of the proposed development.

Archaeology

The further late representations question why officers have not afforded weight to archaeological harm arising from the loss of the iron age remains in the overall planning balance.

The County Archaeologist and Historic England are satisfied that the iron age remains are not of national significance. There are many examples of such finds regionally and nationally.

The iron age finds are to be preserved by record (secured by condition). This means that the archaeology will be excavated by professional archaeologists and following scientific analysis, a clear and detailed record of the finds will be published and made publicly accessible.

Whilst it is accepted that excavating the archaeology could be considered as 'harmful', the County Archaeologist is satisfied that this harm is neutralised by the preservation by record.

On this basis and as reflected in the Officer report, Officer's judgement is that harm to archaeology is not a matter to be weighed within the overall planning balance as it is attributed neutral weight.

b) <u>Report from Historic England</u>

A report was published by Historic England (HE) on 13.11.2026, after the late reps report was published.

This report has been generated as a result of a direct application to HE from an interested individual which sought the Iron Age remains identified on site be scheduled as an Ancient Monument. This application to HE is governed by separate legislation outside of the planning system and is an independent process led by HE with the decision made by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and therefore HDC officers had no involvement in this process.

The report published by Historic England on 13.11.2026 confirms that DCMS have rejected the request to schedule the application site and recommend that the archaeological remains be managed through the planning system. As already noted, the county archaeologist has recommended conditions to secure archaeological mitigation.

c) <u>Emails from Cllr Claffey (Great Paxton Ward and Great Paxton Parish Council) Cllr Bond (Great Paxton Parish Council) and a letter from Great Paxton Parish Council</u>

Further late representations have been received as follows:

- 2no. emails from Cllr Claffey (dated 13.11.2026)
- 1 no. email from Cllr Bond (dated 15.11.2026)
- 1 no. letter from Great Paxton Parish Council (received 16.11.2026)

Officer note: As reflected in the Officer report, representations previously received from Cllr Claffey (25.09.2026) are summarised at paragraph 5.2. No previous correspondence had been received from Great Paxton Parish Council or Cllr Bond, however an officer response to the points raised is provided below, where these have not already been directly addressed within the Officer report.

Question whether highway impacts upon Great Paxton / Little Paxton Bridge / and assumptions made within the Transport Assessment regarding Great Paxton have been adequately assessed by the applicant/Highway Authority

Highway Authority Officers have looked at this application extensively and are satisfied that the submitted Transport Assessment has been prepared using a nationally accepted methodology (using the most up to date data available).

The assumptions regarding trip distributions are all set out within the Transport Assessment and technical notes prepared in support of the application (and publicly accessible on the online file) and have been reviewed by the Highway Authority, National Highways and Active Travel England (as technical specialists).

The Highway Authority are satisfied that a limited number of trips generated by the proposed development could head north, through Great Paxton. The Transport Assessment does not anticipate significant impacts upon any junctions within Great Paxton and account has been taken of highway safety data.

No further pedestrian or cycle improvements are proposed along Huntingdon Road north of the applicant's proposed works, as the key desire lines and destinations for development-related pedestrian and cycle trips are towards the existing facilities, amenities, and schools within St Neots. The Highway Authority advise that Great Paxton is beyond reasonable walking distance from the residential area of the proposed development and therefore do not consider that any off site works in Great Paxton are justified.

Impacts upon Little Paxton Bridge were addressed in detail by the Late Representations report and are addressed again above in response to the further late neighbour representation received.

As noted within the officer report, National Highways, Active Travel England and the Highway Authority offer no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions and obligations, as have been detailed within the Officer Report.

Question whether S106 obligations / infrastructure impacts upon Great Paxton been adequately addressed including doctors, dentists and schools

The catchment schools for the proposed development are all located within St Neots.

The ICB has identified the GP surgeries most likely to be impacted by the proposed development as Buckden & Little Paxton Surgeries and Almond Road Surgery, and has requested financial contributions towards these.

No consultees have identified an impact upon existing infrastructure within Great Paxton which would justify off site works or obligations being secured as part of the application.

d) <u>Email from a resident of the wider district regarding the Screening Opinion</u>

A late representation was received 12.11.2026 (after the Late Representations report was finalised) from an interested resident in the district who has raised concern about the publication of the Screening Matrix which was undertaken to accompany the EIA Screening Opinion for this application (reference 25/70051/SCRE).

In response to the questions raised by this representation, it is confirmed that the Screening Matrix was published as a public document on 08.06.2026, prior to this the matrix had been completed but was saved internally on the file.

Officers are satisfied that this did not prejudice any interested parties and has no bearing upon the determination process for the application before DMC this evening.

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