

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee 07 February 2018
AUTHOR/S: Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

Application Number: S/3450/16/FL

Parish(es): Great Eversden

Proposal: Development to provide 10 new affordable houses

Site address: Land to the North of Church Street, Gt Eversden, known as OSP 148

Applicant(s): Accent Housing

Recommendation: Delegated Approval subject to a section 106 agreement

Key material considerations: Housing land supply, Green Belt, historic environment, biodiversity, flood risk and drainage, highway safety, residential amenity

Committee Site Visit: Yes

Departure Application: Yes advertised 21 December 2016

Presenting Officer: John Koch, Team Leader

Application brought to Committee because: The application site is a Major application relating to the Council's own land where representations have been received against the proposal

Date by which decision due: 13 March 2017

Executive Summary

1. The application, as amended, seeks consent for the construction of 10 affordable dwellings as 7 social rented two bed properties and 3 intermediate properties (2 x two bed and 1 x three bed). The site lies outside of, but adjacent to, the adopted village framework and in the Green Belt.
2. No adverse concerns are raised in respect of transport; drainage and flood risk; ecology; amenity; and crime and disorder considerations. The nature and extent of the affordable housing and various required infrastructure contributions can be secured by way of a planning obligation. The key substantive issues are therefore considered to be the extent to which the development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the impact on the openness of the Green Belt, the rural character and landscape setting of the village and the setting of several nearby listed buildings.

3. Officers are of the view the development is largely compliant with the requirements of adopted policy HG/5 Exception Sites for Affordable Housing. This includes on the grounds there are no other alternative appropriate sites which could be found for the scale and type of development proposed to meet the identified need. The exception is in respect of the need for the affordable housing to be provided in perpetuity. It is understood that the housing provider will seek a Mortgagee in Possession (MIP) clause into the necessary legal agreement. This results in the development having to be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt and contrary to policy GB/1 and section 9 of the NPPF.
4. There is also a breach with policies ST/2 and ST/7 of the Core Strategy and policy DP/7 of the Development Control Policies DPD. Officers consider HG/5 is the dominant policy engaged by this scheme, and as such, consider that the scheme complies with the development plan taken as a whole were it not for the MIP clause.
5. The development will however adversely impact on the setting of the cluster of listed buildings grouped around the Grade 2* Listed Church of St Mary contrary to policy CH/4 of the Development Control policies DPD. The level of harm arising is considered to be 'less than substantial'. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty on the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.
6. Any level of harm to a listed building, including harm arising by development in its setting, must be afforded considerable importance and weight in the planning balance. However, officers are of the view that, in this instance, the substantial public benefits of the scheme in the form of much needed local affordable housing, outweighs the harm to the heritage assets.
7. In considering the need to demonstrate the necessary very special circumstances for inappropriate development in the Green Belt, officers conclude that the benefits arising from the proposal coupled with the likely scenario that the potential outcome of MiP clause is unlikely to have to be relied upon do clearly outweigh the identified harm. Accordingly, officers recommend planning permission is granted.

Relevant Planning History

8. S/3202/88/F – 16 flats (intended to be four blocks of two-storey buildings around a cul-de-sac) and garages. Refused and dismissed at appeal by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State concluded that the special circumstances arising from the need and the opportunity to provide low cost homes for local people were not sufficient to outweigh the need to protect the Green Belt and the significant that would result to the character and appearance of Great Eversden.
9. S/1044/11 – 10 affordable dwellings. The Planning Committee resolved to approve the application on 1 February 2012. The resolution to approve was subject to a successful application for 'judicial review' in respect of the need for an environmental impact assessment and the resolution to approve was quashed by the High Court. The application was subsequently withdrawn.
10. S/1344/14/FL – 10 affordable dwellings. The Planning Committee resolved to approve the application and a decision was issued dated 21 June 2016. The decision was subject to a successful application for 'judicial review' with judgement being handed down on 28 February 2017. The challenge succeeded on the grounds that the Council

had misapplied Green Belt policy in considering the planning application. The decision was subsequently quashed by the High Court for this reason. The claim was however unsuccessful on the second ground, that the Council misinterpreted and misapplied policy HG/5. However, as the decision to grant planning permission has been quashed, that decision, including the officer's report which informed it, should play no part of Members' consideration of this application, which should be determined completely afresh.

National Guidance

11. National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Development Plan Policies

12. The extent to which any of the following policies are out of date and the weight to be attached to them is addressed later in the report.
13. **South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy DPD, adopted 2007**
ST/1 Green Belt
ST/2 Housing Provision
ST/7 Infill Villages
14. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Development Control Policies DPD, adopted 2007:**
DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New Development
DP/3 Development Criteria
DP/7 Development Frameworks
GB/1 Development within the Green Belt
GB/2 Mitigating the impact of development in the Green Belt
HG/1 Housing Density
HG/5 Exception Sites for affordable housing
SF/10 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space and New Developments
SF/11 Open Space Standards
NE/1 Energy Efficiency
NE/3 Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development
NE/4 Landscape Character Areas
NE/6 Biodiversity
NE/9 Water and Drainage Infrastructure
NE/10 Foul Drainage – Alternative Drainage Systems
NE/11 Flood Risk
NE/12 Water Conservation
NE/14 Lighting Proposals
NE/15 Noise Pollution
NE/16 Emissions
CH/4 Development with the curtilage or setting of a Listed Building
TR/1 Planning for More Sustainable Travel
TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
15. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**
Listed Buildings: Works to or affecting the setting of SPD - Adopted July 2009
Open Space in New Developments SPD - Adopted January 2009
Trees & Development Sites SPD - Adopted January 2009
Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted March 2010
Affordable Housing SPD - Adopted March 2010

16. **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission**
S/1 Vision
S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/4 Cambridge Green Belt
S/5 Provision of Jobs and Homes
S/7 Development Frameworks
S/11 Infill Villages
CC/1 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Development
CC/4 Sustainable Design and Construction
CC/6 Construction Methods
CC/7 Water Quality
H/10 Rural exception sites for affordable housing
HQ/1 Design Principles
NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
NH/4 Biodiversity
NH/8 Mitigating The Impact Of Development In And Adjoining The Green Belt
NH/14 Heritage Assets

Consultation

17. **Eversdens Parish Council** (original comments 23.01.2017) - Supports.

Comments on the amended layout (20.02.2017) – No objections. Preference for previous curved road.
18. **Cllr Cattermole** – I wish to express my support for the application as the relevant district councillor. My support is based on a number of factors. I believe the Housing Needs Survey conducted in January 2014 identified a need for affordable local housing and also support (73 per cent of respondents) for a small local development. The site has been owned by the District Council for some considerable time with the intention to use it for housing and no other suitable sites in the vicinity have been identified or are available. I also note that the application has been supported by the Parish Council.
19. Some concern has been expressed about the suitability of the site but it seems to me that the application has gone a long way towards meeting those concerns through the sympathetic design and the way that the development has been laid out. The appearance of the site from the road has been taken into account and the design seeks to mitigate the impact of the village environment. I was pleased to see the care taken not just to impose a number of faceless, modern square houses in the location. Given the points made above, I support the application.
20. **Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)** - No objection in principle to the proposed development.
21. The applicant has demonstrated several options for dealing with surface water including permeable paving, above-ground attenuation and storage crates, restricting surface water discharge to 2.1 l/s in up to the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) event plus a 40% allowance for climate change.
22. Whilst it is understood from the FRA that the surface water system will be maintained

by Accent Housing, once a detailed scheme has been designed, an appropriate maintenance plan will be required to outline the specific activities that will be required to be undertaken by Accent Housing.

23. Conditions are requested for a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and the principles within the agreed Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy prepared by MLM Consulting Engineers Ltd (ref: 618166-REP-CIV-FRA) dated 23 November 2016. Details are also required for the long term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system.
24. **Environment Agency** - No objection in principle to the proposed development. Offer the following recommendations and informatives.
25. For your information this application falls within Flood Risk Standing Advice, being within flood zone 1 and less than 1 ha in area. In line with current government guidance on Standing Advice, it will be necessary, in this instance, for your Council to respond on behalf of the Environment Agency in respect of flood risk and/or surface water drainage issues. Please refer to the relevant standing advice, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/flood-risk-assessment-standing-advice>
26. It would be inappropriate to discharge surface water un-attenuated to any local watercourse as it would exacerbate the risk of flooding to existing property.
27. Recommend informatives in respect of surface water, foul water, pollution, contamination and conservation.

28. **Natural England**

Statutory nature conservation sites – no objection

Natural England advises your authority that the proposal, if undertaken in strict accordance with detail submitted, is not likely to have a significant effect on the interest features for which Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC has been classified. Natural England therefore advises that your Authority is not required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment to assess the implications of this proposal on the site's conservation objectives.

29. In addition, Natural England is satisfied that the proposed development being carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application, as submitted, will not damage or destroy the interest features for which Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI has been notified. We therefore advise your authority that this SSSI does not represent a constraint in determining this application.

Protected Species

30. We have not assessed this application and associated documents for impacts on protected species. You should apply our Standing Advice to this application as it is a material consideration in the determination of applications in the same way as any individual response received from Natural England following consultation.

Local Sites

31. If the proposal site is on or adjacent to a local site, e.g. Local Wildlife Site, Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Site (RIGS) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR) the authority should ensure it has sufficient information to fully understand the impact

of the proposal on the local site before it determines the application.

Biodiversity Enhancements

32. This application may provide opportunities to incorporate features into the design which are beneficial to wildlife, such as the incorporation of roosting opportunities for bats or the installation of bird nest boxes. The authority should consider securing measures to enhance the biodiversity of the site from the applicant, if it is minded to grant permission for this application. This is in accordance with Paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
33. Additionally, we would draw your attention to Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) which states that 'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'. Section 40(3) of the same Act also states that 'conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat'.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zones

34. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 requires local planning authorities to consult Natural England on "Development in or likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest" (Schedule 4, w). Our SSSI Impact Risk Zones are a GIS database designed to be used during the planning application validation process to help local planning authorities decide when to consult Natural England on developments likely to affect a SSSI. The dataset and user guidance can be assessed from the data.gov.uk website.
35. **Cambridgeshire County Council Highways** – I can confirm that the Highway Authority would not seek to adopt the development in its present format, but would suggest that the access way ramp be installed as per Appendix 7 of the HERCS 2013 and it be located at least 10m from the edge of the carriageway and recommend that the surface of the shared surface should be blockwork. Due to the proposed shared surface the applicant is not required to provide a separate footway within the site as shown.
36. The applicant will need to provide a pedestrian facility of a 2m wide footway from the proposed development into the village to connect into the existing footway. Recommend conditions in the interests of highway safety in respect of the need for a traffic management plan; visibility splays; construction of the vehicular access so that its falls and levels are such that no private water from the site drains across or onto the adopted public highway and using a bound material to prevent debris spreading onto the adopted public highway; permitted development rights be removed to install another access under Section 184 of the Highways Act as the Highway Authority would recommend refusal if the applicant comes forward for a cross over from Church Street.
37. The Highway Authority can confirm that they will not be adopting any part of this development including the access road or turning head where it adjoins Church Street. Please condition that the developer deposit a letter and drawing showing the site with the Local Planning Authority confirming that this site will not be presented for adoption now or at any time in the future.

38. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – There have been two reports of burglary in the last year for Great Eversden. I consider that the proposed layout is good allowing lots of natural surveillance and allowing vehicles to be parked within curtilage of the resident's property. Other than the above comments there is nothing further to comment, object to or recommend.
39. **Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology** – No objection to development proceeding but consider the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the inclusion of a negative conditions.
40. Our records indicate that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential, situated 85m to the north west of 15th century Saint Mary's Church (Historic Environment Record reference 03251). To the west are moated sites (01110, 01109) and the remains of the deserted medieval village (03440, MCB18046). As well as earlier Roman settlement evidence (MCB18045). In addition, to the east is Little Eversden, which contained moated site (01111) and archaeological investigations at church Farm revealed evidence of medieval occupation (MCB15938). We have commented on this in recent years. We would recommend that the same archaeological standard condition is placed on the development as was for prior application (S/1044/11, S/1344/14/FL) within the same bounds.
41. **SCDC Tree Officer** – No objection to the proposed development and recommend that a condition be applied to ensure compliance with the tree protection plan and recommendations in the arboriculture report.
42. The application has the benefit of a comprehensive tree report with recommendations and a tree protection plan showing the erection of temporary tree protective barriers to protect the existing, retained trees during implementation of the development. I am satisfied that the proposal would not be of significant detriment to the tree population on the site if the tree protection is put in place in accordance with the arboriculture report.
43. **Environmental Health Officer** – No objections. Recommend conditions and informatives be attached to any consent granted in respect of a construction management plan, controls on hours of working and deliveries, the burning of waste, the use of pile foundations and external lighting. These are required to protect residential amenity.
44. **Environmental Health Officer (Contaminated Land)** – A condition related to contaminated land is not required. I wish to confirm that I have received a copy of the above application, in particular the Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study by Environmental Protection Strategies dated November 2016, and have considered the implications of the proposals.
45. **SCDC Section 106 Officer** – As this is a development comprising 10 dwellings with a gross floorspace of less than 1,000 square metres there will be no offsite financial contributions. As such the terms of the Unilateral Undertaking completed on 20 June 2016 remain relevant and should be reproduced.
46. **SCDC Ecology Officer** – The Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment provided by MKA Ecology is welcomed and provides sufficient information to withdraw the (previous) holding objection. I agree with the consultant's assessment that, although Pond 1 at Church Farm has an Average HSI score, the presence of great crested newt is extremely unlikely due to recent stocking with carp and lack of suitable egg-

laying vegetation. Some of the other ponds are suitable for breeding great crested newt, but are more than 250m from the site. Therefore, providing a proportional precautionary method statement is followed to further minimise the risk of great crested newts being killed or injured or their habitat being destroyed, the works should comply with UK and EU law.

47. Please attach appropriately-worded conditions to cover the following to any consent granted: a Precautionary Method of Working for great crested newt and reptiles, all works must proceed in strict accordance with the recommendations detailed in Section 5 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report (MKA Ecology, November 2016), with the exception of Recommendations 2 and 3, and the 20 Year Landscape Management Plan (The Huck Partnership, December 2016); a specification for external illumination at the site; and a location plan and specification for boxes and in-built features for nesting birds and roosting bats.
48. Please also attach an informative re hedgerow management – works must comply with UK law and should maximise biodiversity gain to meet LDF Policy NE/6.
49. **SCDC Landscape Officer**

Summary

The application site and its surroundings represent a high quality, small scale and detailed landscape at the south east edge of the village, with a pronounced rural character. The whole of the application site lies outside of the village development framework and in the green belt.

50. Development of the site is possible, but any proposals must respect both the setting of the listed buildings and the landscape qualities of the site and its surroundings. The success of any development will depend on the quality of design and layout, and the retention of the small scale, detailed rural character, permeability and openness. Any possible urbanisation of the road frontage and character of the site, or the perceived loss or openness and separation between the listed buildings and village edge must be carefully considered.

The Site and its Landscape

51. The proposed development site lies on the south east approach to the village, between and attractive, outlying group of listed buildings – including St Marys church and 3 Church Street which marks the edge of the main village. the separation between the listed Homestead (5 Church Street) to the south east, and no 3 Church Street is currently approximately 140m, with the proposed application site occupying the centre 79m of this space.
52. In terms of landscape and visual attributes, this approach to Great Eversden combines a group of ancient listed buildings with a small scale, detailed landscape of native hedgerows, fields, paddocks, orchards and yards, with a series of closed and open views over the landscape at the village edge. Great Eversden is a linear village, centred on a cross roads approximately 75m to the north west of the site. Field and property boundaries address the road frontages straight on, and form a distinct sw to ne/se to nw grid, influenced by the chalk geology to the south and west. Visually the proposed development will be clearly seen from a number of locations, including the Church Street frontage, public footpaths to the approximately 90m to the east and adjoining the north east corner of the site, and from local dwellings, particularly 2 Chapel road and 2 and 5 church street.

Proposal as originally submitted

53. The proposed layout of the site has certainly improved compared to earlier versions. However a loss of hedging and urbanisation of the road frontage, the rather 'suburban' treatment of some landscape elements and the scale and landscape treatment of the remaining separation remain. Further mitigation and amendments to the design may be needed to integrate the proposals into the village edge landscape.
54. Under current proposals, separation between the group of listed buildings and the edge of the village could be reduced by development to approximately 60 and 90 m, a loss of 45 of separation. However between 60m and 95m of separation will remain between listed buildings and proposed dwellings. The closest existing houses (2 and 3 Chapel Road) would be within approximately 30m of new dwellings.
55. These distances are reasonable and will allow layout and landscape treatment that can follow the existing grain and scale of the village edge landscape.
56. However the layout of the dwellings slightly deviate from the landscape grid and the containing hedge to the green separation cuts across it, forming a triangular plot of land, at odds with the local landscape grain. The roadways, pathways and parking area are too dominant and suburban elements such as island planting beds, meandering roadways and footways and a rather utilitarian choice of plants have been introduced. The allocation of private space is quite uneven, particularly to plot 5.

Landscape suggestions and mitigation

57. Some development will be possible on the site but the character and layout of the landscape could better reflect the existing forms and sensitive location at the village edge.
58. The main green separation, and landscape forms such as hedgerows should follow the existing landscape grain. Planting and landscape forms should be used to disguise any incongruous layout features and help the development to integrate with the surrounding landscape.
59. Distinctive landscape features such as orchards, willow and crossings and driveways should be reduced by use of alternative materials and the scale and arrangement of paved and access areas should follow vernacular examples.
60. Suburban forms such as strip planting (and pinch points), island beds etc should be avoided.
61. The planting mix should be simple and follow local examples. the current plant list is more suited to large scale housing or commercial areas and will appear out of character. A simple mix of native species trees, hedgerows and low key ornamental herbaceous and shrub planting would be appropriate.

Amended proposal

62. No objections. The revised plan has improved the general layout by straightening the access road, slightly realigning the buildings, reducing hard pathway areas and repositioning bin stores and parking. On the open space the orchard and LAP have been repositioned which is also an improvement.

63. As noted in the urban design comments, a new landscape scheme will be required to match the revised layout, including some screening trees opposite plots 3 and 4. The proposed plant species should be adjusted to reflect the rural location.
64. To break up the areas of proposed block paving suggest that the main driveway is of bitmac or similar with a suitable gravel wearing course, constructed to accommodate heavy vehicles.
65. **SCDC Urban Design and Historic Environment Officer** – The site lies outside (but adjacent to) the village framework of Great Eversden and within the greenbelt. The site is currently a paddock which separates the centre of the village from the cluster of 5 listed buildings including the grade 2* St Marys Church.
66. The paddock currently forms an important separation between this sensitive cluster of historic buildings, and the existing built form of the village. This separation contributes to the setting of the historically more important buildings of the village, and the loss of this distinction would cause harm to the setting of the listed buildings.
67. The Heritage Statement accompanying this application states the proposal are 'likely to have some impact on the setting of the listed buildings', but there is no assessment of the level of harm, and here is no analysis of the change to views or the perception of the important separation resulting from this development. In the absence of this information, my judgement is that the loss of this separation will cause harm to the setting of the listed building, and that this level of harm will be significant, but less than substantial. Any harm to the setting of a listed building is contrary to policy CH/4 (Planning permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect the curtilage or wider setting of a listed building), and I cannot therefore support this application.
68. It is recognised that the applicant has worked positively with SCDC to produce a design that is a much improved scheme from the previous application in 2014. The re-designed scheme responds more positively to local character, and the principle of a 'farm house' with courtyard housing to the rear of the site is much more appropriate. Effort has been made in the layout, scale and architecture, materials and surface treatment to try and reduce any adverse impact to the character of the area. The retention of open space to the south east of the site nearest to the historically sensitive part of the site will provide some separation (al be substantially reduced) from the cluster of listed buildings. Provision of a new pedestrian connection through the site to link to the village hall is welcomed.
69. It is disappointing that the majority of the existing hedgerow along the front of the site will be lost to achieve the required visibility splays, but this will be replanted as part of any works. The land around the church is slightly raised, so there are partial views into and across the site (primarily to the frontage of plots 3 and 4). These units have been reduced slightly in height to single and 1.5 storey, and trees are suggested in front of these properties to further obscure any views of the houses from the area around the church.
70. The scheme was presented to the Design Enabling Panel, to comment on the design merits of the proposals. The DEP concluded that the revised application addressed officers' previous concerns in respect of failing to preserve or enhance the character of the local area. The suggested improvements the panel made relating to parking, detailing and materials have been taken on board by the applicant, and the scheme has been further improved in line with the panels comments.

Conclusion

71. The application is not supported due to the harm caused to the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings through the loss of separation from the main village. However if on planning balance, this harm is deemed to be outweighed by the public benefit of providing affordable housing on site, then I would say the current design is much improved from previous applications and does go some way to mitigate the harm caused.
72. **Historic England** - The proposed development is to provide 10 new affordable houses at the above Site, owned by your authority, to the west of the grade 2* listed parish church of St Mary, Great Eversden. Historic England provided advice regarding previous applications in 2011 and October 2014 for the same scale of residential development on this site. Our view was that those schemes would cause harm to the setting of the listed parish church and recommend that planning permission be refused. The 2014 application was approved by your authority but subsequently quashed as an EIA had not been carried out. The current proposals are very similar to those previously submitted and whilst our advice is updated below, our stance remains unchanged.
73. As with the previous schemes this application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement by the project architects, Saunders Boston Ltd. This document refers to the National Planning Policy Statement, under which development affecting the setting of listed buildings should be considered and which establishes the importance of setting (paragraph 128). However, the statement does not accord the separation of Church farm from the main village its appropriate level of significance. The separation emphasises the way the farm historically sat in its agricultural land beyond the settlement. the same is true of the Homestead, situated across Church Lane and of the Grade 2* listed St Mary's Church, where the isolation from the main village not only affords it a much stronger presence in the landscape but underlines its historic status as the primary building in the community.
74. Also the heritage statement does not conclude that development of the site would cause harm to their setting. The development would involve the removal of part of the existing boundary hedge along Church Street to accommodate the new access road and its visibility splays. Whilst the access road has been designed to be as narrow as possible and the hedge would be replenished following the implementation of the development, we consider it would only partially obscure views of the site. Currently in this case a contiguous band of open fields separate the village from the church, the farm and the Homestead and the proposed development would occupy part of it. The relationship to the village would be irrevocably changed and precedent established for building in this area.(need to address this point)
75. We acknowledge that the scheme would deliver affordable housing, a commodity in short supply in South Cambridgeshire, but it would cause harm to the setting of the grade 2* listed St Mary's Church and the setting of several grade 2 listed buildings in the vicinity. Your authority must, of course, consider the need for affordable housing, but the proposals would run counter to the aims of policies 131,134 and 137 in the NPPF. We do not consider the scheme would demonstrably give rise to public benefits which would outweigh the harm caused by the setting of a number of heritage assets and we therefore maintain our objections made regarding two previous similar applications and urge your authority not to approve the application.

Recommendation

76. Historic England objects to the application on heritage grounds. We consider that the application does not meet the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 131,134 and 137. In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the application.
77. **SCDC Housing** – The proposal is for development of 10 affordable dwellings on an exception site in Great Eversden. This is in accordance with Policy H/10 of the Local Plan, ‘Rural Exception Site Policy’ in which it is stated that development on exception sites should be for the sole purposes of providing 100% affordable housing to meet identified local housing needs.
78. A housing needs survey was carried out in January 2014, which identified 12 households in housing need with a local connection to the Eversdens. The development consists of Affordable Rent 7x 2 bed Houses Shared ownership 2 x 2 Bed Houses and 1 x 3 Bed Houses. The mix and tenure split is reflective of the local need identified in the ‘Housing Needs Survey’. Accent Nene are a Registered Provider who have provided other good quality affordable housing schemes in South Cambridgeshire and are very much committed to the delivery of this affordable housing scheme.
79. The housing strategy and development team are in support of this development which will meet the local housing need in The Eversdens.

80. **Anglian Water** – No objections

Wastewater treatment

The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Haslingfield Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows.

Foul Water Drainage Network

The sewerage system at present has available capacity for these flows.

Surface Water Disposal

From the details submitted to support this application the proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water operated assets.

81. **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** – Object to this application for the following reasons.

(1) Great Eversden is a very small village with only about 90 dwellings, which, apart from a group of 1960's housing along Wimpole Road, has grown organically over many generations. An estate of 10 dwellings would be out of proportion in this village.

(2) The site itself is a field, currently grazed, with some individual trees and bordered by hedges and trees. It can be easily viewed from the public footpath which skirts around an adjoining field and then alongside the site itself and leads to the village hall. The view this path presents is quintessentially rural England. Once built on that view would be lost for ever.

(3) We note that a Housing Needs Survey has been carried out which establishes the

need for houses. However, we urge that a site be found elsewhere in the locality which has facilities.

(4) We recognise and support the need for affordable homes in South Cambridgeshire, but we believe every effort should be made to build them in villages which have facilities such as a convenience store, public house, post officer, primary school in the village itself or within convenient distance of a village which has these facilities. Great Eversden has none of these facilities, nor has the neighbouring larger village of Little Eversden. In addition, public transport is minimal.

(5) We urge the Council to refuse this application.

82. **Design Enabling Panel**

Summary

The (original) scheme was presented at pre-application stage and it remained a 'work in progress'. The Panel consider the proposal an improvement upon the previous scheme and were of the opinion that, subject to sensitive detailed design development which addresses points raised and outlined in the discussion below, the proposals will address the officers' previous concerns and reasons for refusal. It should be noted that the DEP are aware of recent planning history of the site and their comments are restricted purely to the design merits of the proposal.

Discussion

83. The general approach to the site layout was understood and supported. From their earlier site visit the Panellists were particularly aware of the importance of providing the landscape greenspace to the south east boundary as included within the sketch proposal. The distinct character and importance of the church and nearby cluster of buildings which effectively stop the view along Church Street when leaving the centre of Great Eversden should be carefully maintained. It was felt that the general design approach as demonstrated would not prejudice this element. The detailed contextual and village analysis was appreciated. The proposed layout showed the potential to respond positively to the local character subject to further refinement of certain elements and the use of appropriate quality materials.
84. The concept of the 'farmhouse' to the front of the site and the simpler vernacular/agricultural typology to the rear was considered appropriate subject to simple and rationalised detailing, a restricted palette of materials and the avoidance of 'stick on' porches and minor projections.
85. The Panel would encourage further investigation of the road surfacing, edge details and geometry. The scheme would benefit from an informal range of hard landscaping details with hopefully the avoidance of pre-cast kerbs and attendant street lighting. Pedestrians/cycle connectivity through the site and alongside the village hall was strongly encouraged and the Panel would like to see the potential for a pedestrian link and its relationship to the open/green space and 'LAP' beyond developed to provide an informal route appropriate to the setting. It was suggested that the pedestrian link could pass through the LAP rather than running adjacent to it, and that a community orchard could work well here whilst protecting views from the church.
86. The importance of existing trees and hedgerows was agreed and it is understood that this scheme will now be informed by necessary tree survey and Arboricultural

Impact Assessment. It was considered that certain specimen trees towards the centre of the proposed dwellings should be retained where practicable and the housing layout informally revised accordingly. The massing of the single and one and a half storey dwellings should be carefully considered (when the layout is revised to allow for potential to retain certain trees) so as to minimise the impact upon views from the church and approach to the village. In addition to the site edges being marked by retained trees, hedgerows etc, the Panel would strongly encourage individual plots to be informally separated in a similar manner without recourse to high close boarded timber fences.

87. Cycle storage/garden sheds should be carefully sited and incorporated within the submission. Ad hoc small garden structures have the potential to detract from the overall impression and impact upon the setting and character in this edge of settlement location.
88. Car Parking Layout - It was noted that the scheme was at pre-application stage and will be subject to further design development. This should include detailed consideration of the car parking layout in the manner which should avoid a large area of frontage parking without relief. The scheme would therefore benefit from more detailed landscape design as part of the forthcoming submission.
89. Reference was made to the courtyard farmstead concept, and it was suggested that if this is adopted it should not be washed down with bollards, parking bays etc and that a simple material palette will be essential i.e. losing the porch canopies and brick panels. Reference was made to design cues elsewhere in the village where the rooflines of farm buildings vary, and it was suggested that some parking could be under carports to provide this.
90. Materials- The suggestion of a colour wash rendered farmhouse with other buildings weather boarded over brick plinths was supported. A maximum of two roof coverings, slate and tile, with one being used on the 'farmhouse' and the other being used on the rest was supported by the Panel. As the proposal is for all Affordable Housing it was explained that there is a strong preference for UPVC windows. The Panel would recommend timber or perhaps aluminium, however should UPVC be acceptable then it should be to an approved detail/sample.
91. Renewable Energy - It was noted that the orientation of the buildings was not generally good for generating renewable energy from the roof slopes. It was understood that the final proposal is likely to incorporate photovoltaic panels, in which case the Panel would urge that the design installation and impact of such panels is carefully considered and integrated within the roof coverings as far as practicable, i.e. not addressed as a 'bolt on'.
92. **Fire Service** – Should the LPA be minded to grant approval, the Fire Authority would ask that adequate provision be made for fire hydrants which may be secured by way of a S106 agreement or a planning condition.

Representations

93. A total of 32 representations have been received, 18 in favour of the development with 14 opposing.
94. Those in support of the application offer the following comments:
 - There is a clear need for more affordable housing in the village.

- The development is tucked away and will not harm the village, with other proposed sites more visible and would negatively impact on the character of the village.
- There is a need for people to live somewhere.
- The cost of houses is so high that the relatives of residents and those with close connections who are not wealthy can no longer afford them.
- The houses proposed are in keeping with the mix and style of the village.
- The site is well screened by trees bushes and hedgerows.
- Separation will remain to the listed church.
- When viewed from the footpath the development will fit well in the landscape.
- There is a majority of residents in favour of the development.
- This site is sequentially preferable.
- The site benefits from easy and safe pedestrian access.
- Using this site will protect valuable open green belt of the available alternatives.
- The site is socially sustainable with a new orchard, play area and footpath.
- The NPPF promises neighbourhood planning should be 'about people in - communities not specialists or bodies remote from them'
- Private development homes in the Eversdens are large and very expensive which has meant the population of the rural community is priced out.
- The site is close to the recreation ground, bus stops and school bus pick up points.

95. Those opposing the development comment as follows:

- Not all potential site owners have been contacted.
- The development is similar to the previous application.
- Previous planning officers, statutory consultees and a previous appeal inspector have consistently maintained this site should not be developed.
- The development will lead to loss of countryside, green belt, landscape setting of the village and setting of listed buildings.
- Traffic speed is not enforced and frequently exceeds 30mph, with visibility splays the bare minimum acceptable and rely on partial hedge removal and/or planting further back from the road resulting in loss of character of the locality.
- The development will generate a proportionately significant number of traffic movements on a narrow road which encompasses difficult junction with Chapel and Wimpole Road's and a sharp bend around the church.
- Will result in the loss of vegetation including the hedge along the front of the site.
- The development does nothing to enhance the character of the locality or setting of the listed building group.
- The scope of the ecology survey was limited by virtue of being carried out in November.
- The golden thread of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with this development being largely reliant on car travel to access basic facilities in a village where there is no shop, no post office, a bus stop without a bus service and no school.
- Why should rural exception sites not be subject to the same criteria for development consideration as the criteria applied to those used by the SCHLAA for identifying development sites for 10 or more houses: To quote the SCHLAA call for sites 'The Assessment will not consider sites in infill villages... This is because the Council does not consider that in planning policy terms there is any realistic prospect of sites in the smallest villages in the district, with limited local services and facilities lacking for example even a primary school, being suitable for allocation through the plan making process' – SCDC's decision to refuse planning permission for application S/3038/14/FUL on sustainability grounds, the sustainability principles applied to that application also apply to Great Eversden.
- This application should be considered on its own merits not as a means to end for political expediency.

- Just because grant funding may or may not be forthcoming does not affect the inherent suitability of the site for development.
- The development is out of keeping with the character of the village.
- Recommend the land be designated an Protected Village Amenity Area
- The site forms an important part of the natural separation between the historic core of the village and later linear development along High Street, Chapel Road and Wimpole Road.
- Adverse impact on the setting of a number of listed buildings.
- Loss of good quality arable land.
- There is a lack of demand for affordable housing in the village as demonstrated by Low Close.
- The development will give rise to an inordinate population increase within a small village with no amenities for sustainable growth.
- No archaeological survey has been carried out.
- The Parish Council have persisted with an arrogant attitude to campaign for development of affordable housing on this site, in a village with no amenities and negligible transport links.
- The development is on the wrong side of the road for the existing footpath
- Accent Housing have already been gifted the land and £100k from taxpayers to try make the scheme financially viable – this is completely wrong and taxpayers have right to know why this money went to Accent Housing.
- The development will not be affordable to local people.
- The development would destroy one of the primary features of the village, its regular and integrated open spaces.
- The development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- The other sites offered for affordable housing have not been considered properly, with the sequential test not 'vigorous enough'.
- The sequential test is designed to the conclusion and is not an objective assessment.
- The development does not satisfy the criteria required to be permit designation as a Rural Exceptions Site under planning policy in view of proven need.
- The application relies on an outdated screening opinion and fails to recognise that the development would have significant environmental effects on the environment

Site and Surrounding Area

96. Great Eversden village comprises a built form primarily centred around and extending out along the cross roads of Wimpole Road, Chapel Road, High Street and Church Street, with development concentrated to the north and west of this junction. The village is located close to the larger settlement of Little Eversden.
97. Both villages are identified as an 'Infill Village' under policy ST/7 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD 2007.
98. The site lies adjacent but outside the village framework and within the Green Belt. The site is not within a conservation area or is otherwise constrained. It is identified as being at low risk of flooding (flood risk zone 1).
99. The site is located to the north of Church Street on the south eastern edge of the village and covers an area of 0.8 hectares broadly rectangular in shape. South Cambridgeshire District Council has owned the site since 1949 and the site is partially leased for livestock grazing. A mature hedgerow forms the southern boundary along Church Street. A number of trees can be found within the site and along the perimeter boundaries.

- 100 Residential dwellings adjoin the site to the west, with Church Farm (residential property) to the south on the opposite side of Church Street. The site is bounded by agricultural land to the east and north east, with The Homestead (residential property) and St Mary's Church a short distance to the south east.
101. A number of properties in the locality are listed including: Village Hall (Grade 2), Church Farmhouse and Barn (Both Grade 2), Church of St Mary (Grade 2*), The Homestead and Outbuilding (Both Grade 2) along with the telephone kiosk (Grade 2). These are annotated as such on the location plan that accompanies this report. Great and Little Eversden are two separate administrative parishes, but share a single Parish Council.

Proposal

102. The application seeks full planning consent for 10 new affordable houses of which 7 will be Social Rented two bedroom houses and 3 Intermediate properties (2 x two bedroom and 1 x three bedrooms). A single new access is proposed off Church Street which extends to the centre of the site and will serve all the units. Land to the east and south east is proposed to be given over to public open space comprising a Local Area of Play and Community Orchard. Details of the landscaping arrangements accompany the application.
103. During the course of the application the scheme was amended to alter the layout of the dwellings, alignment of the access road along with other minor changes.
104. The application is supported by the following documents:
- 20 Year Landscape Management Plan
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Ecology Report
 - Energy Statement
 - Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy
 - Geo-environmental Desk Study
 - Heritage Statement
 - Open Space Assessment for Proposed Affordable Housing Development in Great Eversden
 - Proposed Waste Strategy
 - Sequential Test
 - Tree Survey
 - Tree Survey & Arboricultural Impact Assessment
 - Housing Needs Assessment
105. The application does not fall under Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The development is not considered to result in significant environmental impacts individually or cumulatively with other developments in the village that requires the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Planning Assessment

106. The key issues to consider in determination of this application relate to the housing land supply, the location and inappropriateness within the Green Belt; historic environment; landscape and rural character, ecological considerations; flood risk and

drainage; highway safety and residential amenity.

Housing Land Supply

107. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires councils to boost significantly the supply of housing and, specifically, to identify and maintain a five-year housing land supply with an additional buffer as set out in paragraph 47.
108. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply in the district as required by the NPPF, having a 4.5 year supply using the methodology identified by the Inspector in the Waterbeach appeals in 2014. This shortfall is based on an objectively assessed housing need of 19,000 homes for the period 2011 to 2031 (as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 and updated by the latest update undertaken for the Council in November 2015 as part of the evidence responding to the Local Plan Inspectors' preliminary conclusions) and latest assessment of housing delivery (in the housing trajectory (December 2017)). In these circumstances policies for the supply of housing are "out of date" and careful thought will need to be given to the weight to attach to other policies which restrict the supply of housing in the context of the overall housing land supply shortfall.
109. Policies ST/2 and ST/7 of the Core Strategy provide for the number and distribution of new housing and are therefore policies for the supply of housing and are to be considered "out of date". That is not to say they should automatically carry no or limited weight. Officers consider that, in the context of the limited shortfall in the supply of housing and the advanced stage of the emerging plan which will deliver a robust five-year supply, these policies should carry moderate weight.
110. Policies DP/7, ST/7 and HG/5 deal with disposition and restriction of new housing and are not policies for the supply of housing, however they do serve restrict the supply of housing the weight to attach to them in the context of an overall shortfall is important.
111. Officers consider that moderate weight should attach to DP/7 given that, in part, it serves to protect the countryside. Policy ST/7 should also carry limited weight given that, in part, it seeks to promote good accessibility to services and facilities. However, officer consider that full weight should apply to policy HG/5 given that its objectives are to boost the supply of affordable homes close to where the need arises.

Green Belt

112. Policy ST/1 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy states that a Green Belt will be maintained around Cambridge. Amongst other things, the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt are to maintain and enhance the quality of Cambridge's setting and to prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city. Moreover, in defining the Green Belt, regard will be given to the special character of Cambridge and its setting, including amongst other things, the distribution, physical separation, setting, scale and character of Green Belt villages (including Great Eversden) and a landscape that retains a strong rural character.
113. The proposed development of the site is not considered to undermine the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt albeit the setting, scale and character of Great Eversden will be changed. This change in Green Belt terms is not, however, considered to be significant given the scale and amount of housing proposed and, its relationship to existing development. Thus there is no material conflict with policy ST/1.
114. Policy GB/1 of the Development Control Policies DPD states that there is a

presumption against inappropriate development in the Cambridge Green Belt as defined on the Proposals Map. The supporting text to Policy GB/1 states that the main purpose of the Green Belt is to keep land open by placing a permanent and severe restriction on inappropriate development; therefore most types of development can only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Such exceptional circumstances will be regarded as Departures from the Development Plan and will only be permitted where other considerations outweigh harm to the Green Belt. It is not sufficient justification to override Green Belt policies because a development would be inconspicuous or would not harm the site or locality.

115. Chapter 9 of the NPPF relates to 'Protecting Green Belt Land', where paragraph 87 advises:

'As with previous Green Belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances'.

116. Paragraph 88 goes on to advise that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations'.

117. Paragraph 89 states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. An exception to this is

"limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan"

118. As the site lies outside the adopted village framework, the first part of this criterion, namely "limited infilling in villages" does not apply in this case. The adopted Development Control Policies DPD contains policy HG/5, which provides for "Exceptions Site for Affordable Housing. This policy is intended to provide affordable housing for local community needs and reads:

1. As an exception to the normal operation of the policies of this plan, planning permission may be granted for schemes of 100% affordable housing designed to meet identified local housing needs on small sites within or adjoining villages. The following criteria will all have to be met:

119. *a. The development proposal includes secure arrangements for ensuring that all the dwellings within the scheme provide affordable housing in perpetuity for those in housing need;*
b. The number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confined to, and appropriate to, the strict extent of the identified local need;
c. The site of the proposal is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village;
d. The site is well related to facilities and services within the village;
e. The development does not damage the character of the village or the rural landscape.

2. In the case of sites within the Cambridge Green Belt, before planning permission is granted for such development, the District Council will have to be assured that no alternative appropriate sites can be found for the scale and type of development proposed and that the scheme fulfils all the criteria set out in the Council's policies,

including those relating to the impact of new development on local surroundings.'

120. The NPPF does not define what is meant by the use of the word "limited" when referring to affordable housing for local community needs, but given that criterion 1 of policy HG/5 refers specifically to "small" sites, officers are satisfied that policy HG/5 applies in this case.
121. As such, where a development for an affordable housing exception site (such as this) complies with all the criteria set out in the above policy such a scheme would represent 'appropriate development' in the Green Belt. Failure to comply with any of the requirements of policy HG/5 would mean a proposal was considered 'inappropriate development', and could only be approved in very special circumstances. Should members conclude that any of the criteria cannot be met, the development would amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As set out above, that would be that great weight should be attached to the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm, and planning permission should only be granted if material planning considerations which amount to very special circumstances clearly outweigh the harm.
122. Officers' assessment in respect of criteria 1a) – e) within policy HG/5 are as follows.
- a) The development proposal includes secure arrangements for ensuring that all the dwellings within the scheme provide affordable housing in perpetuity for those in housing need*
- All of the dwellings are proposed to be "affordable" and would in principle be secured as such in perpetuity through a S106 legal agreement. The Council has previously received advice from Counsel that "it is the case plainly that inclusion of an MiP clause into a planning obligation to secure affordable housing on a rural exception site would involve a departure from policy HG/5 of the Council's adopted Development Control Policies DPD. Such a clause would also conflict with policy H/10 of the Council's emerging local plan".
123. The upshot of this is that the proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- b) The number, size, design, mix and tenure of the dwellings are all confirmed to, and appropriate to, the strict extent of the identified local need*
124. The application is supported by a housing needs survey which examines the 'need' for affordable housing across both Great and Little Eversden, and concludes there is a current and immediate need for 12 new affordable homes to be built.
125. It is of note that the level of 'need' arises from both parishes (Great and Little Eversden), and the Councils affordable housing SPD advises '*for the purposes of the rural exception site policy, local need is defined as identified need in the individual village or the local area it serves, defined as the parish boundary*'.
126. Officers are of the view given the small scale of both villages and close proximity to one another assessing the need across both parish council administrative areas is justified. This interpretation was accepted as appropriate by the High Court decision referred to at paragraph 10 above
127. The application proposes the construction 7 Social Rented two bedroom houses and 3 Intermediate properties (2 x two bedroom and 1 x three bedrooms) meeting some,

but not all, of the level of need identified. Although the Housing Needs Survey was undertaken in January 2014, it is considered sufficiently recent to provide a reliable evidence base in conformance with the guidance set out in the Affordable Housing SPD which recommends a time period of 5 years. The Housing Officer has confirmed this is still the case.

c) The site of the proposal is well related to the built-up area of the settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the size and character of the village

128. The built environment of Great Eversden extends out from the cross roads of Wimpole Road, Chapel Road, High Street and Church Street, with the site located in close proximity to this junction adjacent the defined settlement boundary. In terms of scale, this 10 unit scheme represents a modest increase in the size of the village which is appropriate to both the size and character of the village.

d) The site is well related to facilities and services within the village

129. Policy ST/7 of the Core Strategy permits residential development within the village frameworks of the Infill Villages to an indicative maximum of 2 dwellings. In very special circumstances, a development of up to 8 dwellings may be permitted where this would lead to the sustainable recycling of a brownfield site bringing positive overall benefit to the village. Neither of these criteria can be met in this case and the aim of the policy is to prevent unsustainable development in villages that have a poor range of services and facilities.
130. Great Eversden is a distinct village in its own right and benefits from its own parish. However it is located in close proximity to and shares a Parish Council with Little Eversden. Given this close relationship it is considered that for the purposes of assessing this criterion it is logical to take into account the services and facilities offered across both villages. This approach is consistent with paragraph 55 of the NPPF which advises in rural areas '*development in one village may support services in a nearby village*'. In combination both villages have a total of circa 840 residential properties, two churches, village hall, recreation ground, Indian restaurant, take-away and doctors surgery. Given this level of provision and location of the site to the Little Eversden side of the village it is considered the proposal is well related in terms of access to services and facilities within these villages.
131. In any event, policy ST/7 can only be given "limited" weight at the present time given that the Council cannot demonstrate an up to date supply of housing land. This reduces the weight to attach to conflict with this policy and does not alter the fact that the site is still well related to facilities and services within the village so far as they exist.

e) The development does not damage the character of the village or rural landscape

132. This application is for the same number of units as previous schemes. It has addressed concerns in respect of the impact on village character and landscape raised by officers. Most notably the layout of the buildings are designed adopting a rural character with a long straight access drive, smaller buildings to the rear and barns set around a courtyard. This is complimented through the use of simple vernacular style buildings, the detailed design and materials all of which can be suitably conditioned so far as the actual details are concerned.
133. It is of note the Urban Design officer, advises that the '*design responds positively to*

local character, and the principle of a 'farm house' with courtyard housing to the rear of the site is appropriate. Furthermore the independent Design Enabling Panel concluded the revised application addresses concerns in respect of the impact on the character of the village.

134. Turning to landscape impact, the landscape officer, who does not raise any objection or identify harm, comments that development on this site is possible subject to respecting the landscape qualities of the site and its surroundings, and (following receipt of the amended plans) requests changes to the proposed plant species (of the landscaping scheme) and surfacing materials of the access road. Both these measures can be secured through condition, and as such officers are of the view the development although clearly resulting in a material "change" will not damage the character of the village or the rural landscape.

2) Alternative Appropriate Sites

135. As the site lies within the Green Belt, an assessment is still required so far as the second part of policy HG/5 is concerned and requires consideration to be given to alternative appropriate sites for the scale and type of development proposed.
136. The application is accompanied by a Sequential Test in which the applicant undertook the following measures to identify alternative land parcels across both Great and Little Eversden which were capable of accommodating 10 units:
1. Assistance from the Parish Council on availability and history of sites identified.
 2. Parish Council approach to local landowners
 3. Call for sites which was advertised at the Parish Council meeting, advertised across the village during October and November via posters displayed on four local notice boards around the Eversdens, as well as being published on the Eversdens Online website which has 170 registered users and the direct approach to 14 land owners.
137. As part of this exercise land owners were offered a sum of £10 000 - £12 000 per plot for the sale of land for affordable housing purposes. Officers consider this a sufficiently reasonable value to incentivise a land owner to sell in a location where the planning constraints of the Green Belt restrict higher value market housing.
138. Some local residents have questioned the commitment of the applicant to find alternative sites, providing the names of land owners who have not been approached (Fossey Charitable Trust) and land owners (Diocese of Ely) who may be willing to sell their land that the applicants have approached but discounted.
139. Officers have assessed the Sequential Test, including directly approaching both the Fossey Charitable Trust and Diocese of Ely, and conclude a number of alternative sites may be available (See Appendix A for the location of these). These are sites where the landowner is prepared to sell the land. Sites where the land owner is not prepared to sell have been discounted.)

Great Eversden

- Land at Tinkers Lane (1)
- Land opposite the village hall (2)
- Land between Church Street and Wimpole Road (3)
- OSP148 (4)

Little Eversden

Land adjacent Halton Road (5)
Land at Leetes Lane (6)
Land adjacent High Street (7)
Land to adjacent Leete's Lane (8)

140. Officers are of the view that some of these sites, namely land opposite the village hall (2), land between Church Street and Wimpole Road (3), part of the land adjacent to Halton Road that fronts Church Street (5) and land at Leetes Lane (6), could possibly provide alternative sites for the same scale and type of development. As such officers have needed to be assured that there are no "alternative appropriate sites" having regard to the detailed requirements of policy HG/5.
141. The site at (1) Tinkers Lane was discounted because of its remoteness and isolation from the village. Site (7) High Street, Little Eversden was discounted because of potential impact on surrounding properties and (8) Leete's Lane because of its landscape impact and general isolation. This advice was conveyed to the applicant on 12 May 2017 who was asked to write to the respective landowners of the four remaining sites identified above to see whether they were willing to make their land available.
142. The applicant has subsequently replied providing evidence that none of the respective landowners are interested in seeing their land developed for an affordable housing scheme such as that now proposed. This information is available to view on the public file.
143. The lack of "alternative appropriate sites for the scale and type of development proposed" mean that the proposed development complies with criterion 2 of policy HG/5.
144. Given that officers consider criterion 1e) in policy HG/5 cannot be met, the proposal is held to represent 'inappropriate development' in the Green BeltAs such the test of very special circumstances needs to be applied given the development does not fall within an exception at paragraph 89 NPPF.

Historic Environment

Setting of nearby Listed buildings

145. Chapter 12 of the NPPF relates to Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment where paragraph 129 advises '*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal*'
146. Paragraph 132 advises: '*When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of*

grade II listed buildings, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notable scheduled ancient monument, protected wreck sites, battlefields, Grade I and Grade II listed buildings, Grade I and grade II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional'.*

147. Paragraph 134 relates to the consideration of development proposals which result in 'less than substantial harm' to heritage assets: It advises: *'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use'*
148. Adopted Development Control policy CH/4 advises planning permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect the wider setting of a listed Building. Further policies relating to heritage assets include the adopted SPD (Listed Buildings: Works to or affecting the setting of SPD – Adopted July 2009) and emerging Local Plan policy NH/14, both of which advise a precautionary stance when considering the impact on heritage assets.
149. The protection offered to heritage assets extends beyond policy guidance, with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 placing a statutory duty to have special regard to (amongst other criteria) the desirability of preserving the setting of listed building.
150. As already noted, the development site is located in close proximity to a number of Grade 2 Listed properties (buildings of special interest warranting every effort to preserve them) and the Grade 2* Church of St Mary (particularly important buildings of more than special interest) which benefit from the listing descriptions as set out below.

Village Hall (Grade 2)

151. Non-conformist chapel, now village hall. 1845 (dated panel to front). Gault brick, English bond and low pitch slate roof with plain eaves cornice. Two stages. Pedimented gable end to road. Rectangular recessed panel with stuccoed date panel and below three symmetrically disposed doorways. The central doorway is larger and has a moulded Ketton stone surround with entablature. The flanking doorways have Ketton entablatures only. Side elevations in five window bays. Segmental arches to recessed small pane windows with iron glazing bars. Interior: Gallery on three sides with panelled parapet, on cast iron columns with foliated capitals. R.C.H.M. West Cambs Mon (2)

Church Farmhouse (Grade 2)

152. House. Early C17. Timber framed, rendered and tiled roof with ridge stack of four diagonally set grouped shafts, possibly rebuilt, on square base-. At north end another internal stack with two similar diagonally set shafts. Lobby entry plan, and end to road extended at north end and on west side. Two storeys and attic. Three modern casements at first floor. Doorway to lobby entry and three, three-light modern casements. At the north end some late C17 brickwork, now painted is incorporated in the extension.

Barn at Church Farmhouse (Both Grade 2)

153. Barn. Late medieval. Timber framed, weatherboarded and original roof, half-hipped,

and now covered with corrugated iron. Aisled and in five bays, with porch opening on east side also with half-hipped roof. Inside: Braced tie beams, and through purl in roof with arch braces. Evidence of passing braces from wall posts to tie beams possibly original or reused.

Church of St Mary (Grade 2*)

154. Parish church. Rebuilt after a fire in 1466. Restorations of 1864 and 1920. Fieldstone, clunch rubble and dressings of clunch and limestone. Tiled roof. Plan of west tower, nave and chancel. West Tower of three stages on plinth with three stage diagonal buttressing and newel staircase at north east angle. Rebuilt embattlement. Restored west window of three lights. Single light window with trefoil head in two centred arch to each side of second stage. Bell stage has original clunch dressings to two light openings with foiled heads and two centred arches. Nave has two late C15 windows, restored, in south wall. Chancel with resort fenestration. Each window of three cinquefoil lights in two centred arch. North porch, dated 1636 on gable. Framed, rendered, and tiled. North and South doorways have continuous ogee mouldings to four centred arches on chamfered bases. Interior: nave roof in three bays. Late medieval. Arch braced, cambered tie beams. West tower arch, two centred and of two aisles. Outer hollow and roll moulded, inner chamfered. Responds with half octagonal shafts with moulded capitals and high bases. Chancel arch is similar and has a rood loft stair opening on north side. Chancel has late medieval roof. Arch braced tie beams with the wall posts resting on stone corbels. The wall posts have engaged shafts with embattled capitals and moulded bases. The cornice is also embattled. Piscina, late cl5-early C16 in East wall of chancel. Pulpit, early C17 on modern base.

The Homestead (Grade 2)

155. House. Early C16. Timber framed, plaster rendered, and tiled roof with stack slightly north of the ridge with some rebuilt upper courses. External stack at west end with two alabaster panels. Each has a quatrefoil with a shield. Single range of six bays, and a narrower chimney bay. Two storeys with the south side jettied at first floor, except for two bays at the west end. There is internal evidence that these two bays have always been open at ground floor level on south side possibly having an outshut. This has now been demolished and replaced by modern brickwork. Three C19 windows at first floor and three shuttered windows at ground floor. Doorway leads to cross-passage, with an opposing doorway in the north wall. The rear wall has a six-light window with hollow moulded mullions to the original hall, and at first floor two, three-light diamond mullion windows. At the east gable end there is a window with shafted rectangular mullions. Interior: The framing is of substantial and uniform scantling with closely set studs. There are shallow arch braced tie beams. The clasped side purlin roof has wind bracing. There are broad stop chamfers to spine beams and joists, particularly those of the room at the east end of the house. Clunch and brick inglenooks hearths at ground floor. At first floor small, chamber hearths including one with four centred arch, chamfered, of clunch. The cross-passage retains the screen with an original doorway leading to the hall. Four centred arch. Intersecting main beams in the room at the west end. Staircase leading off the cross-passage, possibly turned round. A rebate for a doorway leading into the present staircase suggests a later alteration. The staircase however is of the original solid wooden treads.

Outbuilding at The Homestead (Grade 2)

156. Outbuilding. Early C16. Timber framed, rendered and pantiled with gablet at south end. Two bays but originally extended further to the north. Two storeys. South end has site for large shuttered window at first floor. Two modern windows in east wall.

Inside: The ceiling has been removed except for one main beam. The tie beam of the centre walls is cranked and jointed to the spine beam of the ground floor ceiling. Wind braced side purlin roof.

Telephone kiosk, Type K6.

157. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by various contractors. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to windows and doors
158. The site is located circa 60m, at its closest point, from the 'S bend' in Church Street to the east, around which the following listed buildings are grouped: The Homestead, Outbuilding at The Homestead, Church Farm and Barn at Church Farm (all Grade 2), along with the Grade 2* Listed church of St Mary.
159. Historic England advise this separation emphasises the way Church Farm historically sat in its agricultural land beyond the settlement, with the same being true for the Homestead and St Mary's Church, where the isolation from the village additionally afforded this building a much stronger presence in the landscape and underlined its historic status as the primary building in the community. Historic England object to the application on grounds the development would result in harm to the setting of the nearby heritage assets due to the removal of part of the existing boundary hedge along Church Street, development within part of the open fields between the village and cluster of listed buildings resulting in an irrevocable change to the relationship with the village and setting a precedent for building in this area.
160. Historic England oppose the application, for the reasons set out in their consultation response, but do not offer views as to whether they consider this harm to be 'substantial' or 'less than substantial', despite officers seeking clarification on this. Historic England have also cited concerns regarding precedent for other development. However as the site is within the Green Belt and applications still need to be considered on their individual merits no weight should be attributed to this argument.
161. The Council's Conservation officer also cites the importance of the open land between the sensitive cluster of historic buildings and existing built form of the village, advising the loss of this distinction would cause harm to the setting of the listed buildings, and considers this harm significant but less than substantial. These stances reflect the views taken by a Planning Inspector who, in dismissing the appeal for application S/3202/88/F (16 flats and garages), referred to the development site as 'Guardian Fields', which although not a recognised heritage term is an accurate description of the application site.
162. In terms of the impact on other heritage assets; the development will not impact (either adversely or positively) on any further listed buildings or structures. Turning to archaeological interests. Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology note the site is located in an area of high archaeological importance arising from its proximity to the 15th century Saint Mary's Church, moated sites, remains of the deserted mediaeval village and earlier Roman settlement in addition to archaeological investigations found at Church farm which reveal evidence of medieval occupation. The County Council do not object subject to the application recommending a programme of archaeological investigation. Subject to securing this by condition to harm to archaeological assets is identified.
163. The NPPF categorises adverse impacts on the significance of heritage assets as either: total loss, substantial harm or less than substantial harm. Officers are of the

view this development will result in harm to the setting of the cluster of listed buildings contrary to policy Ch/4. Taking into account the site layout (with buildings positioned adjoining the village and away from the church), extent of remaining separation retained to the grouping of listed buildings, additional landscaping proposed (details to be secured by condition), modest height of the dwellings and low density nature of the layout that this level of harm is 'less than substantial'.

164. Where a development proposal results in less than substantial harm the NPPF is clear that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, and considerable importance and weight being attached to the less than substantial harm.

Biodiversity

165. Natural England advice the development will not damage or destroy the interest features of the Eversden and Wimpole Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest, and is unlikely to have a significant effect on the Eversden and Wimpole Woods Special Areas of Conservation. The development is therefore unlikely to impact on any statutory nature conservation sites.
166. The Council's ecologist advises that although hedgerows and woodland will be lost, the compensatory measures of boundary planting, new native hedgerows, native trees, community orchard and wildflower grassland should result in a net ecological gain, subject to the correct species mix (controlled through condition).
167. Appropriately-worded conditions to cover a Precautionary Method of Working for great crested newt and reptiles; all works to proceed in strict accordance with the recommendations detailed in Section 5 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report (MKA Ecology, November 2016), with the exception of Recommendations 2 and 3, and the 20 Year Landscape Management Plan (The Huck Partnership, December 2016); a specification for external illumination at the site; and a location plan and specification for boxes and in-built features for nesting birds and roosting bats are also justified to meet the objectives of policy NE/6. An informative re hedgerow management is also recommended.

Affordable housing

168. There are a total of 1,900 applicants on the housing register in South Cambridgeshire and approximately 500 applicants in registered on the 'Help to Buy' register for shared ownership. There is therefore a clear general need for affordable housing across the district, in addition to the specific needs in the Eversdens, and officers are of the view substantial weight should be given to the delivery of affordable housing provision, particularly in the absence of an up to date five year supply of housing land. It is noted that no other affordable housing has been provided in the village since this application was first mooted.
169. The affordable housing provision will need to be secured by means of a planning obligation consistent with the requirements of criteria 1a and 1b of policy HG/5.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Surface Water Drainage

170. The application is accompanied by a flood risk and drainage assessment which Cambridgeshire County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), confirm demonstrates there are several options for ensuring surface water discharge is limited

to 2.1l/s (greenfield run off rate) whilst allowing for climate change. Subject to conditions securing the details of this scheme and its long term maintenance surface water considerations are adequately addressed.

171.

In accordance with the advice from the LLFA, conditions are required for a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and the principles within the agreed Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy prepared by MLM Consulting Engineers Ltd (ref: 618166-REP-CIV-FRA) dated 23 November 2016. Details are also required for the long term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system.

172.

Foul Water Drainage

Anglian Water has confirmed there is capacity within the existing system.

Flood Risk

The site is located within an area which is at low risk of flooding (Flood Risk Zone 1) and the Environment Agency does not object to the development.

173.

Transport considerations

174. The application proposes a single point of access off Church Street with a carriageway width of 5m and visibility splays of 43m x 2.4m in both the trafficked and non-trafficked direction, in compliance with local highways authority guidance.

175. There is no footpath to the north of Church Street. Within the site the footpath is proposed to run along the western side of the vehicular access up to the carriageway where a crossing point is proposed to the footpath on the southern side of Church Street and connection into the village. Additionally pedestrian access can be achieved to the rear of the site via the existing public footpath that runs alongside the Village hall.

176.

All of the dwellings are to be served by two dedicated off road parking spaces as well as external storage space to house bicycles.

177. The carriageway along Church Street is narrow and to ensure construction traffic does not significantly impact on the functioning of the highway network it is necessary to secure details of a construction traffic management plan, which can be done through condition.

178. Subject to conditions securing visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m, detailed design of the access arrangements onto the public highway, details of provision of cycle storage facilities and a crossing point on Church Street, the development is acceptable from a transport perspective. The other conditions suggested by the local highway authority are not considered to meet the relevant tests and so are not recommended for inclusion should the application be approved. The proposal therefore accords with

179. policies DP/3 and TR/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework.

Residential Amenity

The location of the site means that only two residential properties are likely to be impacted by the proposed development. These are Willow Lodge, Chapel Road and Walnut Tree Cottage, Church Street. Both lie to the north west of the application site and in relatively spacious plots.

Plot 7 is a two-storey house and has two small secondary bedroom windows that face directly towards Willow Lodge. These are some 15 m from the shared rear boundary and there is approximately 34 m between opposing windows. Plot 6 is a similar distance off the boundary but has no openings in its west-facing side elevation.

180. Plots 1 and 2 comprise a two-storey detached semi-detached property each with a main bedroom window facing west towards Walnut Tree Cottage. These windows are 13 m away from the shared boundary and there is approximately 30 m between opposing windows.
181. These distances comply with standards set out in the adopted Design Guide and will not result in undue levels of overlooking.
182. The proposed dwellings are all of conventional height with relatively shallow pitch roofs and well spaced out across the site. As such no issues of overbearance, loss of outlook or overshadowing will occur.
183. The construction phase of the development has the potential to give rise to temporary disturbance of the closest residential properties, and conditions controlling parking arrangements, construction hours, and provision of further details should pile foundations be used would prevent any material harm arising. Additionally it is necessary to get details of the air source heat pumps prior to their installation to ensure noise levels are acceptable.
184. The development will therefore comply with policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework.

Other considerations

Crime and Disorder

185. Cambridgeshire Constabulary advise Great Eversden benefits from low rates of crime and are supportive of the layout noting it allows for lots of natural surveillance and vehicles to be parked on the curtilage of residents property. As such no concerns are raised in respect of crime and disorder.

Trees and hedgerow

186. The application is supported by a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan which advises seven trees are necessary to be felled to achieve the desired layout, with a further tree requiring felling irrespective of this development proposal. All of the seven trees which could be retained are classified as category 'C' trees (low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or younger trees with a stem diameter below 150mm). The single tree (Blackthorn) requiring removal is identified as a 'U' category tree defined as not realistically retained as living trees in the current land use for longer than 10 years.
187. In terms of the trees to be retained the alignments of the dwellings does not encroach on their Root Protection Areas. The Council's tree officer does not raise any objection, subject to ensuring the development protects retained trees during construction. This can be achieved by a suitable condition.

Environmental Health considerations

188. No concerns are raised with regard to contamination by the Environmental Health officer.

Developer Contributions

189. Development plan policies state that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements towards the provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
190. Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations states that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development of the obligation is: -
- i) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - ii) Directly related to the development; and,
 - iii) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Public Open Space

191. Policy SF/10 states that 'All residential developments will be required to contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space (including children's play space and formal outdoor sports facilities) and informal open space to meet the additional need generated by the development in accordance with the standards in Policy SF/11.
192. The South Cambridgeshire District Council Recreation and Open Space Study (2013) assessed the open space provision in Great and Little Eversden (combined). The villages require:
- 1.31 ha of sport space and have 2.55 ha representing a surplus of 1.24 ha.
 - 0.66 ha of play space and has 0.02 representing a deficit of 0.64 ha.
 - 0.33 ha of informal open space and has 0.11 representing a deficit of 0.22 ha.
193. A total of 0.168 ha informal open space will be provided as part of this application resulting in a modest public benefit.
194. Consistent with the unilateral undertaking that was entered into with the previous application for the site, contributions towards public open space are sought to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development. This equates to a sum of £17,085.60 as a capital contribution towards the maintenance of the open space to be provided (and first offered to the parish council for adoption. Should the Parish Council not be minded to adopt the on site public open space, the developer will be required to include arrangements to secure the long term management responsibility of the open space and play areas.
195. A Contribution of £735 is also required towards the provision of household waste receptacles (10 x £73.50) and obligation monitoring amounting to £1500.

Other Considerations

196. The granting of permission may result in financial benefit to South Cambridgeshire District Council through means of uplift in the value of the land due to the grant of planning permission. This is not a material planning consideration, and therefore cannot be given any weight in the decision making process.

Very Special Circumstances

197. As has been stated, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations
198. In this case, the harm by reason of inappropriateness will actually only arise should the need for a MiP clause have to be invoked. That is because the MiP clause potentially, but not necessarily, may render the proposal inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Where MiP clauses have been agreed on other sites in the district, it has not been the case that because of the MiP clause that the dwelling has needed to be made available on the open market and thus no longer affordable in perpetuity. Even if there was to be a default on the part of the mortgagee, the section 106 agreement will contain a proviso that the local authority should first be given an opportunity to acquire the property. Thus the risk of "losing" an affordable dwelling remains remote.
199. The Planning Committee has also previously regarded the need for a MiP clause as necessary on other exception sites in the district in the knowledge that the funding requirements of the affordable housing provider require this. Thus there is nothing unusual with the inclusion of a MiP clause.
200. In essence, therefore while the proposal is technically inappropriate development, in real terms the risk of actual conflict with criterion 1 of policy HG/5 is very limited.
201. There have been no other affordable housing schemes coming forward in the parish. The search for alternative suitable sites following this application has also drawn a blank. All such sites would also be within the Green Belt given the limited extents of the two village frameworks.
202. More generally, affordable housing is not being sought on schemes of 10 or less dwellings where the floor area of those dwellings is also less than 1000m². This is based on the Local Plan Inspector's conclusions that local circumstances do not justify departure from the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) and the view that in the light of those conclusions, it would no longer be appropriate or reasonable for the Council to continue to rely on adopted development control policy HG/3, which is not consistent with the WMS. Therefore for the purposes of relevant decisions, the policy approach in the WMS should prevail. On that basis, there is no longer a requirement for a general housing application to provide affordable housing in villages such as the Eversdens.
203. Officers have concluded that the public benefits of this proposal outweigh the harm to the setting of the listed buildings, the loss of openness of the Green Belt and the development of a greenfield site. Given the above views on the significance of the addition of a MiP clause, the availability of other sites in the parish to bring forward any level of affordable housing and the overall housing shortfall, it is concluded that there are very special circumstances that when taken collectively clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and the other identified harm.

Conclusion

204. The starting point is the statutory development plan. The scheme is not in a rural

centre or within a village framework, accordingly the scheme conflicts with policies ST/2, and ST/7 of the Core Strategy. The scheme is not for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation or for a use which is required to be located in the countryside, it is therefore contrary to policy DP/7 Development Control Policies DPD.

205. Furthermore, officers consider that the scheme does not comply with the dominant policy engaged by this scheme, policy HG/5 Development Control Policies DPD. The scheme also does not comply with policy GB/1 and paragraph 89 NPPF, and accordingly amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
206. The development will adversely impact on the setting of the cluster of Grade 2 listed buildings grouped around the Grade 2* Listed Church of St Mary. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy CH/4 although the level of harm arising is considered to be "less than substantial". By paragraph 134 of the NPPF, officers have weighed the public benefits of the scheme (the provision of affordable housing, improvements to biodiversity and provision of open space) against the less than substantial harm to the heritage assets, taking care to afford that harm considerable importance and weight. It is officers' view that the public benefits outweigh the harm, as such officers do not consider the less than substantial harm justifies withholding planning permission.
207. No adverse concerns are raised in respect of transport; drainage and flood risk; ecology; amenity; and crime and disorder considerations that cannot be overcome or mitigated by way of suitable conditions. The nature and extent of the affordable housing and various required infrastructure contributions can be secured by way of a legal agreement.
208. Officers have then moved to consider whether there are very special circumstances nonetheless to justify granting planning permission. The conclusion is that such circumstances do exist having regard to the particular circumstances of this case.
209. Members are therefore advised to grant planning permission.
209. The potential development of this site as an exception site for affordable housing has resulted in two previous applications being the subject of third party challenges. Should Members disagree with any element of officer's analysis as set out within this report, very careful reasons should be recorded in the minutes to ensure the decision is legally sound. These key issues are:
 - (1) Does the Committee agree with the officer view that the proposed development would not comply with HG/5 and is therefore inappropriate development in the Green Belt? In doing so, Members must consider each of the relevant provisions of policy HG/5 in turn. If any such conflict is found with policy HG/5, members must acknowledge there is a conflict with the development plan and turn to apply paragraph 14 NPPF, i.e. grant planning permission unless the adverse consequences significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.
 - (2) Members should then proceed to consider whether there are very special circumstances which clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm, recalling the need to afford "substantial weight" to any harm. If no such circumstances exist, planning permission should be withheld unless there are any other material considerations which justify departing from the development plan. If Members conclude very special circumstances exist, these should be clearly recorded.

- (3) If very special circumstances are found, Members should then return to consider whether the adverse consequences of the scheme (the less than substantial harm to the heritage assets, the harm to the Green Belt, the loss of greenfield land) significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme (the provision of needed affordable housing close to where the need arises).

210. Should the application be approved following members conclusion that the development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the application will need to be referred to the Secretary of State under The Town and Country Planning (Consultation (England) Direction 2009

Recommendation

211. Delegated approval subject to:

Legal Agreement

212. Contributions to be secured by way of a Section 106 (or other appropriate) legal agreement as set out below, final wording to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair prior to the issuing of planning permission. The contributions are as follows:

- The provision and a contribution towards the maintenance of public open space of £17,085.60
- A contribution of £735 towards household waste receptacles
- A monitoring contribution of £1500

Conditions and Informatives

213. Planning conditions and Informatives as set out below, with the final wording of any amendments to these to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair prior to the issuing of planning permission:

(a) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)

(b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1506-P-502 Rev A, 1506-P-503 Rev A, 1506-P-504 Rev A, 1506-P-505 Rev A, 1506-P-010 Rev A, 1506-P-011 Rev A, 1506-P-012, 1506-P-013, 1506-P-014, 1506-P-015.

(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)

(c) Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, no development above base course level shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in

accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(d) Prior to the first occupation of the development visibility splays shall be provided each side of the vehicular access in full accordance with the details indicated on the submitted plan No: 1506-P-503 Rev A. The splays shall thereafter be maintained free from any obstruction exceeding 0.6m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.
(Reason - In the interests of highway safety.)

(e) The proposed access shall be constructed so that its falls and levels are such that no private water from the site drains across or onto the adopted public highway and using a bound material to prevent debris spreading onto the adopted public highway.
(Reason: In the interests of highway safety).

(f) No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until the site access and pedestrian crossing has been laid out as shown on drawing number 1506-P-503 Rev A. The access and crossing shall thereafter be retained.
(Reason - In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(g) No demolition or construction works shall commence on site until a traffic management plan has been agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. The principle areas of concern that should be addressed are:

(i) Movements and control of muck away lorries (all loading and unloading shall be undertaken off the adopted highway)

(ii) Contractor parking, for both phases all such parking shall be within the curtilage of the site and not on street

(iii) Movements and control of all deliveries (all loading and unloading shall be undertaken off the adopted public highway)

(iv) Control of dust, mud and debris, in relationship to the functioning of the adopted public highway

Development shall commence in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - In the interest of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(g) A Precautionary Method of Working for great crested newt and reptiles shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before works commence. This shall include details of Reasonable Avoidance Measures comprising:

- Input by a suitably qualified ecologist including Toolbox Talk and ecological clerk of works;
- Seasonal timing;
- A methodology for phased clearance of suitable habitat;
- Appropriate measures for storage of waste and materials; and
- A protocol to be followed if great crested newt or reptiles are found.

Works shall proceed in strict accordance with the agreed plan.

(Reason - To protect great crested newt in accordance with Policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)).

(h) All works must proceed in strict accordance with the recommendations detailed in Section 5 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report (MKA Ecology, November 2016), with the exception of Recommendations 2 and 3, and the 20 Year Landscape Management Plan (The Huck Partnership, December 2016). This shall include avoidance and mitigation measures for nesting birds and planting and management to benefit wildlife. If any amendments to the recommendations as set out in the reports are required, the revisions shall be submitted in writing to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority before works commence.

(Reason - To minimise disturbance, harm or potential impact on protected species in accordance with Policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)).

(i) No external lighting shall be provided or installed on the site unless a specification for external illumination at the site, including a lux contour plan where appropriate, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before installation. This shall include consideration of sensitive design to protect bat species and other wildlife.

(Reason - To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area in accordance with Policy NE/14 and to protect wildlife habitat in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the NPPF and Policy NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).

(j) No development shall commence until a location plan and specification for boxes and in-built features for nesting birds and roosting bats has been provided to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason: To provide habitat for wildlife and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF, the NERC Act 2006 and Policy NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).

(k) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development. The details shall also include specification of all proposed trees, hedges and shrub planting, which shall include details of species, density and size of stock.

(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(l) All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting, or replacement planting, any tree or plant is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

(Reason - To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area

and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies DP/2 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(m) No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatment shall be completed before the development is occupied in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.
(Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(n) Prior to commencement, on site preparation or the delivery of materials to site the tree protection measures recommended in the Hayden's Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment Preliminary Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan dated 18 November 2016 shall be erected and remain in position until practical completion of the implementation of the development.
(Reason - To protect trees which are to be retained in order to enhance the development, biodiversity and the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(o) No development shall take place on the application site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason - To secure the provision of archaeological excavation and the subsequent recording of the remains in accordance with Policy CH/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(p) No development shall commence until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before development is completed.
The scheme shall be based upon the principles within the agreed Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy prepared by MLM Consulting Engineers Ltd (ref: 618166-REP-CIV-FRA) dated 23 November 2016 and shall also include:

- a) Full calculations detailing the existing surface water runoff rates for the QBAR, Q30 and Q100 storm events
- b) Full results of the proposed drainage system modelling in the above-referenced storm events (as well as Q100 plus climate change) , inclusive of all collection, conveyance, storage, flow control and disposal elements and including an allowance for urban creep, together with an assessment of system performance;
- c) Detailed drawings of the entire proposed surface water drainage system, including levels, gradients, dimensions and pipe reference numbers
- d) Full details of the proposed attenuation and flow control measures
- e) Site Investigation and test results to confirm infiltration rates;
- f) Details of overland flood flow routes in the event of system exceedance, with demonstration that such flows can be appropriately managed on site without increasing flood risk to occupants;
- g) Full details of the maintenance/adoption of the surface water drainage

system;

h) Measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface water;

(Reason - To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(q) Prior to the first occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted, details of the long term maintenance plan for the surface water drainage system (including all SuDS features) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details should identify runoff sub-catchments, SuDS components, control structures, flow routes and outfalls. In addition, the plan must clarify the access that is required to each surface water management component for maintenance purposes. The maintenance plan shall be carried out in full thereafter.

(Reason - To ensure the satisfactory maintenance of unadopted drainage systems in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 103 and 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

(r) During the period of construction, no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site, and there shall be no construction related deliveries taken at or dispatched from the site, before 0800 hours and after 1800 hours on weekdays and before 0800 hours and after 1300 hours on Saturdays, nor at any time on Sundays and Bank Holidays, unless otherwise previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

(Reason - To minimise noise disturbance for adjoining residents in accordance with Policy NE/15 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

(s) In the event of the foundations for the proposed development requiring piling, prior to the development taking place the applicant shall provide the local authority with a report / method statement for approval detailing the type of piling and mitigation measures to be taken to protect local residents noise and or vibration. Potential noise and vibration levels at the nearest noise sensitive locations shall be predicted in accordance with the provisions of BS 5528, 2009 - Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites Parts 1 - Noise and 2 -Vibration (or as superseded). Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - To protect the amenities of nearby residential properties in accordance with Policy NE/15, NE/16 and DP/6- Construction Methods of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

Informatives

(a) The granting of a planning permission does not constitute a permission or licence to a developer to carry out any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with, the Public Highway, and that a separate permission must be sought from the Highway Authority for such works.

(b) The applicant should take all relevant precautions to minimise the potential for disturbance to neighbouring residents in terms of noise and dust during the construction phases of development. This should include the use of water suppression for any stone or brick cutting and advising neighbours in advance of any particularly noisy works. The granting of this planning permission does not indemnify against statutory nuisance action being taken should substantiated noise or dust complains be received. For further information

please contact the Environmental Health Service.

- (c) There shall be no burning of any waste or other materials on the site, without prior consent from the environmental health department.
- (d) All surface water from roofs shall be piped direct to an approved surface water system using sealed downpipes. Open gullies should not be used.
- (e) Where soakaways are proposed for the disposal of uncontaminated surface water, percolation tests should be undertaken, and soakaways designed and constructed in accordance with BRE Digest 365 (for CIRIA Report 156), and to the satisfaction of the Local Authority. The maximum acceptable depth for soakaways is 2 metres below existing ground level. Soakaways must not be located in contaminated areas. If, after tests, it is found that soakaways do not work satisfactorily alternative proposals must be submitted.
- (f) Only clean, uncontaminated surface water should be discharged to any soakaway, watercourse or surface water sewer.
- (g) All foul sewage, and trade effluent, shall be discharge to the public foul sewer. It is an offence under Section 118 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to discharge effluent to a sewer without the prior consent of the statutory undertaker.
- (h) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the conclusions and recommendations of the submitted EPS Desk Study ref:UK16.2446
- (i) Hedgerow Management – Works must comply with UK law and should maximise biodiversity gain to meet LDF Policy NE/6. Hedgerow and tree management work should be completed during October to February inclusive, outside of the bird nesting season. To avoid breaking the law, do not carry out works to trees, hedgerows or dense vegetation where birds are nesting. Maintaining hedgerows at least 4m in height and 2m wide will maximise their value for wildlife.

Background Papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Core Strategy DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission 2014
- Planning File Reference: S/3450/16/FL
- Appendix A Plan of Alternative Sites

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