

**Case No:** 0803534FUL (FULL PLANNING APPLICATION)  
**Proposal:** DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF 4 DWELLINGS  
**Location:** GROOMS COTTAGE, COPPINGFORD ROAD  
**Applicant:** RADLEY HOMES LTD  
**Grid Ref:** 517647 281746  
**Date of Registration:** 07.01.2009  
**Parish:** SAWTRY

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**RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE**

**1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION**

- 1.1 The site relates to an existing grouping of buildings to the south east of Coppingford Road. The site has one access point off Coppingford Road and this is adjacent to the offices across the road. The site boundary to Coppingford Road is well screened, the boundary to the west is less sparsely planted and views of the site can be gained. To the rear of the site lies open countryside. The existing Grooms Cottage building on the site adjoins an existing residential building (known as Lowen Chy) adjacent to the site. To the north east of the site lies a pond. The site on the whole is level however Coppingford Road is on slightly higher ground.
- 1.2 The existing buildings on the site are single storey buildings with an agricultural appearance. These once formed part of a farmyard with the buildings to the east of the site. Some of the buildings have been converted to other uses with others being abandoned. The Coach House building is a single barn with lean-to elements.
- 1.3 The proposed development seeks to demolish the existing stables and coach house buildings and to develop on their basic footprint, four new dwellings. The stable buildings are to be replaced by 3 one and a half storey, terraced dwellings that utilise the roof space for the first floor. This L shaped building, approximately 26.9 metres in length by 16.2 metre in width, at the furthest points, shall adjoin part of the existing residential dwelling to the east (Lowen Chy). The fourth dwelling proposed on this part of the site is a detached unit in the location of the original coach house, approximately 12.3 metres in depth by 10 metres in width. Within the central area a car parking court is proposed.

- 1.4 The dwellings comprise 2 x 3 bedrooms; 1 x 2 bedrooms and 1 x 4 bedrooms and shall all have a small area of amenity space.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

- 2.1 **PPS1: “Delivering Sustainable Development” (2005)** contains advice on the operation of the plan-led system.
- 2.2 **Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change - Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (2007)** sets out how planning, in providing for the new homes, jobs and infrastructure needed by communities, should help shape places with lower carbon emissions and resilient to the climate change now accepted as inevitable.
- 2.3 **PPS3: “Housing” (2006)** sets out how the planning system supports the growth in housing completions needed in England.
- 2.4 **PPS7: “Sustainable Development in Rural Areas” (2004)** sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas.
- 2.5 **PPS9: “Biological and Geological Conservation” (2005)** sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system.
- 2.6 **PPG13: “Transport” (2001)** provides guidance in relation to transport and particularly the integration of planning and transport.
- 2.7 **PPG16: “Archaeology and Planning” (1990)** sets out the Secretary of State's policy on archaeological remains on land, and how they should be preserved or recorded both in an urban setting and in the countryside.
- 2.8 **PPS23: “Planning and Pollution Control” (2004)** is intended to complement the new pollution control framework under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 and the PPC Regulations 2000.
- 2.9 **PPG24: “Planning & Noise” (1994)** guides planning authorities on the use of planning powers to minimise the adverse impact of noise.

For full details visit the government website  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk> and follow the links to planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Policy.

## **3. PLANNING POLICIES**

Further information on the role of planning policies in deciding planning applications can also be found at the following website:  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk> then follow links Planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Information and Guidance, Planning Guidance and Advice and then Creating and Better Place to Live

### 3.1 **East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008)**

Policies viewable at <http://www.go-east.gov.uk> then follow links to Planning, Regional Planning then Related Documents

- **SS1:** “Achieving Sustainable Development” – the strategy seeks to bring about sustainable development by applying: the guiding principles of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005 and the elements contributing to the creation of sustainable communities described in Sustainable Communities: Homes for All.
- **H1:** “Regional Housing Provision 2001 to 2021” – Local Planning Authorities should facilitate the delivery of district housing allocations – 11,200 for Huntingdonshire.
- **H2:** “Affordable Housing” – Development Plan Documents should set appropriate targets. At the regional level, delivery should be monitored against a target for some 35% of housing coming forward through planning permissions granted after the publication of the RSS.
- **T14:** “Parking” – controls to manage transport demand and influencing travel change alongside measures to improve public transport accessibility, walking and cycling should be encouraged. Maximum parking standards should be applied to new residential development.
- **ENV3:** “Biodiversity and Earth Heritage” it should be ensured that the region’s wider biodiversity, earth heritage and natural resources are protected and enriched through conservation, restoration and re-establishment of key resources.
- **ENV7:** “Quality in the Built Environment” - requires new development to be of high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.

### 3.2 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003)**

Saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> follow the links to environment, planning, planning policy and Structure Plan 2003.

- **P6/1** – Development Related Provision – development will only be permitted where the additional infrastructure and community requirements generated by the proposal can be secured.

### 3.3 **Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995)**

Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are relevant and viewable at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95)

- **H23:** “Outside Settlements” – general presumption against housing development outside environmental limits with the

exception of specific dwellings required for the efficient management of agriculture, forestry and horticulture.

- **H31:** “Residential privacy and amenity standards” – Indicates that new dwellings will only be permitted where appropriate standards of privacy can be maintained and adequate parking provided.
- **H38:** “Noise Pollution” – development sites adjoining main highways, railways, industrial operations and other potentially damaging noise pollution sources will be required to adopt adequate design solutions to create acceptable ambient noise levels within the dwellings and their curtilage.
- **T18:** “Access requirements for new development” states development should be accessed by a highway of acceptable design and appropriate construction.
- **R1:** “Recreation and Leisure Provision” – will directly promote district wide recreation and leisure projects and generally support leisure and recreation facilities commensurate with population levels, housing developments and identified need.
- **En13:** “Archaeological Implications” – in areas of archaeological potential, planning applications may be required to be accompanied by the results of an archaeological field evaluation or desk-based assessment.
- **En17:** "Development in the Countryside" - development in the countryside is restricted to that which is essential to the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services.
- **En18:** “Protection of countryside features” – Offers protection for important site features including trees, woodlands, hedges and meadowland.
- **En20:** Landscaping Scheme. - Wherever appropriate a development will be subject to the conditions requiring the execution of a landscaping scheme.
- **En22:** “Conservation” – wherever relevant, the determination of applications will take appropriate consideration of nature and wildlife conservation.
- **En25:** "General Design Criteria" - indicates that the District Council will expect new development to respect the scale, form, materials and design of established buildings in the locality and make adequate provision for landscaping and amenity areas.
- **CS8:** “Water” – satisfactory arrangements for the availability of water supply, sewerage and sewage disposal facilities, surface water run-off facilities and provision for land drainage will be required.

### 3.4 **Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002)**

Saved policies from the Huntingdon Local Plan Alterations 2002 are relevant and viewable at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan) - Then click on "Local Plan Alteration (2002)

- **STR1** – District Hierarchy - Outlines the settlement hierarchy. Group villages are those where housing groups and infilling will be allowed and infill villages where only infilling will be allowed.
- **STR5** – Group Villages – includes Sawtry.
- **HL5** – Quality and Density of Development - sets out the criteria to take into account in assessing whether a proposal represents a good design and layout.
- **HL6** – Housing Density - indicates that housing development shall be at a density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.
- **HL7** – Reusing Brownfield Land and Buildings - indicates that the District Council will seek to maximise the re-use of previously developed land.
- **HL10** – Housing Provision – in the district should reflect the full range of the local community's needs by ensuring a choice in new housing.
- **AH5** – Rural Exceptions – normal restrictive open countryside policies may be relaxed to permit affordable within, adjoining or well related to settlements of less than 3000 population, subject to environmental impact and availability of necessary infrastructure. A local need must be proven and long term availability ensured.
- **OB1** – Nature and Scale of Obligations – will relate to the size of development and the impact on physical infrastructure, social and community facilities and services.

### 3.5 **Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007**

Policies from the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning, then Planning then Planning+Policy then Informal policy statements where there is a link to Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007

- **P8** – Development in the Countryside – Outside the defines limits of the Key Centres (limited or potential growth) development will be restricted to: that which is essential to the efficient operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry, or required for the purposes of outdoor recreation; the alteration, replacement or change of use of existing buildings in accordance with other policies; limited and specific forms of housing, business and tourism development, as provided for within the Local Development Framework; or land allocated for particular purposes.

- **G2** – Landscape Character - development proposals should respect and respond appropriately to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape
- **G3** – Trees, hedgerows and Other Environmental Features - development proposals should minimise risk of harm to trees, hedgerows or other environmental features of visual, historic or nature conservation value.
- **G4** – Protected Habitats and Species – development proposals should not harm sites of national or international importance for biodiversity or geology. Proposals will not be permitted if they potentially damage County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, Important Species or Protected Roadside Verges, unless they significantly outweigh the harm.
- **G7** – Biodiversity – proposals that could affect biodiversity should: be accompanied by a suitable assessment of habitats and species; maintain and enhance biodiversity; provide appropriate mitigation measures; seek to achieve positive gain in biodiversity.
- **B1** – Design Quality - developments should demonstrate a high quality of design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character of the area.
- **B4** – Amenity - developments should not have an unacceptable impact upon amenity of existing or future occupiers.
- **B5** – Energy and Water use – developments should aim to maximise the level of energy efficiency through sustainable design and construction.
- **B9** – Sites of Archaeological Interest – a proposal that could affect a site or area of archaeological interest should; be accompanied by a suitable assessment of the nature and significance of any remains; not cause harm to remains or their setting which are recognised or identified as being of national importance and allow for their preservation in situ; or make satisfactory arrangements for the physical preservation recording or removal of other remains, as appropriate.
- **H3** – Mix of Dwelling Sizes – minor housing development or residential infilling should provide for a mix of household sizes and types appropriate to the needs of the local area.
- **T1** – Transport Impacts - development proposals should be capable of being served by safe convenient access to the transport network and should not give rise to traffic volumes that exceed the capacity of the local transport network.
- **T2** – Car and Cycle Parking - development proposals should limit car parking and provide cycle parking facilities to the levels set out in the Council’s parking standards.

### 3.6 **Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework submission Core Strategy 2008**

Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework submission Core Strategy 2008 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning then click on Planning and then click on Planning Policy where there is a link to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

- **CS1:** “Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire” – all developments will contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development, having regard to social, environmental and economic issues. All aspects will be considered including design, implementation and function of development.
- **CS3:** “The Settlement Hierarchy” – Identifies Sawtry as a ‘Key Service Centre’ in which development schemes of moderate and minor scale and infilling may be appropriate within the built up area. This policy states that any area not specifically identified are classed as part of the countryside, where development will be strictly limited to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside.
- **CS5:** “Rural Exceptions Housing” – in exceptional circumstances, affordable housing will be considered acceptable within or adjacent to the built up area of a Smaller Settlement subject to set criteria.
- **CS10:** “Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements” – proposals will be expected to provide or contribute towards the cost of providing infrastructure and of meeting social and environmental requirements, where these are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

### 3.7 **Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents**

- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment (2007)
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2007)
- Developer Contributions Towards Affordable Housing (SPD – Nov 2007)
- ‘Growing Awareness – A Plan for Our Environment’ – was formally adopted by the Council in April 2008 and provides a framework for action over five years for tackling the three main environmental challenges of tackling climate change, using resources efficiently and protecting and improving the environment. Progress against targets will be reported and published annually and will be used to inform the development of the following years action plan.

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

- 4.1 0500898FUL – change of use and alteration to office building to form dwelling – permission granted expires 12.12.10 (not implemented)
- 4.2 0401693FUL- residential use (Grooms cottage) – permission granted, expires 1.09.09 (not implemented)
- 4.3 0002117FUL – change of use to a B1a or B1b office –permission granted – part implemented – extension not completed to the north east side elevation
- 4.4 0001697FUL - Alterations to form offices – expired 29.11.05
- 4.5 0000059FUL- Alterations to stables, cottage, coach house and barns to form four dwellings – permission granted – expired 24.5.05
- 4.6 9300351FUL – Change of use to storage of materials– permission granted
- 4.7 9100897FUL - Partial change of use of orchard, change of use of stores into office – permission granted
- 4.8 8101781FUL – Change of use to builder’s office and yard – permission granted

#### **5. CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 **Sawtry Parish Council – Recommend APPROVAL (copy attached)**
- 5.2 **CCC Education** – Falls within the catchment area of Sawtry CC, which has no spare capacity. Estimated that the proposal would generate 0.8 secondary school places. The County Council cost 1 secondary school place at £12,500. This proposal would generate 0.8 secondary school places at a cost of £10,000
- 5.3 **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Services** – adequate provision should be made for fire hydrants.
- 5.4 **HDC Environmental Health** – Officers have advised that they have no comments to make on the application.
- 5.5 **HDC Highways** – no objections to the proposal, shall result in less traffic movements, secure covered cycle parking should however be available
- 5.6 **HDC Operations** – residents shall be responsible for putting bins out on the relevant collection days.
- 5.7 **Natural England – OBJECTION**, due to the potential impact on legally protected/Biodiversity Action Plan species, insufficient survey information has been submitted to demonstrate that there would not be an adverse affect on Great crested newt or Bat species
- 5.8 **Middle Level Commissioners** – land drainage system downstream of the site is close to capacity during high rainfall events. Require the

restriction of surface water discharge from this site to the Greenfield rate of run-off.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

### **6.1 ONE letter of OBJECTION**

- Do not believe the buildings should be demolished
- no information relating to bats, which have been seen in the area
- concern over the increase in the height of the buildings and impact on amenity, would result in a more uniformed appearance and would result in overcrowding
- concern over widening of building and proximity to existing residential dwelling
- concern over sewerage, drainage and services and adequacy of service
- increase in traffic
- No objection to restoration of buildings, and a few new homes with sufficient garden space
- Number of dwellings is too high and the proposal has not taken account of the existing wildlife

## **7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES**

7.1 The main issues to consider are the principle of the development; design and impact on the character and appearance of the area; the impact on amenity; highways; the impact on biodiversity; impact on trees; noise and planning obligations.

7.2 The current 'Coach House' is used as an office space and permission for a change of use has not been implemented.

### **Principle**

7.3 This proposal seeks to demolish the existing buildings and replace them with buildings in a similar location. The site is located in the open countryside and outside the Key Service Centre of Sawtry. The site may be defined as previously developed land as outlined in PPS3, however that does not mean that it is necessarily suitable for housing development nor that the whole of the curtilage should be developed.

7.4 It is acknowledged that both this site and the adjoining site have a lengthy planning history with consent for residential development. Adjacent the site residential development has been part implemented. An extant permission for conversion of the 'Coach House' and 'Grooms Cottage' to residential has not been implemented and the buildings remain in a commercial use. To the south west of the site, the land is used as a builder's yard.

7.5 There is a lack of services available in the immediate locality. PPS3 indicates that housing should be developed in suitable locations, which offer a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. This application site does not fulfil this requirement the site is set away from the existing settlements and as such amounts to new residential development in

the countryside. PPS7 indicates that sustainable patterns of development should be sought with development being focused in, or next to, existing towns and villages and clearly indicates that 'New building development in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled'. There is no reasoned justification for the development of four new dwellings on this countryside site; the proposal does not accord with national guidance or local planning policy. The principle of residential development on this site is not considered to be acceptable.

### **Exception Site**

- 7.6 PPS7 indicates that isolated houses in the countryside would need special justification and 'Very occasionally, the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design of a proposed, isolated new house may provide...special justification for granting planning.... such a design should be truly outstanding and ground-breaking'. This application has not successfully demonstrated such a high quality development.
- 7.7 Policy CS5 of the Submission Core Strategy relates to relates to Rural Exception Housing and indicates that in 'exceptional circumstances, affordable housing development will be considered acceptable within or adjacent to the built-up area of a Key Service Centre or Smaller Settlement'. This site is not adjacent the built up area, nor is it for affordable housing.

### **Sustainability of Construction**

- 7.8 The applicant's commitment to provide dwellings to Code Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes is to be encouraged. It doesn't however represent an exemplar development, which should be permitted in the countryside, due to this potential achievement. The Local Planning Authority has recently approved a scheme in Huntingdon which seeks to achieve Code Level 5 and is in a sustainable location.
- 7.9 Whilst the applicant has identified solar thermal on the roofs of some of the dwellings full details have not been provided. This detail, if the application is approved, could be conditioned.

### **Layout, design and impact on the character and appearance of the area**

- 7.10 The development of the site would amount to approximately 0.5 hectares and with 4 dwellings on site would equate to a density of 12.5 dwellings per hectare. This is significantly below the density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare encouraged by Policy HL6. Given the in principle objections to the proposal, a higher density would be even more objectionable in this instance.
- 7.11 The land to the south west of the existing buildings and defined as the builder's yard has not been identified for a particular land use, although would appear to be, from the plans submitted, a landscaped area and may serve the proposed dwellings.

- 7.12 The replacement buildings have a similar footprint to the existing buildings on site. The proposed amenity space for each dwelling is particularly small given the area of the site. The partitioning of the rear gardens breaks up the existing space, eroding the courtyard character. The proposed materials for the boundary treatment are also considered poor in this rural landscape. The development is not an appropriate form in this rural landscape and having regard to the character and form of the existing buildings.
- 7.13 The existing access onto Coppingford Road would serve the development. Parking for eight vehicles would be provided in a courtyard area to the front of the proposed dwellings. A large bin and cycle store building is also proposed in this area. The two storage buildings will be highly visible and do not relate well to the re-build units, rather forming intrusive features into this generally open area. The proposed bin and bicycle store are also ill fitting to the proposal. Full elevations and floor plans have not been provided, however such structures should be designed as ancillary buildings and located in discrete locations
- 7.14 The proposed dwellings to be built in the position of the existing buildings are to the east of the site are significantly larger than the existing buildings. Such an increase in size, scale and mass will erode the simplicity of this part of the site.

#### **Building to replace Grooms Cottage**

- 7.15 This proposed residential block fails to embrace the architectural style of the existing office buildings, which are to be replaced. The south western elevation fronting the car parking area has a significant number of openings, creating a cluttered appearance. The roof would be cluttered with rooflights, solar thermal panels and large uncharacteristic dormer windows. Dormer windows are not characteristic of rural barn style developments.
- 7.16 The Design and Access statement refers to the existing buildings to the east of the site. Whilst there are some larger buildings to the east, these were former agricultural buildings which have been converted to residential buildings. The further introduction of larger buildings, as part of this proposal, would fundamentally change the character of this group of buildings as a whole. This proposal should be considered with regard to the overall impact.

#### **Building to replace Coach House**

- 7.17 The proposed replacement building for the Coach House would be built on a northwest-southeast axis. The re-orientation and significant bulk, mass, scale and size of the building fundamentally alters the character of the development on the site.
- 7.18 Whilst there is a significant sized building to the east of the site which has clipped gables, it is not in keeping with the character of the site. The introduction of additional significant sized buildings with clipped gables will erode the simple character of the existing development with simple gables.

- 7.19 The use of timber cladding is considered acceptable for the Coach House. The building it replaces is timber clad. The 3 units contained within the L-shaped building propose a mixture of timber clad and brick, with the timber clad at high level, which would create an awkward appearance and would not represent a high quality development.

#### **Residential Amenity**

- 7.20 Some concern has been raised by neighbours, in terms of the proximity of the proposed buildings to the existing residential units to the northeast and impact on residential amenity. The rear elevations of the three terrace dwellings would be approximately 7.5 metres at the nearest point and 9.4 metres at the furthest point from the common boundary with the adjoining residential dwelling to the north east. The proposed amenity space separates the residential units. The proposed building shall take on a similar footprint to the existing buildings and the eastern corner of the proposed dwellings shall adjoin part of the existing residential dwelling (Lowen Chy). Having regard to the design of the proposed dwellings and separation distance to the existing residential unit it is not considered that the development would unduly harm residential amenity, by reason of overlooking or overshadowing, nor is it considered that the development would be overbearing.

#### **Highway Safety**

- 7.21 The site has an extant permission for a builder's yard and the existing buildings are used as offices, although it is understood that Grooms Cottage is currently unoccupied. In light of this, it is considered that this development would not harm highway safety and would have the potential to reduce traffic generation from the site.
- 7.22 The proposal also includes the provision of cycle parking to serve the development. The internal space of the storage area measures approximately 2.1 metres by 4.7 metres, this would seem sufficient to accommodate the four required cycle spaces.

#### **Refuse**

- 7.23 Comments have been received from HDC Operations, which indicate that any future occupiers would need to put their bins out, by the road for collection. No comments have been made regarding the bin store area, however it would appear that the store, at 2.1 metres by 4.7 metres, would not be able to accommodate the 12 bins required for the four new dwellings.

#### **Trees and Landscaping**

- 7.24 The application fails to identify adequately the existing trees on site in accordance with BS 5837 2005. Further survey detail would be required to show the Arboricultural constraints on the site and to assess the relationship with the proposed development. The level of detail submitted with the application is not acceptable and fails to demonstrate that this development would not harm the exiting landscape features on the site.

## **Biodiversity**

- 7.25 Natural England has raised an objection to the proposed development. Within the site lie Great Crested Newts, a protected specie. There is also some concern that there may be bats on the site. This application does not acknowledge this fact and has failed to demonstrate that this development would not harm their habitats, survey detail has not been submitted. The application cannot be supported on biodiversity grounds.

## **Archaeology**

- 7.26 County Council records indicate that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. It is considered likely that important archaeological remains survive on the site and that these would be severely damaged or destroyed by the proposed development. It is recommended that the site is subject to an archaeological evaluation to be carried out prior to the granting of any planning permission. The results of such an evaluation should allow for fuller consideration of the presence/absence, nature, extent, quality and survival of archaeological remains within the development area.
- 7.27 As no such evaluation has been submitted in support of this application, it is considered that the proposed development is considered to be contrary to planning policy in this regard.

## **Noise**

- 7.28 The site is in relatively close proximity to the A1(M) trunk road, approximately 170 metres to the east. Environmental Health has no comments to make on this application and as such, it is not considered that noise would be a potential issue to any future occupiers.

## **Contamination**

- 7.29 Part of the site has been in use as a builder's yard. However, Environmental Health has not objected to the proposed development and potential contamination is not therefore an issue requiring further consideration.

## **Drainage**

- 7.30 The comments received from the Middle Level Commissioners are noted. Should the application be approved it is considered that the required surface water drainage details could be conditioned.

## **Neighbour concerns**

- 7.31 Having considered the concerns raised by the objectors, the majority of these points have already been considered within the report. Concerns over sewerage, drainage and services and adequacy of service are noted but do not form part of the consideration for this current application.

## **Contributions - Education**

- 7.32 This development would require planning obligations to make the development acceptable, in the form of a contribution towards secondary education.
- 7.33 The County Council as Education Authority have requested a contribution towards secondary education in Sawtry. Whilst the need generated by the proposal is low, there remains an onus on the County Council to justify how such a need can be met. As the current secondary school has reached capacity, there would be a need to extend the school in order to meet any further demands. As the Local Planning Authority has been unable to ascertain how the school could be reasonably extended without prejudicing either car parking or playing fields, the County Council have been asked to provide reasoned justification as to how S106 contributions would be spent to mitigate against the generated need in the locality. Any responses to this request will be reported to Members as soon as it becomes available.
- 7.34 Whilst the obligation has not been addressed by the applicant in the submission, this could be achieved by entering into a Section 106 Agreement. This matter has not been explored further with the applicant due to the number of in principle objections to the scheme. The applicant shall be informed of the necessary requirements should Members be minded to support the recommendation by virtue of a covering letter with any Decision Notice.

## **Conclusion**

- 7.35 The proposed development is considered to be contrary to both Government and Local Planning Policy by virtue of:
- The unacceptable location for new residential development;
  - The unacceptable design and impact on the character of the area;
  - The absence of surveys for protected species;
  - Inadequate Arboricultural information; and,
  - The absence of an archaeological evaluation of the site.

As such the Officer recommendation is one of refusal.

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.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION – REFUSE, for the following reasons**

- 8.1 The proposed residential development, by reason of its location outside the built-up area of Sawtry and in the countryside, would cause harm through its introduction of built form and unsustainable development without justification of a rural need. As such the proposal would be contrary to PPS7, Policies En17 and H23 of the

Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995, Policy P8 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 and Policy CS3 of the Huntingdonshire Submission Core Strategy 2008.

- 8.2 The proposed development would, by virtue of its layout, size, scale and massing create a poor design of development that is incongruous with its surroundings. This would result in a significant detrimental impact on the existing character of the area. As such the proposal would be contrary to PPS1, PPS3, Policy ENV7 of the East of England Plan 2008, Policy En25 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995, Policy HL5 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations 2002, Policy B1 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007, Policy CS1 of the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide 2007 and the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007.
- 8.3 The application fails to demonstrate that protected species of Great Crested Newts and Bats will not be adversely affected by the development. As such, the proposal is contrary to PPS9, Policy ENV3 of the East of England Plan 2008, Policy En22 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and Policies G4 and G7 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007.
- 8.4 The application fails to demonstrate that there will not be an unacceptable loss of trees and detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the site and surroundings. As such the proposal is contrary to PPS9, Policy ENV7 of the East of England Plan 2008, Policy En18 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and Policy G3 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007.
- 8.5 The application fails to demonstrate that there will not be any damage or destruction to potential archaeological remains. As such the proposal is contrary to PPG16, Policy ENV6 of the East of England Plan 2008, Policy En13 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and Policy B9 of the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007.

**Background Papers:**

Planning Application File Reference: 0803534FUL  
East of England Plan – Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy May 2008  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan, 1995  
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, 2002  
Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007  
Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008

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