

# DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Case No:** 25/01279/FUL

**Proposal:** 43 AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS OF MIXED SIZE AND TENURE ALONG WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE.

**Location:** LAND NORTH OF SEWAGE PUMPING STATION, STATION ROAD, WARBOYS

**Applicant:** Mr David Stutting (Amplius Living)

**Grid Ref:** 531110 280894

**Date of Registration:** 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025

**Parish:** WARBOYS

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## RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE

This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) as Huntingdonshire District Council own the land, the Officer recommendation of approval is contrary to that of the Parish Council, and a local member has also called in the application.

### 0. BACKGROUND

#### Regulation 4

- 0.1 This land which forms the application site is owned by Huntingdon District Council. The development is being promoted by Amplius Living, the applicant. This is a reg 4 application as the land is owned by Huntingdonshire District Council, but the application is made by another party.
- 0.2 Regulation 4 of The Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 governs planning applications made by a local authority for development on their own land, which they do not intend to develop themselves but instead intend to make available for development by others. These applications are processed by the relevant planning authority (e.g., district council), treating them as standard applications.
- 0.3 Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 022 Reference ID: 21b-022-20140306 outlines:

*The procedures dealing with development proposed by local authorities are contained in the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (as amended). The principle underlying these Regulations is that local authorities must make planning applications in the same way as any other person and must follow the same procedures as would apply to applications by others.*

*Local authorities may grant themselves planning permission for their own development on land in which they have an interest or for development by an authority jointly with another person. The proposals must be publicised in the same way as any similar application from any other applicant and they cannot be decided by a committee or officer responsible for the management of any land or buildings to which the application relates.*

*Local authority development proposals, like those of other persons applying for planning permission, must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning permission which any local authority grants to itself runs with the land – see the Town and Country Planning General (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2018.*

- 0.4 Officers of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) have not been engaged with, or are privy to, any commercial matters relating disposal of council owned land. To ensure transparency the planning application has been advertised, and a site notice was erected as close as possible to the site, alongside wider consultation with stakeholders and residents. Further consultations have been undertaken during the course of the application.
- 0.5 To ensure full transparency, this application is brought before the Development Management Committee for determination.

#### Secretary of State Call in Request

- 0.6 The Secretary of State (SoS) has received a request to call in the application.
- 0.7 Under section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the SoS can call in an application for determination by the SoS.
- 0.8 The SoS is still considering the request and has confirmed they do not intend for that to impede the application's progress with the council. Officers have informed the SoS that the application is to be considered at the 16<sup>th</sup> of March DMC with an Officer recommendation of approval. Members must therefore consider the application in full like any other application on the agenda.

- 0.9 Officers will notify the SoS of the outcome of the DMC meeting and will not issue the decision until the SoS have confirmed their decision on whether to call in the application or not.

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

### Site and Surroundings

- 1.1 The application site is a 2.3 hectare, broadly square, parcel of agricultural land (arable use until late 2022, vacant since then). The site lies to the northeast part of Warboys. Immediately to the north-west is an industrial unit. To the south-west is Station Road which has a strong linear form of dwellings fronting onto the opposite side of the road. To the south-east are dwellings and paddocks. To the north-east is open countryside.
- 1.2 The boundaries are defined by a combination of drainage ditches, intermittent hedging, and mature trees. The northwest boundary is strongly vegetated, forming a dense wooded belt that screens the adjacent industrial unit, while the northern edge features three prominent mature oak trees and lengths of shrubby vegetation. The eastern boundary is more open, comprising chain-link fencing interspersed with scrub and occasional trees, while the southern boundary adjoins residential properties and includes an Anglian Water pumping station.
- 1.3 The site is set in an elevated position which falls markedly from around 25.5m AOD along the western boundary to approximately 16.5m AOD in the east, creating an open aspect with extensive views across the fenland landscape to the north and east. Drainage ditches run along the north-east, south-west and south-east perimeters of the site.
- 1.4 There are currently two access points from Station Road onto the site. One is opposite 107a Station Road to the north-west and the second access is on the southern corner adjacent to a pumping station and opposite an access between 67 and 69 Station Road
- 1.5 Warboys Footpath 7 (245/7) is a public right of way which runs north to south circa over 100m from the eastern edge of the site.
- 1.6 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding) as identified by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2024 and the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning. There is some surface water flooding on the far eastern element of the site, and some towards the north-eastern element of the site.
- 1.7 There are no designated heritage assets which would be affected by the proposed development and no trees subject to a preservation order in the vicinity. The site does not fall within a protected landscape. Pringle Wood and Cutting (County Wildlife

Site) are located circa 355.4m to the northeast and Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI is located circa 833m to the north-west of the site.

### Proposal

- 1.8 This planning application seeks full planning permission for 43 affordable dwellings of mixed size and tenure along with associated infrastructure and open space.
- 1.9 Vehicular access to the site is defined through a number of access points. There is a main access point off Station Road, which utilises the existing access point opposite 107a Station Road, that would serve 33 dwellings. The access leads to a loop road circulation within the site. The second existing access point along Station Road in the southern corner of the site is the approximate location of a new proposed access serving plots 1-4 parking court. Five additional accesses to private drives would be created off Station Road to serve six dwellings. Four out of six plots would have the ability to turn around within the plot curtilage and therefore leave site onto Station Road in forward gear. A new 2m wide footpath along the frontage is proposed to improve access from the village to the development, with two crossing points proposed. A crossing point on Station Road, is proposed to be located between the shared driveway for plots 1 and 2 and the access to the existing pumping station compound. The crossing point on the opposite side would be located between the existing drives for 67 and 67a Station Road with the drop kerb being extended.
- 1.10 Open space, landscaping and SuDs would be provided on the eastern element of the site which is adjacent to the wider countryside.
- 1.11 The proposal is for 100% of the dwellings to be affordable for either rent or shared ownership.
- 1.12 This application has been accompanied by the following drawings and documents:
  - Drawings
  - Planning, Design & Access and Affordable Housing Statement
  - Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy
  - Foul Sewerage and Utilities Assessment
  - Odour Impact Assessment
  - Noise Impact Assessment
  - Transport Statement
  - Arboricultural Statement
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
  - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

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

### Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 1.14 With regard to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 the development does not meet the criteria within Schedule 2 to require a detailed screening opinion, as the application does not propose more than 150 dwellings and is under 5 hectares.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

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

## **3. PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)
- LP1: Amount of Development
  - LP2: Strategy for Development
  - LP3: Green Infrastructure
  - LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
  - LP5: Flood Risk
  - LP6: Waste Water Management
  - LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
  - LP8: Key Service Centres
  - LP10: The Countryside
  - LP11: Design Context
  - LP12: Design Implementation
  - LP14: Amenity
  - LP15: Surface Water

- LP16: Sustainable Travel
- LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
- LP25: Housing Mix
- LP28: Rural Exceptions Housing
- LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
- LP37: Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution

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

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

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

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

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

For full details visit the government website.

## 4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 22/00412/FUL - Residential development for 47 affordable dwellings and associated works (WITHDRAWN)

## 5. CONSULTATIONS

### Summary of consultation responses

- 5.1 Cllr Ross Martin (County Councillor) – Objection

1. Conflict with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

- The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) puts into question the use of this site for allocation, concluding:
  - It is Grade 2 agricultural land, protected under Policy LP10(a) to prevent irreversible loss of the best and most versatile farmland.
  - It forms part of the open countryside with “no capacity for development” due to its visibility, undeveloped character, and contribution to the setting of Warboys.
  - It lies outside the built-up area boundary, contrary to Policy LP8, which supports development only within defined built-up areas.
  
- 2. Unsustainable Location and Poor Connectivity
  - The site is beyond reasonable walking distance from shops, a school, and a doctor’s surgery. Resulting in the development would increase car dependency, undermining local and national sustainability objectives.
  - Public transport is limited to sporadic at best, bus service, falling short of Policy LP16 (Sustainable Transport).
  
- 3. Harm to Landscape, Character, and Amenity
  - The site is adjacent to a sewage pumping station and industrial premises (B2 use), yet no odour, noise, or amenity assessments have been provided, contrary to NPPF Paragraph 187.
  
- 4. Failure to Justify as a Rural Exception Site
  - No Housing Needs Survey has been conducted for Warboys; therefore, no evidence exists of an unmet local need. Without such evidence, allocations may go to people with no local connection, increasing commuting and reducing sustainability.
  - Warboys has already delivered over 130 affordable homes since 2015, with another 40 in the pipeline.
  
- 5. Highways, Parking, Drainage, and Flood Risk
  - The proposed junction aligns with an existing dwelling, causing potential light intrusion. Station Road is narrow, with no pedestrian infrastructure, creating highway safety risks which must be resolved before any development is allowed.
  - The LLFA objected to the previous application (22/00412/FUL), and many feel these concerns remain unresolved.
  
- 6. Consultee Objection – Anglian Water

- Anglian Water has objected due to significant existing capacity issues in the foul drainage network. Despite this not being a material planning reason, the potential for failure of our waste assets should hold a significant weight.

## 5.2 Cllr Charlotte Lower (District Councillor) - Objection

### **Procedural and Policy Conflicts**

The application raises significant procedural issues, including a clear **conflict of interest** as Huntingdonshire District Council is both the landowner of the site and the planning authority making the decision. This undermines public confidence in the impartiality of the planning process. As mentioned by Warboys Parish Council in their objection letter, the proposal also fails to address the site's history in the planning process. This site was previously rejected for allocation in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) for the Local Plan to 2036. A key reason for the previous rejection, which remains relevant, is that the site is comprised of Grade 2 agricultural land, which is considered "very good quality". The permanent loss of this productive farmland conflicts with **NPPF Paragraphs 174 and 175**, which require planning decisions to protect and enhance valued soils and recognize the economic benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

### **Amenity and Environmental Suitability**

The site is unsuitable for residential use due to significant **environmental health and amenity issues**. The Environmental Health Officer's report identifies considerable noise from the adjacent factory and road traffic. The proposed mitigation measures, including a **3m high acoustic barrier**, sealed glazing, and mechanical ventilation, demonstrate that the site is not appropriate for residential development. This conflicts with **NPPF Paragraph 135**, which requires developments to provide a high standard of amenity for future residents. Additionally, the location presents potential contamination risks from adjacent sites and previous large development of houses behind the existing terraced houses on Station Road, due to possible sewage overflows from the Pumping Station, fuel leaks and surface water flooding. Locating affordable family housing next to industrial noise and potential contamination risks is contrary to this principle. This also conflicts with **Local Plan Policy LP17 (Amenity)**, which requires that development does not harm the health, quality of life, or amenity of existing and future residents.

A further concern is the potential impact from a proposed incinerator at Woodford's Recycling Centre, which would exacerbate these existing amenity issues.

## **Loss of Prime Agricultural Land**

The application site is former Grade 2 **agricultural land (2.35 hectares)** which only recently went out of production, due to the landlord proposing this site for development. Paragraphs **174 and 175 of the NPPF** require planning decisions to protect and enhance valued soils and recognise the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a). The permanent loss of productive farmland for housing undermines long-term food security and directly conflicts with these national policy aims.

This also conflicts with **Local Plan Policy LP10 (The Countryside)**, which seeks to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, including the role of agricultural land.

## **Unresolved Infrastructure and Heritage Concerns**

The application has not adequately addressed concerns raised by technical consultees:-

- **Highway Safety:** While a transport assessment was not required for the proposed number of dwellings, the Highways Development Management Engineer has requested amended drawings to resolve issues with a "too severe" taper in front of Plot 21 and the need for relocated or additional crossing points.
- Given that the road is one lane each way, with residents parking their cars on the road outside their homes, this proposed development will further increase road traffic collisions and potential difficulties for families crossing the road and vehicular turning.
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- **Drainage and Flood Risk:** The LLFA has reviewed the drainage plans, but there are still concerns regarding the relocation of the ditch. Anglian Water has also noted that assets close to, or crossing the site, will require diversion at the developer's cost. Plus the sewerage system will not cope with the additional 43 properties proposed on this site.
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- **Archaeological and Heritage Concerns:** The site lies within an area of "high archaeological potential". Previous investigations nearby have uncovered evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity, including an inhumation burial and Iron Age features. Developing this site risks the permanent loss of nationally important heritage assets, which directly conflicts with **NPPF Paragraph 205**. This raises direct conflict with **Local Plan Policy LP34 (Heritage Assets and Their Settings)**.

## **Failure to Deliver Biodiversity Net Gain**

The scheme also fails to meet a key policy requirement for **Biodiversity Net Gain**. The applicant has admitted that the scheme cannot deliver the required 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on-site and instead relies on off-site credits. This is in direct conflict with **NPPF Paragraph 186**, which requires a measurable net gain in biodiversity.

The proposed site is highly visible with wide open views to the surrounding countryside. Development here would cause permanent harm to the landscape setting of Warboys. Paragraph **180 of the NPPF** requires planning decisions to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

This also conflicts with **Local Plan Policies LP11 (Design Context)** and **LP12 (Design Implementation)**, which require development to integrate positively into its landscape setting and avoid harm to rural character.

With the potential build of an incinerator very close to the proposed site, I do not think the potential residents would be so keen on purchasing a property that is so close to an incinerator!

In summary, this proposal:

- Conflicts with **NPPF paragraphs 174–175, 180, 186, and 205**.
- Conflicts with **Local Plan Policies LP10, LP11, LP12, LP17, LP30, and LP34**.
- Results in the **loss of agricultural land, harm to heritage assets, risk to residential amenity, and a failure to deliver biodiversity net gain**.

For the reasons outlined above, the proposal is considered to be **contrary** to both national and local planning policies, is outside the built-up area of the village (contrary to Policy LP8) and should be refused.

### 5.3 Warboys Parish Council - Objection

1. Conflict with the Local Plan
  - Grade 1 agricultural land, protected under Policy LP10(a);
  - Open countryside outside the built-up area boundary, contrary to Policy LP8; and
  - Of high landscape sensitivity, contributing to the rural setting of Warboys.
2. Failure to justify the development as a rural exception site
  - No Housing Needs Survey has been undertaken for Warboys;
  - No evidence of unmet local need has been provided;

- No binding mechanism is proposed to prioritise local households; and
- The site's unsustainable location conflicts with LP28(d).

3. Infrastructure impact and absence of meaningful cil or secured mitigation

As a 100% affordable housing development, the scheme will generate no meaningful Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts for Warboys Parish. The proposal would introduce approximately 190–200 new residents through 43 dwellings, representing a significant increase in the village population, yet:

- No firm Section 106 obligations are secured;
- Health and education contributions remain “subject to discussions”;
- No alternative funding mechanism is proposed to offset the absence of CIL; and
- No certainty is provided that local infrastructure can support this level of growth. This places additional pressure on already constrained services and facilities and weighs significantly against the sustainability of the proposal.

4. Highways safety, drainage, and deferred technical detail

- Station Road remains the sole access point to the development;
- Steep gradients are mitigated rather than resolved;
- The drainage ditch along Station Road must be infilled and realigned to facilitate a footway; and
- The acceptability of these works is deferred to post-permission S38 and S278 agreements. Scale and Impact on Village Character

5. Landscape, character, and visual impact (including misleading visual evidence)

The Parish Council remains concerned about the loss of open countryside, erosion of the rural edge of Warboys, and harm to valued long-distance fenland views. In addition, the Parish Council considers that the photographic evidence submitted with the application is misleading and does not provide an accurate representation of landscape impact. The photographs are predominantly taken facing back towards the village, rather than looking down the site and across the open countryside, which is where the most significant visual harm would occur. As a result:

- The openness and depth of the site are understated;
- The true extent of countryside loss is not properly illustrated; and

- The development's impact on the wider landscape setting of Warboys is not accurately conveyed.

The newly released documents acknowledge significant level changes across the site and confirm the need for prominent retaining walls, in some cases exceeding 1100mm in height. This further undermines the reliability of the applicant's landscape and visual assessment.

#### 6. Amenity impacts – sewage pumping station and industrial use.

The site lies adjacent to a sewage pumping station and close to a B2 industrial premises. No odour, noise, or amenity assessments have been provided, contrary to the “agent of change” principle set out in the NPPF. This omission remains unaddressed.

#### 7. Cumulative impact – incinerator proposal

While planning application CCC/22/151/FUL for an incinerator at The Old Brick Works, Puddock Hill, has been withdrawn, Thermeco has publicly confirmed its intention to submit a revised application. The likelihood of a future incinerator proposal in close proximity to the site remains a material planning consideration. No cumulative impact assessment has been undertaken, and the applicant's failure to address this realistic planning context is a significant omission.

#### 8. Procedural and governance concerns

Serious concerns remain regarding:

- HDC's dual role as landowner and determining authority;
- The fact that the sale of the land is contingent on the grant of planning permission;
- The absence of clear separation between commercial and regulatory functions; and
- Restricted public access to application documents during part of the consultation period due to a planning portal outage

5.4 HDC Housing Officer – Supports.

5.5 HDC Urban Design Officer – Supports subject to conditions.

5.6 HDC Landscape Officer – It would result in significant visual effects for high-sensitivity receptors along the Public Right of Way (PRoW) and the northern approach to Warboys. These effects remain most pronounced within the immediate foreground, particularly in the locations represented by Viewpoints 02–06 and along Station Road. Beyond the locations represented by Viewpoints 02–06 and Viewpoint 10, the proposed built form would

not be visible, with the visual envelope closing rapidly due to the combination of distance, landform, and existing vegetation. As a result, visual effects are confined to the immediate and near-field context only, with no predicted effects on receptors beyond these viewpoints. Taking these factors into account, we conclude that the proposed development would, overall, give rise to a medium/moderate level of landscape and visual harm.

- 5.7 HDC Ecology Officer – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.8 HDC Tree Officer – Concern about the impact of this acoustic fence and the encroachment into root protection areas. The acoustic fencing will require pruning for installation, and the excavations throughout their RPA's, some of the RPA's will be left within the rear gardens, constant and on-going pruning would be required which would degrade the trees and their value.
- 5.9 HDC Environmental Health – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.10 Cambridgeshire Constabulary Designing Out Crime Office – No objection.
- 5.11 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Archaeology – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.12 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Highways – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.13 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.14 Anglian Water – No objection in relation to Oldhurst WRC. Maintains objection to any connection into our foul network from the proposed development, due to capacity constraints and pollution risk. In order to overcome our objection we require that the applicant reconsult Anglian Water in the form of a Pre-Development enquiry (PPE) in order to define a Sustainable Point of Connection (SPOC).
- 5.15 Natural England – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.16 Fire Service – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.17 HDC Strategic Sports Development Officer - HDC's Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy outlines a few key formal outdoor sports sites within the village which could benefit from this contribution. At Warboys Sports field Ancillary provision is poor with the mini (5v5) and Youth (11v11) pitches considered poor quality. It, however, must be noted that the Warboys Sports Field have received several S106 agreements which have been paid or due to be paid when thresholds are met.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

6.1 Summary of multiple letters of objection received from 32 addresses:

- Conflict with the Local Plan (not allocated)
- Loss of agricultural land
- Station Road already congested and operating near capacity.
- Increased vehicle movements → higher collision risks, queuing, rat-running.
- Steep site access and unsafe pedestrian crossing points.
- Persistent speeding issues along Station Road.
- On-street parking is already over-subscribed, leading to: Restricted visibility, Narrowed carriageways, Obstruction of emergency and refuse vehicles
- Local schools are full, risking split siblings or long-distance placements.
- GP surgeries are over-capacity, with long waits for appointments.
- Anglian Water objects: Oldhurst WRC lacks capacity until at least 2030.
- Some proposed homes would be within 15m of the pumping station, causing noise/odour issues.
- Risk of overloading foul networks.
- Concerns over proposed drainage strategy
- Multi-phase construction leading to prolonged disruption.
- Existing traffic and factory noise already high.
- Potential air quality impact
- Reliance on sealed glazing and acoustic fencing shows the site is inherently unsuitable for housing.
- Loss of habitat corridors (hedgerows, ditches).
- Impact on protected/priority species.
- Inadequate evidence of Biodiversity Net Gain or mitigation.
- Out of keeping with Warboys' rural and village character (too dense and urban)
- Past contamination risks from sewage and fuel storage.
- Limited local job opportunities in Warboys

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

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

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

- 7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as “the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area”.
- 7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan (relevant to this applications) consists of:
- Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
  - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
- 7.4 The statutory term ‘material considerations’ has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the circumstances which bears on the use or development of the land: *Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor* [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P. & C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraph 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.
- 7.5 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- The principle of development, including its impact on the character and appearance of the area
  - Access, Transport, Highway Safety & Parking Provision
  - Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Drainage
  - Parameter Plans, Indicative Layout, Landscaping, Trees and Open Space
  - Biodiversity
  - Residential Amenity
  - Affordable Housing
  - Accessible Housing
  - Water Efficiency
  - Other Matters
  - Developer Contributions

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

Housing Land Supply

- 7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory

approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).

- 7.7 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test, a 5% buffer is required here. The 5-year housing land requirement, including a 5% buffer, is 5,907 homes. The current 5YHLS is 4,345 homes, equivalent to 3.68 years' supply.
- 7.8 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications. Each planning application will be considered on its own merits and the degree of weight to be attached is a matter for the decision maker. Where an application is situated within a parish with a made Neighbourhood Plan NPPF paragraph 14 should also be taken into account.

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

- 7.9 The application seeks full planning permission for 43 dwellings (100% affordable dwellings) on a site within Warboys.
- 7.10 Policy LP2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (the Local Plan) sets out the overarching development strategy for Huntingdonshire through the plan period. The main objectives are:
- Concentrate development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities;
  - Direct substantial new development to two strategic expansion locations of sufficient scale to form successful, functioning new communities;
  - Provide opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations for housing, employment, commercial or community related schemes;
  - Support a thriving rural economy;
  - Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside;

- Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and
- Provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation.

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

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

7.13 Local Plan Policy LP8 identifies Warboys as a Key Service Centre (KSC), which recognises the range of services and facilities available in KSCs that meet many of the day to day needs of residents and to some extent those of other nearby settlements. KSCs are more sustainable than those villages that are identified as Small Settlements (Policy LP9) within the Local Plan. The strategy also sets out a role for further sustainable development at KSCs in contributing to the social and economic sustainability of these settlements and supporting a thriving rural economy. Such development may be appropriate subject to recognition of the limitations of the services and facilities available and consideration of the impact development would have on the settlement concerned. It is therefore considered appropriate to limit development primarily to sites within built-up areas, acknowledging the fact that opportunities for development within them will largely be limited to redevelopment opportunities, intensification of use and development of land which relates wholly to existing buildings rather than the surrounding countryside.

7.14 Policy LP8 states:

***'Development Proposals within the Built-up Area***

*A proposal for development on a site which is additional to those allocated in this plan will be supported where it is located within a built-up area of a Key Service Centre.*

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

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

7.15 Policy LP8 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP8 given that the policy sets out that a set of criteria for assessing whether the proposal reflects sustainable development which is consistent with the NPPF. However, the part of Policy LP8 which specifies that only certain types of development on land well-related which accords with specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan is to be given reduced weight in determining a proposal for residential development. This means that any residential development on land well-related may be acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations.

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

7.17 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 contains a definition of the built-up area. Para. 4.81 states that:

*"The fundamental purpose of defining the built-up area is to provide guidance on interpretation of the boundary to inform the answer to the question 'does a specific parcel of land situated on the periphery of a settlement relate more to the built environment of that settlement in its use, form, character and connectivity or does it relate more to the surrounding countryside?'"*

7.18 The definition is as follows: 'A built-up area is considered to be a distinct group of buildings that includes 30 or more homes. Land which relates more to a group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area.'

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

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

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

7.20 It also advises that the built up area will include:

*Principle - Individual plots and minor scale development opportunities which would provide infill and rounding off opportunities on land which is physically, functionally and visually related to existing buildings, taking account of any environmental development constraints subject to the exclusions below.*

*Implementation guidance - Pockets of undeveloped land exist in some locations which relate to nearby buildings. Often well contained by existing hedgerows or tree belts, the character of such land is influenced by the buildings such that it is not perceived to be part of the surrounding countryside but relates primarily to the built form of the settlement. Small parcels of land such as this can offer opportunities for organic growth of settlements.*

7.21 The supporting text to Local Plan Policy LP7 also advises that the built up area will exclude:

*Principle - Agricultural land, woodland, meadow, areas of water and natural habitats that penetrate the built form or sections of large residential curtilages where the character of the land primarily relates to the countryside.*

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

7.22 The western part of the site is considered to lie within the built-up area of Warboys for the following reasons:

- The factory immediately to the north is within the built-up area as paragraph 4.85 of the Local Plan states that buildings on the edge of settlements that relate closely to the economic function of the development form part of the built-up area
- 84 and 86 Station Road form the northernmost extent of existing residential development on the eastern side of Station Road. They are clearly within the built-up area of Warboys and provide a built-up area boundary to the southern two thirds of this edge of the site

- To the west of the site, on the opposite side of Station Road there is in-depth residential development
- The northern boundary of the site is defined by a drainage ditch with mature hedge and tree planting, albeit that this is limited in parts

7.23 Given these four points, the western part of the site can be considered as open space that is predominantly surrounded by built-up area, integral to the built-up area and is defined by strong boundary features on at least 2 and half sides. The western part of the site is functionally and physically linked to the built up area. For these reasons, Officers consider the western part of the site can be classed as being within the built-up area, and at the very least land well-related to the built-up area.

7.24 There is an element of the site within the eastern part that extends beyond the built form of 84 and 86 Station Road, which form the northernmost extent of existing residential development on the eastern side of Station Road. They are clearly within the built-up area of Warboys and provide a built-up area boundary to the southern two thirds of this edge of the site. That eastern part of the site sits against the remaining third of the south-eastern boundary. It also extends beyond the built form of the factory to the north.

7.25 The eastern site boundary is largely undefined and accordingly, in the context of adjoining fields, the application site from this point of view is perceived to be part of the wider surrounding countryside. But given it's physical relationship with the rest of the site, it can also be considered as land well related to the built-up area.

7.26 Taking into account, the above commentary about how the eastern part of the site may appear visually part of the countryside and noting that the site is set in an elevated position falling from west to east, which creates an open aspect with extensive views across the fenland landscape to the north, policy LP10 is considered to be relevant also.

7.27 Policy LP10 places significant restrictions on developments in such locations, referring to only "limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan" as being acceptable in principle. Policy LP10 requires all development in the countryside to:

- (a) seek to use land of lower agricultural value in preference to land of higher agricultural value:
  - (i) avoiding the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a) where possible, and
  - (ii) avoiding Grade 1 agricultural land unless there are exceptional circumstances where the benefits of the proposal significantly outweigh the loss of land;

- (b) recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; and
- (c) not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.

- 7.28 Policy LP10 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP10 especially in relation to criteria (a) to (c) as it is consistent with the NPPF. However, the part of Policy LP10 which restricts residential development in the countryside is to be given reduced weight. This means that any residential development on land in the countryside may be acceptable in principle subject to other material planning considerations.
- 7.29 With regard to Policy LP10 part (a) the application site comprises an undeveloped arable field which is classified as Grade 2 (very good) agricultural land, nationally considered as amongst the best and most versatile agricultural land. There has been reference to the land being Grade 1 by the Parish Council but the mapping system clearly shows it as Grade 2.
- 7.30 Some 98% of the district comprises land within Grades 1 to 3, with 15% being Grade 1 and an estimated 77% of land falling within the definition of best and most versatile land. The proposal would result in the irreversible loss of some of this best and most versatile agricultural land. Whilst the land has remained vacant since late 2022, it could in theory be returned to farming in the future. The irreversible loss of agricultural land which can be used for food or crop production would conflict with Policy LP10 part (a)(i). This will need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposal in the planning balance section at the end of the report.
- 7.31 In terms of Policy LP10 part (b), as discussed above, the western part of the site is considered to be within the built up area and the land to the rear of the site (far eastern element) is considered to well-related to the built up area of Warboys.
- 7.32 As outlined above, the site is agricultural field which since farming of the land has ceased in late 2022 has undergone natural succession, now supporting neutral grassland with a diverse sward, scattered scrub, and mature trees. The site lies to the north east part of Warboys. Immediately to the north-west is an industrial unit. To the south-west is Station Road which has a strong linear form of dwellings fronting onto the opposite side of the road. To the south-east are dwellings and paddocks. To the north-east is open countryside.

- 7.33 The boundaries are defined by a combination of drainage ditches, intermittent hedging, and mature trees. The northwest boundary is strongly vegetated, forming a dense wooded belt that screens the adjacent industrial unit, while the northern edge features three prominent mature oak trees and lengths of shrubby vegetation. The eastern boundary is more open, comprising chain-link fencing interspersed with scrub and occasional trees, while the southern boundary adjoins residential properties and includes an Anglian Water pumping station.
- 7.34 The site is set in an elevated position which falls markedly from around 25.5m AOD along the western boundary to approximately 16.5m AOD in the east, creating an open aspect with extensive views across the fenland landscape to the north and east. Drainage ditches run along the north-east, south-west and south-east perimeters of the site.
- 7.35 Pringle Wood and Cutting (County Wildlife Site) and Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI are ancient woodland landscape features within the wider setting, forming part of the transition between the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area (LCA) and the Fens LCA to the north. These wooded areas are connected by a network of hedge banks and small, irregularly shaped fields that reflect the historic landscape character. They provide ecological connectivity and visual structure, creating a strong contrast with the open fenland context and linking the settlements located on higher ground.
- 7.36 The site is located within the Fen Edge Landscape Character Area (LCA), forming part of the transition between the Fen Margin LCA and the Fens LCA to the north. This position provides views across the surrounding landscape and illustrates the relationship between settlement and fenland that has historically influenced the development of Warboys. This area represents one of a few transitional zones within the district and is considered sensitive to change due to its open character. That being said, it not considered to be a valued landscape in line with NPPF paragraph 187, which is confirmed by the Landscape Officer.
- 7.37 The application is supported by a Landscape & Visual Appraisal (LVA) which consists of 3 documents which should be read in conjunction with each other: The original version dated 2023 submitted in support of the previously withdrawn application ref 22/00412/FUL, an addendum dated 2025 submitted in support of this application and Accurate Visual Representations dated Jan 2026.
- 7.38 The Landscape Officer has undertaken an assessment of the visual impact and has reviewed the submitted documents.
- 7.39 The LVA methodology set out in the LVA dated 2023 was agreed under 22/00412/FUL.

- 7.40 The revised current application proposes 43 dwellings on land east of Station Road, Warboys, following the withdrawal of 22/00412/FUL which was for 47 units. An addendum to the Landscape Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been submitted as part of the current application. The proposed development incorporates changes made after consultation and review. These include:
- a reduction in unit numbers and adjustments to the layout to improve site permeability and maintain views through the site towards the surrounding countryside.
  - Bungalows have been repositioned to the northern edge, and the pumping station has been relocated to the northern boundary within a landscaped setting.
  - The arrangement of front-facing plots has been amended to reflect the established character of Station Road.
  - Additional measures include the introduction of tree-lined verges and a landscape-led approach intended to integrate the development with its surroundings.
- 7.41 It is considered that the landscape character of the Fen Margins remains relatively intact despite the presence of large agricultural buildings and numerous wind turbines breaking the skyline within the adjacent Fen Landscape Character Area.
- 7.42 The Landscape Officer has advised that the host landscape has medium sensitivity within the wider LCA context. However, the site itself is highly sensitive to landscape change within its immediate setting. The updated viewpoint locations included in the Addendum are welcomed, as they provide a representative illustration of the visual experience along Footpath 245/7 over approximately 480 metres. However, these photographs were taken in August 2024 when trees were in full leaf (viewpoints for the LVA were also taken in full-leaf season, May 2022). In winter, filtered views extend up to 100 metres further south than Viewpoint 7. Additionally, when approaching Warboys from the north, the site becomes visible approximately 100 metres before Viewpoint 10. This indicates that the visual experience for users of the PRoW is affected over a distance more than 40% greater than previously illustrated, limiting the understanding of cumulative visual effects along these routes. Consequently, it is considered receptors on PRoW Warboys 7, to the east of the site, to have high sensitivity.
- 7.43 In response to the comments from the Landscape Officer, the applicant submitted Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs), including winter-season photography and wireframe modelling for Viewpoints 7 and 10. The submission of the AVRs is welcomed. It enables the planning authority, stakeholders, and the public to understand the likely landscape and visual changes resulting from the development. The out of leaf imagery to better reflect seasonal visibility. The wireframes in particular offer helpful clarity regarding the relationship between the proposed built form and the receiving landscape.

- 7.44 However, the Landscape Officer has advised that on review of all 3 documents that make up the LVA including the AVRs, they remain of the view the proposed development would result in changes to the landscape and views. This is due to its position at a village gateway and it being a transition space between landscape types. Changes include the permanent loss of key views from Station Road and changes to the landscape character and its perceptual qualities, which incorporate the historic and spatial relationships previously described. The submitted AVRs and the wireframes indicate that elements of the development, including rooflines, would remain perceptible above existing vegetation and would introduce a degree of change to the currently open fen-edge views.
- 7.45 The proposed development would continue to result in significant visual effects for high-sensitivity receptors along the Public Right of Way (PRoW) and the northern approach to Warboys. These effects remain most pronounced within the immediate foreground, particularly in the locations represented by Viewpoints 02–06 and along Station Road. Beyond the locations represented by Viewpoints 02–06 and Viewpoint 10, the proposed built form would not be visible, with the visual envelope closing rapidly due to the combination of distance, landform, and existing vegetation. As a result, visual effects are confined to the immediate and near-field context only, with no predicted effects on receptors beyond these viewpoints. Taking these factors into account, the Landscape Officer concludes that even with the proposed landscaping scheme that seeks to mitigate the visual impact, the proposed development would, overall, give rise to a medium/moderate level of landscape and visual harm.
- 7.46 Planning Officers agree with these conclusions. The proposed development overall would give rise to a medium/moderate level of landscape and visual harm which would conflict with Policy LP10 part (b). This will need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposal in the planning balance section at the end of the report. As noted within the earlier paragraphs of this report, the tilted balance contained within the NPPF is firmly engaged.
- 7.47 The proposed design of the development including landscaping will be discussed in more detail below.
- 7.48 Policy LP10 part (c) requires proposals to avoid giving rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others. These objectives could be secured by conditions and will be addressed in the relevant sections within this report. As such the proposal complies with Policy LP10 part (c).
- 7.49 As outlined above, Warboys as a Key Service Centre (KSC), it is considered there are a range of services and facilities available in

KSCs that meet many of the day to day needs of residents and to some extent those of other nearby settlements. Such settlements are, by their nature, considered more sustainable and are identified higher up the settlement hierarchy under Policy LP2.

- 7.50 This site is in a highly sustainable and accessible location for residential development, as it has local shops and services within reasonable walking and cycling distance, including a grocery store, bakery, hairdresser, church, library, public houses, doctor's surgery and community primary school. A local bus service provides transport to Abbey College in Ramsey. There are links with public transport, with a bus stop only 800m from the site on the route between Ramsey and Huntingdon, the latter of which provides access to national rail services.
- 7.51 NPPF Para 84 states: Planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside.
- 7.52 NPPF Para 110 states: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.
- 7.53 It is considered that the development would have access to services and facilities within Warboys, and also the means to access the market town of Huntingdon through sustainable modes of transport. The development would therefore not result in the development of isolated homes in the countryside nor would the future occupiers have to have an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle.
- 7.54 Given the above discussion about whether the site is considered to be wholly in the built-up area, and the fact that the proposed development is for 100% affordable housing, it could be argued that the principle of development is considered acceptable by virtue of its location within the built-up area of a key service centre. However, it could also be considered that the relevant policy tests lie at Local Plan Policy LP28 ("Rural Exceptions Housing"):

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

- (a) at least 60% (net) of the site area is for affordable housing for people with a local connection;
- (b) the number, size, type and tenure of the affordable homes is justified by evidence that they would meet an identified

- need arising within the settlement or nearby small settlements (as defined in 'Small Settlements' ) through a local needs survey or other local needs evidence;
- (c) the remainder of the site area is available as open market housing or plots suitable for custom or self-build homes tailored to meet locally generated need; and
  - (d) the amount of development and location of the proposal is sustainable in terms of:
    - (i) availability of services and existing infrastructure;
    - (ii) opportunities for users of the proposed development to travel by sustainable modes; and
    - (iii) effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole.”

7.55 Whilst the application meets requirement (a), it fails to evidence the local need requirement at (b). The Council’s Policy and Enabling Officer who advises on affordable housing has outlined the following:

*‘As you will also be aware, all the homes are to comprise Affordable Housing for which there continues to be a significant unmet need in the District. At this time, there are 3081 households on the Council’s Housing Register and yet more people will be interested in Shared Ownership housing. The difficulty in affording a home at market prices is well known but with Shared Ownership people can buy a share in the property and as their circumstances improve, they can acquire further shares and ultimately buy the property outright.*

*In discussion with the applicant (Amplius), it has been agreed that there will be a 'Local Lettings Plan'. The details will be finalised with the Council’s Housing Strategy/Allocations team and Amplius. These are used from time to time with the objective of delivering a balanced community by apportioning the initial lettings across the different priority bands on the housing register and also seeking to ensure a proportion are in employment. The sustainability of the development is further enhanced since a significant proportion of the homes will be Shared Ownership homes (18 no.) and the occupants of those are anticipated to be working and in higher income groups.*

*The provision of 43 affordable would therefore make a valuable contribution towards meeting the needs of people unable to afford market housing in the District.’*

7.56 LP28 (c) is not engaged in this instance. With regard to LP28 (d), that is addressed throughout the relevant sections of the report.

7.57 Overall, it is determined that the site is considered to be sustainable for the amount of development proposed. The above identified conflicts and harm will need to be weighed against the need for housing in the district, the significant need for affordable

housing within the district and any other benefits of the development. This will set out in the planning balance section at the end of the report.

## **Design, Landscaping and Open Space**

- 7.58 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape.
- 7.59 Section 12 of the NPPF (2023) seeks to achieve well designed places, noting that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 7.60 The National Design Guide (2020) sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It covers the following: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan. Of particular note to the current proposals is guidance relating to design and how this understands and relates well to the site within its local and wider context, how the history of the place has evolved and that local sense of place and identity are shaped by local history, culture and heritage, how a proposal responds to existing local character and identity, whether proposals are well designed, high quality and attractive and whether they are of an appropriate building type and form.
- 7.61 The HDS Design Guide (2017) is relevant to the current application proposals, in particular chapter 4 and sections 3.7 and 3.8. The guide states that the size, shape and orientation (the form) of a building can have a significant impact upon its surroundings. The form of new buildings should generally reflect traditional built forms found in Huntingdonshire. The scale, massing and height of proposed development should be considered in relation to that of adjoining buildings, the topography, pattern of heights in the area and views, vistas and landmarks.
- 7.62 The guide notes that with regard to building detailing, the district has various architectural styles and materials which reflects the local vernacular. It is noted that new buildings should be designed in harmony and proportional to each other, complimenting the overall street character of the place. Appropriate spaces between buildings helps to create an interesting streetscape. Detailed guidance is also provided relating to roofs, eaves and ridge lines and chimneys. With regards to materials, these should

complement the successful parts of any surrounding developments in order to conserve or enhance the distinctive character of the various parts of the district and to ensure that buildings sit comfortably within the landscape.

- 7.63 This revised application follows the withdrawal of application 22/00412/FUL for 47 affordable dwellings (withdrawn May 2024) and has been the subject of extensive redesign and consultee engagement.
- 7.64 Key revisions since the withdrawn application 22/00412/FUL:
- Reduction in unit numbers from 47 to 43, improving permeability and separation between dwellings.
  - Realignment and widening of the main access and green spine to create a continuous, direct corridor through the site to open space and countryside beyond.
  - Relocation of bungalows (Plots 36–37) away from the Station Road frontage to the northern edge, preserving views from Station Road towards Pingle Wood.
  - Relocation of the new pumping station to the northern boundary within a treed perimeter, away from the main public open space.
  - Introduction of a loop road, reducing cul-de-sacs and improving connectivity.
  - Design revisions to front-facing plots to reflect traditional Station Road character.
  - Reconfiguration of turning areas to allow forward access for most dwellings onto Station Road.
  - Inclusion of tree-lined verges and reduction of retaining wall heights across the site.

### Design

- 7.65 Development is setback from Station Road between 8.4m to 11.6m, behind a proposed new 2m footpath, knee rail, relocated swale, proposed tree and hedge planting and turning areas to allow the occupants of Plots 5-8 to enter and leave in forward gear. The frontage comprises semi-detached F-Type units (Plots 5-8) with side drives, C-Type corner turning units with frontage parking (Plots 9-10 and 42-43) and 2 pairs of A-Type units (Plots 1-4) towards the southeastern corner which are served by a parking court and separate access from Station Road.
- 7.66 The main site access is to be from Station Road, opposite No. 107a. This leads to a loop road, part of which forms a conventional road with 2m footpaths either side and 3m wide verges in front of Plots 21-28 and a shared surface road in front of Plots 29-37. This creates legible street layout and brings trees and soft landscaping into the centre of the development and allows for outward facing development overlooking the open space and northwest and southeast boundaries and frontage to Station Road.

- 7.67 The loop road allows the units to be arranged in 4 tiers of development that drop in height to follow the existing site contours from Station Road falling towards the northeast part of the site. The second existing access point along Station Road in the southern corner is the approximate location of a new access serving the parking court of Plots 1-4. Across the rest of the site parking is predominantly located on plot with side drives provided for Plots 5-8, 10-27, 29-35 and 42. These drives are aligned between the 4 tiers of development allowing multiple views between units from Station Road towards the open countryside to the north and northeast.
- 7.68 Apart from two bungalows, all other plots are two storeys in height with either a traditional dual-pitched roof and gables or hipped roofs. The appearance of plots 1-12 & 38-43 have been designed with traditional detailing. The appearance of the remaining plots (13-37) has been designed with a more contemporary appearance. A simple palette has been chosen for the whole development to reflect those in the local area. The main facing brick would be a buff gault brick with contrasting red facing brick for detailing work. TBS - Grantchester Bled TBS - Audley Antique A simple flat grey roof tile has been chosen for the whole development. On the contemporary designed dwellings (plots 13-37) this would be complimented with dark grey fascia boards and rainwater goods to create a contemporary aesthetic.
- 7.69 Key amendments since the withdrawn application include a reduction in dwelling numbers from 47 to 43, improved site permeability, and greater separation between units, while maintaining views towards the surrounding countryside. The principal green corridor from Station Road, which incorporates both vehicular and pedestrian access, has been widened. This open green swathe now forms a continuous straight line through to the northeast of the site, creating a more direct visual link compared to the previous offset alignment. The revised alignment also focuses views towards the distant open countryside, rather than towards the outer-lying buildings behind storage facilities on Heath Road. The Landscape Opportunities/Strategy Plan (N1166 (03)002 Rev A) which is provided as an appendix in the Landscape Visual Appraisal Addendum (INF\_N1166\_R02) May 2025 illustrates the improved site permeability.
- 7.70 The combination of proposed on-plot side-drives, frontage parking and a parking court is acceptable, provides variety and is well integrated with the built form, reducing the prominence of parking across the site. The revised layout demonstrates a significant improvement over the withdrawn scheme and responds positively to many of the recommendations made during pre-application and consultation discussions. The development achieves a clearer structure, better integration with its landscape setting, and stronger character references to Station Road. The proposed

design of the development would comply with policies LP11 and LP12 of the Local Plan.

### Landscaping

- 7.71 The overall arrangement of soft landscaping is supported. The proposed attenuation pond planting comprises a wetland planting mix and wetland grass mix. The principal green corridor creates an open green swathe that runs in a continuous straight line towards the northeast of the site. This forms a clear visual axis, directing views toward the distant open countryside. The location offers a valuable opportunity to enhance outward views from within the development—through the Fen Edge Landscape Character Area (LCA) and towards the Fens LCA—as well as views into and across the site.

### Open Space

- 7.72 In accordance with Local Plan Policies LP3 and LP4, proposals for residential development of this scale are required to provide appropriate levels of onsite informal and formal green space. The illustrative masterplan shows an appropriate level of onsite provision, with the Urban Design Officer commenting in support of the location, useability and natural surveillance of those open spaces.
- 7.73 When assessed against the adopted Developer Contributions SPD sufficient green space is provided as part of the proposed development, such to accord with Policies LP3 and LP4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The proposed layout also incorporates a dedicated area of public open space for residents to enjoy. This includes a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) and a retention basin, providing both recreational and functional benefits within the development. The details and design of the LEAP will be conditioned. The future management/maintenance, would need to be secured by way of Section 106 Agreement, were the Members minded to grant planning permission.

### Summary

- 7.74 Overall, it is considered that the application site could satisfactorily accommodate 43 dwellings. Taking these points into account, and when considering the densities of development in the locality, it is considered that the density of development and mix of built form shown on the drawings would not be uncharacteristic to the area. Urban Design are supportive of the proposal and recommend a number of conditions. The design of the proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable and would accord with the aims of the NPPF (2024), policies LP11 and LP12 of the Local Plan to 2036.

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

### Access, Transport & Highway Safety

- 7.75 Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seek to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.
- 7.76 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states: 116. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.
- 7.77 The application seeks full planning permission for 43 dwellings. Extensive objections have been received by local residents and the Parish Council regarding the amount of additional cars that would serve the proposed development and their impact on the local traffic network, the existing congestion issues and highway safety concerns. These concerns are noted. Members should be mindful that objections about speeding issues along Station Road is a matter for the police, not the planning process.
- 7.78 The applicant submitted a Transport Statement in support of the application. This outlines that the proposed development would generate a level of movements that could be accommodated, particularly at peak times. This level of traffic is not anticipated to have any significant impact on the wider highway network. It is considered that the likely number of movements associated with the development, and the Transport Statement's findings, are reasonable in relation to the number of dwellings proposed.
- 7.79 Vehicular access to the site is defined through a number of access points. There is a main access point off Station Road, which utilises the existing access point opposite 107a Station Road, that will serve 33 dwellings. The access leads to a loop road circulation within the site. The second existing access point along Station Road in the southern corner of the site is the approximate location of a new access serving plots 1-4 parking court. Five additional accesses to private drives will be created off Station Road to serve six dwellings. Four out of six plots will have the ability to turn around within the plot curtilage and therefore leave site onto Station Road in forward gear. A new 2m wide footpath along the frontage has been incorporated to improve access from the village to the development, with two crossing points proposed. Due to the requirement to construct a footway and verge along the site frontage for sustainable access reasons, the existing drain along the site boundary with Station Road would be realigned to the rear of the footway. A crossing point on Station Road, located between

the shared driveway for plots 1 and 2 and the access to the existing pumping station compound. The crossing point on the opposite side will be located between the existing drives for 67 and 67a Station Road with the drop kerb being extended.

- 7.80 The Highway Authority has been consulted as part of the application and raises no objection to the proposed development as the proposal will not have an adverse impact upon the local network and the access arrangements are acceptable in highway safety terms. This is consistent with the advice on the previously withdrawn application. Following discussions with the Highway Authority, they are satisfied that the design of the relocated ditch could be conditioned, with a gradient of 1:1 given that a fence is provided adjacent to the ditch but within the site boundary. Also, the footway will require additional construction depth and the bank will require reinforcement. The full scope of this work can be determined at S278 stage but will also be covered by way of a planning condition.
- 7.81 The Highway Authority recommends a number of conditions regarding access, internal road design and the highway improvement works. These conditions are therefore recommended to be imposed.
- 7.82 Subject to the inclusion of the conditions recommended by CCC Highway Authority, it is considered that a safe means of access could be achieved for the development and the traffic generated by the proposal would not have a severe impact upon the highway network. The development would connect to existing networks of sustainable transport to encourage travellers to use the sustainable travel opportunities within the development and the surrounding areas. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024), the development should not be refused on transport grounds. Subject to the inclusion of the recommended conditions, the proposed development complies with the NPPF 2024, policies LP16 and LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

### Parking

- 7.83 Car parking provision has been calculated at 1 space per 1-bed unit, 2 spaces per 2- and 3-bed units, and 3 spaces per 4-bed units, with additional EV charging provided for every dwelling. Five visitor spaces are proposed, distributed across the site. This overall provision is considered appropriate.
- **Side-drive dwellings:** Semi-detached dwellings with side drives are generously spaced, allowing parking bays to be widened to 3.3m where required. This ensures compliance with Policy LP25 and the provision of M4(2) accessible/adaptable dwellings.

- **Plots without side drives:** Plots 9, 43 with frontage parking include an access footpath adjacent to the space, for Plots 12 and 13, one of the two spaces allocated to each unit has been designed at 3.3m wide. Similarly, the ground-floor maisonettes at Plots 38–41 have been provided with 3m wide bays. This is supported as it ensures accessibility across a range of dwelling types.
- **M4(3) wheelchair adaptable homes:** Plots 36 and 37 incorporate parking spaces measuring 3380mm and 2500mm in width, each positioned adjacent to a 1200mm footpath. This arrangement is compliant with M4(3) requirements and is supported.

7.84 Each unit includes a cycle parking store and refuse storage within the rear garden (with communal stores proposed for Maisonette Type-I units). the stores are positioned on close to the rear of the dwellings, allowing level access from driveways and rear garden footpaths

7.85 Sufficient car and cycle parking is proposed to be provided as part of the development in accordance with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

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

### Flood Risk & Surface Water

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

7.87 The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding) as identified by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2024 and the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning. There is some surface water flooding on the far eastern element of the site, and some towards the north-eastern element of the site. The site is set in an elevated position which falls markedly from around 25.5m AOD along the western boundary to approximately 16.5m AOD in the east,

7.88 The concerns over Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Drainage raised by the Parish Council and local residents are carefully noted.

7.89 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been submitted with this application which demonstrates that the proposed layout, design, and mitigation measures would ensure that occupiers and users would remain safe from current and

future surface water flood risk for the lifetime of the development, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

- 7.90 The Parish Council and objectors have raised concerns in respect of flood risk but these concerns are not shared by the Lead Local Flood Authority, who has no objections to the proposed development. The application site is located in Flood Zone 1, where there is the lowest risk of flooding. The Lead Local Flood Authority has scrutinised the applicant's surface water drainage strategy and is satisfied that that this would be appropriate to manage run-off through permeable paving and an onsite infiltration basin on the eastern element of the site. The proposed built form avoids any areas at risk of surface water flooding. This approach has both flow attenuation and water quality benefits and therefore subject to appropriate conditions recommended by the LLFA, the proposed development is considered capable of complying with Policy LP5 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

#### Foul Drainage

- 7.91 Policy LP6 of the Local Plan sets out the approach necessary to ensure that waste water capacity is maintained through the plan period.
- 7.92 Policy LP6 states: "A proposal for major scale development that would:
- a. require a new connection to the sewer network;
  - b. involve significant increases to flows entering the sewer network; or
  - c. involve development of a site identified by the Huntingdonshire Stage 2 Detailed Water Cycle Study or updated, successor or equivalent documents, to have potentially limited sewer network capacity (Amber or Red assessment);
- will only be supported where a sustainable foul/ used water strategy has been prepared and agreed with Anglian Water as the sewerage undertaker to establish whether any upgrades are necessary so that flows from the proposal can be accommodated. If upgrades are necessary the proposal will need to include an agreed plan for delivery, including phasing of development as necessary."
- 7.93 Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) states the focus of planning decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively.
- 7.94 The proposal seeks to discharge foul water into the existing foul sewerage system.

- 7.95 Anglian Water originally advised this site is located within the catchment of the Oldhurst Water Recycling Centre (WRC), which currently lacks the capacity to accommodate the additional flows that would be generated by the proposed development as a whole. Anglian Water had determined that the site is unsustainable due to the associated environmental risk and the increased discharge rates, which could lead to a deterioration in water quality and an unacceptable risk of breaching environmental legislation at Oldhurst WRC. At present, no funding has been allocated at this Water Recycling Centre (WRC) for AMP 8 (2025-2030).
- 7.96 Anglian Water also originally objected to the proposed development due to the intended connection to the public foul drainage network and objects to any connection into our foul network from the proposed development, due to capacity constraints and pollution risk.
- 7.97 The applicant has submitted a report in response to this objection. The report outlines the following:
- Anglian Water (AW) provided a Pre-Planning assessment Report on the 11/03/2025 (Ref PPE0223268) confirming that the receiving wastewater recycling plant for the development was Oldhurst WRC and that capacity existed to accommodate the flows from the proposed development. Anglian Water also confirmed a suitable connection point and detailed works required for a suitable connection to be made that would fully comply with AW requirements. This pre-app advice is valid until March 2026.
  - The treatment of foul flows at the Oldhurst WRC is controlled by an environmental permit (Permit Number AWCNF/1160) issued by the Environment Agency (EA) who are responsible for the management of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016. The Environmental permit details the conditions that the operator (AW) must comply with. These cover all aspects of the operation and maintenance of the WRC and importantly state the volume of foul flow that can be treated and the quality of treated effluent that is discharged to the receiving watercourse (The Bury Brook).
  - A review of the flow data for the Oldhurst WRC using data supplied by the EA for years 2019-2024 (Note: the EA would not provide 2020 data due to an ongoing investigation has been undertaken. This shows that for those years, the flows are well below the limit.
  - To more accurately determine the current actual dry water flows at Oldhurst, the rainfall data for the years 2019-2024 has also been reviewed. Rainfall has a significant impact on the incoming flows and in wet years it could mean that even in the typically dry months (July, August, September) if high groundwater levels or rainfall continues it may well be that dry water flow conditions are not achieved throughout the year. This will mean that the measured

levels will be higher due to rainfall and water ingress rather than due to increased population related foul flows. This is why the EA now typically look for exceedance of the flow in 2 earlier years before a failure is recorded.

- The data demonstrates the impact of high rainfall levels in 2023 and 2024 which cause a significant increase in average flows treated throughout the entire year and in 2024 elevated Q90 flows. The Q90 flow in 2022 is 894 m<sup>3</sup>/day (a dry year) followed by a 2024 Q90 of 985 (a record wet period). This is a 10% increase in DWF in less than two years which if it were related to an increase of foul flows would represent a population increase of around 800 (or 300 newly connected dwellings) in less than two years. At a works that likely serves a population of around 8000 this would be most unlikely. It is however possible that the increase in flow is directly related to the wet years in 2023 and 2024 and our opinion is that AW are mistaken in their conclusion that the works does not have the capacity to treat the flows likely to be generated from the proposed development, which, based on AW calculations would increase the population equivalent by around 101 and the daily foul flows by <15m<sup>3</sup>/day.
- The report also comments that is suspected that that infiltration of groundwater and rainfall into the sewerage network is increasing due to poor maintenance of the sewers. If sewers are not maintained adequately, they will suffer from root damage and cracking which will mean that more groundwater ingress will take place. The increase in flows in wet years suggests high levels of water ingress that AW need to give urgent attention to.
- The report also highlights on the obligation placed on water companies to continuously review and properly manage all aspects of their permits. The permits under which water companies operate are determined by the Environment Agency (EA) and matters such as Environmental Permitting are clearly matters between the permit holder AW and the EA.
- In conclusion, the proposed development represents an increase of less than 1.5% in the permitted dry water flows at Oldhurst and as such is a very small increase. Therefore it is not agreed that the proposed development would cause the Oldhurst WRC to breach its Q90 flow limit and as such operate outside the limits of its EA permit.

7.98 This was sent to Anglian Water alongside a letter from HDC. Anglian Water have since confirmed they agree that the dry water flows returns are within the permit limits and therefore agree with the applicant on that point.

7.99 Anglian Water have explained that they also take into account the growth through planning consents. They have reviewed the latest Huntingdonshire 5 year housing supply Annual Monitoring Report-

Part 1 (Housing Supply) 2024/25 and note the progress of sites. Using their standard methodology for flow calculations, Anglian Water has advised that there will be headroom to accommodate the 43 dwellings proposed. On that basis, Anglian Water have removed their objection in relation to the Oldhurst WRC.

- 7.100 Anglian Water has advised they object to any connection into their foul network from the proposed development, due to capacity constraints and pollution risk. In order to overcome their objection, they required the applicant to reconsult Anglian Water in the form of a Pre-Development enquiry (PPE) in order to define a Sustainable Point of Connection (SPOC). This has taken place, and discussions with Anglian Water are ongoing.
- 7.101 Officers are satisfied that the applicant is engaging with Anglian Water to seek a solution to ensure the proposed development can remain safe for its lifetime. The implementation of this solution would fall under the responsibility of Anglian Water and the applicant and/or other statutory control regimes. To secure this, a Grampian condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a foul water drainage strategy should Members be minded to approve the proposal. A Grampian condition prevents development from starting or being occupied until specified off-site works or measures have been completed. Subject to this condition, the proposed development would be safe for its lifetime and would not exacerbate foul water network capacity constraints or give rise to pollution risks. Officers therefore seek delegated authority to resolve outstanding matters with Anglian Water and to subsequently impose a suitably worded condition.
- 7.102 This will be consistent with recent decisions made by Members of the DMC.
- 7.103 Subject to the imposition of the recommended condition, the proposed development would accord with Policy LP6 of the Local Plan.

### **Trees**

- 7.104 Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and that a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development.
- 7.105 The proposal is not located within a Conservation Area nor are there any Tree Preservation Orders on or immediately adjacent to the site.

- 7.106 The majority of the site is an agricultural field. However, there are number of trees and hedgerows on the perimeter of the site. An AIA, Tree Protection Plan and Tree Survey has been provided with the application. All of the trees have been given a 'B' grade rating. The Tree Officer has reviewed this and also visited the site. The Tree Officer has confirmed that the mature Oak Trees along the northern boundary are not veteran trees. Although the trees are large and of high value, their condition is not one of a Veteran tree, due their relatively young age and lack of significant heart rot/decay.
- 7.107 In terms of the group of trees on the northern common boundary, a 3m high acoustic fence is proposed on that common boundary. As discussed in further detail below, this is required to mitigate the noise from the factory. Plots 38-43 are also sited adjacent to this group of trees. The Tree Officer has raised concern about the impact of this acoustic fence and the encroachment into root protection areas. The acoustic fencing will require tree pruning for installation, and the excavations throughout their RPA's, some of the RPA's would be left within the rear gardens, constant and on-going pruning would be required which would degrade the trees and their value. This is noted, and will be weighed up at the end of the report.
- 7.108 The Tree Officer has recommended a number of conditions if members look to approve the application regarding methods of construction, tree protection etc. These conditions are considered are necessary to ensure accordance with the aims of Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

## **Biodiversity**

- 7.109 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.
- 7.110 A preliminary ecological assessment (PEA) within the Habitat and Protected Species Suitability Report has been submitted as part of the application, and demonstrates that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on wildlife subject to recommendations outlined in the report.
- 7.111 The application is supported a numerous surveys which have been reviewed by the Ecology Officer who is content with the conclusions and agrees that no further surveys are required. Conditions are recommended regarding further surveys should

work not commence within 18 months, sensitive lighting plan, precautionary working method statement and an ecological enhancement statement.

- 7.112 In accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021 and amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, this development is subject to the mandatory requirement to deliver at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- 7.113 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment within the Habitat and Protected Species Suitability Report has been submitted as part of the application.
- 7.114 The site is an arable field with good quality grassland on site. The proposed development will inevitably result in the loss of some of these grassland.
- 7.115 There is scope onsite to provide some biodiversity net gain through enhancements and SuD's features on the eastern section of the site. A number of off-site units would need to be secured also. A condition is recommended to secure this. Overall, the Ecology Officer is satisfied that the application is supported by sufficient information to demonstrate the development is capable of providing at least 10% BNG.
- 7.116 A BNG condition is recommended to secure this net gain. Due to the size and distinctiveness of habitat created onsite, a monitoring fee of £6,345.50 broken up into instalments is required to cover a period of 30 years. This would be required to be secured through a Section 106 agreement and is considered necessary to ensure the biodiversity net gain is achieved in accordance with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan and the NPPF 2024. The Ecology Officer is content with this approach.
- 7.117 Warboys and Wistow Wood SSSI is located circa 833m to the north-west of the site. The applicant has submitted a SSSI Impact Assessment. This has been reviewed by Natural England who confirm they agree with the conclusions. A condition is recommended to secure the provision of Homeowner Information Packs (about respecting SSSI's, making use of PROW's and educational tools for the environment) as a way of mitigation.
- 7.118 Subject to the imposition of the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to broadly accord with the objectives of Policy LP30 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 7.119 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all

users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

#### Amenity of neighbouring properties

- 7.120 The closest neighbouring residential properties are on the northern side of Station Road and abut the eastern boundary of the application. These properties are no.84 Station Road, which fronts onto Station Road but is separated from the site by the access to No.86 Station Road which sits to the rear of No.84. Unlike No.84, No.86 sits against the site boundary.
- 7.121 The nearest plots to those properties are Plot 1, 20, 28 and 29. Plot 1 is located a considerable distance away from both properties and therefore will not have a significant impact upon these two neighbouring properties. Plot 20 is located circa 14m away from No.86. The proposed first floor windows on the eastern facing elevation look towards the driveway of No.86. Plots 20 is positioned and orientated to avoid any significant interlooking or overlooking from the first floor windows on the northern facing elevation because the angles will be too oblique. It is therefore considered that Plot 20 would not have a significant impact upon No.86.
- 7.122 Plots 28 has two first floor windows on the east facing elevation which would face towards the rear garden of No.86. Whilst there would be circa 17m separation, both of those rooms are served by windows on either the north or south elevations. Officers therefore recommended a condition to obscure glaze the proposed first floor windows on the east facing elevation of Plot 28. In regard to Plot 29, that is located a considerable distance away from No.86.
- 7.123 The other nearest residential properties are opposite the site on the south/west side of Station Road. Given the proposed development is set quite a bit back from the site boundary, this relationship is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.124 It is considered that the detailed layout demonstrates no significant impact upon any neighbouring properties.
- 7.125 The Environmental Health Team (EH) have been consulted as part of the application and have not raised any concerns. Conditions to protect neighbouring properties during construction, a construction environmental management plan is recommended to be imposed should Members be minded to approve the application.
- 7.126 Given the site context and the design of the development, no concerns are raised regarding noise or lightning.

#### Amenity for future occupiers

- 7.127 In terms of noise, a noise assessment was submitted with the application. The assessment identified factory noise to the north and traffic noise to the south-west from Station Road. The assessment sets out the factory noise could be mitigated with a 3m high acoustic fence on the common boundary. A condition is recommended to secure this. This would affect plots 38-43 the most. However, it is located between circa 10m -14m away. Whilst it may have a degree of impact upon these plots given its height and proximity, it is considered necessary to mitigate the noise from the factory and therefore acceptable in this instance. It is located a considerable distance away from plots 36 and 37. Traffic noise would be mitigated with glazing and background ventilation. A condition is also recommended to secure the implementation of the recommendations of the noise assessment. The pumping station has also been relocated to a less sensitive part of the site and will be further away from neighbouring properties. Environmental Health have raised no concerns about odour or noise from the pumping station, nor have they raised any concern about air quality.
- 7.128 In respect of the amenity of future occupants, it is considered that the detailed layout has been designed to ensure amenity of the future occupiers of the development is of a high quality. It is noted that, in any event, occupants would be aware of the layout and relationship of the site and would be able to make an informed decision on how that relationship would relate to their personal needs.
- 7.129 The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms amenity to both existing neighbouring properties and future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Local Plan Policy LP14, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Accessible Housing**

- 7.130 The requirements within policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 relating to accessible and adaptable homes are applicable to all new dwellings. This states that all dwellings (where practicable and viable) should meet Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'. These include design features that enable mainstream housing to be flexible enough to meet the current and future needs of most households, including in particular older people, those with some disabilities, and also families with young children. The applicant has confirmed that all the dwellings meet the requirements of M4(2) and a condition is recommended to be attached to secure these Building Regulation requirements. In addition to this, two bungalows are to be provided which meet the requirements of M4(3).

## **Water Efficiency**

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

## **Other Matters**

### Contamination

- 7.132 Policy LP37 of the Local Plan states that where ground contamination of a site is possible, the risks of such needs to be investigated. The geo-environmental assessment indicated that the site is likely to be suitable for its proposed new use with regard to land contamination and the supplementary ground investigation confirms that no contamination was identified along the south-western boundary. However, in light of potential sewage overflows or fuel leaks from the adjoining sites, it might be prudent to include an "unexpected contamination" condition. The proposal therefore complies with Policy LP37 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan.

### Fire Hydrants

- 7.133 A fire hydrant condition is recommended to be imposed given the size and scale of development, and on the advice of the Fire Service.

### Archaeology

- 7.134 In terms of archaeology, The Historic Team at Cambridgeshire County Council have been consulted. They advise that the development lies in an area of archaeological potential, to the north of the historic core of Warboys. Archaeological investigations in advance of residential development along Station Road to the south have found evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity including an inhumation burial, pitting, ditches and a series of disarticulated human remains of the same date (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record reference. MCB23599). Earlier prehistoric activity was found including Iron Age pitting. These earlier remains were found to be overlain with evidence of medieval agricultural regimes and post-medieval quarry pits (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record references ECB5008, ECB5549, ECB4648, ECB5548, MCB23599, MCB25917). Cropmarks of circular enclosures and long, linear features along with further probable quarry pitting are also present to the west, adjacent to Coronation Avenue (MCB20261), and a medieval moated site is present to the north of the proposed development, at Pingle Wood (MCB23579). The Historic Team advise that due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to

provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary. A written scheme of investigation condition is therefore recommended.

Cumulative impact – incinerator proposal

- 7.135 Concerns have been raised locally that whilst planning application CCC/22/151/FUL for an incinerator at The Old Brick Works, Puddock Hill, has been withdrawn, Thermeco has publicly confirmed its intention to submit a revised application. However, at the time of writing this report, there is no live application for an incinerator.

### **Developer Contributions**

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

### CIL

- 7.137 Housing in Huntingdonshire is generally Chargeable Development under the Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) Regulations. CIL payments cover footpaths and access, health, community facilities, libraries, lifelong learning and education.
- 7.138 However, a chargeable development which comprises social housing is entitled to full relief from CIL for the ‘qualifying dwellings’ within the development. There are clawback provisions if the development no longer qualifies for relief within seven years of the commencement of development. However, this is not a planning issue. In respect of the lack of health and education contributions, the Contributions SPD is clear that the threshold for contributions are for developments of 200 or more, everything below is addressed via CIL. This development is for 43 dwellings. The development is still a chargeable development for CIL but is granted CIL relief given that it is 100% affordable. It is also noted that Warboys is Key Service Centre and has a range of services and facilities available. The CIL bid process is also separate from planning.

### Affordable Housing

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

### Open/Green Space

- 7.140 In accordance with Local Plan Policies LP3 and LP4, proposals for residential development of this scale are required to provide appropriate levels of onsite informal and formal green space. The site plan shows an appropriate level of onsite provision, with the Urban Design Officer commenting in support of the location, useability and natural surveillance of those open spaces. When assessed against the adopted Developer Contributions SPD sufficient green space will be provided as part of the proposed development, such to accord with Policies LP3 and LP4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The design and delivery of the onsite open spaces, and their future management/maintenance, would need to be secured by way of Section 106 Agreement, were Members minded to grant planning permission.

### Formal Sports

- 7.141 Comments have been received from the Strategic Sports Development Officer. Within those comments, it is noted that Warboys Parish Council have received several S106 financial contributions (some have been paid, some are due to paid when thresholds have been met). No project has been identified for a contribution and therefore no contribution has been sought.

### Residential Wheeled Bins

- 7.142 Each dwelling would require the provision of wheeled bins. The current cost of such provision to the developer is £150 per dwelling and would be secured through S106 Agreement were Members minded to grant planning permission.

## **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

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

date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

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

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

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

7.147 NPPF para 11 states:

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

*For decision-taking this means:*

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

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

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

*7\* Foot note 7 states: The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated*

*as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.'*

- 7.148 As outlined in the report, in light of the considerations, there are no strong reasons for refusal in relation to any habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Green Space, irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75) and areas at risk of flooding. Therefore, there is no reason to not move forward to test d (ii) as per above and thus the 'titled balance' is engaged.
- 7.149 As stated above, a tilted balance approach should be applied in the assessment of the proposed development, and a balancing exercise should be carried out to determine the potential any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 7.150 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 43 affordable dwellings in Warboys.
- 7.151 It has been determined that the western part of the site is on land within the built-up area, and the eastern part of the site is on land on land well related to the built up area but could be considered visually part of the countryside. Policies LP8 and LP10 are therefore relevant and are considered for completeness. These Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications. The aspects of these policies that restrict development on land well-related to the built up or in the countryside is to be given reduced weight.
- 7.152 It has been established that the proposed development is in a sustainable location, would have access to services and facilities, and that it would not result in an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle. As such, the proposed development would comply with Framework Paragraph 109.
- 7.153 It is considered that the application site could satisfactorily accommodate 43 dwellings and be of an acceptable design and layout.
- 7.154 The proposed access arrangements are considered to be safe and acceptable in highway safety terms. The level of traffic generated by the development would not result in adverse traffic impacts on the surrounding network.

- 7.155 The site is Flood Zone 1, and the site is therefore acceptable in principle in terms of flood risk and drainage.
- 7.156 The development of this 2.3 hectare site would result in the loss of Grade 2 agricultural land, nationally considered as amongst the best and most versatile agricultural land. The proposal would result in the irreversible loss of some of this best and most versatile agricultural land. The irreversible loss of agricultural land which can be used for food or crop production would conflict with Policy LP10 part (a)(i). However, given that the total area of agricultural land being lost is less than 20 hectares and therefore does not trigger consultation with Natural England as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order) (DMPO) 2015. This loss is not considered to be significant. Whilst harm does arise from this loss, such harm should be quantified through the size of the loss which amounts to 2.3 hectares. Therefore, in this case, moderate weight is attached to this.
- 7.157 As outlined above, the surrounding landscape is not considered to be a valued landscape in line with NPPF paragraph 187, which is confirmed by the Landscape Officer. Whilst this application represents an improvement on the previously withdrawn application through the reduction in number of dwellings, improved views from Station Road through the development and pulling back of the built form from Station Road, even with the proposed landscaping mitigation, the proposed development overall would give rise to a medium/moderate level of landscape and visual harm which would conflict with Policy LP10 part (b). This harm is considered to be moderate given that the harm is considered to be localised as it is confined to the immediate and near-field context only.
- 7.158 There would be a degree of impact upon the group of trees on the western boundary due to the acoustic fence and positioning of the curtilages of those nearest properties. However, as outlined above, the site layout has been developed in response to a number of constraints and consultee comments, and maintains visual gaps through the development. It is therefore considered that in that context, and on balance the degree of impact upon the group of trees on the western boundary is not significant.
- 7.159 As noted above, there would be some element of conflict identified with the requirements of Policy LP28. This is because the application is not supported by a housing needs survey for Warboys. The identified element of Policy LP28 deals with evidence of unmet local need in the context of rural exception sites as opposed to affordable housing needs more generally and within a strategic context.
- 7.160 However, the delivery of housing and affordable housing is a prime material consideration of significant and strategic importance for

the District. The Council's housing team have confirmed that there continues to be a significant unmet need in the District and the delivery of all 43 dwellings as affordable housing would make a valuable contribution towards meeting the needs of people unable to afford market housing in the District.

- 7.161 At this time, there are some 3081 households on the Council's Housing Register and yet more people will be interested in Shared Ownership housing. The difficulty in affording a home at market prices is well known but with Shared Ownership people can buy a share in the property and as their circumstances improve, they can acquire further shares and ultimately buy the property outright.
- 7.162 The extent of known demand arising from the Council's Housing Register is clearly significant and should attract commensurate weight within the planning balance, particularly when considering any identified conflicts with development plan policy.
- 7.163 There is an obligation through the planning process to provide for affordable housing in sustainable locations and the magnitude of need across the district outweighs any remnant harm arising from the 'exception site' element of policy LP28.
- 7.164 Overall, the proposal would result in the delivery of 43 homes towards the housing supply and acknowledged need for new affordable homes. The applicant has agreed to two years for implementation. This will mean that the homes will come forward sooner. Substantial weight is afforded to this provision and delivery.
- 7.165 This quantum of residential development would not only address local needs but would also contribute to the national imperative to deliver 1.5 million new homes over the current parliamentary period as set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of July 2024. Further ministerial statements since, flowing from this, also highlight the importance of the £39 billion pounds 'social and affordable homes programme' designed to deliver the biggest boost to social and affordable housing in a generation.
- 7.166 In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposal would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation - during the construction phase and in the longer term through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. Moderate weight is afforded to this.
- 7.167 In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, the proposal offers potential for the incorporation of energy efficiency measures, the delivery of green space and a 10% minimum net gain in biodiversity. The application site constitutes a sustainable location for the scale of development

proposed in respect of access to local employment opportunities, services and facilities in the local area as well as Ramsey and Huntingdon and is accessible by sustainable transport modes. Moderate weight is afforded to this.

- 7.168 Conflict/harm has been identified in relation to loss of agricultural land and the localised landscape/visual impact. This is weighed against the benefits of the provision of 43 dwellings in a sustainable location in the absence of the Council being able to demonstrate a 5YHLS, as well as the provision of 43 affordable dwellings which will make a valuable contribution towards addressing the significant shortfall across the district and the other above-mentioned benefits.
- 7.169 It is concluded that the identified harm would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits when taking all the positives and negatives of the proposal into account.
- 7.170 Having regard to all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that approval be granted.

**8. RECOMMENDATION – APPROVAL with delegated authority to the Head of Planning, Infrastructure & Public Protection (Chief Planning Officer) to resolve Anglian Water matters including the wording of a suitable condition for foul drainage, and subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 obligation relating to affordable housing, BNG monitoring, provision of open space and wheeled bins, and to conditions to include those listed below:**

- Time limit (2 years)
- Approved Plans
- Boundary treatment (including railing on Station Road)
- Hard and soft landscaping
- Materials
- Architectural details
- Cycle and refuse stores
- LEAP design and play equipment
- Street furniture
- Lighting
- Highways (including access, internals, relocated ditch and highway improvements etc)
- Surface water drainage
- Foul drainage
- Trees (including construction method, tree protection etc)
- Ecology (including lighting, method statement, enhancements, welcome packs etc)
- BNG
- Obscure glaze 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows east elevation Plot 28
- Acoustic fence
- Windows & ventilation

- CEMP
- Unexpected contamination
- Fire Hydrants
- Written scheme of investigation (archaeology)
- M4(2) dwellings
- Water efficiency

or

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

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

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to **Lewis Tomlinson Development Management Officer** – [lewis.tomlinson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:lewis.tomlinson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)



WARBOYS COMMUNITY CENTRE  
High Street  
Warboys  
PE28 2TA  
01487 505062  
[Clerk@warboysparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:Clerk@warboysparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
[www.warboysparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.warboysparishcouncil.gov.uk)

To:  
Development Services  
Huntingdonshire District Council  
Pathfinder House  
St Mary's Street  
Huntingdon  
PE29 3TN

**10<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Updated Objection and Request for Refusal**

**Planning Application:** 25/01279/FUL

**Site:** Land North of the Sewage Pumping Station, Station Road, Warboys

Warboys Parish Council writes to reaffirm and update its formal objection to the above planning application, having now reviewed the recently released planning documents submitted in December 2025 and January 2026, including the applicant's Responses to Consultees and updated highways material.

Having carefully considered this additional information, the Parish Council is of the clear view that the newly submitted documents do not address the fundamental and material planning objections previously raised. The proposal remains unacceptable in principle and should be refused for the reasons set out below.

**1. CONTINUED CONFLICT WITH THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN TO 2036**

The recently submitted documents do not revisit or rebut the conclusions of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), which explicitly rejected this site for development. The site remains:

- Grade 1 agricultural land, protected under Policy LP10(a);
- Open countryside outside the built-up area boundary, contrary to Policy LP8; and
- Of high landscape sensitivity, contributing to the rural setting of Warboys.

No material change in circumstances has been demonstrated to justify departing from the adopted Local Plan strategy.

**2. FAILURE TO JUSTIFY THE DEVELOPMENT AS A RURAL EXCEPTION SITE**

Despite being promoted as a 100% affordable housing scheme, the proposal continues to fail to meet the requirements of Policy LP28:

- No Housing Needs Survey has been undertaken for Warboys;
- No evidence of unmet local need has been provided;
- No binding mechanism is proposed to prioritise local households; and
- The site's unsustainable location conflicts with LP28(d).

The newly submitted documents do not remedy these deficiencies.

### 3. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT AND ABSENCE OF MEANINGFUL CIL OR SECURED MITIGATION

As a 100% affordable housing development, the scheme will generate no meaningful Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts for Warboys Parish.

The proposal would introduce approximately 190–200 new residents through 43 dwellings, representing a significant increase in the village population, yet:

- No firm Section 106 obligations are secured;
- Health and education contributions remain “subject to discussions”;
- No alternative funding mechanism is proposed to offset the absence of CIL; and
- No certainty is provided that local infrastructure can support this level of growth.

This places additional pressure on already constrained services and facilities and weighs significantly against the sustainability of the proposal.

### 4. HIGHWAYS SAFETY, DRAINAGE, AND DEFERRED TECHNICAL DETAIL

While the applicant has submitted revised access drawings and explanatory material, the Parish Council notes that:

- Station Road remains the sole access point to the development;
- Steep gradients are mitigated rather than resolved;
- The drainage ditch along Station Road must be infilled and realigned to facilitate a footway; and
- The acceptability of these works is deferred to post-permission S38 and S278 agreements.

Critical matters relating to highway safety, drainage stability, and long-term maintenance remain unresolved at the application stage.

### 5. LANDSCAPE, CHARACTER, AND VISUAL IMPACT (INCLUDING MISLEADING VISUAL EVIDENCE)

The Parish Council remains concerned about the loss of open countryside, erosion of the rural edge of Warboys, and harm to valued long-distance fenland views.

In addition, the Parish Council considers that the photographic evidence submitted with the application is misleading and does not provide an accurate representation of landscape impact. The photographs are predominantly taken facing back towards the village, rather than looking down the site and across the open countryside, which is where the most significant visual harm would occur.

As a result:

- The openness and depth of the site are understated;
- The true extent of countryside loss is not properly illustrated; and
- The development's impact on the wider landscape setting of Warboys is not accurately conveyed.

The newly released documents acknowledge significant level changes across the site and confirm the need for prominent retaining walls, in some cases exceeding 1100mm in height.

This further undermines the reliability of the applicant's landscape and visual assessment.

## 6. AMENITY IMPACTS – SEWAGE PUMPING STATION AND INDUSTRIAL USE

The site lies adjacent to a sewage pumping station and close to a B2 industrial premises. No odour, noise, or amenity assessments have been provided, contrary to the "agent of change" principle set out in the NPPF. This omission remains unaddressed.

## 7. CUMULATIVE IMPACT – INCINERATOR PROPOSAL

While planning application CCC/22/151/FUL for an incinerator at The Old Brick Works, Puddock Hill, has been withdrawn, Thermeco has publicly confirmed its intention to submit a revised application.

The likelihood of a future incinerator proposal in close proximity to the site remains a material planning consideration. No cumulative impact assessment has been undertaken, and the applicant's failure to address this realistic planning context is a significant omission.

## 8. PROCEDURAL AND GOVERNANCE CONCERNS

The Parish Council has submitted a Freedom of Information request to Huntingdonshire District Council regarding governance arrangements for this application.

Serious concerns remain regarding:

- HDC's dual role as landowner and determining authority;
- The fact that the sale of the land is contingent on the grant of planning permission;
- The absence of clear separation between commercial and regulatory functions; and
- Restricted public access to application documents during part of the consultation period due to a planning portal outage.

These matters undermine public confidence in the transparency and impartiality of the planning process.

## **CONCLUSION**

The newly submitted documents do not materially alter the planning balance. They rely on justification, mitigation, and deferred detail rather than resolving fundamental policy conflicts and site constraints.

For the reasons set out above, Warboys Parish Council respectfully requests that planning application **25/01279/FUL** be **refused**, as it:

- Conflicts with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036;
- Fails to meet the requirements for a rural exception site;
- Introduces significant infrastructure and sustainability impacts without mitigation;
- Causes harm to landscape character and residential amenity; and
- Raises serious procedural and governance concerns.

Yours faithfully,



Clerk to Warboys Parish Council

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Charlotte Lowe (Cllr) [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 03 September 2025 15:40  
**To:** Lewis Tomlinson  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Call-in 25/01279/FUL

Dear Lewis and Planning,

I am writing to formally request that planning application 25/01279/FUL, relating to the proposed residential development at Station Road, Warboys, be referred to the Planning Committee (DMC) for determination rather than decided under delegated powers.

This request is made on the basis of several material planning considerations that I believe warrant wider scrutiny and public debate:

- **Wastewater Infrastructure Capacity:** Anglian Water has objected to the application due to insufficient capacity at Oldhurst Water Recycling Centre. The risk of environmental harm and potential breach of statutory obligations is significant and unresolved.
- **Amenity Impact:** The proposed dwellings are located within 15 metres of a sewage pumping station, raising serious concerns about noise, odour, and disruption. This proximity could result in unacceptable living conditions for future residents.
- **Flood Risk and Surface Water Management:** The site's impermeable clay soils and complex drainage strategy—including ditch realignment and attenuation ponds—require careful consideration. The long-term sustainability of these measures is uncertain.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain:** The development cannot deliver the required 10% net gain on-site and relies on off-site compensation. This approach may not align with Policy LP30 or the Environment Act 2021.
- **Prematurity and Scale:** The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary and is not allocated for development in the Local Plan. Given the scale of the proposal and its edge-of-village location, it may represent overdevelopment and undermine the character of the area.
- **Conflict with National Policy – Heritage and Archaeology:** The Archaeology Report (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record references MCB23599, ECB5008, ECB5549, etc.) identifies that the development site lies within an area of high archaeological potential.

Previous investigations in the immediate area uncovered Anglo-Saxon burials, Iron Age features, and medieval remains. Failure to secure proper preservation and mitigation would risk contravening the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)**, which emphasises the need to conserve and record heritage assets. This makes the matter of more than local significance.

- **Community Safety and Crime Prevention:** Although the developer has submitted a Crime Reduction Statement adopting principles of “Secured by Design”, there are unresolved concerns about natural surveillance, defensive boundaries, and lighting design in a rural setting. Poorly implemented layouts risk undermining community safety, contrary to NPPF policies on creating safe, inclusive and accessible environments.
- **Wider Regional and Precedent-setting Impact:** This development is of a scale and sensitivity that extends beyond Warboys parish. It sets a precedent for how archaeological sites in Huntingdonshire and beyond will be managed when faced with housing development pressures. This is a matter of more than local significance in terms of heritage protection, housing growth, and planning consistency across Cambridgeshire.

Given the above concerns, I believe this application raises issues of strategic importance and public interest that merit transparent discussion at committee level.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this letter and advise whether the application will be referred to committee.

Kind regards  
Charlotte

Charlotte Lowe BSc (Hons) Env.Sci.  
Huntingdonshire District Councillor - Warboys Ward  
Covering Broughton, Old Hurst, Pidley cum Fenton, Upwood & The Raveleys, Warboys, Wistow & Woodhurst villages

[REDACTED]

Huntingdonshire District Council | Pathfinder House | St Mary's Street | Huntingdon | PE29 3TN



[REDACTED]

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**From:** Charlotte Lowe (Cllr) [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 10 September 2025 16:02  
**To:** Lewis Tomlinson  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Planning application 25/01279/FUL

Dear Lewis,

I am writing to formally object to planning application 25/01279/FUL for the proposed development of 43 affordable dwellings at Land North of the Sewage Pumping Station, Station Road, Warboys. This objection is based on material planning considerations, many of which conflict with the NPPF, as evidenced by the supporting documents for the application.

### **Procedural and Policy Conflicts**

The application raises significant procedural issues, including a clear **conflict of interest** as Huntingdonshire District Council is both the landowner of the site and the planning authority making the decision. This undermines public confidence in the impartiality of the planning process.

As mentioned by Warboys Parish Council in their objection letter, the proposal also fails to address the site's history in the planning process. This site was previously rejected for allocation in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) for the Local Plan to 2036. A key reason for the previous rejection, which remains relevant, is that the site is comprised of Grade 2 agricultural land, which is considered "very good quality". The permanent loss of this productive farmland conflicts with **NPPF Paragraphs 174 and 175**, which require planning decisions to protect and enhance valued soils and recognize the economic benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

### **Amenity and Environmental Suitability**

The site is unsuitable for residential use due to significant **environmental health and amenity issues**. The Environmental Health Officer's report identifies considerable noise from the adjacent factory and road traffic. The proposed mitigation measures, including a **3m high acoustic barrier**, sealed glazing, and mechanical ventilation, demonstrate that the site is not appropriate for residential development.

This conflicts with **NPPF Paragraph 135**, which requires developments to provide a high standard of amenity for future residents. Additionally, the location presents potential contamination risks from adjacent sites and previous large development of houses behind the existing terraced houses on Station Road, due to possible sewage overflows from the Pumping Station, fuel leaks and surface water flooding.

Locating affordable family housing next to industrial noise and potential contamination risks is contrary to this principle. This also conflicts with **Local Plan Policy LP17 (Amenity)**, which requires that development does not harm the health, quality of life, or amenity of existing and future residents.

A further concern is the potential impact from a proposed incinerator at Woodford's Recycling Centre, which would exacerbate these existing amenity issues.

### **Loss of Prime Agricultural Land**

The application site is former Grade 2 **agricultural land (2.35 hectares)** which only recently went out of production, due to the landlord proposing this site for development.

Paragraphs **174 and 175 of the NPPF** require planning decisions to protect and enhance valued soils and recognise the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a). The permanent loss of productive farmland for housing undermines long-term food security and directly conflicts with these national policy aims.

This also conflicts with **Local Plan Policy LP10 (The Countryside)**, which seeks to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, including the role of agricultural land.

### **Unresolved Infrastructure and Heritage Concerns**

The application has not adequately addressed concerns raised by technical consultees:-

- **Highway Safety:** While a transport assessment was not required for the proposed number of dwellings, the Highways Development Management Engineer has requested amended drawings to resolve issues with a "too severe" taper in front of Plot 21 and the need for relocated or additional crossing points.
- Given that the road is one lane each way, with residents parking their cars on the road outside their homes, this proposed development will further increase road traffic collisions and potential difficulties for families crossing the road and vehicular turning.
- 
- **Drainage and Flood Risk:** The LLFA has reviewed the drainage plans, but there are still concerns regarding the relocation of the ditch. Anglian Water has also noted that assets close to, or crossing the site, will require diversion at the developer's cost. Plus the sewerage system will not cope with the additional 43 properties proposed on this site.
- 
- **Archaeological and Heritage Concerns:** The site lies within an area of "high archaeological potential". Previous investigations nearby have uncovered evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity, including an inhumation burial and Iron Age features. Developing this site risks the permanent loss of nationally important heritage assets, which directly conflicts with **NPPF Paragraph 205**. This raises direct conflict with **Local Plan Policy LP34 (Heritage Assets and Their Settings)**.

### **Failure to Deliver Biodiversity Net Gain**

The scheme also fails to meet a key policy requirement for **Biodiversity Net Gain**. The applicant has admitted that the scheme cannot deliver the required 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on-site and instead relies on off-site credits. This is in direct conflict with **NPPF Paragraph 186**, which requires a measurable net gain in biodiversity.

The proposed site is highly visible with wide open views to the surrounding countryside. Development here would cause permanent harm to the landscape setting of Warboys. Paragraph **180 of the NPPF** requires planning decisions to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

This also conflicts with **Local Plan Policies LP11 (Design Context)** and **LP12 (Design Implementation)**, which require development to integrate positively into its landscape setting and avoid harm to rural character.

With the potential build of an incinerator very close to the proposed site, I do not think the potential residents would be so keen on purchasing a property that is so close to an incinerator!

In summary, this proposal:

- Conflicts with **NPPF paragraphs 174–175, 180, 186, and 205.**
- Conflicts with **Local Plan Policies LP10, LP11, LP12, LP17, LP30, and LP34.**
- Results in the **loss of agricultural land, harm to heritage assets, risk to residential amenity, and a failure to deliver biodiversity net gain.**

For the reasons outlined above, the proposal is considered to be **contrary** to both national and local planning policies, is outside the built-up area of the village (contrary to Policy LP8) and should be refused.

Kind regards  
Charlotte

Charlotte Lowe BSc (Hons) Env.Sci.  
Huntingdonshire District Councillor - Warboys Ward  
Covering Broughton, Old Hurst, Pidley cum Fenton, Upwood & The Raveleys, Warboys, Wistow & Woodhurst villages

████████████████████  
Huntingdonshire District Council | Pathfinder House | St Mary's Street | Huntingdon | PE29 3TN



## County Councillor for Warboys and The Stukeleys

Abbots Ripton - Alconbury Weald - Great Raveley - Great Stukeley  
Little Raveley - Little Stukeley - Upwood - Warboys - Wennington  
Wistow - Woodwalton

## Leader of the Cambridgeshire County Council Conservative Group

Planning Department  
Huntingdonshire District Council  
Pathfinder House  
St Mary's Street  
Huntingdon  
PE29 3TN

### **Subject: Formal Objection to Planning Application 25/01279/FUL – Land North of Sewage Pumping Station, Station Road, Warboys**

Dear Sir/Madam,

As the County Councillor for the Warboys and The Stukeleys Division, I wish to lodge a formal objection to planning application 25/01279/FUL, which proposes the erection of 43 dwellings (all designated as affordable housing) and associated works at Land North of the Sewage Pumping Station, Station Road, Warboys.

This objection is based on multiple material planning considerations, many of which were raised in relation to the earlier application 22/00412/FUL and remain unresolved.

#### **1. Conflict with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036**

- The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) puts into question the use of this site for allocation, concluding:
  - It is Grade 2 agricultural land, protected under Policy LP10(a) to prevent irreversible loss of the best and most versatile farmland.
  - It forms part of the open countryside with “no capacity for development” due to its visibility, undeveloped character, and contribution to the setting of Warboys.
  - It lies outside the built-up area boundary, contrary to Policy LP8, which supports development only within defined built-up areas.

#### **2. Unsustainable Location and Poor Connectivity**

- The site is beyond reasonable walking distance from shops, a school, and a doctor's surgery. Resulting in the development would increase car dependency, undermining local and national sustainability objectives.
- Public transport is limited to sporadic at best, bus service, falling short of Policy LP16 (Sustainable Transport).

### **3. Harm to Landscape, Character, and Amenity**

- The site is adjacent to a sewage pumping station and industrial premises (B2 use), yet no odour, noise, or amenity assessments have been provided, contrary to NPPF Paragraph 187.

### **4. Failure to Justify as a Rural Exception Site**

- No Housing Needs Survey has been conducted for Warboys; therefore, no evidence exists of an unmet local need. Without such evidence, allocations may go to people with no local connection, increasing commuting and reducing sustainability.
- Warboys has already delivered over 130 affordable homes since 2015, with another 40 in the pipeline.

### **5. Highways, Parking, Drainage, and Flood Risk**

- The proposed junction aligns with an existing dwelling, causing potential light intrusion. Station Road is narrow, with no pedestrian infrastructure, creating highway safety risks which must be resolved before any development is allowed.
- The LLFA objected to the previous application (22/00412/FUL), and many feel these concerns remain unresolved.

### **6. Consultee Objection – Anglian Water**

- Anglian Water has objected due to significant existing capacity issues in the foul drainage network. Despite this not being a material planning reason, the potential for failure of our waste assets should hold a significant weight.

### **Conclusion**

For the reasons above, I strongly urge Huntingdonshire District Council to refuse application 25/01279/FUL.

Given the lack of robust justification and enduring policy conflicts, I respectfully request that this application be refused.

Yours sincerely



**Cllr Ross Martin**

**County Councillor for Warboys and The Stukeleys  
Cambridgeshire County Council**

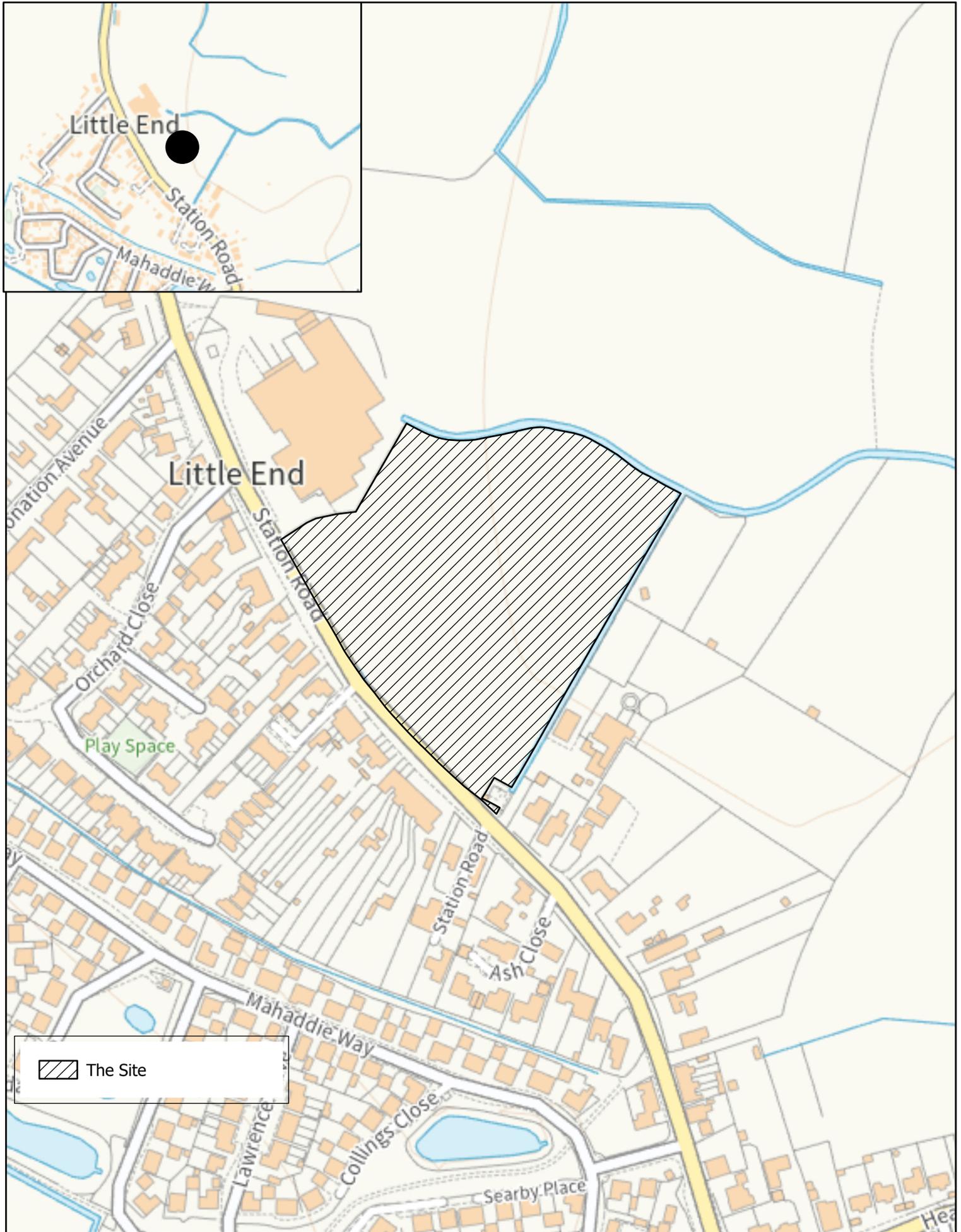
# Development Management Committee

Application Ref: 25/01279/FUL



Scale = 1:2,500

Date Created: 05/03/2026





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DEVELOPMENT at STATION ROAD, WARBOYS  
 For AMPLIUS  
 SITE: LOCATION PLAN  
 Scale: 1:1250 @ A3 Date: 09/04/2025  
 Drawn: DC Dwg No: 21015/PL17

**PDG ARCHITECTS LTD**  
 1 Eaglethorpe Barns,  
 Eaglethorpe, Warmington,  
 Peterborough, PE8 6TJ  
 T: 01733 371000  
 E: design@pdgarchitects.co.uk  
 W: www.pdgarchitects.co.uk



PLOT SCHEDULE	
4	HTA 1b2p House
10	HTB 2b4p House
4	HTC 2b4p House
4	HTE 3b5p House
4	HTF 3b5p House
10	HTG 3b5p House
1	HTH 4b7p House
4	HTI 1b2p Flat
1	HTJ 2b4p Bungalow M4(3)
1	HTK 3b5p Bungalow M4(3)
43	

■ SHARED OWNERSHIP  
■ AFFORDABLE RENT

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS	
<span style="color: blue;">- - - -</span>	SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS HARD LANDSCAPING PLAN
<span style="color: cyan;">- - - -</span>	SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS HARD LANDSCAPING PLAN
<span style="color: magenta;">- - - -</span>	SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS HARD LANDSCAPING PLAN
<span style="color: red;">- - - -</span>	SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS HARD LANDSCAPING PLAN
<span style="color: green;">- - - -</span>	SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS HARD LANDSCAPING PLAN
<span style="color: orange;">- - - -</span>	SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS HARD LANDSCAPING PLAN
<span style="color: blue;">- - - -</span>	3000mm HIGH ACOUSTIC FENCE - SEE NOISE REPORT

SURFACE FINISHES	
	ASPHALT ROAD & FOOTWAY (ADOPTABLE)
	BLOCK PAVED SHARED SURFACE (ADOPTABLE)
	BLOCK PAVED PRIVATE DRIVE
	PRIVATE FOOTPATH/PATIO
	GRAVEL
	PRECAST CONCRETE GRASS BLOCK
	INDICATIVE LANDSCAPING - TREES & HEDGING SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS DRAWINGS & INFORMATION
	INDICATIVE LANDSCAPING - PLANTING SEE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS DRAWINGS & INFORMATION
	PEDESTRIAN CROSSING POINT - SEE CIVIL ENGINEERS DRAWINGS
	RETAINING STRUCTURE - SEE CIVIL ENGINEERS DRAWINGS ENGINEERING BRICKWORK

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS. SEE RECOMMENDATIONS WITHIN ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PREPARED BY ARBTECH CONSULTING LTD	
	BEE BRICKS - IBSTOCK BEE HABITAT BRICKS OR SIMILAR. POSITION ON SOUTH EAST FACING WALL AT 1-1.5m AFL SPACING NO MORE THAN 4 PER 1m <sup>2</sup> TOTAL NUMBER OF LOCATIONS: 5
	BAT BOX - IBSTOCK BUILT-IN BAT BOX OR SIMILAR. POSITION ON SOUTH EAST FACING WALL AT 5m AFL TOTAL NUMBER OF BOXES: 3
	RSPB SPARROW TERRACE NEST BOX THREE SEPARATE NEST BOXES IN ONE TIMBER TERRACE, EACH WITH 32mm ENTRANCE HOLE. POSITION AT HIGH LEVEL TO GABLE JUST BELOW APEX OF ROOF MEASURES 48 X 23 X 17cm. TOTAL NUMBER OF BOXES: 4
	RSPB SWIFT NEST BOX WITH INTERNAL NEST CUP AND 28 x 65mm ENTRANCE HOLE. POSITION ON EAST, WEST OR NORTH ELEVATIONS AT HIGH LEVEL BELOW EAVES AT LEAST 5m AFL MEASURES 44 X 20 X 12-21cm. TOTAL NUMBER OF BOXES: 4
	REPTILE LOG PILES TOTAL NUMBER: 6
	AMPHIBIAN HIBERNACULA TOTAL NUMBER: 6
	'h' DENOTES 10CM X 12CM HEDGEHOG HOLE TO GRAVEL BOARD

	ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POST. IF NOT SHOWN EV POINT TO EACH PLOT TO BE FIXED TO EXTERNAL WALL OF PROPERTY
	BIKE STORAGE (EXTERNAL/CYCLE STORAGE) 2/3 BEDROOM = 2/3 CYCLE SPACES = 1.25m x 1.95m PENT BIKE SHED 4 BEDROOM = 4 CYCLE SPACES = 1.45m x 2.05m PENT BIKE SHED
	SHED (EXTERNAL/CYCLE STORAGE) 2/3 BEDROOM = 2/3 CYCLE SPACES = 1.8m x 2.4m SHED
	GATE
	RETAINING WALL
	BIN COLLECTION POINT
	3no. 240 LITRE WHEELIE BINS (Refuse, Recycling, Garden)
	DENOTES ROOF MOUNTED PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS

