

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

2nd February 2011

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services)/
Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

S/1847/10 - IMPINGTON

31 Dwellings (12 affordable) and associated landscaping (including LAP and community orchard), cycle and refuse enclosures, car parking, garaging and internal roadways and footpaths – Land West of Merrington Place, off Impington Lane for Almaren Plc

Recommendation: Conditional Approval

Date for Determination: 24th January 2011

Notes:

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as the recommendation of Impington Parish Council differs to that of officers.

Site and Proposal

1. The site comprising 0.97ha is located within village development framework boundary with the vast majority of the site being situated within flood zone 3 (High Risk) of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). A narrow strip of land to the west of the application site lies within the village Conservation Area. The site is accessed via Impington Lane and Glebe Way and is within walking distance to the centre of the village with close proximity to its services and facilities. The site forms the southern part of an allocated housing site under Policy SP/6.
2. The site is sandwiched between residential properties to the east (New Development at Merrington Place), south (long gardens serving properties within Impington Lane) and west (Glebe Way). The site's northern boundary is shared with a piece of open agricultural land, which forms the northern part of the allocated housing site under Policy SP/6 with the boundary being defined by a landscaped hedgerow and ditch.
3. The full planning application received 25th October 2010 seeks the erection of 31 dwellings (including 12 affordable) along with associated open space, landscaping, and car parking provision and vehicle and pedestrian routes. The application is supported by the following documents:
 - Design & Access Statement;
 - Flood Risk Assessment;
 - Development Brief;
 - Planning Statement;
 - Contamination Report;
 - Ecological Appraisal;
 - Foul Drainage & Utility Report;

- Landscape Proposal & Management Plan;
 - Lighting Assessment;
 - Sustainability Report;
 - Site Waste Management Plan;
 - Arboricultural Assessment;
 - Transport Statement;
 - Affordable Housing Statement;
 - Open Space Assessment;
 - Daylight & Sunlight Assessment;
 - Draft Heads of Term;
4. The development would represent a residential density of approximately 34dph providing the following house types:
 - 2 x 5-bedroom private houses
 - 6 x 4-bedroom private houses
 - 3 x 3-bedroom private houses
 - 8 x 2-bedroom private apartments
 - 4 x 1-bedroom affordable apartments;
 - 4 x 2-bedroom affordable apartments;
 - 3 x 3-bedroom affordable houses;
 - 1 x 4-bedroom affordable house;
 5. 40% of the scheme would provide affordable housing totalling 12 Units to be under the management of the Luminus Group. The properties would be two-storey in height and of a modern contemporary design mimicking the styles within the adjacent Merrington place development. The development would be served by 46 car parking spaces of which 4 would be allocated for disabled parking with a total of 43 cycle spaces. Car parking would be on plot for all private and affordable houses with parking serving apartments to be located at the front of these buildings including visitor spaces.
 6. The development will be designed in accordance with the 'Green Guide to Specification' exceeding the basic requirements of the Building Regulations aiming to achieve a code 4 sustainable. It is proposed that 10% of the site's energy requirements would be met through the use of solar PV panels with sustainable construction measures providing a reduction in carbon emissions along with conservation of water in line with the code 4 for sustainable homes mandate.
 7. The site would be served by the existing vehicular access from Impington Lane through the Merrington Place housing development and an additional pedestrian/cycle route from Glebe Way. In addition it is proposed that the site will provide a Local Area for Play (LAP) and a community orchard. The soft landscaping proposals seek to retain planting where appropriate with the provision of fruit and ornamental trees within each garden and indigenous trees and hedges with shrub planting and areas of wild sward throughout the development.

Planning History

8. Planning Application S/1217/10/F was approved for revised design to plots 4 and 5 for the erection of two garages with associated driveways and landscaping.
9. Planning Application S/1235/09/F for the revised design to house types A and the merging of plots 6 and 7 to form one large affordable dwelling was approved.
10. Planning Application S/1356/08/F was approved for the erection of 35 dwellings (including 14 affordable homes), roadways, and landscaping and open space.
11. Planning Application S/0146/08/F was refused for the erection of 113 dwellings on the grounds that the proposal would result in an insufficient design, layout, parking provision, would not be in keeping with the character of the area and would prejudice the development of neighbouring land. In addition the proposal failed to provide adequate infrastructure provision for public open space and did not market the use of employment uses within the site.
12. Planning Application S/0321/05/O for residential development was refused and dismissed upon appeal on the grounds of loss of employment, flood risk and impact upon potential archaeological findings.

Planning Policy

13. **Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) 2010:**
SP/6 North of Impington Lane, Impington
14. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), 2007:**
ST/4 Rural Centres
15. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD), 2007:**
DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New development
DP/3 Development Criteria
DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments
DP/5 Cumulative Development
DP/7 Development Frameworks
GB/3 Mitigating the Impact of Development Adjoining the Green Belt
CH/5 Conservation Areas
HG/1 Housing Density
HG/2 Housing Mix
HG/3 Affordable Housing
SF/6 Public Art and New Development
SF/10 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments
SF/11 Open Space Standards
NE/1 Energy Efficiency
NE/2 Renewable Energy
NE/3 Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development
NE/6 Biodiversity

NE/9 Water and Drainage Infrastructure
 NE/10 Foul Drainage - Alternative Drainage Systems
 NE/11 Flood Risk
 NE/12 Water Conservation
 NE/14 Lighting Proposals
 TR/1 Planning for More Sustainable Travel
 TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
 TR/3 Mitigating Travel Impact

16. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**
 District Design Guide SPD – Adopted March 2010
 Landscape in New Developments SPD – Adopted March 2010
 Biodiversity SPD– Adopted July 2009
 Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted January 2009
 Open Space in New Developments SPD – Adopted January 2009
 Public Art – Adopted January 2009
 Trees and Development Sites – Adopted January 2009
 Affordable Housing – March 2010

Consultations

(External)

17. **Histon & Impington Parish Council** – Whilst the application is commended on many aspects of its design, the Parish Council recommend that the development be refused on grounds of flood risk. The FRA submitted is considered to use out of date information ignoring local knowledge and recent history.
18. **Environment Agency** – Initially recommended a holding objection to the application and for the determination to be deferred in order to obtain additional information. This was on the grounds that insufficient information (FRA) was submitted to be able to fully assess the proposals with regard to flood risk. This objection was by virtue of the flood risk assessment submitted underestimating the potential flood risk to the site and the surrounding catchments. Following negotiations between the developer and the Council's Drainage Manager additional information has been submitted with regard to the Environment Agency's holding objection.
19. In light of the additional information submitted the Environment Agency (EA) has confirmed that the holding objection has been withdrawn and recommend pre-commencement conditions should the planning authority be minded to approve the application. These conditions are that the floor levels of the proposed dwellings no lower than 10.8m ODN and that surface water drainage; foul water drainage and pollution control schemes are submitted for the approval of the local authority. In addition the EA recommends a condition identifying ground contamination remediation where identified.
20. Notwithstanding the above, whilst the EA has confirmed that the site is not within the an area deemed to be functional as a floodplain and that the proposed floor levels are acceptable to mitigate flood risk it is not agreed at this present time that no flood risk has been demonstrated. Therefore whilst it is believed that the residual risk of flooding has not been adequately addressed, it is likely that the risk to the redline area of the site is marginal even at the worse case scenario.

21. **Anglian Water** – The foul drainage from the development is within the catchment of Cambridge STW that at present has available capacity for these flows. Furthermore the sewerage system at present has available capacity for these flows. Nevertheless, if the developer wishes to connect to this network, they will need to serve notice under S106 of the Water Industry Act 1991 and they will be advised on the most suitable point of connection. The surface water strategy/flood risk assessment submitted with the planning application is unacceptable in its relevance to Anglian Water. The FRA advises that connection will be via a public drain to the north of the site, however, the application states that the connection will be via SUDS. As a consequence the application will need to consult both Anglian Water and the Environment Agency and that any permission granted be subject to a pre-development condition requiring that no development is commence until a surface water strategy/flood risk assessment has been submitted to and approved in writing.
22. Notwithstanding the above, following the additional information submitted with regard to flood risk, Anglian Water has confirmed that surface water from the site is to be discharged to a ditch and that this methodology is outside of the jurisdiction of Anglian Water and will need to be reviewed by the Local Authority and the Environment Agency. Nevertheless a pre-commencement condition requiring a surface water drainage scheme will be required.
23. **Local Highway Authority** – Raise no objections to the proposals as the site is to remain private and therefore the internal layout and proposals shall not be adopted as part of the public highway. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that a condition requiring a site traffic management plan including a construction methodology has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Authority. In addition conditions will be required to ensure a condition survey of the adopted public highway is undertaken and approved prior to work commencing on site along with the construction of all footpaths/cycle ways abutting the adopted highway to be constructed in accordance with County Council Guidance.
24. **Cambridgeshire County Council New Communities** – Histon & Impington does not currently have sufficient capacity to accommodate the expected pre-school demand from 31 dwellings. Therefore a pre-school education contribution of £26,040 should be sought should the development benefit from planning permission. This is based on the County Council costing 1-pre school place at £8,400. The standard multiplier estimates that 100 dwellings would generate 10 pre-school places; so 31 dwellings would generate 3.1 places (3.1 x £8,400 = £26,040).
25. **Cambridge County Council Archaeology** – The site in question was investigated in 2005 revealing little remains within the application area. Therefore the County Council would not recommend that any further archaeological evaluations are required by way of condition.
26. **Cambridge County Council Rights of Way Access Team** – No recorded public rights of way would be affected by the proposed development.
27. **Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue** – Adequate provision should be made for fire hydrants and secured by way of condition or legal agreement.

28. **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – Raises no objections commenting that the proposed layout would appear fine in terms of permeability and natural surveillance. However, it is noted that the proposed access from Glebe Way would appear too narrow for vehicular traffic and would benefit from a barrier to slow potential cyclists from conflict with vehicle users. In addition the bin and cycle stores to the fronts of plots 9-12 and 20-31 would benefit from being gated.

(Internal)

29. **Council's Drainage Manager** - Following detailed discussions with both the EA and the developer's consultant the Agency were initially prepared to accept the developers assertion that flooding was very unlikely to occur on the site and that the site did not form part of the 1 in 100 year floodplain. Following concerns that downstream levels in the vicinity of the Histon pond (on a separate catchment) were such that they might impact on the development, the developer was asked to undertake a more detailed assessment.
30. The work recently undertaken included a topographical survey of the pond area. The survey demonstrates that the development site is above the highest known water levels from knowledge of the flooding in October 2001 and September 2005.
31. Based on this information officers are now satisfied that the downstream watercourse is very unlikely to be affected by the development of the site. The Agency has accepted that the developer's hydrology is an improvement over their own rather coarse estimate of the extent of the floodplain. It is now believed that the updated FRA and its amendments are acceptable subject to the conditions as set out by the Environment Agency.
32. **Urban Design Team** – The Urban Design Team supports the scheme commenting that the development would respond positively to the restrictions of the site and efficiently makes use of available land. The attempt to integrate the unique design into the rural environment, whilst being sympathetic to the site's surroundings is welcomed. The affordable housing would integrate with open market homes and would be indistinguishable from one other as both utilise the same high quality materials and detailing.
33. **Acting Environmental Health Manager** – No comments have been received. (Comments to feature by way of an update)
34. **Scientific Officer (Contaminated Land)** – The preliminary contamination report submitted with this application identifies further investigation within areas of previously restricted access. Therefore no development approved by this permission should commence until further investigations have been undertaken and controlled by the use of a pre-development condition.
35. **Housing Enabling Officer** – The 12 affordable units proposed would be in line with the 40% requirement outlined within Policy HG/3 and is supported by the Housing Team. Furthermore, the scheme would provide a good range of units and tenure to be built to the minimum code 3 standard. It is not clear from the application whether the development will seek grant support from the Homes and Communities Agency at this stage. Due to proposed cuts this

may result in the need for a variation to the proposed tenure to allow for some element of cross subsidy from the intermediate units.

36. **Trees & Landscaping Officer** – Raises no objections.
37. **Landscape Design Officer** – Raises no objections following the amended additional details relating to the management of the proposed fruit trees.
38. **Ecology Officer** – Raises no objections the current landscape arrangements would delivering notable biodiversity enhancements i.e. the community orchard and boundary tree planting inc fruit trees in gardens.
39. **Building Control** – From the information provided the PV panel system would be sufficient to achieves the 10% CO2 reduction for the site's overall energy requirements.
40. **Conservation** – No comments have been received (Comments to feature by way of an update)

Representations

41. 8 letters of objection from local residents have been received, the content of which has been summarised below:
 - The site has already been turned down for development in the past due to the risk of flood;
 - The garden of no.26 Glebe Way would be overshadowed by the height of the buildings proposed within close proximity to the common boundary;
 - Current activity within the garden of 26 Glebe Way generates a degree of noise that would adversely affect the amenity of the proposed building within close proximity to the common boundary;
 - The proposed screening to the north boundary is inadequate for a development of this scale and should not rely on the trees in our garden as they may be removed in the future;
 - The access to the site from Glebe Way is a narrow thoroughfare and encouraging human traffic in this locality next to a busy through road would be dangerous;
 - There are existing problems with antisocial behaviour in the area with youths congregating within public spaces. The development would create new areas for congregation and would result in noise and disturbance;
 - It is unclear as to the finish of the boundary treatment upon the southern boundary. There is a concern over security of the play area and orchard within close proximity to residential properties;
 - Nos.8, 10 and 16 Glebe Way have a right of way across the proposed western access to the site. At present this is organised through communication with these neighbours, however, should the development be approved access would be problematic;
 - The implication that Glebe Way could be used for emergency vehicles is questionable as there is a tight turn in the track between the corner of the wall serving no.16 Glebe Way and the fences serving nos.8 and 10 Glebe Way. In addition the responsibility of maintenance of this area is in doubt as at present the existing neighbours maintain this area as best they can with no help of the land owner;

- The proposed footpath would run level with the common boundary of no.16 Glebe Way upon higher ground and therefore the levels of this path should be reduced in level or moved away from this boundary to ensure privacy is maintained;
- A further single dwelling located at the end of the footpath from Glebe Way sharing the existing access would be welcomed in place of the thoroughfare and play space;
- A condition requiring the erection of 2m high close-boarded fences should be imposed upon the southern boundary of the site. This would safeguard the amenity of properties within Impington Lane, which currently have chain link fences to their rear gardens;
- The proposed cycle sheds located within close proximity to the southern boundary should be kept below a height of 2.5m as they are within 2m of the common boundary with neighbouring properties;
- New trees that were planted off the southern boundary are now mature specimens and should be safeguarded by Tree Preservation Orders to ensure that they remain in situ;
- There is a concern that the ground level upon the site will be significantly higher than that proposed upon the cross section plan to the detriment of the amenity of the lower level gardens within properties in Impington Lane. During the construction of phase 1 spoil has been stored on the current application site and if this is retained and levelled then the finished levels may be increased from that proposed;
- Public consultation was not adequately made to adjoining landowners in time to attend the Parish Council meeting to discuss this application. Therefore the views of residents were not adequately met at this meeting;
- Properties with vehicle access onto the proposed thoroughfare from Glebe Way have to manoeuvre within a tight space with limited visibility. Use of this site as a public thoroughfare would therefore be dangerous to cyclists and pedestrians;
- The Orchard and play area proposed would not be suitably naturally surveyed by properties and will serve as a location for antisocial behaviour to the detriment of local amenity;
- The potential for the ground level of the site to be raised by virtue of the current spoil in situ for the provision of two-storey houses would result in overlooking to properties within Impington Lane and could lead to a sink for water run-off.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

42. The key issues to consider in this instance are the impact of proposals upon the public realm, highway safety, flood-risk, historic environment, infrastructure provision, residential amenity and car parking provision.

Principle of Development

43. The site forms part (southern) of an allocated housing site under policy SP/6 of the site-specific policies DPD, 2010. This policy allocates the site and the site to the north comprising of 1.42ha in total for residential development subject to suitable means of access and flood risk mitigation measures can be achieved. Furthermore, the site is located within the village development framework, which is designated as a Rural Centre by Core Strategy Policy ST/4, which permits residential schemes of unlimited number provided that

adequate services, facilities and infrastructure are available or can be made available as a result of the development.

Housing Policy

44. The development would represent a housing density of approximately 34dph, which is within the net density of between 30-40dph as defined by policy HG/1. This is considered to represent the best use of land at the site considering both the site's constraints and the character assessment of the site's surroundings. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is located within a particularly sustainable location it is considered that a higher residential density in excess of 40dph would be contrary to the surrounding built form of the area and would result in a development unsympathetic to the character of the locality.
45. The development would provide a mix of house types varying in size and design and is considered to provide an adequate mix for a family residential development suitable to local need resulting in a balanced community. The mix sees the provision of 5, 4 and 3-bedroom dwellings along with one and two-bedroom apartments. This mix is considered to compliment that of the adjacent development at Merrington Place by providing a wide variety of housing.
46. This proposed housing mix is further complimented through the provision of 40% on-site affordable housing (12 units in total). Plots 9-12, 14-17, 20-21 and 30-31 are proposed to be affordable housing providing the following house types and tenures:
 - 4 x 1-bedroom apartments (2 x Social Rented & 2 Shared Equity)
 - 4 x 2-bedroom apartments (3 x Social Rented & 1 x Shared Equity)
 - 3 x 3-bedroom houses (2 x Social Rented & 1 x Shared Equity)
 - 1 x 4-bedroom house (Social Rented)
47. The above provision is considered to be acceptable in terms of local need and would accord with Policy HG/3 and the subsequent SPD and will be secured by virtue of a S106 agreement.

Flood Risk

48. The application site is located within a flood risk zone as identified by the Environment Agency's flood risk maps and the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Furthermore, the principle of development within the allocation site is identified as being subject to appropriate flood prevention measures being met. The level of flood risk associated with the site is defined as Zone 3, which is high risk. This is the starting point for the principle of development in consideration of flood risk.
49. The Parish Council has raised an objection to the proposed development solely on the grounds of flood risk. The Parish Council is of the opinion that the FRA submitted is insufficient and does not adequately address flood risk for the site and the surrounding area. The Parish considers the applicant's reference to flooding history to be flawed, stating that it ignores the current Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and the input of the Parish Council into this assessment. Photographic evidence from flooding dating back to

1978 show flooding within Glebe Way and at 2001 in Impington Lane due to insufficient capacity of the drain at Homefield Park. In addition the Parish challenges that the assessment ignores the existing pattern of ground water flow, which threatens properties in Glebe Way and that it centres on the risk to properties within the site and not those surrounding it. Lastly the Parish raises concerns over the incorrect references to catchment areas within the assessment and is greatly concerned about the proposed discharge of water from the site to the Award Drain.

50. Anglian Water has confirmed that the foul sewerage system has an adequate capacity to deal with flows of the proposed development with waste water treatment being within the catchment of Cambridge Sewage Treatment Works, which also has an adequate capacity for the flows anticipated by the proposed development. Following discussions with the applicant Anglian Water has confirmed that the discharge of surface water to the drain is a matter for the environment agency and local planning authority to assess and is not within their jurisdiction. Therefore Anglian Water raises no objection to the development subject to a condition requiring a scheme for surface water drainage is secured by condition.
51. The Environment Agency (EA) shared similar views to that of the Parish Council upon the submission of the FRA and as a consequence raised a holding objection to the application. However, following further negotiations between the agency and the Councils Drainage Manager a revised FRA has been submitted, which both the agency and the Drainage Manager consider to address the principle issues of flood risk as a result of the proposed development. The removal of this objection is however conditional, with further details to foul and surface water drainage to be submitted for approval prior to any work commencing.
52. The EA has confirmed that the proposed floor levels of the development are acceptable mitigation against the potential flood risk on the site. Furthermore the EA agrees that no part of the site lies within an area deemed to be a functional floodplain. Notwithstanding the above, the EA does not share the opinion of the applicant that no flood risk has been demonstrated. The latest SFRA does show the site to be at risk from flooding as it utilises the EA flood maps for the area but the EA are not aware of ground water issues for the site. Therefore whilst the agency believes that the residual risk of flooding has not been adequately addressed, it is likely that the risk to the redline area of the site is marginal even at worst case scenario.
53. Further to the above, the Council's Drainage Manager has confirmed that according to the latest survey information a revised interpolated flood level observed at Histon Pond has achieved a level no higher than 10.05 AOD. The revised FRA states that this interpolated flood level would not impact upon the site, even if it did back up the Award Drain 165 located to the north. Therefore the site is not at risk from fluvial flooding and it will not displace floodwaters, which may otherwise cause flooding elsewhere. To conclude the Council's Drainage Manager and the EA believe this also satisfies the Parish Council's concerns regarding flood risk to and from the site; provided a suitable drainage condition is appended.

Highway Safety and Car Parking

54. The development will be accessed via the neighbouring housing development at Merrington Place, which was designed to be the first phase of the wider development of the allocated site. Merrington Place has a direct vehicle access onto Impington Lane and was designed to be capable of providing a suitable means of access for future development. Furthermore, the application site is proposed to be entirely private and will not be adopted by the Local Highway Authority (LHA). As a consequence the LHA raise no objections to the development with regard to highway safety. Notwithstanding this, the LHA has requested that a pre-commencement condition requiring a construction traffic methodology statement be submitted for assessment.
55. The development would provide on average 2 car parking spaces per dwelling, for dwellings of 3-bedrooms or more, with four of the 3-bedroom dwellings being served by 1.5 spaces. The 12-unit apartment block would be served by 14 car parking spaces (including visitor and disabled provision). The four-unit apartment block would be served by 6 car parking spaces (including disabled parking). All dwellings would benefit from secured and covered cycle parking provision as would the apartment blocks by virtue of communal cycle storage. The total of overall cycle storage spaces would be 43. The parking and garage layouts are considered to be acceptable in terms of their size, manoeuvring and turning ability. Furthermore, the overall parking provision accords with the Council's parking standards as set out with Policy TR/2. In addition the site is well related to the centre of the village with good access to local services and facilities.
56. Representations have been made relating to the proposed pedestrian and cycle access from Glebe Way. This access would serve as a permeable link for the development from Impington Lane through to Glebe Way allowing access to the centre of the village via the pedestrian crossing opposite the village green. At present this access is not open to the public and only serves as a vehicle and pedestrian access to numbers 8, 10 and 16 Glebe Way. Residents of these properties have raised concerns with the proposal for this to area to serve as a route for emergency vehicles to the site due to its narrow form. In addition concerns have been raised about the use of this access for increased pedestrian and cyclist numbers due to the limited visibility and frequent use of residential traffic within this narrow space.
57. It is acknowledged that the use of this access for emergency vehicles would provide potential difficulty due to the narrow access and conflict that may result with pedestrians, cyclists and resident vehicle users. Furthermore, it is considered that the free flow of cyclists may also result in conflict with resident vehicle movements within this vicinity. Therefore it is the opinion of officers that this access is to be limited to the use of pedestrians only, with a gated system to be secured by condition to ensure that cyclists are required to dismount before accessing or exiting the site. This will restrict the number of vehicle movements within this area to that which currently exist and will safeguard potential conflict between cyclists and resident vehicle movements.
58. Notwithstanding the above, the potential conflict between resident vehicle movements and pedestrians is recognised. However, given the narrowness of the access and the limited residential properties that it serves, it is considered that the risk to pedestrians would be marginal, as vehicles using this space would be manoeuvring at slow speeds. Furthermore, the parking of vehicles

within this space would be short term in relation to service vehicles; therefore any obstruction to pedestrian access would be limited. To ensure that the access can be maintained to a high standard and that it is suitably sign posted negotiations shall be undertaken with the developer and secured by way of S106 agreement. The applicant has accepted this requirement and would like to incorporate it with a form of onsite public art, which is a view supported by the Parish Council.

Public Realm (Design)

59. The applicant worked closely with South Cambridgeshire District Council to negotiate a new scheme in 2010 under the Council's pre-application advice. The proposal has also been designed in accordance with the Council's Design Guide SPD.
60. The Site represents backland development, with a single vehicular connection to Impington Road via the residential development known as Merrington Place. The density of 34 dwellings per hectare is achieved with a well-integrated layout that represents an efficient use of land. The scheme proposes back-to-back gardens onto the existing properties that surround the site with a scale and mass of 2-storey, set back with a roof height appropriate to the scale and massing of the surrounding dwellings. This massing and form is considered to protect the adjacent properties from overshadowing and an overbearing impact, and also balances the setting of the new development. The layout also avoids insecure alleyways and minimises spaces that are not naturally overlooked.
61. The Design and Access Statement submitted illustrates the progression of the initial draft layout drawings and how the final integrated approach of the final layout was arrived at. The design and layout of the buildings produce a sequence of outdoor spaces and vistas for pedestrians and visitors alike, creating a small but interesting and attractive neighbourhood environment. The dwellings are arranged in short terraces, semi-detached and detached units around a shared vehicle and pedestrian cul-de-sac accessed via Merrington Place. The provision of a central access between Impington Lane and Glebe Way divides the site into two halves, thus helping to achieve active frontages on both sides of this central spine, while providing a robust and secure route for the pedestrians through the site enhancing permeability. Furthermore, the variation in building setbacks; low speed restricted shared surface with integrated parking spaces and landscaping serve as a single, active, and integrated public space for all creating and help achieve a 'sense of place'.
62. Cycle parking space for houses is provided in the gardens, and is easily accessed from the rear entrance. However the cycle storage for apartments as shown on drawings CJM-02, does not show the 'visually permeable' storage required for secure by design. As a consequence this detail will be required by condition.
63. Responding to the restrictive nature of the site, the scheme proposes an appealing modern design, which complements the pitched angles and rhythm of gables of adjacent properties and relates positively to the streetscape. The orientation of the proposed buildings is appropriate to the narrow site, rather than following the existing roofline and dominating as infill development. Therefore the proposed building form has minimised the extent of overbearing

impacts on other properties as much as is possible. All dwellings have windows and most have balconies giving carefully framed views. Although these features enhance the spatial experience they reduce the potential for meeting the Lifetime Homes standards. The elevations work well together to generate enough variety as well as provide an intermittent space to appreciate the volume and massing of the overall scheme.

64. The proposed materials are similar to that upon Phase 1 at Merrigton Place and propose little variation. This is key for tying in the two relatively small developments together thus creating a high quality and well-defined palette of public realm materials. Materials are indicated to reflect those of adjacent properties, therefore relating the modern scheme to the context. Nevertheless, samples of the proposed materials will be required for approval by way of condition prior to development commencing on site.
65. To summarise the proposed scheme is a design concept that responds positively to the restrictions of the site and efficiently makes use of available land. The attempt to integrate the unique design into the existing rural environment, whilst being sympathetic to its surrounding is welcomed. The affordable housing proposed is considered to be 'tenure blind' as it would be well integrated with open market homes and is indistinguishable from each other as both use the same high quality materials and detailing. The scheme also includes pedestrian and cycle links to the site to the north, which is allocated for housing development. These will facilitate permeability for future development should it come forward.

Residential Amenity

66. As referenced above the proposal has been designed in accordance with the Councils Design Guide SPD. As a consequence the proposed layout conforms to the guidance within this document to safeguard from overlooking and loss of privacy and overshadowing and loss of daylight and sunlight. All dwellings proposed significantly exceed the 25m back to back relationship for residential dwellings stipulated within the Design Guide both in relation to one another and with regard to neighbouring properties outside of the application site.
67. The proposed community orchard and local area of play (LAP) are site to the western corner of the site within close proximity to the pedestrian / cycle access from Glebe Way. Representations from residents have raised concerns over the design and location of these spaces due to the potential for noise and disturbance to residential amenity and anti-social behaviour. The LAP has been designed in accordance with the Open Space SPD in that a buffer of 5m can be achieved between the area of play and the nearest residential dwellings, namely plots 9-12 and 8. A buffer zone is the space between the facility and the nearest residential property and is required to minimise disturbance.
68. Notwithstanding the above, the LAP and community orchard area (informal open space) would abut residential curtilages with dwellings outside the site within Glebe Way (nos.6, 8, 10 and 16) and Impington Lane (nos.11, 13, 15 and 17). However, there is considered to be a sufficient distance between these areas and the properties in question of approximately 30m. Sufficient boundary treatment between the site and the gardens of these dwellings is considered to suffice as mitigation for potential noise and disturbance from

open space to gardens. It is acknowledged that natural surveillance is essential in negating anti-social behaviour and both plot 8 and the apartments serving plots 9-12 would overlook the proposed LAP. The Police Architectural liaison officer supports this view.

69. The maximum height of the dwellings proposed at two-storey level is considered compatible with that of surrounding properties. Furthermore, the back-to-back distance of the dwellings proposed is comparable to that of existing surrounding properties. However, representations have been raised commenting that the site levels have been altered significantly by virtue of the spoil currently within the site that has been taken from the development to the east at Merrington Place. This matter has been raised with the applicant who has confirmed that the spoil is being stored temporarily and will be in part re-used and distributed throughout the site in accordance with the finished levels identified in the proposed cross section plan. These levels in relation to the distances between properties are considered acceptable in terms of outlook for properties within Impington Lane.

Landscape (Green Belt) & Ecology

70. The landscape proposals provide a range of soft and hard landscape environments that integrates a contemporary unique design into an existing rural environment. The site in its present form provides little landscape or biodiversity features of merit and the proposals are considered to provide the opportunity to regenerate the land creating interesting building layouts within a diverse environment. The provision of hedgerows and fruit trees will encourage a wide range of insects and birds whilst the hard landscaping is considered to coordinate with the proposed building materials to the enhancement of buildings and complement the soft planting areas.
71. The provision of a LAP is in accordance with the guidance within the Public Open Space SPD, which requires schemes of up to 10 units to provide a local area of play for 2-6 year olds that will stimulate play through the use of landscape features. In addition the provision of a community orchard is considered to provide an attractive transition into the site from Glebe Way providing a soft entrance to the development. The orchard would be complemented through the provision of a wildflower sward, which will provide a rich and diverse habitat resulting in biodiversity enhancement.
72. The proposed planting along the northern boundary is to be retained in part and further enhanced where required. The residential boundaries in this location are to be defined by timber fences of approximately 2m in height. Given the scale of the development proposed and the set back from this landscaped boundary the impact upon the adjacent Green Belt is considered to be marginal. A pre-commencement condition will be proposed to ensure that the boundary treatment for each dwelling is agreed in writing to safeguard residential amenity whilst maintaining the high design standards of the public realm.

Historic Environment

73. The furthest western part of the site is partly within the boundary of the village Conservation Area. This area presently comprises of the track that is accessed via Glebe Way and currently serves as a right of way to nos.8, 10 and 16 Glebe Way. In addition there are two Listed Buildings located within

the wider vicinity at no.6 Impington Lane, 22 The Green and 2 Glebe Way (Rose and Crown Public House). At present the area of the site located within the Conservation Area serves as a narrow track of little visual merit, which is overgrown in part and not currently in full use with regard to access into the application site. The hard and soft landscape proposals that would develop this space into a public thoroughfare are considered to enhance the character and appearance of this space.

74. The development has been designed to limit prominent public views from outside of the application site. This has been achieved by limiting the density of the development and ensuring that building heights are compatible with those that surround the site. Furthermore, the nearest built form would be sited approximately 35m from the Conservation Area boundary and approximately 80m from the public adopted highway. In light of the distance from the existing built up area and the heights of the built form proposed the development is considered to have a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of nearby Listed Buildings. In addition the introduction of the pedestrian thoroughfare will enhance the environment at this point and the provision of a community orchard and public open space within close proximity to the Conservation Area will enhance the character and appearance of the area.
75. Cambridgeshire County Council has confirmed that the site has been subject to archaeological investigation and no significant results were found. Therefore the site would not require being subject to further investigation.

Sustainable Construction

76. The proposal aims to provide a minimum of code 4 for Sustainable Homes, which would exceed the minimum building regulations requirements. This will be achieved through the use of structural insulated panels, which produce low U-values, which when used with additional insulation result in predictable and resource efficient building. The development's energy requirements have been assessed and it is proposed that the use of solar PV panels will result in 10% of on site energy requirements being met through renewable energy production. Materials proposed will be sourced using the BRE Green guide rating system and the development will mostly be built using timber frame construction, all of which will be sourced responsibly. The development will also provide space for home working by way of home offices within each affordable dwelling and would conserve water through the use of rainwater butts and low flow products.

Environmental Protection

77. It has been identified under the site's preliminary testing that further investigation is required within areas that were previously restricted access due to buildings being in situ. Therefore a condition will be required to provide further investigation work and any required remediation to ensure that levels of contamination are acceptable or minimised. The applicant has confirmed that this work is already underway and accepts the need for such a condition in the event that the matter cannot be addressed prior to determination.
78. The proposal is accompanied by a lighting design assessment of the same lantern as that approved for phase 1 at Merrington Place. The assessment provides details of the areas that are to be lit including the roadway and

parking areas in front of the apartment buildings and the footway leading to Glebe Way. The assessment indicates lighting to be low level due to the rural location taking into consideration the transition between phase one and phase two of the residential developments. The impact of this proposal upon residential amenity and wider light pollution is yet to be assessed by the Acting Environmental Health Manager and therefore this information will be provided to members by way of an update.

Planning Obligations

(Public open space)

79. Officers calculate the proposed onsite open space to be an area of 1032m² providing informal children's play space and 80m² providing informal open space. The section 106 agreement will take account of future maintenance of the onsite open space, which in accordance with the planning statement, is envisaged to be an arrangement similar to the neighbouring development where the housing association is to be responsible.
80. In accordance with the Open Space in New Developments SPD the shortfall of onsite provision would result in the requirement for an offsite contribution of £76,328.52 to be paid to the District Council for onward transmission to the Parish Council. If the on-site open space is to be transferred to a public body (i.e. the Parish Council) an onsite maintenance contribution of £4,177.98 is payable. The 2005 recreation study identified that Histon and Impington had a combined shortfall of sport space of 7.2 hectares and play space of 5.42 hectares when compared to the open space standards as detailed in Policy SF/11.

(Community facilities)

81. A development of this size is required to make an offsite contribute of £15,319.54 to be paid to the District Council for onward transmission to the Parish Council. The District Council undertook a community facility audit in 2009 that identified the village of Impington has insufficient provision of community space, as has the closely related neighbouring village of Histon. The combined total of indoor community space was 351 square metres against an adopted standard of 110 square metres per 1000 people, or in the case of Impington and Histon a total of 488 square metres. The audit also identified some areas of improvement for existing facilities.

(Public art)

82. The applicant has expressed a willingness to enter into a legal agreement in respect of the public art SPD with a value yet to be agreed with the Council. Officers recognise the applicants desire to incorporate a scheme for public art within the development. As the scheme remains to be agreed the District Council will require a scheme for public art to be agreed prior to the occupation of any units with the value of the scheme to be no less than £17,000 and not inclusive of fees. As per the neighbouring development should agreement on the scheme not be reached, a commuted public art contribution is to be made, which will be a greater sum than providing on site provision.

(Household waste receptacles)

83. A contribution for £69.50 per dwelling is required in accordance with the RECAP waste management design guide.

(Section 106 monitoring)

84. A contribution of £1,500 is required to be paid prior to the occupation of the first dwelling.

(Education)

85. Histon and Impington currently does not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the expected pre-school demand from 31 dwellings and therefore a section 106 contribution of £26,040 is to be secured.
86. The applicant has been made aware of the above obligations, has agreed to meet and a Section 106 agreement currently in draft form to secure this planning gain.

Conclusion

87. Having regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all relevant material considerations into account, it is considered that planning permission should be granted in this instance.

Recommendation

88. Approve as amended by plan nos. CJM-02 1101-B date stamped 10th December 2010, Flood Risk Assessment and amended Landscape Management Plan date stamped 18th January 2011, subject to the prior completion of a S106 Agreement dealing with affordable housing, education, open space, community provision, public art, access matters (see paragraph 58 above), waste receptacles and monitoring, and to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. **The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.**
(Reason - To ensure that consideration of any future application for development in the area will not be prejudiced by permissions for development, which have not been acted upon.)
2. **The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:** CJM-02 1101-B, CJM-02 2200 A, CJM-02 1100 A, CJM-2 2000 A, CJM-2 2001 A, CJM-2 2002 A, CJM-2 2003 A, CJM-2 2004 A, CJM-2 2005 A, CJM, 2006 A, CJM-2 2007 A, cjm-2 2008 a, CJM-2 2009 A, CJM-2 2010 A, GPM 558-1 Lighting Design, Sustainability Statement dated 4th October 2010, Development Brief June 2010, 160-02A and Landscape Management Plan 18th January 2011.
(Reason - To facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.)
3. **No development shall take place until samples and details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings**

hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

(Reason - To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 4. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected for each dwelling. The boundary treatment shall be completed before each dwelling is occupied in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be retained.**

(Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the site does not detract from the character of the area in accordance with Policy DP/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

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

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

- 6. The buildings, 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 TR/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 7. Prior to the commencement of any development, 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 Policy NE/10 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 8. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface 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 ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and to prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 9. Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision and implementation of pollution control 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 with the Local Planning Authority.**

(Reason - To reduce the risk of pollution to the water environment in accordance with Policy DP/1 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 10. The development, hereby permitted, shall not be occupied until all identified flood alleviation and protection measures have been completed in accordance with the approved scheme.**

(Reason - To prevent the increased risk of flooding in accordance with Policies DP/1 and NE/11 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 11. No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision and location of fire hydrants to serve the development to a standard recommended by the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented.**

(Reason - To ensure an adequate water supply is available for emergency use.)

- 12. The finished floor levels of the proposed dwellings in relation to the existing and proposed ground levels of the surrounding land shall be no lower than 10.80m above Ordnance Datum Newlyn (ODN) unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.**

(Reason - In the interests of residential/visual amenity, in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 13. The garages, hereby permitted, shall not be used as additional living accommodation.**

(Reason - To ensure the continued provision of off-street parking space in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 14. No development shall take place until a scheme for the siting and design of the screened storage of refuse has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The screened refuse storage for each dwelling shall be completed before that dwelling is occupied in accordance with the approved scheme and shall thereafter be retained.**

(Reason - To provide for the screened storage of refuse in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.)

- 15. No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until:**

- a) 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.

- b) 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.**
- c) The works specified in the remediation method statement have been completed, and a validation report submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the approved scheme.**
- d) If, during remediation works, any contamination is identified that has not been considered in the remediation method statement, then remediation proposals for this contamination should be agreed 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 DP/1 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007).

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