



**Report to:**

South Cambridgeshire District  
Council Planning Committee

10 February 2021

**Lead Officer:**

Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

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## **S/3921/19/FL – Bancroft Farm, Church Lane, Little Abington, Cambridge, CB21 6BQ**

Proposal: Erection of 6 no. dwellings and the change of use and conversion of 2no. agricultural barns to office space (Use Class B1(a)) following the demolition of agricultural buildings and removal of hardstanding and associated works (Re-submission of S/1388/19/FL)

Applicant: c/o Agent, Cheffins

Key material considerations:

- Principle of Development
- Housing Provision
- Protected Village Amenity Area
- Character / Visual Amenity
- Heritage Impact
- Biodiversity
- Landscaping
- Trees
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Highway Safety, Management of Roads and Parking
- Residential Amenity
- Renewables / Climate Change
- Open Space Provision
- Contamination
- Developer Contributions
- Other matters

Date of Member site visit: None

Is it a Departure Application?: No

Decision due by: 17 February 2021 (extension of time agreed)

Application brought to Committee because: Officer recommendation is contrary to Little Abington Parish Council's recommendation of refusal; referred to the Planning Committee through Delegation Meeting held on 10 November 2020.

Officer Recommendation: Approval

Presenting Officer: Michael Sexton

## **Executive Summary**

1. This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of six residential dwellings and the conversion of two existing agricultural barns into office space following the demolition of agricultural buildings, removal of hardstanding and associated works.
2. The site is located within the development framework boundary and conservation area of Little Abington. To the south of the site is the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, a Grade II\* Listed Building. To the east of the site is a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) which covers a wide area of open land to the rear of the site (east). The PVAA abuts the eastern boundary of the site while a small northern portion of the site falls within the PVAA.
3. The proposal, as amended, has been designed to reflect an agricultural yard with converted barns, which references the historic character of the site and the rural character of the area. This is considered to be an appropriate design response for the context of the site, with elements of soft landscaping incorporated in and around the site to further integrate it with its rural surroundings.
4. The proposal would present some conflict with Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan (PVAA) due to the encroachment of the site into this designated area. However, Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan does not explicitly prohibit development, instead it tests whether the development would have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village. Officers are of the view that, on balance, the degree of harm would be limited and would not result in significant conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy NH/11.
5. In heritage terms, the proposal is considered to result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin and the character of the Conservation Area. On balance, the harm to the heritage assets is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits, noting that the extent of that harm can be further mitigated through the use of planning conditions to ensure appropriate detailing and finish of the development.
6. The scheme has therefore been recommended for approval subject to planning conditions.

## **Relevant planning history**

7. S/1388/19/FL – Erection of 6no. dwellings and the change of use and conversion of 2no. agricultural barns to office space (Use Class B1(a) following the demolition of agricultural buildings and removal of hardstanding and associated works – Withdrawn.

8. S/2051/93/PNA – Grain Storage Bin – Have no objections to.
9. S/0433/85/O – Residential development (three houses) – Appeal Dismissed.
10. S/1957/84/O – Residential development conversion of barns and erection of houses – Refused.

## **Planning policies**

### **National Guidance**

11. National Planning Policy Framework 2019  
National Planning Practice Guidance  
National Design Guide 2019

### **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**

12. S/1 – Vision  
S/2 – Objectives of the Local Plan  
S/3 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
S/5 – Provision of New Jobs and Homes  
S/6 – The Development Strategy to 2031  
S/7 – Development Frameworks  
S/10 – Group Villages  
CC/1 – Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change  
CC/3 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments  
CC/4 – Water Efficiency  
CC/6 – Construction Methods  
CC/7 – Water Quality  
CC/8 – Sustainable Drainage Systems  
CC/9 – Managing Flood Risk  
HQ/1 – Design Principles  
NH/4 – Biodiversity  
NH/11 – Protected Village Amenity Areas  
NH/14 – Heritage Assets  
H/8 – Housing Density  
H/9 – Housing Mix  
H/10 – Affordable Housing  
H/12 – Residential Space Standards  
E/12 – New Employment Development in Villages  
SC/6 – Indoor Community Facilities  
SC/7 – Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments  
SC/9 – Lighting Proposals  
SC/10 – Noise Pollution  
SC/11 – Contaminated Land  
TI/2 – Planning for Sustainable Travel  
TI/3 – Parking Provision  
TI/8 – Infrastructure and New Developments  
TI/10 – Broadband

## **South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**

13. Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020  
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016  
District Design Guide SPD – Adopted March 2010  
Landscape in New Developments SPD – Adopted March 2010  
Biodiversity SPD – Adopted July 2009  
Listed Buildings: Works to or affecting the setting of SPD – Adopted July 2009  
Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted January 2009  
Open Space in New Developments SPD – Adopted January 2009  
Trees & Development Sites SPD – Adopted January 2009

## **Consultation**

14. **Great Abington Parish Council** – Objection.

The full comments of Great Abington Parish Council received on 14 December 2020 following the submission of detailed car port plans and 12 October 2020 to the amended proposal are provided below.

See Appendix 1 and 2 for a full copy of the comments received from Great Abington Parish Council to earlier iterations of the proposed scheme from April 2020 and December 2019.

### October 2020

Little Abington Parish Council (LAPC) met on 9 December 2020 to discuss amendments to this planning application. Three letters of objection had been copied to the Parish Council.

LAPC objects to this application. Previous comments still apply. It was noted that the Planning Committee is scheduled to discuss the application in January 2021. It was assumed that, despite current restrictions, they would visit the site.

There is still some infringement on the PVAA that was established in the most recent Local Plan. It was noted that the Local Plan was not referenced under constraints.

LAPC queried if information was missing from the SCDC planning website. The only information relevant to this amendment is a drawing for car ports at plots 2 & 3 and 5 dated 20/11/2020. It was difficult to align that drawing with the site plan drawing dated 11/9/2020. It was noted that a response to comments about trees was awaited from the applicant.

The following points related to this amendment were noted:

Car port design:

- The car ports are very narrow and impractical for the majority of modern cars. The County Council also commented on this. We were unable to

find any SCDC guidance on car port design criteria although one objection letter referred to guidance from another authority.

- It was felt that the narrow width of the car port at plot 5 would make it impossible to use. In addition, there is no space available in any of the car ports for other items often stored in garages such as bicycles and garden machinery.

#### On street/pavement parking

- There were concerns that if car ports were not used because of their impracticality it would lead to more parking on the road or worse pavements in the development, on the “green open spaces” at the entrance to the development and on roads/pavements nearby.
- If residents do not use their car ports and garages, road parking on the narrow spine road which is also the access to the offices will result in office users parking on nearby roads. Concerns about the lack of adequate parking space at the offices has already been highlighted.

#### Road safety

- Church Lane is a narrow road; street parking will create obstruction and increase road safety risks for pedestrians and other road users including cyclists. (NOTE. The Greater Cambridge Partnership’s Linton Greenway is likely to route cyclists through the village). The hazards at the bend near the church have already been highlighted.

#### Overall design and layout

- The Parish Council felt the root of the difficulties with planning this development is trying to cram too much into a small plot. Local residents had supported a small housing development of up to six medium sized properties. It was not envisaged that offices would be included.

#### October 2020

Little Abington Parish Council (LAPC) met by video conference to discuss this application on Monday 5 October 2020. Five letters of objection were received and one member of a household summarised his objections at the meeting. There was a unanimous objection to it for the same reasons as we gave in December 2019 and April 2020.

We agree that the Bancroft Farm farmyard site, which has been left to fall into disrepair and neglect, should be used for housing that meets the village’s needs. Following consultation with residents, the site was identified as a potential small development of up to six dwellings suitable for downsizing. We did not envisage that it would be a mixed development of housing and offices.

#### PVAA:

There is still concern that the boundaries of the proposed development encroach onto the Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA). The boundaries of the PVAA were agreed after a long and rigorous review of the Local Plan involving independent inspectors. It was felt that these boundaries and the principle of retaining the PVAA as an area of natural and historical interest must

be respected. We fear that allowing one encroachment will lead to further development and the loss of a much-valued green space in the village close to the conservation area.

The public footpath across the meadow/PVAA was fenced off in 2014. Until then the meadow was left open for residents to enjoy. The Abingtons Footpaths Group has suggested designating a new path from the corner of Bourn Bridge Road across the PVAA to join the existing public footpath and we support this suggestion.

#### Layout:

Plots 1 and 6 will back on to Church Lane. One consequence of this will be views of back garden paraphernalia such as laundry, garden sheds and children's toys. Although we understand that there would be some screening, this is completely out of keeping with the surrounding area. The 2m width 'landscape buffer' adjacent to plot one seems completely impracticable and ineffective. Properties close to the proposed development in Church Lane and Bourn Bridge Road have a consistent layout in that the houses are set back about 20 metres from the road with a driveway and front garden. Some have large trees in their front gardens enhancing the rurality of the setting. In contrast, the proposed development is laid out like a compound and the tree-lined rural character of Church Lane will be irrevocably destroyed.

#### Maintenance of internal road:

We are concerned that the road, grass verges and trees may not be properly maintained over the years.

#### Offices:

When residents were originally consulted, it was not thought that the site would be used for employment but that the entire farmyard site would be a housing development. The proposal to convert the two old barns to business units has reduced the area available for house building.

We also object to the proposal to create offices/business units because there is insufficient parking for normal business activities. We believe there is insufficient parking for the proposed business units, given that there are eight parking spaces including two disabled spaces, and there could be well over 20 people working on the site. Therefore, the result of insufficient parking is likely to be parked cars in Church Lane and into West Field. (See below for more on parking.)

#### Impact on green spaces and biodiversity:

Increased street lighting and penetration of lights into the meadow/PVAA, which is currently a dark area, will disturb wildlife. The problem of light penetration is exacerbated by the location of houses close to the PVAA boundary. In particular, it will disrupt the feeding behaviour of the seven species of bat identified in and around the site as well as the Shetland ponies that graze there. There will need to be arrangements to ensure lighting levels for the office units are kept to a minimum outside working hours.

#### Flooding:

The corner of Church Lane regularly floods after heavy rain. Unless the works associated with this development include some improvement to drains and drainage, the creation of more hard standing will reduce the amount of land available for soakaway and increase the risk of flooding. Parking and road safety: We believe there is insufficient provision for residents' and visitor parking. This could lead to parking in Church Lane, on the verge outside the church and in Westfield. The pavements are used by families and by children walking to and from the bus stops or to the local primary school. Some vehicles already park on the pavement and cause obstruction to pedestrians, pushchairs and wheelchair users.

#### Conditions

When an acceptable proposal has been submitted and approved, the following conditions would need to be included in the approval:

- Working hours restricted, given the proximity to residential property. Restricting delivery times given proximity to residential property and concerns about road safety.
- Routes for vehicles to and from the building site to be defined, given the narrow roads into and out of the village and concerns about road and pedestrian safety.
- Arrangements for building site parking because of concerns about parking on footways, parking on narrow roads, access to the church, and road and pedestrian/cyclist safety.
- Keeping the area clean and tidy and any mud and mess on the roads to be dealt with at the end of each working day.
- Arrangements for storing building materials.
- Tree protection for the mature trees that are to be retained – when confirmed.
- Consideration must be given to protecting the PVAA during the building works.
- Making good any damage to road surfaces, kerbs, pavements and verges as a result of the building work and the associated heavy traffic.

#### 15. **Anglian Water** – No objection.

There are no assets owned by Anglian Water or those subject to an adoption agreement within the development site boundary.

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

#### 16. **Conservation Officer** – No objection, subject to conditions.

The revised scheme largely retains the layout of the previous, but with an enhanced landscape buffer along Church Lane, between the roadside and the new dwelling (Plot 1) together with the retention of trees either-side to provide a softer boundary treatment in contrast to the high-walled boundary treatment south of the site. This is considered broadly acceptable given the evolution of the site in more recent years and the current tree and hedge boundary towards

this north-west end of the site which informs the approach to the Conservation Area and presents a softer boundary which marks a transition between the more intensive residential development to the south and west, and the open countryside to the east. It also softens the impact of the proposed development on the corner when approaching from the north-west, rather than presenting a harsh building line.

The designs and layout of the plots have been amended to reflect concerns regarding the overall design and scale of the previous units, some of which lacked coherent design language and others which were overly dominant and competed with the neighbouring existing buildings and wider heritage assets, such as views of the Grade II\* listed church of St Mary the Virgin. Plot 3, in particular, was a concern as the building would sit opposite the site entrance and assume an air of prominence due to its excessive height. This has since been reduced to a more modest form and design which will have a greatly reduced impact when viewed from Church Lane, and read as a more low-key development of converted outbuildings which is much more in-line with the overall character of the Conservation Area and site history.

The linking element between plots 3 and 4 has been improved and plot 4 is now the most prominent building on the site, taking the form of a 3-bay flint barn with large taking-in doors. Whilst the scale of this building is somewhat larger than its neighbours, its detailing is considered acceptable and the use of flint to the elevations, with buff brick detailing to the openings is considered to be an improvement over the previous designs, and responds more positively to the character of the site and wider Conservation Area. It should also be noted that this building will be largely concealed from view from Church Lane, by plot 6; however, what remains visible is considered, on balance, to appear proportionate with the development and neighbouring buildings.

When viewed from the east, along the public right of way, it is felt that on the whole, views of the church in the distance would continue to be appreciated and the development would (subject to materials, samples of which will need to be conditioned) read as an agricultural yard with converted buildings. This is what one might expect to see here and references the historic character of the site.

Taking the above into account, and subject to the conditions referenced above, I consider that the proposals would result in a minor detrimental impact to the character of the Conservation Area, the extent of which would be impacted by the details, fenestration and materials. These will need to be of high quality and locally appropriate to ensure that the development preserves and enhances the Church Lane street-scene and character of the wider Conservation Area.

The level of impact arising from the proposed development, is considered to result in minor less than substantial harm to the setting of the church and character of the Conservation Area. In response to this, there is a degree of public benefit arising from the provision of the new units and commercial facilities; it is therefore for the case officer to balance the impacts against the public benefit.



Should the planning officer feel minded to approve the scheme, I would also request a full landscaping plan to be submitted and agreed for the public access/ communal areas, to ensure that the surface treatments are appropriate to the character of the site which has largely been designed to appear as a former agricultural yard. As such, hard landscaping will be a key element of the success of the scheme and overly domestic planting and soft landscaping would detract from the overall character and success of the development. Similarly, it is important that there is no attempt to 'value engineer' the scheme at a later date, to remove details and features, such as shutter doors, materials or details which enhance the scheme and contribute to its being considered acceptable at this time.

Subject to reserved matters by condition, on balance the proposals are considered to satisfy the aims of Local Plan policy NH/14.

With reference to the NPPF, paragraphs 189, 190, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196 and 197 would apply.

Recommend conditions for:

- Samples of all external materials to be made available on site for inspection
- All windows to be timber, flush fitting and painted, without trickle vents or applied glazing bars.
- All rainwater goods shall be metal, powder coated or similar and finished matt black or dark grey.
- A landscaping plan shall be submitted and agreed prior to commencement of the related element.
- Details of all boundary treatments shall be submitted and agreed prior to commencement of the related element.
- All rooflights shall be top-hinged, flush fitting and metal conservation style units, with a central, vertical glazing bar.
- All doors, and shutters, shall be natural timber and flush fitting
- All brickwork to elevations shall be Flemish bond.
- The use of flint shall match the existing in size and appearance (knapped or whole) with a sample to be submitted and agreed by the local authority prior to the commencement of this element.

**17. Contaminated Land Officer – No objection.**

Recommend conditions for a detailed desk study and site walkover, a risk assessment, a remediation method statement, a verification report and the identification of any additional or unexpected contamination.

**18. Ecology Officer – No objection.**

Recommend conditions for a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) and a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).

**19. Environmental Health Officer – No objection.**

Recommend conditions for hours of works and burning of waste. Informatives relating to minimising the potential for disturbance to neighbouring residents, a demolition notice and air source heat pumps are also provided.

20. **Historic England** – No objection.

The scheme has been revised following our previous consultation response of 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020. We note the revisions to the site layout and individual plots, in particular the reduction in scale of plot 3 and the link with plot 4, along with revisions to some of the architectural language and detailing of this and other plots, such that the development would read much more as a farmyard adjunct to the farmhouse. We are also pleased to note from the drawings that a more comprehensive scheme of landscaping is now proposed along with the retention of existing trees on the Church Lane boundary. This will help to maintain the rural character of the conservation area, and soften the general appearance of the development within its context.

We welcome the proposed amendments and consider that the scheme in its revised form would respond more sensitively to its context than the previous iteration. Whilst the scheme would not be entirely without impact upon the conservation area and setting of the church, we nevertheless recognise that the reduction in scale and overall improvement of the architectural and aesthetic quality, along with enhanced boundary treatment is such that the level of harm to significance would be reduced to a level to which we would no longer wish to raise concerns.

21. **Historic Environment Team (County Archaeology)** – No objection.

Recommend a condition for the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI)

22. **Landscape Officer** – No objection

Recommend conditions for boundary treatment, car port plans, hard and soft landscaping, and lighting details.

23. **Lead Local Flood Authority** – No objection.

Recommend conditions for a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site and details for the long-term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage scheme. An informative relating to pollution control is also provided.

24. **Local Highways Authority** – No objection.

Raise concern over the width of the single car port for plot 5 which appears to be narrow at 2.28m.

Recommend conditions for visibility splays, access construction, access drainage measures, future management and maintenance of the proposed

streets and a traffic management plan. An informative relating to works to or within the public highway is also provided.

**25. Sustainable Drainage Engineer – No objection.**

Recommend conditions for a surface water drainage scheme for the site and details for the long term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system.

**26. Tree Officer – No objection.**

Not clear who will manage T4 and T7, these key trees stand in an area marked open space.

Minor concern over T17 been and the deliverability of plot 5 where an imbalance may increase pressure on the protected tree to be pruned back – The Council will not support tree works which are to for the health or structural condition of the tree.

Details of hedgerow (eastern boundary) should be submitted for approval and a condition requiring its retention placed on any approval.

Recommend that the Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Preliminary Method Statement is listed as an approved document.

## **Representations from members of the public**

27. 51 representations from 20 residents/properties have been received raising objection to the proposed development (noting that the application has been subject to revisions and several rounds of public consultation). Full redacted versions of these comments can be found on the Council's website. In summary the following concerns have been raised:

### **Biodiversity / Landscape**

- Existing bushes and trees make a huge difference to the pollution from increasing traffic.
- If trees are removed, they should be replaced with mature trees and bushes.
- Lighting impact on wildlife, including bats.
- Loss of trees and shrubs, impacting on wildlife and the replacements will do little to replace the lost habitat.
- Maintenance of future landscaping.
- Significant alteration to the landscape of Church Lane.
- The cosmetic 'landscape buffer' alongside plot 1 is only 2.5m deep in front of four windows; it would not be possible within this narrow space to plant any practical landscape buffer.
- Unclear who would manage the trees on the 'open space'.

### **Character / Design**

- Access road pushes houses to perimeter of the site resulting in small gardens.
- All existing houses are set back from the road (at least 22m away) and face onto Church Lane through tree-lined vista.
- Density of dwellings is too great.
- Development bears no relationship in terms of character and appearance to the adjacent western side; out of keeping.
- Inappropriate materials.
- Inappropriate scale dramatically changing the existing character of this green stretch of Church Lane with houses close to the road instead of buses and trees.
- Layout wastes a lot of the available area with an access road and common areas.
- Overdevelopment with six houses and two offices plus access road.
- Poor quality design, inappropriate scale of development.
- Proposed dwellings arranged around an access road created down the centre, out of character with the main ribbon development pattern with front gardens and properties facing the road.
- Significantly alter the rural character and feel of the road which is dominated by large trees and vegetation.
- Some poor fenestration detailing.
- The height of Plot 6 right against the existing wall would be seen from West Field into Church Lane and dominate the view.
- Two buildings close to the road do not face forward onto the main road.
- Visually intrusive, detracting from the street scene.

#### Drainage / Flooding

- Increased level of surface water draining into Church Lane.

#### Heritage

- Adverse and negative impact on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area.
- Boundary properties much taller than existing wall.
- Closeness of buildings to Church Lane has severe negative impact on the Conservation Area.
- Plots 1 and 6 are intrusive features and have a negative impact on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area.

#### Highway Safety & Parking

- Car ports are too narrow and impractical with restricted manoeuvring space (reference to guidance of the South Cambs District Design Guide SPD).
- Easier for office workers to park on Church Lane and walk through existing gap in flint boundary wall.
- Impact of construction traffic.
- Impact of future traffic and congestion from development.
- Inadequate parking provision.
- Increased parking on Church Lane (residential and office users).
- Office location near a right-angle bend potentially dangerous.

- Parking cars behind one another will cause vehicles to park on the spine road, blocking its use, or Church Lane.
- Reduced visibility at the junction.
- Site plan ambiguous regarding the ownership/parking entitlement of various spaces.

#### Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA)

- Encroachment into the PVAA.
- Infringement on character, amenity, tranquillity, function of village.
- Land encroached on provides an open aspect into the PVAA.

#### Office Provision

- Change of use of barns to office is inappropriate for the site (it's too cramped).
- No call in current climate to provide new offices.
- Size of office space (over 200sqm) could lead to a greater number of workers than indicated on application form.
- Why build offices in Little Abington when Granta Park is on the doorstep.

#### Residential Amenity

- Loss of privacy.

#### Other Matters

- A plan for three dwellings in 1985 was refused and dismissed at appeal (contribution to rural aspect northwards along Church Lane).
- Concern over the accuracy of the Landscape Officer's comments.
- Duplication of Parish Council comments online.
- Emphasize the importance of a new foot path connecting Bourne Bridge Road/the new development with the existing footpath that runs across the meadow.
- Inconstancies in neighbour comments published, some with addresses some without.
- Light pollution to rear of site.
- No 'file copy of amendment letter for the November 2020 amendment.
- Parish Council's proposed inclusion of the site in the Local Plan for housing was on the premise that the site would be a development of 6 cottages suitable for 'downsizers' with generous room sizes.
- Request planning permission, if granted, specifies the wall of the new barn (A) continues along the boundary of 38A to the end of the garden as the current barn wall does.
- Should housing be developed on the site it would be an appropriate opportunity to extend public footpaths to benefit local residents.
- The barns should be converted into houses with their own office space.
- The Planning Committee should make a site visit before their determination of this application.

## **The site and its surroundings**

28. The site is located within the development framework boundary and Conservation Area of Little Abington. To the south of the site is the Parish

Church of St Mary the Virgin, a Grade II\* Listed Building, while to the south east of the site is no.36 (Church view) Church Lane, a Grade II Listed Building.

29. To the east of the site is a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) which covers a wide area of open land to the rear of the site (east). The PVAA abuts the eastern boundary of the site while a small northern portion of the site falls within the PVAA. To the north, south and west of the site are residential properties.
30. There are Tree Preservation Orders to the north, east and west of the site but none within the boundaries of the site itself.
31. A public right of way (footpath) runs in a north-south direction to the east of the site connecting Cambridge Road (A1307) to Church Road, approximately 32 metres from the eastern boundary of the site.
32. The site lies within flood zone 1 (low risk).

## **The proposal**

33. This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of six dwellings and the change of use and conversion of two agricultural barns to office space (use class B1(a)) following the demolition of agricultural buildings and removal of hardstanding and associated works (re-submission of S/1388/19/FL).

## **Planning Assessment**

34. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are the principle of development, housing provision, Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA), character / visual amenity, heritage impact, biodiversity, landscaping, trees, flood risk and drainage, highway safety, management of roads and parking, residential amenity, renewables / climate change, open space provision, contamination, developer contributions and other matters.

## **Principle of Development**

35. The site is located within the development framework boundary of Little Abington.
36. Policy S/7 of the Local Plan states that development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks will be permitted provided that: a) development is of a scale, density and character appropriate to the location, and is consistent with other policies in the Local Plan; and b) retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character, and development would protect and enhance local features of green space, landscape, ecological or historic importance; and c) there is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development.
37. Little Abington is identified as a Group Village under Policy S/10 of the Local Plan, which states that residential development and redevelopment up to an

indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings will be permitted within the development frameworks of Group Villages.

38. The supporting text to Policy S/10 details that Group villages are generally less sustainable locations for new development than Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, having fewer services and facilities allowing only some of the basic day-to-day requirements of their residents to be met without the need to travel outside the village. All Group Villages have at least a primary school and limited development will help maintain remaining services and facilities and provide for affordable housing to meet local needs.
39. Policy E/12 of the Local Plan deals with new employment development in villages and states that within development frameworks in villages, planning permission will be granted for new employment development (B1, B2 and B8 uses) or expansion of existing premises provided that the scale of development would be in keeping with the category and scale of the village, and be in character and scale with the location.
40. While matters of scale, density, character, biodiversity, and heritage are considered in more detail below, there is no in-principle objection to the development of six residential properties on the site. Officers do not consider that the present state of the site forms an essential part of the local character of the area which would rule out the potential for development, while the quantum of development proposed would accord with the thresholds set out in Local Plan policy for Group Villages, with the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development (i.e. no more than 8 dwellings).
41. The application proposes the conversion of two existing agricultural barns into office space (B1 use). The development would create approximately 173sqm of office floor space across the two buildings. The Planning Application Form indicates that the development would result in the employment of 12 staff. Officers consider that the level of office floor space generated by the proposal would be of an acceptable scale with the status of Little Abington as a Group Village.
42. There is no in-principle objection to the erection of six dwellings on the site and the conversion of two existing barns into office space, which would accord with the principles of Policies S/7, S/10 and E/12 of the Local Plan.

## **Housing Provision**

43. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of six residential dwellings as part of the proposed development.

### Housing Density

44. Policy H/8 of the Local Plan details that housing developments will achieve an average net density of 30 dwellings per hectare in Group Villages but that the net density on a site may vary from where justified by the character of the

locality, the scale of the development, or other local circumstances.

45. The site measures approximately 0.5 hectares in area. However, the application includes the conversion of two existing barns into office space which would occupy approximately 0.1 hectares of the site. The development of 6 dwellings across the remaining 0.4 hectares of the site would equate to a net density of approximately 15 dwellings per hectare.
46. The density of development is significantly lower than the average requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare. However, given the sensitive location of the site within Little Abington Conservation Area, the character of the local area and the rural nature of the sites surroundings, the density is considered acceptable in this instance.
47. The proposal would accord with Policy H/8 of the Local Plan.

#### Market Housing Mix

48. Policy H/9 of the Local Plan states that a wide choice, type and mix of housing will be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community including families with children, older people, those seeking starter homes, people wishing to build their own homes, people seeking private rented sector housing, and people with disabilities.
49. Policy H/9(3) requires the mix of market homes to be provided on sites of 9 or fewer homes will take account of local circumstances.
50. The application proposes the development of 2x2-bed dwellings, 3x3-bed dwellings and 1x4-bed dwellings.
51. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development would provide a reasonable mix of market houses, with no evidence available to suggest that such a mix would not be appropriate to local circumstances.
52. Policy H/9(4) requires 5% of homes in a development to be built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings M4(2) standard, rounding down to the nearest whole property and split evenly between affordable and market homes in the development.
53. Plots 2, 3 and 5 are single storey properties with all accommodation on the ground floor.
54. The proposal would accord with Policy H/9 of the Local Plan.

#### Affordable Housing

55. Policy H/11 of the Local Plan requires that all developments of 11 dwellings or more, or on sites of less than 11 units if the floor space of the proposed units exceeds 1,000sqm should provide affordable housing.



56. However, NPPF paragraph 63 is a material consideration and states that provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). A major development can be defined as 10 dwellings or more.
57. The development proposes six residential dwellings which would not exceed 1,000sqm of floor space (approximate provision of 805sqm). Therefore, no affordable housing is required as part of the development.
58. The proposal would accord with Policy H/11 of the Local Plan and paragraph 63 of the NPPF.

#### Residential Space Standards

59. Policy H/12 of the Local Plan states that new residential units will be permitted where their gross internal floor areas meet or exceed the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or successor document.
60. Plots 1, 2 and 6 would meet or exceed the space standards set out in Policy H/12 of the Local Plan.
61. Plot 3 would meet the minimum floor space requirement for a single storey 3-bed 5-person property but would not provide the 2.5sqm of storage space also required, with only a 1sqm storage area provided (excluding the dedicated wardrobe space within bedrooms 1 and 2).
62. Plots 4 and 5 exceed the minimum floor space requirements but do not illustrate dedicated storage space on the floor plans. However, given that the overall floor space exceeds the requirements by approximately 78sqm and 29sqm respectively, clearly adequate internal space is provided.
63. Officers do not consider that the slight shortfall of storage space for Plot 3 would be sufficient to warrant or sustain a refusal of the application, noting the dedicated wardrobe space associated to two of three bedrooms within the proposed property.
64. The proposal would generally accord with Policy H/12 of the Local Plan.

#### **Protected Village Amenity Area**

65. The eastern boundary of the site abuts a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA), which covers an area of approximately 3.94 hectares (39,400sqm). A small northern portion of the site falls within the PVAA, an area of approximately 0.06 hectares (600sqm). The area of overlap between the application site and the PVAA equates to approximately 0.02% of the overall PVAA.
66. A map showing the application site boundary and the PVAA can be found in appendix 3.

67. The area identified as a PVAA was originally designated as a special policy area in the 1993 Local Plan:

Policy Abington 1: The District Council will resist development in the special policy area between Cambridge Road and Church Lane as indicated in the inset proposals map.

68. The supporting text further detailed that:

The area of open land to the north of Church Lane and south of Cambridge Road provides for an important rural character in this part of the village. As such there should be a general presumption against built development on this area.

69. The area received its identification as a PVAA in the 2004 Local Plan when the designation was introduced:

POLICY SE10: Protected Village Amenity Areas (PVAA) are defined within village framework boundaries in order to identify undeveloped land, the retention of which is of importance to the character, amenity and/or functioning of the village as a whole. Development of such areas will not be permitted if it would be harmful to the distinctive qualities and functioning lying behind their inclusion in the PVAA.

70. The relevant supporting text further detailed that:

The area of open land to the north of Church Lane and south of Cambridge Road provides for an important rural character in this part of the village. As such there should be a general presumption against built development on this area and consequently it is allocated as a Protected Village Amenity Area (paragraph 36.19).

71. The area designated as a PVAA has therefore been considered to make an important contribution to the rural character of the village for some time, as an area of open land to the north of Church Lane and south of Cambridge Road.
72. In terms of adopted policy, and the policy against which the proposal must be assessed, Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan states that Protected Village Amenity Areas are identified on the Policies Map where development will not be permitted within or adjacent to these areas if it would have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village.
73. The supporting text in paragraph 6.40 of the Local Plan details that PVAAs have been designated on sites within village frameworks in order to safeguard those areas of undeveloped land within villages which are important to retain. Some of the PVAAs may have important functions for the village such as allotments, recreation grounds and playing fields whilst others have an important amenity role in providing a setting for buildings or offer tranquil areas where there is minimum activity. Not all PVAAs have public access as some undeveloped

areas which are important may be private gardens. They also vary from those which are very open to visual penetration to those which may be enclosed or semi-enclosed.

74. In this instance, the PVAA is relatively enclosed. The northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the PVAA abut residential development, which restricts views through to the area from the public highway / public realm outside of private garden areas. The western boundary of the PVAA abuts the application site and a small section of Church Lane. The existing structures within the application site and an existing boundary wall adjacent to the public highway restrict clear views through to the PVAA from most of Church Lane, while mature trees along Church Lane further restrict clear open views, although there are glimpses between the trees and it is evident that an open space lies behind the tree line.
75. The main view through to the PVAA is found towards the north-western corner of the PVAA, beyond the northern boundary of the application site, where Church Lane connects with Bourn Bridge Road. On approach from the west along Bourn Bridge Road there is a more open view into the PVAA where there is a gated access and less natural screening present.
76. In terms of public access, a public right of way (footpath) runs in a north-south direction to the east of the application site, connecting Cambridge Road (A1307) to Church Road, approximately 32 metres from the eastern boundary of the site, through the PVAA. This provides an element of public accessibility to the PVAA.
77. The general surroundings of the PVAA and the public right of way can be seen in appendix 3.
78. The application proposes the erection of six dwellings and the conversion of two existing barns into office use. The principle of new residential development adjacent to the PVAA is not considered to conflict with the purposes of the PVAA designation, nor would the conversion of existing buildings into office use, noting that the PVAA is already surrounded by residential development and is relatively enclosed.
79. Officers are of the view that the key issue to consider in this instance is the encroachment of the application site into the PVAA and whether this results in significant harm and conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan, with due consideration to the characteristics of the adjacent PVAA as set out above.
80. The area of encroachment would cover approximately 600 square metres and would contain a small portion of the built form of Plots 1 and 2, which would encroach into the PVAA by approximately 4 metres, with the rear gardens of both Plots located entirely within the PVAA.
81. Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan does not explicitly prohibit development within a PVAA, rather the test and assessment are whether the development would

have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village. It is important to note that the supporting text to Policy NH/11 highlights that PVAA's may be private gardens, they are not simply open undeveloped areas, such as allotments, paddock, recreation or playing fields within villages, they can include areas which are in residential use.

82. Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan cites matters of character, amenity, tranquillity and function as the key points of consideration.
83. Given the very small proportion of the PVAA which would be incorporated into the site, being 0.02% of the PVAA, the proposal is not considered to significantly compromise the amenity and tranquillity of the village, noting that the developed area would largely comprise residential garden land. Furthermore, the proposal is not considered to result in significant harm to the function of the PVAA within the village, which is an area of open land to the north of Church Lane and south of Cambridge Road providing an important rural character in this part of the village; this purpose is clear from how the area has been considered since the 1993 Local Plan. The area which is impacted by the proposal is a small western projection adjacent to Church Lane.
84. Officers are therefore of the view that the harm which arises from the proposed encroachment relates to the character aspect of Policy NH/11.
85. The area from which the presence of the PVAA is most notable from the wider public realm, aside from the public right of way, is the approach to Church Lane from the west along Bourn Bridge Road. This approach is the main area from which the PVAA and open undeveloped land within the middle of the village is particularly evident, contributing positively to the rural character of the area.
86. However, it is only a limited portion of this open aspect and wider appreciation of the PVAA which would be lost as a result of the proposal. Most of the open view where there is a gated access and less natural screening present are unaltered as a result of the proposal and direct line of site from Bourn Bridge Road. Where the development encroaches into the PVAA there is already a reasonable amount natural screening which begins to limit the visual permeability to the area beyond. Nonetheless, it is accepted that the introduction of a residential use and built form onto the application site and into the PVAA would have an impact on character.
87. In response to this encroachment, the layout of the site incorporates additional planting along its northern and western boundaries, which would soften the visual impact of the proposed development on the character of the area, a positive response to its rural setting. Although landscape is considered in more detail below, conditions could be imposed as part of any consent to secure the delivery of high quality landscape and planting scheme. Subject to appropriate landscape details to fully incorporate the development with its rural surroundings, the degree of harm on the character of the PVAA and village is considered to be limited, again noting the small proportion which is incorporated.

88. Furthermore, a condition could be imposed as part of any consent to remove permitted development rights from the Plots within the site, to prevent the erection of any outbuildings without formal consent. Such a condition would contribute to the protection of the character of the PVAA and avoid further encroachment from domestic structures.
89. In terms of impact from views within the PVAA, officers do not consider that the encroachment into the PVAA would be as evident from the public right of way as the public footpath affords much wider views and appreciation of the PVAA unlike the more limited views from Bourn Bridge Road and restricted views from Church Lane.
90. Officers acknowledge that there would be a degree of harm in terms of the impact on the character of the PVAA arising from the proposed encroachment. However, the extent of that harm is considered to be limited given the level of encroachment that is proposed and the small amount of additional enclosure resulting from the development, the impact of which is mitigated somewhat through additional soft landscaping to better incorporate the development within its rural village setting.
91. On balance, officers do not consider that the harm arising would be sufficient to warrant a refusal of the application or to result in significant conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan.

### **Character / Visual Amenity**

92. The site and surrounding area present a distinctive rural character, particularly given the relatively undeveloped nature of the application site and the large area of open space to the east. However, there are notable differences in the existing built form of development in the immediate area in terms of scale, siting and form, all of which contribute to the overall character and visual amenity of the area.
93. The development to the west of the site comprises a mixture of single storey, one and a half storey and two storey residential properties finished in facing brickwork and/or render with tiled roofs. These properties front onto Church Street and are set back from the public highway within relatively spacious plots. To the north of West Field, a public highway off of Church Street opposite the application site, the properties are predominantly single storey while to the south of West Field the properties take on a two storey form. Although the front gardens of these properties are generally open areas of soft landscaping and private driveways, the properties to the south of West Field have large detached single storey garages close to, and almost abutting, the public highway, which are evident in street scene views.
94. The development to the south of the site comprises two storey residential properties which vary in terms of their design, form and appearance. The siting of the properties also varies with some set back from the public highway and others built much closer to, (i.e. no.40 Church Lane) or even abutting, the public highway (i.e. no.36 Church Lane).

95. The properties along Bourn Bridge Road to the north west of the site are typically large detached two storey residential properties which form a linear pattern of development along either side of the public highway. These properties are all set back within their plots with spacious open front gardens and private driveways. The architectural form of the properties varies, as does their external appearance, which incorporate a range of materials including red and cream facing brickwork, weatherboarding, cladding and render with tiled roofs.
96. The siting of the existing buildings within the application site also contribute to the rural character of the area. Notably, the site contains a single storey barn which abuts the public highway and is evident within street scene views, a building which is to be retained as part of the proposed development.
97. The proposal has undergone several revisions in response to concerns raised by officers and local representations, seeking to provide a responsive design to the constraints and context of the site.
98. The six proposed dwellings within the site have been arranged in a courtyard form in response to the rural character of the area and the historic layout of the barns on site, with several barns located along the eastern boundary of the site. The entrance to the site has two areas of informal open space on either side which contribute positively to the low-density arrangements of the site and surrounding area, along with the general character of the area where large open front gardens with soft landscaping are common.
99. The dwellings, as amended, have been designed to reflect a simple agricultural form and to appear as barn conversions with simple and modest fenestration detailing; a positive response to the context of the site and its historic use. This is continued through the proposed use of materials which includes the use of flintwork, buff brick, black weatherboarding, rustic red pantiles, timber framed windows and wooden barn doors and window shutters.
100. In terms of scale, the dwellings provide a range of heights from single storey through to a modest two storey property in the centre of the site towards the eastern boundary. Plots 3 and 5 are designed as single storey properties with a ridge height of approximately 5.5 metres while Plots 1, 2 and 6 take on a modest one and a half storey form ranging from approximately 6 metres to 6.5 metres in height, with Plots 1 and 6 providing limited living accommodation within the roof space in the form of a bedroom. Plot 4 is the largest property within the development with a ridge height of approximately 7.5 metres and provides a full range of accommodation at first floor level. The general scale proposed is reflective of the varied scale of development in the surrounding area and are not considered to result in overly dominant or prominent additions which would result in significant harm to the character of the area.
101. Officers acknowledge the concern raised locally around the siting of buildings close to the public highway and their general scale. Plot 1 would be sited approximately 3.5 metres from the edge of the public highway, separated by a

small strip of soft landscaping, while Plot 6 would abut the public highway. However, although the development would introduce a new form of built development near to Church Lane this is not considered to be out of keeping with the character of the area.

102. As noted above, an existing single storey barn within the site abuts the public highway and is to be retained and converted into office use. Immediately to the south of the site is no.40 Church Lane, a two storey dwelling which is sited approximately 2 metres from the edge of the public highway, while two detached single storey garages on the opposite side of Church Lane are also sited close to the edge of the highway. No.36 Church Street, a two storey dwelling to the south of the site (albeit 'round the corner' from the application site), also abuts the public highway. These buildings are all evident in street scene views and contribute to the overall character of the area.
103. The siting and scale of Plots 1 and 6 are not considered to result in significant harm to the character or visual amenity of the area.
104. In terms of the proposed barn conversions, there are no extensions or alterations proposed to the general scale and form of the barns other than alterations to the fenestration and external appearance, noting that a portion of Barn A is to be demolished. The existing barns are in a relatively poor state of repair and therefore the proposed conversions would represent a visual enhancement.
105. The overall design, scale, form, appearance and detailing of the proposed development is considered acceptable and to include a variety of interest within the development, which draws on the context of its location and historic form. Officers consider that the materials palette and architectural detailing includes variety and interest within a coherent, place-responsive design, which is legible and creates a positive sense of place and identity whilst also responding to the local context and respecting local distinctiveness.
106. To ensure that the quality of development is taken through to completion in a manner which is fully compatible with its location, officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose conditions requiring details of all external materials and boundary treatments.
107. Overall, and subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan.

## **Heritage Impact**

108. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 requires decision-makers to pay "special regard to the desirability of preserving the (listed) building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".

109. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 requires decision-makers to pay “special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.
110. Chapter 16 of the NPPF focuses on conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
111. In considering the potential impacts of development, paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation with paragraph 194 of the NPPF detailing that any harm to, or loss of, significance should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 195 of the NPPF sets out that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to a designated heritage assets consent should be refused, unless that harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Paragraph 196 of the NPPF details that where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
112. Policy NH/14 of the Local Plan sets out support for development proposals when they sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets, including their settings, as appropriate to their significance and in accordance with the NPPF. Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan also requires development to conserve or enhance important natural and historic assets and their settings.
113. The designated heritage assets of relevance to this application are the Little Abington Conservation Area and the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, a Grade II\* Listed Building to the south of the site. Officers also note the potential for archaeology on the site.
114. The application has been subject to formal consultation with Historic England and the Council’s Historic Buildings Officer. Cambridgeshire County Council’s Historic Environment Team has also made formal comment on the application in respect of archaeology.
115. Historic England note in their comments the amendments that have been made to the scheme, including the reduction in scale and revisions to the architectural language of the scheme, which will help maintain the rural character of the conservation area. Although acknowledging that the scheme would not be entirely without impact upon the relevant heritage assets, Historic England conclude that they have no objection to the application, as amended, on heritage grounds.
116. The Council’s Historic Buildings Officer also refers to the revisions that have been made to the scheme, responding more positively to its potential impact on the relevant heritage assets.
117. The application, as amended, presents a layout which is considered to reflect an agricultural yard with converted barns, which references the historic character of the site. As detailed above, the amended development has been designed to reflect barn conversions in both scale and appearance with simple



and modest fenestration detailing and responsive external materials, again in response to the historic context of the site. The scheme is considered to appear as a low-key development of converted buildings, which is in keeping with the overall character of the conservation area.

118. A small landscape buffer has been incorporated along part of the western edge of the site to soften the edge of the development, transitioning from the more open and rural setting to the north and east to the more intensive residential development to the south and existing boundary wall which abuts the public highway. Key trees are to be retained at the entrance to the site, further maintaining a softer rural edge to the site. This overall transition is considered to contribute to the approach to the Conservation Area.
119. Although a greater volume of built form is introduced onto the site and would therefore inevitably have an impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, the overall design, scale and appearance of the development is considered responsive to this constraint. Nonetheless, officers acknowledge that the development would result in a minor detrimental impact to the character of the conservation area through the additional built form, including its presence within the street scene.
120. In terms of the setting of the church, direct views would remain along Church Lane to the south, although additional built form within the site will be evident. However, as noted above, the overall design, scale and appearance of the development is considered acceptable and would not read as an overly dominant or prominent addition within the street scene, mitigating its potential impact on the setting of the church.
121. Views of the church are also available from the public right of way which runs to the east of the site. Officers consider that views of the church in the distance would continue to be appreciated, given that the layout, design and scale of the proposal reflects an agricultural yard conversion and the type of development likely to be seen in this location.
122. With reference to the NPPF, the proposal, as amended, is considered to result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin and the character of the Conservation Area. It is therefore necessary to weigh this harm against the public benefits of the proposal (NPPF paragraph 196).
123. In relation to what is meant by the term public benefits, the NPPG details:

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit.

(Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723; Revision date: 23 07 2019)

124. In this instance, the public benefits arising from the proposed development are the provision of local housing and small-scale office space, along with the associated economic benefits in terms of construction work, albeit on a relatively small site.
125. The development would provide six high quality residential dwellings close to the centre of the village. The development would also deliver three single storey properties, which is a notable benefit to the scheme. The Council's Local Plan acknowledges that the District has an ageing population (paragraphs 1.6, 7.3 'Key Facts', 7.38, and 9.3 'Key Facts'). Paragraph 7.38 of the Local Plan notes that often older people need or prefer smaller properties that are easier to manage than their original home, with people often looking to 'downsize' to a smaller property. Officers are therefore of the view that the delivery of three single storey units within the scheme are a significant benefit.
126. In terms of the provision of office space, officers acknowledge the important role that such developments play within the rural economy as set out in the Council's Local Plan. Paragraph 8.52 of the Local Plan details that sensitive small-scale employment development can help sustain the rural economy and achieve a wider range of local employment opportunities, with small scale proposals acceptable within Group Villages.
127. Although not directly applicable to the application, officers note that Policy E/14 of the Local Plan seeks to resist the loss of employment land to non-employment uses within (or on the edge) of villages. The supporting text in paragraph 8.54 details that employment sites at villages are a scarce resource, which should be retained to provide local employment.
128. The provision of small-scale office space within the development is a significant benefit.
129. On balance, the harm to the heritage assets associated with the proposed development is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits, noting that the extent of that harm can be further mitigated through the use of planning conditions to ensure appropriate detailing and finish of the development.
130. The conditions recommended by the Council's Historic Buildings Officer are noted, with specific design details playing a key role in mitigating the impact of the development and ensuring a high-quality compatible finish to the scheme. Officers consider that compliance conditions for the specifications of windows, rainwater goods, rooflights, doors, shutters, Flemish bond and use of flint to be reasonable and necessary to ensure that the quality of development is taken through to completion in a matter which is responsive and compatible with its location in heritage terms.
131. Conditions requiring details of materials and boundary treatments are also considered necessary, as noted above, which are also considered critically important in heritage terms. Details of landscape are covered in more detail

below, but officers acknowledge the recommendation of the Council's Historic Buildings Officer in respect of landscape details for the scheme.

132. The comments of the Historic Environment Team are noted. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work to ensure that the significance of historic environment assets is conserved.
133. On balance, and subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies HQ/1 and NH/14 of the Local Plan, Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 and NPPF guidance.

## **Biodiversity**

134. The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (Green Environmental Consultants, October 2019), a Bat Roost Characterisation Survey (Green Environmental Consultants, October 2019), and a Reptile Survey (Green Environmental Consultants, October 2019).
135. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer who raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions.
136. The reports have found that there are a small number of low importance bat roosts within the buildings affected by the application and that a Low Impact Class Licence will necessary for works to commence. The Council's Ecology Officer has commented that they have no reason to believe that this licence will not be granted based on the information submitted.
137. No reptiles were found during surveys and all other potential ecological constraints (for example breeding birds) can be controlled through non-licensable methodology.
138. The Council's Ecology Officer has recommended that two conditions be imposed as part of any consent.
139. The first would require the submission of a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) prior to the commencement of development, to protect existing habitats and protected species on site and to enhance the site for biodiversity. The CEcMP would require the submission of details including a risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities, practical measures to avoid or reduce impacts during construction, the location and timings of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features and the use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs if applicable.
140. The second would require the submission of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) prior to development above slab level, to provide habitat for wildlife and enhance the site for biodiversity. The LEMP would

require the submission of details including aims and objectives for management (including how a minimum of 10% in biodiversity net gain will be achieved) and ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

- 141. Officers consider that the two recommended conditions would be reasonable and necessary and should be imposed as part of any consent to ensure appropriate arrangements for enhancing biodiversity as part of the development.
- 142. Subject to the recommended conditions, officers consider that the proposal would accord with Policy NH/4 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 170, 174, and 175 of the NPPF which require development to enhance, restore and add to biodiversity with opportunities should be taken to achieve a net gain in biodiversity through the form and design of development.

## **Landscaping**

- 143. The application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Assessment (Jon Etchells Consulting, November 2019).
- 144. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Landscape Officer who raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions.
- 145. The Landscape and Visual Assessment sets out the context of the site and key public view points including the public right of way, noting that the site is visible only in short distance views from the north, west and south, the public footpath to the east and some longer distance views from private gardens. Paragraph 4.2.4 of the Assessment states that the landscape of and around the site has been assessed as of low sensitivity to development of the type proposed, and the degree of change brought about by the development would be minor. The Assessment sets out the scope of landscape works, including mitigation measures, although these have been enhanced significantly as the scheme has progressed.
- 146. The layout, as amended, incorporates a small landscape buffer / strip along much of its western boundary. This is considered a positive response to the sites rural setting and existing street scene of Church Lane which comprises soft landscaping and planting on either side of the public highway. Two large trees are also retained either side of the entrance to the site within areas of informal open space which provide a soft and expansive entrance to the site. Within the site there are small areas of soft landscaping to the front of the proposed properties, each of which have private garden areas. The formal entrance to the site turns to more informal and shared surfacing arrangements creating a softer layout and surface treatment within the sites rural setting.
- 147. The scheme also proposes additional landscaping around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site to soften the impact of the proposed development on its rural surroundings. As noted above, this additional planting is considered a positive response to the adjacent PVAA. Although outside of the application

boundary the proposed planting lies within other land within the applicant's ownership and therefore details can be conditioned as part of any consent.

148. The landscaping in and around the site is considered to contribute positively to the sites low density layout and rural character. However, officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring full details of hard and soft landscaping, including a condition relating to landscape works to the northern and eastern boundaries of the site, to ensure that the site is fully integrated with its surroundings.
149. As noted above, a condition is recommended in respect of boundary treatments, a detail which will also contribute in landscape terms.
150. Subject to the recommended conditions, officers consider that the proposal would accord with Policies HQ/1 and NH/4 of the Local Plan.

## **Trees**

151. The application is supported by an Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Preliminary Method Statement (Oakfield Arboricultural Services, November 2019).
152. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Trees Officer who raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions
153. The report details that a total of 17 individual trees and two groups of trees were assessed, noting that the trees are unmanaged with varying quality from good to poor. The report clarifies that trees of good quality with long term potential to contribute to the area are T3-T5, T7 and T13-T17 (as labelled within the report) while the remaining trees are of low value with little to no arboricultural value, made up of lower level of self-set stems likely formed from unmanaged hedgerows that have been allowed to grow and self-seed. The report also sets out that appropriate protection methods can be put in place during construction and providing they are adhered to the proposal will have no material effect to the long term health and or value of the trees which are to be retained.
154. In terms of works to the existing trees the report sets out the removal of nine trees to accommodate the layout (identified as T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T8, T9, G1 and G2), all of which are categorised as moderate or low quality and value, along with some pruning works to T7 to provide adequate height clearance.
155. The Council's Trees Officer recommended a condition that the submitted Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Preliminary Method Statement be listed as an approved document. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition that works are carried out in accordance with the submitted report.

156. The Council's Trees Officer also noted in their comments that if the layout were to be amended in any way it is likely that an amended Tree Protection Plan would be required.
157. The proposed development has undergone several revisions, which has resulted in some minor changes to the footprint of the proposed dwellings. Officers therefore consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition that, notwithstanding the approved document, an amended Tree Protection Plan be submitted prior to the commencement of works on site to ensure the appropriate protection of trees to be retained.
158. The Council's Trees Officer did raise a query over who will own and manage T4 and T7 and some minor concern over T17 beech and the liveability of Plot 5, noting that the Council would not support tree works which are not for the health of structural condition of the tree.
159. The agent has clarified that in respect of the management of T4 and T7, this will either fall to a management company or that planning conditions could be used to remove permitted development rights to erect fences / state that the areas surrounding the trees should not be enclosed.
160. Officer are proposing to remove permitted development rights for fences (detailed later in this report) but are satisfied that a management company could appropriately manage the trees.
161. In terms of the concerns over T17, Plot 5 has been designed to have an area of usable private amenity space directly to the rear of the property, thereby reducing the pressure for works to be undertaken to T17 to increase the garden area. Officers consider this to be an acceptable arrangement while any works to T17 would require consent from the Local Planning Authority and therefore a good level of protection is afforded to this tree against potentially undesirable works.
162. Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal would accord with Policy NH/4 of the Local Plan.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

163. The application site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered as having low probability of flooding.
164. The application is supported by a SuDs Statement and Flood Risk Assessment (EAS, March 2020) and, as amended, a SuDs Statement and Flood Risk Assessment (EAS, August 2020) following initial objection from the Lead Local Flood Authority.
165. The application has been subject to formal consultation with Anglian Water, the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Sustainable Drainage Engineers, who raise no objection to the proposed development subject to conditions, following the

submission of the amended Assessment.

166. The August 2020 Assessment confirms that surface water will be limited to 1 l/s into the Anglian Water foul sewer, with Anglian Water providing confirmation that they can accept these flows. Water quality has been adequately addressed when assessed against the Simple Index Approach outlined in the CIRIA SuDS Manual.
167. The Lead Local Flood Authority and the Sustainable Drainage Engineers have recommended that two conditions be imposed as part of any consent.
168. The first would require the submission of a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and in accordance with Local Plan policies prior to commencement of development, to ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained and to ensure that there is no increased flood risk on or off site resulting from the development.
169. The second would require the submission of details for the long-term maintenance arrangements of the surface water drainage system prior to occupation, to ensure the satisfactory maintenance of drainage systems that are not publicly adopted.
170. Officers consider that the two recommended conditions would be reasonable and necessary and should be imposed as part of any consent to ensure appropriate arrangements for surface water drainage.
171. In terms of foul water drainage, no objection has been raised by Anglian Water who detail that the foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Linton Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows.
172. To ensure an appropriate arrangement for foul water drainage, officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the submission of scheme for the provision and implementation of foul water drainage prior to development above slab level.
173. Subject to the recommended conditions, officers are satisfied that the proposal would accord with Policies CC/7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the Local Plan which requires developments to have an appropriate sustainable foul and surface water drainage systems and minimise flood risk.

### **Highway Safety, Management of Roads and Parking**

174. The application proposes the creation of a new vehicular access to the site directly onto Church Lane, approximately 25 metres further north than the existing junction between West Field and Church Lane. The section of Church Lane where the new access is proposed is relatively straight and therefore the required visibility splays can be achieved, as illustrated on the two visibility splay plans which have been submitted in support of the application.

175. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Local Highways Authority who raise no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions.
176. The Local Highways Authority has confirmed that they will not be adopting any part of the development as the road within the site would not meet the required specifications for adoption. This is not uncommon and does not present a risk to highway safety, subject to securing details for the further management and maintenance of the proposed street within the development by way of a planning condition.
177. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose conditions to details of the proposed arrangements for future management and maintenance of the proposed streets, access construction details, footpath provision, falls and levels and a traffic management plan. Officers also consider it reasonable to include an informative relating to works to or within the public highway for the attention of the applicant.
178. Subject to the recommended conditions the proposal is considered acceptable in highway safety terms and to accord with Policy TI/2 of the Local Plan and paragraphs 108 and 110 of the NPPF.
179. In terms of car and cycle parking provision, Policy TI/3 of the Local Plan sets out the Council's parking requirements, with figure 11 of the Plan setting out the standards for each use class.
180. For each residential unit, two car parking spaces per dwelling should be provided, with one space to be allocated within the curtilage of the dwelling. Each of the six Plots are provided with two off-road parking spaces.
181. Officers acknowledge the concern and objection that has been received from the Local Highways Authority, Little Abington Parish Council and third-party representations as to the suitability of the car ports proposed, in particular the car port for Plot 5. In response the car port structure for Plot 5 has been removed; Plot 5 would therefore be provided with two adequately sized parking spaces.
182. For cycle parking provision, one space per bedroom should be provided. No cycle parking provision has been indicated for the residential units and therefore officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition to require the submission of appropriate secure and covered cycle parking prior to the occupation of any residential units.
183. For the office units, one car parking space per 25sqm of gross floor area should be provided. The proposed development would create approximately 173sqm of office floor space across the two converted barns. Therefore, a parking provision of seven spaces would be required; the development proposes eight car parking spaces for the office buildings, including two disabled parking spaces.



184. For cycle parking provision, one cycle space per 30sqm of gross floor area should be provided. Therefore, six cycle parking spaces are required for the office units.
185. The office development includes the provision of a dedicated bike store within Barn B across an area of approximately 20sqm. The bike store would provide enough space for at least 6 cycle parking spaces, with the potential for 10 spaces to be accommodated within the store (based on the dimension requirements set out for cycle stands in the Cambridge Cycle Parking Guide September 2018 by CamCycle).
186. Subject to the recommended condition, the proposed parking provision would accord with Policy TI/3 of the Local Plan.

## **Residential Amenity**

### **Neighbouring Properties**

187. The six dwellings proposed are relatively well separated from existing residential development near to the site. Furthermore, given the scale of proposed dwellings, the potential for any significant loss of privacy, loss of light or overbearing impact is further mitigated.
188. The areas directly to the north and east of the site comprise open areas of land, with the area to the east covering large area of open space. The nearest property to the north of the site is Meadowside, which is located approximately 70 metres from the northern boundary of the site (approximately 24 metres between the northern site boundary and southern property boundary of Meadowside). Given the degree of separation, the proposed development is not considered to result in harm to the amenities of Meadowside.
189. To the west of the site are the residential properties of Church Lane. These properties front the public highway but are set back within their individual plots by long open front gardens. These properties are typically set approximately 25 metres from the western boundary of the site. Given the degree of separation and open front garden arrangement, the proposed development is not considered to result in harm to the amenities of the properties to the west of the site along Church Lane.
190. Plot 5, the south-eastern most property within the development, is the closest proposed dwelling to the existing residential properties to the south of the site, namely no.38a Church Lane to the south and no.38 Church Lane to the south east. Plot 5 is a detached single storey property with all accommodation on the ground floor and is sited approximately 10 metres from the nearest shared southern / south-eastern boundary of the site. There are no openings above ground floor level in the southern elevation of Plot 5 which could provide direct views towards nos.38 and 38a Church Lane. Given the scale and siting of Plot 5, the proposed development is not considered to result in harm to the amenities of the properties to the south of the site along Church Lane.

191. The two barns to be converted into office use are located in the southern portion of the site, in closer proximity to nos.38 and 38a Church Lane than the proposed residential element of the development. However, these are existing buildings which are to be converted and no increase to their scale has been proposed, noting that a portion of Barn A is to be demolished. Velux rooflights are proposed on the roof slopes which face into the site. Given the retained scale of the barns and the proposed alterations to the fenestration details, the barn conversions are not considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of the properties to the south of the site along Church Lane.
192. The proposed development has been assessed in terms of loss of privacy, loss of light and overbearing impact and is not considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties.

#### Future Occupiers

193. Consideration is also given to the amenities of the future occupiers of the site.
194. The internal layout of the site is such that it is not considered to significantly compromise the quality of amenity afforded to each property. Officers do not consider that the office element of the development would give rise to any significant harm to the residential units proposed by way of noise and disturbance.
195. In terms of existing development impacting on the proposed dwellings, given the arrangements of the site and scale and siting of nearby development, officers do not consider that any existing development would result in significant harm to the amenities afforded to each of the proposed plots.
196. Paragraph 6.75 of the Council's District Design Guide details that ideally residential units should be provided with access private amenity space with one or two bedroom house having 40sqm in urban settings and 50sqm in rural settings whilst each house with 3 bedrooms or more should have a private garden space of 50sqm in urban settings and 80sqm in rural settings.
197. Each property would benefit from a private garden area which would exceed with the recommendations of the Council's District Design Guide.

#### Conclusion

198. The proposal is considered to accord with Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan which requires development to protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses from development that is overlooking, overbearing or results in a loss of daylight.

#### **Renewables / Climate Change**

199. Policy CC/3 of the Local Plan states that proposals for new dwellings and new non-residential buildings will be required to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% (to be calculated by reference to a baseline for the anticipated

carbon emissions for the property as defined by Building Regulations) through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies.

- 200. Policy CC/4 of the Local Plan states that all new residential developments must achieve as a minimum water efficiency equivalent to 110 litres per person per day.
- 201. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose conditions requiring a scheme to demonstrate a minimum reduction of 10% of carbon emissions and that the dwellings achieve a minimum water efficiency consumption of 110 litres use per person per day, in accordance with Part G of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended 2016).
- 202. Subject to the recommended conditions the proposal would accord with policies CC/4 and CC/5 of the Local Plan.

### **Open Space Provision**

- 203. Policy SC/7 of the Local Plan states that all housing developments will contribute towards Outdoor Playing Space (including children's play space and formal outdoor sports facilities), and Informal Open Space to meet the need generated by the development in accordance with the minimum standards set out in the Policy/Plan.
- 204. Policy SC/7(5) of the Local Plan details that in developments of less than 10 homes, it is expected that only the Informal Open Space element will be provided on-site.
- 205. The layout of the development incorporates two areas of informal open space on either side of the vehicular entrance to the site.
- 206. The proposal would accord with Policy SC/7 of the Local Plan.

### **Contamination**

- 207. The application is supported by a Site Specific Phase I Contamination Report dated April 2019 by Horizon Structures.
- 208. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Contaminated Land Officer who raises no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions, but does raise objection to the Phase I Report considering it to be flawed.
- 209. The Council's Contaminated Land Officer therefore recommends that conditions requiring a detailed desk study and site walkover, a risk assessment, a remediation method statement, a verification report and the identification of any additional or unexpected contamination should be imposed as part of any consent. Officers consider that such conditions would be reasonable and

necessary to ensure that the site is made safe for the sensitive residential end-use.

210. Subject to conditions, the proposal would accord with Policy SC/11 of the Local Plan.

### **Developer Contributions**

211. Policy TI/8 of the Local Plan states 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.
212. Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations states that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is –
- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - b) directly related to the development; and
  - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
213. In this case, the need for contributions are not considered necessary to make the development acceptable due to the Written Ministerial Statement dated 28 November 2014 that states contributions should not be sought from developments of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of no more than 1000sqm.

### **Other Matters**

#### **Broadband**

214. Policy TI/10 requires that infrastructure be imposed to create access to broadband internet respectively. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition to require that the requirements of policy TI/10 are satisfied.

#### **Lighting**

215. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition restricting the installation of lighting unless a scheme is agreed in writing prior to installation to protect the amenities of neighbouring properties and to protect biodiversity, in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/4 of the Local Plan.

#### **Noise**

216. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition restricting the hours of works on site to protect the amenities of neighbouring residents in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and CC/6 of the Local Plan. Informatives relating to minimising the potential for disturbance to neighbouring residents, a demolition notice and air source heat pumps are also considered appropriate.

## Permitted Development Rights

217. The impact of the proposed development on the adjacent PVAA, character of the area, heritage assets and residential amenity have been considered to be acceptable. However, to ensure that these matters are adequately protected, officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition removing permitted development rights for Classes A (extensions), C (rooflights), D (porches), E (outbuildings), G (chimneys, flues etc.) of Part 1 of Schedule 2 and Class A (gates, fences walls etc) of Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
218. Without such restrictions additions/alterations to the proposed dwellings and development in and around their respective curtilages could be undertaken without formal planning consent which may result in harm to the aforementioned considerations.
219. The potential addition of dormer windows under Class B of Part 1 of Schedule 2 is already prohibited within the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as the site is located within a Conservation Area and thus such additions are already controlled and would require formal consent.
220. Officers also consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition to restrict the conversion of the consented office buildings into residential use through permitted development rights. Such a conversion may give rise to matters or issues not considered within this report which may result in adverse harm and potential impacts on nearby residents or future potential occupiers of those units.

## Third Party Comments

221. The comments made in third-party representations are noted, with many points already considered in the report., including the concerns raised in objection to the original proposal (scale, path and landscaping). The remaining matters raised are considered below.
222. Several comments refer to the fact that the site was put forward by the Parish Council for inclusion within the Council's Local Plan as a site for housing (a small development of up to six dwellings). The site was not allocated for development within the Local Plan and therefore comments on this matter have no weight in the determination of the application.
223. The provision of a new footpath from the corner of Bourn Bridge Road across the PVAA to join the existing public footpath is not material to the application.
224. Comments question whether the provision of office space is appropriate, particularly in the current climate (Covid-19), and in respect to the nearby Granta Park. As set out above, the provision of office space is supported by planning policy. In terms of the current climate, it may be the case that the

impact of Covid-19 results in a greater demand for smaller office space at a local level.

- 225. Reference is made to the provision of over 200sqm of office space, which could lead to a greater number of workers than indicated on the application form. The amount of office space provided is approximately 173sqm as set out in this report. Barn B includes a 20sqm bike store and 9sqm 'store', which are not proposed for office space as part of this application.
- 226. Concern is raised that two buildings close to the road do not face onto the main road. This is not considered to result in harm in design terms. The side elevation of Plot 1 adjacent to the road would have fenestration details presenting a relatively active frontage while Plot 6 is sited behind an existing boundary wall.
- 227. The existing gap in the flint boundary wall would provide pedestrian access to the office buildings only, there is no vehicular link to the parking associated to the office buildings. Although parking is not restricted on Church Lane, adequate provision for parking is provided within the site as detailed above.
- 228. The level of development is not considered to result in a significant rise in traffic or congestion while the development has no impact on existing visibility at junctions.
- 229. The duplication of comments on the Council's website and the inconsistencies in whether addresses are published are not material to the application. All representations received have been made available online as part of the application with appropriate redactions applied in line with GDPR guidance. The lack of a 'file copy of amendment letter for the November 2020 amendment' is not material to the application, all relevant plans and documents submitted as amendments were made publicly available for consultation.
- 230. The 1985 application (refusal) is noted in the planning history section of the report. The application is assessed and determined against the adopted policies at the time of the application as set out above.
- 231. Requests have been made that the Planning Committee should make a site visit before the determination of the application. The impact of Covid-19 and lockdown requirements does not allow the Council to conduct committee site visits in the usual manner. However, members of the committee would be able to make their own visit to the site before the committee meeting if deemed necessary.

## **Planning balance and conclusion**

- 232. Officers consider that the general design approach, as amended, to reflect an agricultural yard with converted barns, which references the historic character of the site and the rural character of the area, to be an appropriate response to the context of the site. Planning conditions can be applied to secure details of external materials, fenestration and hard and soft landscaping amongst others,

to ensure that the quality of development is taken through to completion in a manner which is fully compatible with its location.

233. There is an element of conflict with Policy NH/11 of the Local Plan due to the encroachment of the site into this designated area. However, officers are of the view that, on balance, the degree of harm would be limited when considering the characteristics of the PVAA and would not result in significant conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy NH/11 or significant harm to the character of the area.
234. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin and the character of the Conservation Area. On balance, the harm to the heritage assets is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits through the delivery of local housing and office space, again noting that the extent of that harm can be further mitigated through the use of planning conditions.
235. For the reasons set out in this report, officers consider the proposal to be acceptable, on balance, in accordance with the relevant policies in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

## **Recommendation**

236. Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approves the application subject to conditions.

## **Conditions**

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

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- b) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
- Site Location Plan (1:1250)
  - 1013 P8 (Site Plan)
  - 1001 P4 (Plot 1 Floor Plans)
  - 1002 P6 (Plot 1 Elevations)
  - 1003 P4 (Plot 2 Floor Plan)
  - 1004 P6 (Plot 2 Elevations)
  - 1005 P6 (Plot 3 Plans)
  - 1007 P4 (Plot 4 Floor Plans)
  - 1008 P6 (Plot 4 Elevations)
  - 1009 P6 (Plot 5 Plans)
  - 1010 P5 (Plot 6 Floor Plans)
  - 1011 P7 (Plot 6 Elevations)
  - 1020 P2 (Car Port Plans)

0035 P5 (Barn A Plans)  
0040 P6 (Barn B Plans)

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- c) No demolition/development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI which shall include:
- i) the statement of significance and research objectives;
  - ii) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works
  - iii) The programme for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material.

Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the significance of historic environment assets is conserved in accordance with Policy NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- d) No development (including demolition) approved by this permission shall take place until:
- i) The application site has been subject to a detailed desk study and site walkover, to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
  - ii) The application site has been subject to a detailed scheme for the investigation and recording of contamination and remediation objectives have been determined through risk assessment and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
  - iii) Detailed proposals for the removal, containment or otherwise rendering harmless any contamination (the Remediation method statement) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with Policy SC/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.



- e) No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEcMP shall include the following:
- i) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
  - ii) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
  - iii) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
  - iv) The location and timings of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
  - v) The times during which construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
  - vi) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
  - vii) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
  - viii) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs if applicable.

The approved CEcMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To protect existing habitats and protected species on site and to enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF, the NERC Act 2006 and Policy NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- f) 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 shall be within the curtilage of the site and not on the 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

Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policies HQ/1, CC/6 and TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- g) No demolition, site clearance or building operations shall commence until an updated Tree Protection Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved protection measures shall be maintained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority during the course of development operations. Any tree(s) removed without consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased during the period of

development operations shall be replaced in the next planting season with tree(s) of such size and species as shall have been previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

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 S/3 and NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- h) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works, including works to the northern and eastern boundaries of the site outside of the application site boundary within the blue land (as shown on drawing number 1013 P8 – Site Plan), 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. The landscape plan should clearly identify which proposed trees will benefit from 3D cellular confinement systems.

Reason: To ensure the development is satisfactorily assimilated into the area and enhances biodiversity in accordance with Policies HQ/1, NH/4 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- i) No development above slab level shall take place until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:
- i) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
  - ii) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
  - iii) Aims and objectives of management, including how a minimum of 10% in biodiversity net gain will be achieved.
  - iv) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
  - v) Prescriptions for management actions.
  - vi) Prescription of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
  - vii) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
  - viii) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved

details.

Reason: To provide habitat for wildlife and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF, the NERC Act 2006 and Policy NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- j) No development above slab level shall take place until details of the proposed arrangements for future management and maintenance of the proposed streets within the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (The streets shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the approved management and maintenance details until such time as a Private Management and Maintenance Company has been established).
- k) Reason: To ensure satisfactory development of the site and to ensure estate roads are managed and maintained thereafter to a suitable and safe standard in accordance with policies HQ/1 and TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and paragraphs 108 and 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- l) No development above slab level shall take place until a scheme for the provision and implementation of foul water drainage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be constructed and completed in accordance with the approved plans prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the implementation programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To reduce the risk of pollution to the water environment and to ensure a satisfactory method of foul water drainage in accordance with Policies CC/7 and CC/8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- m) No development above slab level shall take place until a scheme has been submitted that demonstrates a minimum of 10% of carbon emissions (to be calculated by reference to a baseline for the anticipated carbon emissions for the property as defined by Building Regulations) can be reduced through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies. The scheme shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the development.

Reason: In accordance with Policy CC/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraphs 148, 151 and 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 that seek to improve the sustainability of the development, support the transition to a low carbon future and promote a decentralised, renewable form of energy generation.

- n) No development above slab level 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 for each building shall be completed before that/the building 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 Policies HQ/1 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- o) Prior to their first use in the development hereby permitted, details of all materials for the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved materials.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- p) Prior to its first use in the development, the use of flint shall match the existing in size and appearance (knapped or whole) with a sample to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved materials.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- q) Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings and office units hereby permitted, the works specified in any remediation method statement detailed in condition 4 must be completed and a Verification report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with Policy SC/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- r) Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings and office units hereby permitted, details for the long term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system (including all SuDS features) to 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 drainage systems that are not publicly adopted in accordance with Policies HQ/1, CC/7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraphs 163 and 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- s) Prior to the first occupation of the development the vehicular access from the existing carriageway edge shall be laid out and constructed in accordance with a detailed engineering scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, and such a scheme shall include the provision of a metalled/sealed surface for a minimum length of 5 metres from the existing carriageway edge.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with policy TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraphs 108 and 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

- t) Prior to the first occupation of the development the developer shall provide a footway to the front of the site (as shown on the proposed site plan). The footway is required to be a minimum of 2 metres in width and agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests safe and effective use of the highway in accordance with policy TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraphs 108 and 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

- u) The dwellings hereby approved shall not be occupied until the minimum water efficiency consumption of 110 litres use per person per day, in accordance with Part G of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended 2016) has been complied with.

Reason: To improve the sustainability of the dwelling and reduce the usage of a finite and reducing key resource, in accordance with policy CC/4 of the south Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- v) The dwellings and offices hereby approved shall not be occupied until the dwelling to be occupied has been made capable of accommodating Wi-Fi and suitable ducting (in accordance with the Data Ducting Infrastructure for New Homes Guidance Note) has been provided to the public highway that can accommodate fibre optic cabling or other emerging technology, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure sufficient infrastructure is provided that would be able to accommodate a range of persons within the property and improve opportunities for home working and access to services, in accordance with policy TI/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- w) The dwellings, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied until covered and secure cycle parking has been provided within the site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the provision of covered and secure cycle parking in accordance with Policy TI/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- x) If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors in accordance with Policy SC/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- y) 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 HQ/1, NH/4 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- z) The development, hereby permitted, shall be carried out in accordance with the following criteria, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority:
- i) All windows shall be timber, flush fitting and painted without trickle vents or applied glazing bars.
  - ii) All rainwater goods shall be metal, powder coated or similar and finished matt black or dark grey.
  - iii) All rooflights shall be top-hinged, flush fitting and metal conservation style units with a central, vertical glazing bar.
  - iv) All doors and shutters shall be natural timber and flush fitting.
  - v) All brickwork to elevations shall be Flemish bond.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policies HQ/1 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- aa) The proposed access shall be constructed so that the fall and levels are such that no private water from the site drains across or onto the adopted public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with policy TI/2 of the

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and paragraphs 108 and 110 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

- bb) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Preliminary Method Statement (Oakfield Arboricultural Services, November 2019).

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 Policy NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- cc) No external lighting shall be provided or installed within the site other than in accordance with a scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise the effects of light pollution on the surrounding area in accordance with Policy SC/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- dd) During the period of demolition and construction, no power operated machinery shall be operated on the site before 0800 hours and after 1800 hours on weekdays or 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 CC/6 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- ee) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development within Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, C, D, E and G and Part 2, Class A of the Order shall take place unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, heritage assets, adjacent Protected Village Amenity Area and the amenities of residents in accordance with Policies HQ/1, NH/11 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

- ff) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development within Class O of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Order shall take place unless expressly authorised by planning permission granted by the Local Planning Authority in that behalf.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the character of the area, heritage assets, adjacent Protected Village Amenity Area and the amenities of residents in accordance with Policies HQ/1, NH/11 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

## 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) Before the existing building is demolished, a Demolition Notice will be required from the Building Control section of the council's planning department establishing the way in which it will be dismantled, including any asbestos present, the removal of waste, minimisation of dust, capping of drains and establishing hours of working.
- c) There shall be no burning of any waste or other materials on the site, without prior consent from the environmental health department.
- d) Should driven pile foundations be proposed, then before works commence, a statement of the method for construction of these foundations shall be submitted and agreed by the District Environmental Health Officer so that noise and vibration can be controlled.
- e) 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 complaints be received. For further information please contact the Environmental Health Service.
- f) Under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2011 permitted development rights were granted to the development of ground source or air source heat pumps for dwelling houses and flats. The MCS Planning Standards were developed to act as a resource for this and contains the requirements, including noise prediction methodologies, that ground source or air source heat pumps must comply with to be permitted development under the above Act. Development would not be permitted development if it failed to comply with The MCS Planning Standards. It would be a reasonable step to require that any new ground source or air source heat pump complies with the MCS Planning Standards. This should ensure that internal and external noise levels are kept to a reasonable level at any nearby residential premises.
- g) The granting of permission and or any permitted development rights for any Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) does not indemnify any action that may be required under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 for statutory noise nuisance. Should substantiated noise complaints be received in the future regarding the operation and running of an air source heat pump and it is considered a statutory noise nuisance at neighbouring premises a noise abatement notice will be served. It is likely that noise insulation/attenuation measures such as an



acoustic enclosure and/or barrier would need to be installed to the unit in order to reduce noise emissions to an acceptable level. To avoid noise complaints it is recommended that operating sound from the ASHP does not increase the existing background noise levels by more than 3dB (BS 4142 Rating Level - to effectively match the existing background noise level) at the boundary of the development site and should be free from tonal or other noticeable acoustic features.

In addition equipment such as air source heat pumps utilising fans and compressors are liable to emit more noise as the units suffer from natural aging, wear and tear. It is therefore important that the equipment is maintained/serviced satisfactory and any defects remedied to ensure that the noise levels do not increase over time

## **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 Plan 2018
- South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)
- Planning File References: S/1388/19/FL, S/2051/93/PNA, S/0433/85/O and S/1957/84/O.

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