

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

01 March 2017

AUTHOR/S: Head of Development Management

Application Number: S/1694/16/OL

Parish(es): Hardwick

Proposal: Outline planning permission for the erection of up to 98 dwellings with all matters reserved except for access

Site address: Agricultural field west of Grace Crescent, Hardwick CB23 7AH

Applicant(s): Hill Residential

Recommendation: Delegated approval (to complete section 106 agreement)

Key material considerations: Five year supply of housing land
Principle of development
Density of development and affordable housing
Character of the village edge and surrounding landscape
Highway safety
Residential amenity of neighbouring properties
Surface water and foul water drainage
Trees
Ecology
Provision of formal and informal open space
Section 106 Contributions

Committee Site Visit: 28 February 2017

Departure Application: Yes

Presenting Officer: David Thompson, Principal Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: Approval of the planning application would represent a departure from the Local Plan

Date by which decision due: 01 March 2017 (Extension of time agreed)

Executive Summary

1. The proposal does represent a significant scale of development on the edge of a group village. Hardwick is however considered to be one of the more sustainable group villages within the District due to its relatively close proximity to and regular bus service to and from Cambridge. The main area of weakness in Hardwick in sustainability terms is considered to be the limited amount of indoor community

meeting space within the village. The proposal would significantly reduce this deficit through the provision of a 250 square metre community building, or an equivalent financial contribution in lieu of this. The Parish Council control a significant area of land on the recreation ground, centrally positioned within the village, where there would be space to erect such a facility.

2. The provision of this building would enhance the overall sustainability of Hardwick to a point comparable with other villages considered suitable for elevation to Minor Rural Centre Status in the 2012 Village Classification Study. This factor and the need for the development to compensate for the loss of the community space within the primary school (required to meet the additional demands that the scheme will place on pre-school provision), when combined, are considered to ensure that the provision would be CIL compliant. Alongside this facility, the provision of a community vehicle, a contribution towards healthcare provision and the other measures detailed in the main body of the report, mean the development is considered to be socially sustainable.
3. Following the receipt of additional information, none of the Council's internal consultees have recommended refusal. There are no objections to the proposals from the Highway Authority, the Flood Risk Authority or the Environment Agency. The indicative proposals are considered to demonstrate that the residential amenity of neighbouring properties would be preserved and the density of development would allow sufficient space to be retained between the buildings to preserve the residential amenity of the future occupants of the development. The presence of a bus service at commuting times in close proximity to the site and a more regular service from the northern edge of the village, when considered alongside the provision of a community vehicle, are considered to render the scheme environmentally sustainable.
4. Overall, it is considered that the significant contribution the proposal would make to the deficit in the Council's five year housing land supply and the social benefits that would result from the development outweigh the harm resulting from the development of agricultural land and the limited landscape harm arising from the scheme. None of these disbenefits are considered to result in significant and demonstrable harm and therefore, it is considered that the proposal achieves the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

Relevant Planning History

5. No site history that is relevant to the determination of this application.

National Guidance

6. National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)
Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan Policies

The extent to which any of the following policies are out of date and the weight to be attached to them is addressed later in the report.

7. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Core Strategy DPD, 2007**
ST/2 Housing Provision
ST/6 Group Villages
8. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Development Control Policies DPD, 2007:**
DP/1 Sustainable Development

- DP/2 Design of New Development
- DP/3 Development Criteria
- DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments
- DP/7 Development Frameworks
- CH/5 Conservation Areas
- HG/1 Housing Density
- HG/2 Housing Mix
- HG/3 Affordable Housing
- NE/1 Energy Efficiency
- NE/3 Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development
- NE/4 Landscape Character Areas
- NE/6 Biodiversity
- NE/8 Groundwater
- NE/9 Water and Drainage Infrastructure
- NE/11 Flood Risk
- NE/12 Water Conservation
- NE/14 Lighting Proposals
- NE/15 Noise Pollution
- NE/17 Protecting High Quality Agricultural Land
- CH/2 Archaeological Sites
- SF/10 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments
- SF/11 Open Space Standards
- TR/1 Planning For More Sustainable Travel
- TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
- TR/3 Mitigating Travel Impact

9. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**

- Open Space in New Developments SPD - Adopted January 2009
- Affordable Housing SPD - Adopted March 2010
- Trees & Development Sites SPD - Adopted January 2009
- Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted March 2010
- Biodiversity SPD - Adopted July 2009
- District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010
- Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted January 2009

10. **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission - March 2014**

- 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
- HQ/1 Design Principles
- H/7 Housing Density
- H/8 Housing Mix
- H/9 Affordable Housing
- NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
- NH/3 Protecting Agricultural Land
- NH/4 Biodiversity
- NH/14 Heritage Assets
- CC/1 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments
- CC/4 Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC/6 Construction Methods

CC/7 Water Quality
 CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
 CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
 SC/2 Heath Impact Assessment
 SC/6 Indoor Community Facilities
 SC/7 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments
 SC/8 Open Space Standards
 SC/10 Lighting Proposals
 SC/11 Noise Pollution
 TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
 TI/3 Parking Provision
 TI/8 Infrastructure and New Developments

Consultation

11. **Hardwick Parish Council** – strongly objects to the proposed development. The Parish Council welcomes the development of affordable homes in the Parish. However, the following concerns are raised:
- The proposals do not comply with policy ST/6 of the SCDC Core Strategy.
 - The development would exaggerate the problems of access to facilities within the village, to public transport on the northern edge of the village and access to facilities in neighbouring villages.
 - The proposal brings no new facilities within the development itself and offers inadequate funding proposals to provide significant new facilities.
 - The development would add additional traffic to the already congested centre of Hardwick.

The following points are made, expanding on the above objections:

The applicant makes a number of assertions in the application which the Parish Council considers to be misleading:

- The Planning Statement at sections 7.68 – 7.78 is sustainably located in transportation terms – the Parish Council disagrees with this as it is the northern edge of the village (approx. 1 mile from the site) that is well served. The primary school, shop and other community facilities are also approx. 1 mile from the site and therefore occupants of the development would be somewhat detached from these facilities.
- The bus service which runs adjacent to the site only operates once a day and so would not be adequate to be relied upon as an alternative means of transport to the private car.
- Access to the development is through a narrow residential street (The Pastures) where traffic is further restricted by parked cars.
- The Parish Council acknowledge that the proposal includes provision of a parking layby to accommodate 4 vehicles to aid the existing congestion but consider that this will not sufficiently improve the access arrangements to the site.
- Concerns regarding the impact of traffic through the village, particularly on Cambridge Road where the school and village shop are located.
- Access to the Wimpole Way bridleway can be restrictive in poor weather, hampering this ‘benefit’ of the proposals.
- The South Cambridgeshire Village Classification Report (2012) concludes that Hardwick is one of the 8 least sustainable villages in the District. The area in which Hardwick scored well was access to public transport – but these facilities are located at the opposite end of the village to the application site.

- The Parish Council disagree that the doctor's surgery at Comberton is easily accessible from Hardwick and the claim that the village has adequate community facilities – both of which were conclusions in the Village Classification Report.
- The Parish Council considers that the public open space is not well located within the scheme – adjacent to the surface water attenuation pond.
- Hardwick requires improvements to the sports facilities on the recreation round
- Affordable housing is a benefit of the scheme and is needed in the village, but should be developed in a sustainable location.
- There is a need to improve the capacity of the pre-school facilities in Hardwick.
- The proposed offer of £46,000 towards the provision of a new community facility is considered insufficient to mitigate the impacts of the development.
- There are concerns about the capacity of the sewage network which runs below Main Street as there have been blockages in the past. The Parish Council seek assurances that there is capacity to take the additional flows that will result from this development.

Since the date of the initial consultation response, the Parish Council have been in correspondence with the applicant and since that point, the proposed heads of terms have been developed. The detail of the changes is discussed in the main body of the report but substantial areas of change include the provision of funding for a 250 square metre community building (or a financial contribution in lieu of this), the provision of a commuted sum for the installation of play equipment within Grace Crescent, or an enhancement of the existing facilities at the recreation ground, as well as on site and the provision of a community vehicle.

The Parish Council are due to meet to consider the matter further at their meeting on 28 February 2017 and officers will provide feedback to the Planning Committee meeting on 01 March.

12. **District Councillor** - Cllr Chamberlain (Hardwick Ward) has written in support of the application making the following comments (summarised):

- Hardwick is desperately short of affordable homes for our children and grandchildren who are having to leave the village to find housing due to the cost of buying and renting property in Hardwick.
- The village currently lacks community facilities, including any form of healthcare provision, a village hall and public transport. The proposal would provide contributions to improve this situation and 40% of the dwellings would be affordable.
- Particular advantages of the proposal are the provision of a community centre, additional capacity in the pre-school provision at the primary school and a community bus service.
- The proposal will marginally add to the traffic congestion currently experienced outside the shops on Cambridge Road. However, it is considered that this impact would not be so severe on the wider highway network.
- Planning conditions could be used to control the impact of construction related traffic on The Pastures, where there are concerns about these vehicles using a highway which is restricted in width due to extensive on street parking.
- The benefits of the proposals, particularly in relation to the provision of enhanced community facilities are considered to outweigh the harm arising from the scheme.

13. **District Council Environmental Health Officer (EHO)** – The Public Health Specialist has commented that the Health Impact Assessment has been assessed as meeting the required standard of the SPD Policy. The scheme is therefore acceptable in this

regard.

Further assessment of the potential noise generated by traffic on adjacent roads (Grace Crescent, The Pastures and Main Street) and the impact that this may have on the residential amenity of the occupants of the dwellings will be required to ensure that adequate attenuation measures are put in place, if required. Details of any lighting to be installed will also need to be provided.

Noise, vibration and dust minimisation plans will be required to ensure that the construction phase of the scheme would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. These details shall be secured by condition, along with a restriction on the hours during which power operated machinery should be used during the construction phase of the development and details of the phasing of the development.

The applicant will be required to complete a Waste Design Toolkit at the reserved matters stage in order to show how it is intended to address the waste management infrastructure, and technical requirements within the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide. In addition conditions should secure the submission of a Site Waste Management Plan. Provision of domestic waste receptacles by the developer will be secured via the Section 106 agreement.

14. **District Council Contaminated Land Officer** - low risk in relation to land contamination and as such it is considered that a phase I contaminated land assessment can be required by condition at this outline stage, to ensure that the detailed layout does not result in any adverse impact in this regard, acknowledging the sensitive end use proposed for the site.
15. **Air Quality Officer** – No objection. To ensure that sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the development are not affected by the negative impact of construction work such as dust and noise, as well as ensuring that the applicant complies with the Council's low emission strategy for a development of this scale, conditions should be included that require the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan/Dust Management Plan, and an electronic vehicle charging infrastructure strategy.
16. **District Council Urban Design Officer** – no objection to the proposals on the basis that the height of the proposed dwellings is limited to 2 storeys and a ridge height of 9.5 metres. This restriction should be conditioned at this outline stage as the indicative parameter plans indicate dwellings that would be a maximum ridge height of 13 metres. The site is located on the edge of the village, the conservation area is in close proximity to the north east of the site and 2.5 storey buildings are not a prominent feature in the surrounding area. In light of these observations, it is considered that a development without this restriction could have an unacceptable impact on the transition from the edge of the built environment to the open countryside beyond. The design will need to be carefully considered at the reserved matters stage, with a design brief provided in support of such an application, to ensure that the layout and scale of development reflect the character of the surrounding area.
17. **District Council Landscape Design Officer** – The proposed density of development (approx. 34 dwellings per hectare) is considered to be high in this edge of village location. The inclusion of 2.5 storey properties would have a detrimental impact on the sensitive landscape character of the site. There are sensitivities associated with the site in terms of its position within the landscape – the field sits on the south facing slope of an east-west ridge. The landscape character is more enclosed and finely grained in this edge of village location. The site is enclosed by

mature woodland to the north and west. The development will be a clear addition to the landscape, particularly in long and short range views of the site from the south and south west. The proposal for comprehensive landscaping within the development is welcomed but there will be a need to ensure that street and public realm areas are extensive enough to accommodate established tree planting. There is a need to secure a lower density of development in the western part of the site. Subject to a reduction in the maximum height to two storeys, no objection is made as other matters can be dealt with at the reserved matters stage.

18. **Cambridgeshire County Council Local Highway Authority** – following the submission of additional information, no objection to the proposals subject to the securing of footpath improvements and cycle stands at the bus stops on the eastbound side of St. Neots Road. Details of the scheme for the footway improvements on Main Street and a commuted sum for the provision of the cycle stands and Real Time Passenger Information displays at the bus stop can be secured through the Section 106 Agreement. The trip generation levels are considered to be acceptable and conclude that that the development would not result in a volume of traffic that would have a severe impact on the capacity of the highway network. In relation to the wider network, the capacity of St. Neots Road roundabout, the westbound slip roads of the A428 and the Madingley Much roundabout have all been considered and the Highway Authority are satisfied that these junctions have the capacity to deal with the additional traffic flows resulting from the development. The provision of subsidised bus travel for a 6 month period is welcomed, more detail is considered necessary in relation to the community transport scheme.
19. **Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (Archaeology)** – There is evidence from the Historic Environment Records that the application site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. The site is located to the south of the 14th Century St. Mary's Church and is on the southern edge of land which formed a medieval settlement. Earthworks to the north of the site and a moat site to the east, as well as traces of Ridge and Furrow have all being recorded within close proximity of the site. There is further evidence of Roman and Iron Age settlement in the locality, which is also registered on the Historic Environment Record.

The County Council Archaeologist has raised no objection to the proposal on the basis that a standard condition requiring a scheme of investigation to be agreed and any necessary measures carried out prior to the commencement of development, to ensure that any risk to archaeology is mitigated, is attached to the decision notice. This can be secured at this outline stage.

20. **Cambridgeshire County Council Flood & Water Team** – no objection to the revised proposals. The applicant has demonstrated that surface water can be dealt with on site by using permeable paving and an attenuation basin as SuDS features which will restrict surface water discharge to 5 litres per second i.e. no higher than the existing greenfield run off rate. The details of the surface water drainage strategy shall be secured by condition.
21. **NHS England** - state that Comberton surgery and the satellite surgery at Little Eversden do not currently have capacity to accommodate the projected additional demand. On the basis of their calculation, NHS England have requested a sum of £32,220 to provide an additional 16.11 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional approximately 235 anticipated population increase (nb. Different projection to the County Council figure in this regard).
22. **Environment Agency** – no objections to the proposals on the basis that a condition

is attached to the planning permission requiring final details of the surface water drainage strategy to be agreed and that a condition requiring investigation into and the remediation of any sources of contamination on the site be added to any permission granted.

23. **Anglian Water** - No objections received, and advised –
Wastewater treatment – The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Bourn Water Recycling Centre, which currently has capacity to treat the flows from the proposed development
Foul Sewage Network – The sewage system at present has available capacity for these flows. If the developer wishes to connect to our sewage network they should serve notice under section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991. We will advise them of the most suitable point of connection.
Surface Water Disposal – The preferred means of draining surface water from the site would be via Sustainable Drainage System, with connection to the mains sewer being a last resort. The Lead Local Flood Risk Authority (LLFRA) should be consulted on this aspect of the proposals.
24. **Affordable Housing Officer** – The site is located outside of the development framework of Hardwick and should therefore be considered as an exception site for the provision of 100% affordable housing to meet the local housing need in line with Policy H/10 of the proposed Local Plan. However, should this application not be determined as an exception site, then the Council will seek to secure at least 40% affordable housing. The developer is proposing 98 market dwellings, 39 of these would have to be affordable.

There are currently 44 people on the Housing Register who live in or have a local connection to Hardwick.

The mix and tenure split for the 39 affordable dwellings should be as follows:

12 x 1 bed flats
14 x 2 bed houses
8 x 2 bed flats
4 x 3 beds
1 x 4 bed

27 of the above properties should be for affordable rent, 12 for intermediate shared ownership.

8 properties should be allocated to those with a local connection to Hardwick and the remaining 31 should be allocated on a 50/50 split basis between applicants with a local connection to Hardwick and those with a District wide connection.

Properties should be built to DCLG technical housing standards.

25. **Section 106 Officer** – details of the summary of section 106 requirements are appended to this report. Specific policy compliant contributions are discussed in detail in the main body of the report.
26. **Cambridgeshire County Council Growth Team** – This proposal would result in an anticipated 26 children in the early years age bracket, 14 of which would qualify for free provision. The pre-school is currently accommodated via a mobile classroom which does not have capacity to accommodate the additional children. The proposed solution is a two classroom development on the school site. The first of these would

replace the existing temporary classroom and is therefore not eligible for a contribution from this development, in accordance with the CIL regulations. The cost of the provision of the second classroom has been calculated as £480,000. This classroom would accommodate 26 pre-school children and as such would equate to a cost of £18,461.54 per pupil. The proportionate contribution being sought from this development is therefore £258,461.56 (14 x £18,461.54). An alternative to this would be the provision of the additional capacity required in the pre-school provision through the conversion of the existing community space within the school building, to be compensated for by the new community building.

27. **District Council Conservation Officer** – no objections to the proposals. The case officer has considered the impact of the proposals on the setting of the adjacent Hardwick Conservation Area and this is assessed in the main body of the report.
28. **District Council Ecology Officer** – No objections to the proposals. This risk to Great Crested Newts is considered to be low but there are designated sites within close proximity of the application site. There is a badger sett within 50 metres of the western boundary of the site. The 20 metre landscape buffer to be provided on the western edge of the development is considered sufficient to offset any significant impact. An updated badger survey and a detailed mitigation strategy should be submitted at the reserved matters stage. A condition should also be added restricting the removal of trees and hedge planting to outside of the bird breeding season. The biodiversity enhancement scheme included in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted with the planning application is welcomed and the specific details of this scheme should be secured by condition at this outline stage.
29. **District Council Tree Officer** – no objections raised. The illustrative masterplan retains the considerable tree belt located on the western boundary of the site and indicates new areas of planting within the developed area of the scheme. The application is supported by a clear and concise arboricultural report which includes satisfactory protection measures for the trees to be retained. Further details of the proposed landscaping scheme should be secured at the reserved matters stage.
30. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** – No objection to the proposals subject to adequate provision being made within the development for fire hydrants which could be secured by a condition or through a Section 106 agreement.
31. **National Grid** – the substation at the entrance to the site would need to be relocated to accommodate the development. Nb this is not a reason to object to the planning application but the applicant is aware of the need to apply for planning permission to relocate this infrastructure.

Representations

32. 13 letters (including representations received via the website) have been submitted in objection to the planning application. The responses raise the following issues (summarised):
 - The proposed development would make the existing congestion on Grace Crescent and The Pastures worse.
 - Whilst new development is needed in the village, this site, located at the southern edge of the village, is considered not to be a sustainable location, as the facilities and better public transport links are situated in the northern part of the village.
 - The bus service on St. Neots Road is in excess of 400 metres/ 5 minutes walking distance from the site and is therefore beyond the established guidance in terms

- of being a sustainable alternative means of transport to the private car.
- The primary school, recreation ground and other shops and facilities are a 25 minute walk from the site, suggesting further reliance on motor vehicles to access these facilities from the development.
- The existing footway along Cambridge Road/Main Street is only 0.5 metres wide in some places, limiting its usability as a pedestrian link from the site to the centre of the village. The developer's offer to upgrade the footway does not include the narrowest part at the junction between Main Street and Cambridge Road.
- The site comprises agricultural land and therefore should not be developed.
- The access to the site appears to be restrictive in width and would be unsuitable for the level of traffic that will be generated by the scheme.
- The development should include bungalows to accommodate elderly residents.
- The village does not have a wide range of services and facilities and is therefore not suitable for expansion on the scale proposed.
- The village suffers from high levels of congestion due to traffic going to Comberton Village College. The additional traffic generated by this proposal would make that situation worse.
- The noise and disturbance generated by traffic during the construction process would have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.
- The proposed development would increase the population of the village by 9.4%. This may be increased by another large scale development. This level of development and the resulting population increase in Hardwick is considered to be unsustainable.
- The policies in the Local Development Framework, which aim to 'strike the right balance between growth and conservation' should not be ignored.
- The emerging Local Plan proposes to retain the status of Hardwick as a Group Village, where the maximum number of dwellings is capped at 15. This proposal far exceeds that and cannot therefore be considered to represent sustainable development.
- Land at Toft Road (south of this site) and St. Neots Road were considered to be of 'no development potential' during the SHLAA process. These were both rejected for landscape and townscape impact and these are considerations which still apply.
- There is no capacity in the primary school or Comberton surgery and due to other large scale proposed developments within the catchment, Comberton Village College is under pressure in terms of spaces available.
- The need for affordable housing in Hardwick is considered to be exaggerated by the applicant. The Cambridgeshire ACRE Housing Needs Survey was responded to by 217 households – 21% of the total households in the village. Only 24 the respondents expressed a need for affordable housing. Despite this, that report concluded (also referencing secondary data) that there was a 'significant need' for affordable housing in Hardwick Parish. The need for affordable housing should be met as part of the redevelopment of Bourn Airfield and the new settlements of Cambourne and Northstowe.
- Concerns regarding the capacity of the drainage network and the fact that the mains drain runs across private property, presenting maintenance challenges.
- The foul sewage treatment facility at Bourn is at capacity and will need to be expanded to cope with the additional demand arising from this and other new residential developments.

Site and Surroundings

- 32/1 The application site is an undeveloped field which is located at the southern edge of the village of Hardwick. The site is accessed on its eastern boundary via Grace

Crescent, which connects to Main Street via The Pastures. The residential properties on Grace Crescent run parallel with the eastern boundary of the site. A relatively dense tree belt runs along the western boundary of the site, with less dense planting along the southern boundary of the site. The boundary of Hardwick Conservation Area is located to the north east of the site.

Proposal

33. The proposal seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to 98 dwellings, associated works, including access, car and cycle parking, open space and landscaping, with all matters reserved with the exception of the means of access.

Planning Assessment

34. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application in terms of the principle of development are the implications of the five year supply of housing land deficit on the proposals and whether Hardwick generally and this site specifically allow the proposal to meet the definition of sustainable development. An assessment is required in relation to the impact of the proposals on the character of the village edge, the setting of the adjacent Conservation Area and surrounding landscape, highway safety, the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, environmental health, surface water and foul water drainage capacity, the provision of formal and informal open space and other section 106 contributions.

Principle of Development

Five year housing land supply and sustainability of the proposed development:

35. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires councils to boost significantly the supply of housing and to identify and maintain a five-year housing land supply with an additional buffer as set out in paragraph 47.
36. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply in the district as required by the NPPF, having a 3.7 year supply using the methodology identified by the Inspector in the Waterbeach appeals in 2014. This shortfall is based on an objectively assessed housing need of 19,500 homes for the period 2011 to 2031 (as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 and updated by the latest update undertaken for the Council in November 2015 as part of the evidence responding to the Local Plan Inspectors' preliminary conclusions) and latest assessment of housing delivery (in the housing trajectory November 2016). In these circumstances any adopted or emerging policy which can be considered to restrict the supply of housing land is considered 'out of date' in respect of paragraph 49 of the NPPF.
37. Unless circumstances change, those conclusions should inform, in particular, the Council's approach to paragraph 49 of the NPPF, which states that adopted policies "for the supply of housing" cannot be considered up to date where there is not a five year housing land supply. The affected policies that were listed in the Waterbeach appeal decision letters are: Core Strategy DPD policies ST/2 and ST/5 and Development Control Policies DPD policy DP/7 (relating to village frameworks and indicative limits on the scale of development in villages). The Inspector did not have to consider policies ST/6 and ST/7 but as a logical consequence of the decision these should also be considered policies "for the supply of housing".
38. Further guidance as to which policies should be considered as 'relevant policies for the

supply of housing' emerged from a recent Court of Appeal decision (*Richborough v Cheshire East and Suffolk Coastal DC v Hopkins Homes*). The Court defined 'relevant policies for the supply of housing' widely so not to be restricted 'merely policies in the Development Plan that provide positively for the delivery of new housing in terms of numbers and distribution or the allocation of sites,' but also to include, 'plan policies whose effect is to influence the supply of housing by restricting the locations where new housing may be developed.' Therefore all policies which have the potential to restrict or affect housing supply may be considered out of date in respect of the NPPF. However even where policies are considered 'out of date' for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 49, a decision maker is required to consider what (if any) weight should attach to such relevant policies, having regard to, amongst other matters, the purpose of the particular policy.

39. Where a Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It says that where relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted for development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, or where specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
40. This means that where planning permission is sought which would be contrary to the policies listed above, such applications must be determined against paragraph 14 of the NPPF, unless other national policies indicate an exception to this, Green Belt land is one such exception. Sustainable development is defined in paragraph 7 of the NPPF as having environmental, economic and social strands. When assessed against these objectives, unless the harm arising from the proposal 'significantly and demonstrably' outweighs the benefits of the proposals, planning permission should be granted (in accordance with paragraph 14).
41. As part of the case of the applicant rests on the current five year housing land supply deficit, the developer is required to demonstrate that the dwellings would be delivered within a 5 year period. Officers are of the view that the applicant has demonstrated that the site can be delivered within a timescale whereby weight can be given to the contribution the proposal could make to the 5 year housing land supply.
42. The site is located outside the Hardwick village framework, although adjacent to the southern boundary of the village, and in the countryside, where policy DP/7 of the LDF and Policy S/7 of the Draft Local Plan state that only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted. The erection of a residential development of up to 98 dwellings would therefore not under normal circumstances be considered acceptable in principle since it is contrary to this adopted and emerging policy. However, these policies are considered out of date due to the current lack of a 5 year housing land supply as set out above.
43. It falls to the Council as decision maker to assess the weight that should be given to the existing policy. Officers consider this assessment should, in the present application, have regard to whether the policy continues to perform a material planning objective and whether it is consistent with the policies of the NPPF.
44. Development in Group Villages (the current and emerging status of Hardwick) is normally limited under policy ST/6 to schemes of up to an indicative maximum of 8 dwellings, or in exceptional cases 15, where development would lead to the sustainable recycling of a brownfield site bringing positive overall benefit to the village. This

planning objective remains important and is consistent with the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development, by limiting the scale of development in less sustainable rural settlements with a limited range of services to meet the needs of new residents in a sustainable manner.

45. However, this objective has to be considered in light of the 'out of date' status, resulting from the lack of a five year supply of housing land in the District. By proposing 98 dwellings, the scheme would significantly exceed the indicative maximum of 8 on a greenfield site. The principal consideration is that the NPPF requires development to be assessed against the definition of sustainable development. Specifically in relation to the size of development in or on the edge of Group Villages, the Inspector in the recent Over appeal decision (18 January 2017) stated that '...the strict application of the existing settlement hierarchy and blanket restriction on development outside those areas would significantly restrain housing delivery.....this would frustrate the aim of boosting the supply of housing.'
46. In light of the above, it is not appropriate, in the case of all Group Villages, to attach the same weight to policy DP/7 and DP/1(a) in the 'blanket' way. It is necessary to consider the circumstances of each Group Village to establish whether that village can accommodate sustainably (as defined in the NPPF) the development proposed, having regard in particular to the level of services and facilities available to meet the needs of that development.
47. The environmental issues, including impact on the open countryside, are assessed in the following sections of the report. In relation to the loss of higher grade agricultural land, policy NE/17 states that the District Council will not grant planning permission for development which would lead to the irreversible loss of grades 1, 2 or 3a. This site is classified as grade 2 agricultural land.
48. The site is not allocated for development in the existing or the emerging Local Plan. However, given the sustainable location of the site for residential development and the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, it could be argued that the need for housing overrides the need to retain the agricultural land when conducting the planning balance. Given the extent of the housing supply deficit, it is considered that compliance with criteria b of NE/17 should be afforded more weight than the conflict with criterion a.
49. The proposals are assessed below against the social and economic criteria of the definition of sustainable development.

Social Sustainability:

50. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas advising 'housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities', and recognises that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
51. The development would provide a clear benefit in helping to meet the current housing shortfall in South Cambridgeshire through delivering up to an additional 98 residential dwellings, 40% of which would be affordable (39 units). Ensuring that the housing mix in the market element of the scheme would accord with emerging policy H/8 (discussed in detail later in this report) is a matter to be dealt with at the reserved matters stage.
52. The affordable housing can be secured through a Section 106 Agreement. Officers are of the view the provision of up to 98 additional houses, including the affordable

dwelling, is a social benefit and significant weight should be attributed this in the decision making process, particularly in light of the Housing Officer's confirmation that there is a demonstrable need for affordable housing in Hardwick.

53. The adopted Open Space SPD requires the provision of just over 2800 metres squared of public open space for a development on the scale proposed, depending on the final mix, which is to be determined at the reserved matters stage (this figure represents an approximate amount based on a policy compliant mix). The scheme exceeds this amount by a significant margin (in excess of 8000 square metres is shown on the indicative masterplan, although this may need to be reduced to allow separation distances between plots within the development to be increased) and would include sufficient space for the inclusion of an equipped play area with land surrounding it, as required by the SPD. Given that Hardwick has an identified short fall in play space and informal open space, the fact that this amount of space can be provided at the density of development indicated is considered to be a significant social benefit of the proposals. The provision of a minimum of 250 square metres of allotment space within the development would further enhance the social sustainability of the scheme. Details of the management of this area can be secured in the Section 106 Agreement at this outline stage. The offer of a contribution towards the provision of additional equipped play areas off site would be a further social benefit of the scheme, helping to address the lack of such a facility for the existing residents of Grace Crescent.
54. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the social dimension of sustainable development includes the creation of a high quality built environment with accessible local services. The indicative layout plan demonstrates that the site can be developed for the number of dwellings proposed, although there are aspects which require further consideration at the reserved matters stage.

Impact on services and facilities:

55. As already stated, policy ST/6 of the Core Strategy, which limits the size of residential schemes on greenfield sites within Group Villages to 8 is considered to be out of date, due to the inability of the Council to demonstrate a five year housing land supply. Nevertheless, the proposal would significantly exceed this number and would not be within the existing framework boundary. Therefore an assessment needs to be made in relation to the impact of the development on facilities in Hardwick and whether this impact is considered to meet the definition of sustainable development.
56. Paragraph 204 of the NPPF relates to the tests that local planning authorities should apply to assess whether planning obligations should be sought to mitigate the impacts of development. In the line with the CIL regulations 2010, the contributions must be:
- necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms
 - directly related to the development
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed.
57. There are bus stops to the east of the site on Main Street, within a reasonable walking distance of the site. The bus service on that route (no. 2) is limited, with only one bus to and one bus back from Cambridge at commuting times during the week. The Citi 4 bus service runs along St. Neots, which is located 1 mile to the north of the site. That service provides a bus every 20 minutes to and from Cambridge during working hours and an hourly service in the evenings Monday to Saturday, with an hourly service on Sundays. It is acknowledged that the 1 mile distance may reduce the likelihood of some people using this service as opposed to relying on the private car. Footway improvements along Main Street and cycle stands at the bus stops on St. Neots Road

are mitigation measures offered by the applicant that would incentivise residents of the proposed development to access the more regular bus service.

58. In Hardwick, the no. 2 runs along Cambridge Road, adjacent to the site and the route connects to St. Neots Road, with 1 service in the morning and 1 in the evening at commuting times. There is the potential therefore for these services to be used to connect to the Citi 4 service for those who choose not to walk or cycle to meet those services. Overall, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in that there is potential to commute to Cambridge from the site via public transport.
59. The applicant in this case is proposing the provision of a community vehicle as part of the package of measures to mitigate the impact of the development. Hardwick Parish Council has agreed to take ownership of the vehicle and the Section 106 funding would also include a contribution towards annual maintenance of such a vehicle for a five year period. This facility would provide an alternative to single occupancy car journeys for residents of the development as well as the wider village, enhancing the environmental sustainability of the scheme. The contribution of this community vehicle is considered to add to the opportunities for sustainable travel options for residents to access services and facilities as well as employment in larger settlements.
60. In addition to this facility, the applicant is also proposing to install covered cycle stands adjacent to the east bound bus stop on St. Neots Road. This would provide a greater incentive to cycle from existing houses on the southern edge of the village, as well as the proposed development, to the location of the more frequent bus service into Cambridge. This represents a further environmental sustainability benefit of the scheme.
61. Cambridgeshire County Council is the Education Authority. This proposal would result in an anticipated 26 children in the early years age bracket, 14 of which would qualify for free provision. The pre-school is currently accommodated via a mobile classroom which does not have capacity to accommodate the additional children. One proposed solution is a two classroom development on the school site.
62. The first of these would replace the existing temporary classroom and is therefore not eligible for a contribution from this development, in accordance with the CIL regulations. The cost of the provision of the second classroom has been calculated as £480,000. This classroom would accommodate 26 pre-school children and as such would equate to a cost of £18,461.54 per pupil. The proportionate contribution being sought from this development is therefore £258,461.56 (14 x £18,461.54).
63. The alternative to this, which the County Council acknowledge would be appropriate mitigation, would be the conversion of the rooms which are currently available for community use, within the school building, to provide the pre-school facility, alongside the retention of the existing temporary classroom on site. This space would be compensated for through the provision of the new community building, to be provided offsite. In order to achieve the conversion of the existing community space within the school to classrooms, the applicant is offering a commuted sum of £60,000, which the Education Authority consider sufficient.
64. The County Council consider that there is sufficient capacity at the primary school to accommodate the 22 children within this age bracket anticipated to result from the population of the proposed development. Likewise, it is considered that there is capacity at Comberton Village College to accommodate the 12 children of secondary school age anticipated to result from the population of the proposed development. This is a bus service from Hardwick to Comberton Village College.

65. Hardwick is served by a mobile library service which has 4 regular stops and there is a public library at Comberton Village College. In light of each of these situations, the County Council consider that there is no requirement to mitigate the impact of the development in relation to the capacity of primary or secondary education or library provision. A monitoring fee of £650 is sought in relation to the contribution sought towards the provision of additional pre-school capacity.
66. In terms of health impact, the applicant has submitted an Impact Assessment in this regard. This Assessment confirms that the nearest doctor's surgery is located in Comberton and that discussions with the NHS have indicated that there is no funding identified for a satellite surgery in Hardwick. This has been corroborated by discussions that officers have had with the Practice Manager of the Comberton surgery, which already operates a satellite practice at Little Eversden.
67. NHS England have commented on the planning application and their response indicates that there is currently insufficient space available for doctors within the Comberton Practice and the satellite surgery in Little Eversden to accommodate the demands of the additional population that would result from this development. As a result, NHS England are requesting a sum of £32,220 to provide an additional 16.11 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional 235 anticipated population increase (nb. Different projection to the County Council figures above).
68. Whilst there is limited physical capacity to extend the surgery at Comberton, there would be scope to physically extend the satellite practice at Little Eversden. Given the modest nature of the amount of additional floorspace required however, it is considered that this could be achieved through a relatively minor alteration to the internal layout as opposed to requiring an increase in the footprint of the building.
69. NHS England have indicated in their response that they consider the requested sum to meet the tests for seeking contributions as set out in the NPPF, quoted above.
70. The fact that the developer has agreed to the principle of paying the contribution to fund the additional infrastructure required to offset the impact of the development in this regard ensures that the impact of the scheme on the capacity of these facilities could be adequately mitigated, weighing in favour of the social sustainability of the scheme.
71. In addition to the primary school and mobile library service, Hardwick has a post office and village store, a public house, a social club and sports pavilion, recreation ground a better range of shops and services than is evident in a number of Group Villages in the District.
72. Facilities at the recreation ground include an equipped area of play space, a pavilion, a skate park, 2 football pitches for senior level games (this space also accommodates a cricket pitch in season) and a Multi-use games area (which can also be used for netball and tennis). The pavilion provides some element of community meeting space, there is a community meeting room at the school and there is a Scout Hut. There is no village hall or large dedicated community meeting space within the village.
73. The 2009 Community Facilities Assessment identified Hardwick as one of the larger settlements in the District which has a significant deficit in the amount of indoor public meeting space. On the basis that 111 square metres of such space should be provided per 1000 people, Hardwick was deficient by approximately 300 square metres in 2009. The population of the village was largely static between 2009 and 2013. There has been a community facility approved adjacent to St. Mary's Church since that time,

although the net gain from that development is relatively small (120 square metres) as it would include replacement of temporary buildings on that site.

74. The 2012 Village Classification Report assessed the level of services and facilities in each village in the District and considered whether some of the larger Group Villages warranted re-classification as Minor Rural Centres. In this assessment, Hardwick scored the highest grade in terms of public transport links, but scored zero in relation to community services and facilities and sources of employment. The report also highlighted the fact that the village does not have a secondary school.
75. A key element of the proposed package of mitigation measures relating to this application is the provision of a 250 square metre community building, or a financial contribution for the provision of such a facility within the village. The developer has costed the provision of a building of this size at £608,000 and this is the financial amount to be offered to the Parish Council should the commuted sum route be pursued. The Parish Council controls land at the recreation ground, where there would be space for such a facility to be located.
76. Provision of a self contained community facility of this size would be a significant benefit of the scheme. Whilst the development would only compensate for the loss of the current space within the school building (to accommodate the early years provision) in floor area terms, it would provide a much more coherent, independent and accessible facility for the village. Seeking the full contribution is therefore considered to be CIL compliant in that the proposed building would be required to mitigate the impact of the additional population of the development, and in particular the loss of existing community facilities at the school to meet the needs arising from the development. The facility would be related in scale to the impact of the development when considering the conversion of the community space within the school.
77. Whilst on floor area the replacement building may be considered simply offsetting the impact of the loss of the community rooms in the school, it is considered that the actual benefit is greater. The existing provision is provided in a disjointed fashion across a school site, restricting the usability of the space both physically and time wise. Due to these constraints, the space was not audited as part of the 2009 Assessment, as it did not meet the required standards. The proposed building would not have these constraints and would have the ability to score well against the criteria in the 2009 Assessment. When combined with the approved additional space adjacent to St. Mary's Church, this would address the identified deficit in good quality community space in the village.
78. This situation would ensure that Hardwick could score higher in relation to access to services and facilities for residents and would therefore score at a similar level (albeit in different categories) to Swavesey, Bassingbourn or Comberton in the Classification report, all of which are settlements proposed to be elevated to Minor Rural Centres in the emerging Local Plan.

Economic sustainability:

79. It is accepted that there are limited opportunities for employment within Hardwick and this does weigh against the sustainability of the location. However, the opportunities to access the employment opportunities in Cambridge by public transport (as described above) reduce to an extent the weight which should be attached to the limited employment opportunities in the village, as an element of harm arising from this proposal.

80. The provision of up to 98 new dwellings will give rise to employment during the construction phase of the development, and has the potential to result in an increase in the use of local services and facilities, both of which will be of benefit to the local economy.
81. Overall, it is considered, on balance, that the proposed development would achieve the social and economic elements of the definition of sustainable development, subject to the mitigation measures quoted above, which the applicant has agreed to in principle and can be secured via a Section 106 agreement. This assessment is made on the basis that Hardwick has a range of existing facilities to meet the needs of the settlement and the proposed development. These will be supplemented through the mitigation measures proposed, which would go a significant way to address the lack of good quality community meeting space within the village and the fact that Hardwick has one of the most regular public transport connections to Cambridge within the District.

Density of development and housing mix

82. The scheme would be of a lower density than required by policy HG/1 of the LDF and emerging Local Plan policy H/7 (30 dwellings per hectare) when taking the site as whole (approx. 4.4 hectares in area). The density equates to approximately 23 dwellings per hectare. However, both policies include the caveat that a lower density may be acceptable if this can be justified in relation to the character of the surrounding locality. Given that the application site is located on the edge of the settlement, it is considered that this proposal meets the exception tests of the current and emerging policy with regard to the density of development.
83. The density of the developed area in the indicative layout would be higher than this figure, approximately 36 dwellings per hectare, due to the retention of a significant amount of undeveloped space along the southern and western boundaries of the site. Whilst this layout is not fixed, the illustrative masterplan is considered to demonstrate that 98 units could be accommodated on the site without resulting in a density of development that would be out of character with the edge of village location. Matters of design and landscape impact are discussed in detail in the following section of the report.
84. Under the provisions of policy HG/2, the market housing element of proposed schemes is required to include a minimum of 40% 1 or 2 bed properties. The detail of the housing mix proposed within the market element of the scheme (59 units) has not been specified.
85. Policy H/8 of the emerging Local Plan is less prescriptive and states that the mix of properties within developments of 10 or more dwellings should achieve at least 30% for each of the 3 categories (1 and 2 bed, 3 bed and 4 or more bed properties), with the 10% margin to be applied flexibly across the scheme. This policy is being given considerable weight in the determination of planning applications due to the nature of the unresolved objections, in accordance with the guidance within paragraph 216 of the NPPF.
86. As the application is outline only, a condition requiring this mix is recommended to ensure that the scheme is policy compliant and would deliver a high proportion of house of 3 bedrooms or smaller, in a District where there is a need to increase the stock of smaller housing.
87. The applicant has agreed to accept a condition that the development will bring forward a minimum of 5% of the properties as bungalows at the reserved matter stage. This will

help to secure a number of smaller properties and accommodation suitable for a range of ages and needs within the final scheme, enhancing the social sustainability of the development.

Character of the village edge and surrounding landscape

Landscape Impact

88. The applicant has submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in support of the application. The report considers that the overall impact of the scheme would be 'low to negligible.' However, the LVIA also concludes that the development would lead to a 'High/Medium' adverse magnitude of change and that the significance of that change would be 'Moderate or High.' The LVIA concludes that there would be a 'High Adverse' impact in terms of the magnitude and significance of change to the viewpoint at the entrance to the site, which the Landscape Design Officer considers could be reduced by employing a less 'sub-urban' layout.
89. However, as is indicated by the conclusion in the LVIA, the immediate context of this viewpoint is the existing residential development on Grace Crescent and The Pastures, as opposed to open countryside. When looking at the entrance to the site from this viewpoint, the existing properties on Grace Crescent that are arranged in a cul-de-sac extending southwards from that point are also visible. The existing development extends into the field within which the proposed development would be located and therefore the entrance to this proposal would be viewed alongside these dwellings.
90. It is acknowledged that there would be a significant change in the views from the Public Right of Way which runs parallel with the southern boundary of the site. However, the existing development on Grace Crescent extends into the south eastern corner of the field, with a row of properties close to the southern boundary of the field. Given the prominence of this existing development, it is considered that the extensive 'buffer' adjacent to the southern boundary would reduce the visual impact of the proposal from these close public views to a degree that would reduce the harm below a level that could be considered so significant as to weigh against the benefits of the scheme. Views from this Right of Way further west of the site would be screened by the extensive landscaping on the western boundary of the site, the retention of which can be secured by condition.
91. The land to the south of the application site was considered in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) exercise associated with the emerging Local Plan. In assessing the potential development of that site, the report referred to the Village Capacity Study assessment of the southern edge of Hardwick being characterised by a network of large open fields, which extend to the west and south of the linear pattern of built development along Main Street. In relation to the development of that site, the assessment concluded that development would have a significant adverse impact on the townscape and landscape of the area, as it would take a form contrary to the linear character of this part of the village and encroachment of the built area into the open countryside.
92. In assessing the impact of this proposal on these landscape characteristics, it is considered that there are a number of factors which would reduce the extent of the harm to the character of the village edge. The application site is contained by residential development to the east and relatively dense landscape screening to the north and west. The presence of these features is considered to reduce the extent to which this site shares the characteristics of the 'open' landscape to the south and west, where the field boundaries are demarcated by less dense hedgerows. This allows the

application site to appear less exposed in landscape terms than the site immediately to the south, which was considered as part of the SHLAA exercise.

93. In addition to the above, the applicant has produced parameter plans which indicate that a separation distance of approximately 15 metres would be retained between buildings and the western boundary of the site. The developable area boundary at the southern edge would be 25 metres from the southern boundary of the overall field at its shortest point, rising to in excess of 50 metres in the south western corner.
94. The southern and western boundaries are considered to be the most sensitive as they are immediately adjacent to the open countryside beyond, whereas there is existing built development to the east and north east. The extent to which development would be set off the most sensitive boundaries is considered to reduce the level of harm that would result to the character of the surrounding landscape from developing this site.
95. There may be a need to reduce the extent of the 'buffer' on the western edge of the development, to increase the separation distances between plots within the scheme. However, if this were reduced by 5 metres, there would still be a 10 metre offset between the edge of the development and the applicant owns the land on which the extensive tree coverage on the western boundary is located. On that basis, it is considered that the site could be developed for up to 98 dwellings and space to ensure that a significantly adverse impact on the character of the landscape could be mitigated.
96. The Design Officer expressed concern in relation to the original proposal which set a height limit of 2.5 storeys and 13 metres across the development, as indicated on the parameter plan submitted with the application. It was considered that this height would have resulted in a development of a mass and scale that would have been out of context in relation to the surrounding area. The majority of the existing properties on Grace Crescent are limited to two storeys in height. In addition, establishing a ridge height of 13 metres for buildings across the full extent of the development would have increased the bulk of the buildings in public views immediately to the south of the site, which would have led to an adverse impact on the setting of the conservation area, located to the north east of the site. To address these concerns, the applicant has agreed to the imposition of a condition at this outline stage limiting the height of development across the site to 2 storeys and a maximum ridge height of 9.5 metres.
97. The Design Officer has indicated that the parking arrangement shown on the indicative masterplan, whereby a number of properties would have parking spaces in front of them, is not satisfactory from a design perspective. This situation would lead to the dominant presence of car parking on the streetscene, which would have an adverse impact on the character of the village edge, presenting a more urban form of development. As the Design Officer acknowledges, this is a matter to be addressed in detail as part of the layout at the reserved matters stage. Garages could be included within the footprint of the dwellings in the more densely developed parts of the scheme and separate garages provided at the side of dwellings on the larger plots.
98. At the density proposed, it is considered that there would not be an over-reliance on flatted development and the communal parking areas associated with such development could therefore be positioned so as not to have an overbearing impact on the character of the development from public views. The indicative masterplan suggests flatted development in the north eastern corner. It is considered that there would be sufficient space in that area to provide the amount of amenity space required by the adopted Design Guide to allow for the 26 flats, in a 2 storey development, that would reach the 98 plots in the indicative arrangement. There would be scope to re-arrange the parking layout for these flats to ensure that they are well overlooked but not

dominant on the streetscene. Again, this is a matter to be resolved at the reserved matters stage.

99. In assessing the comments of the Landscape Officer and the conclusions of the SHLAA report on land immediately south of this site, it is acknowledged that there would be some harm resulting from this scheme to the local landscape character, in which the linear form of development on the edge of the village allows a gradual transition from the main part of the village to the expansive character of the open countryside. However, the extent of the harm from this proposal has been reduced by the fact that the quantum could be achieved whilst retaining significant 'buffers' between the southern and western edges of the buildings and the respective boundaries of the site.
100. Within the context of a lack of five year housing land supply, the Inspector for the New Road, Melbourn appeal (199 dwellings and a care home) provided guidance in a case where landscape harm is identified and balancing this against the need to address the lack of housing land supply. In that case the Inspector concluded in relation to landscape harm that 'while the development of this site would cause very limited harm to the wider landscape, there would be a greater localised harm to the character of the village and its countryside setting, in conflict with development control policies. This carries fairly significant weight (in the planning balance).' In weighing this harm against the benefit of housing provision in that location, the Inspector concluded that '...while there would be some notable adverse impacts, they would not be sufficient to outweigh the very significant benefits of the proposal (i.e. the provision of additional housing in the District).'
101. Officers acknowledge that each site must be assessed on its own merits and that the number of houses proposed at Melbourn was greater than the 98 proposed in this scheme. However, the Inspector acknowledged that there would be 'screening' of open views from the edge of the village and a loss of views over open fields in that case. This harm applies in a similar way to this scheme and has been commented upon by local residents and reflects the concern in terms of the scale of the development.
102. In light of the above assessment, it is considered that, on balance, the harm to the landscape arising from this proposal would not itself outweigh the benefits of providing additional housing (including 40% affordable) and additional community benefits on the edge of a village which has a relatively high level of connectivity to Cambridge.

Trees

103. The District Council Tree Officer has raised no objections to the proposals. The existing trees of amenity value which could potentially be affected by the development are located along the western boundary of the site. Given the extent of the landscape 'buffer' to be provided on the western edge of the development, it is considered that all of these trees could be retained (even if that areas had to be reduced to increase the separation distance between buildings – as assessed earlier in this report). Given the size of the public open space to be created within the development, it is considered that there would be opportunities for providing additional landscape planting, which would represent a biodiversity enhancement, in accordance with the guidance within the NPPF. Details of all new landscaping and the means of protecting existing trees and hedges to be retained can be secured by condition at this outline stage.

Ecology

104. The Ecology Officer has considered the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal submitted with the planning application. This risk to Great Crested Newts is considered to be low but

there are designated sites within close proximity of the application site. There is a badger sett within 50 metres of the western boundary of the site. The landscape buffer to be provided on the western edge of the development is considered sufficient to offset any significant impact. An updated badger survey and a detailed mitigation strategy should be submitted at the reserved matters stage.

105. A condition should also be added restricting the removal of trees and hedge planting to outside of the bird breeding season.
106. Biodiversity enhancements should be secured as part of the development, in accordance with the guidance in the NPPF. This matter can be dealt with by condition at the outline stage.

Highway safety and parking

107. Following the submission of additional information, the Local Highway Authority have no objection to the proposals subject to the securing of footpath improvements and cycle stands at the bus stop on the eastbound side of St. Neots Road. Details of the scheme for the footway improvements on Main Street and a committed sum for the provision of the cycle stands and Real Time Passenger Information displays at the bus stops can be secured through the Section 106 Agreement. The trip generation levels are considered to be acceptable and conclude that that the development would not result in a volume of traffic that would have a severe impact on the capacity of the highway network. In relation to the wider network, the capacity of St. Neots Road roundabout, the westbound slip roads of the A428 and the Madingley Mulch roundabout have all been considered and the Highway Authority are satisfied that these junctions have the capacity to deal with the additional traffic flows resulting from the development. The provision of subsidised bus travel for a 6 month period is welcomed, more detail is considered necessary in relation to the community transport scheme. Whilst the Highway Authority has questioned the feasibility of operating a community bus, they support the proposal in principle as a means of improving such facilities. Given that the Parish Council expressed the wish to see such a facility and have expressed a willingness to manage this facility, it is considered that this matter could be addressed through the Section 106 Agreement.
108. Given the low density of the scheme, it is considered that there would be sufficient space to locate 2 car parking spaces on each plot, meeting the requirements of the LDF standards of 1.5 spaces per dwelling across developments with additional room for visitor parking.

Residential amenity

109. The application is in outline only and therefore the layout plan submitted is for illustrative purposes only. However, officers need to be satisfied at this stage that the site is capable of accommodating the amount of development proposed, without having a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties. Due to the size of the gardens to the rear of the properties which front on to Grace Crescent, sufficient separation distances could be retained between the rear of those properties and the properties on the eastern edge of the development (position to be fixed at the reserved matters stage) to ensure that the proposal would not result in an adverse impact through overlooking or overshadowing. Given the separation distances to be retained, it is considered that development of the quantum proposed could be achieved without having an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the properties to the north east of the site.

110. It is considered that some of the plots within the development would need to be re-arranged to extend the separation distances. As stated previously, this could be accommodated by slightly reducing the extent of the landscape buffers indicated on the parameter plan, without resulting in a development that would have a more harmful impact on the character of the surrounding landscape.
111. At 36 dwellings per hectare, the average plot size of would be approximately 270 square metres in size. This is considered sufficient to achieve a dwelling size significantly greater than the minimum residential space standards proposed in policy H/11 of the emerging Local Plan (85 square metres for a 3 bed house with 5 occupants) and allow sufficient space for 80 square metres of garden space (the upper limit of the standards within the adopted Design Guide) along with the required space for driveways etc to the front of the plots.
112. Standard conditions relating to the construction phase of the development have been recommended by the EHO and these can be attached to the decision notice. It is considered that the proposed number of units can be accommodated on the site without having any adverse impact on the residential amenity of the occupants of each of the plots within the development.

Surface water and foul water drainage

Surface water drainage

113. The site is located within flood zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding). The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFRA) has not raised an objection to the revised proposal.
114. The applicant has demonstrated that surface water can be dealt with on site by using permeable paving and attenuation basins, restricting surface water to a discharge rate of 5 litres per second prior to the discharge of this water into the drainage ditch network to the south west of the site. The capacity of the surface water attenuation measures on site would ensure that the proposals meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework by not increasing the surface water run off rate beyond the existing greenfield level once the scheme has been developed.
115. The details of the surface water drainage strategy can be secured by condition at the outline stage and the means of management and maintenance can be included as clauses in the Section 106 Agreement. The Environment Agency has also raised no objection on the basis that this condition is attached to the decision notice.

Waste and Foul water drainage

116. In relation to Wastewater treatment, Anglian Water has confirmed that the foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Bourn Water Recycling Centre and that the facility does currently have capacity to treat the additional flows resulting from the development.
117. Anglian Water also confirms that the foul sewage network currently has available capacity to treat flows from the development and as such has no objections to the scheme in this regard. Anglian Water raise no objection in relation to the drainage of surface water from the site, subject to the details of these measures being secured by condition.

Section 106 contributions

118. In addition to the County Council in terms of pre-school capacity and the NHS already identified in this report, the Section 106 Officer has confirmed that the site has the capacity to achieve the 98 units proposed and also meet the required provision for formal and informal space on site. As none of the details are to be fixed at this stage, a legal agreement should make provision for an eventuality where equipped open space would need to be provided off site should the proposal at the reserved matters stage involved a scheme which would not meet the Open Space SPD requirement in full through on site provision.
119. As highlighted previously, a contribution of £608,000 (sum arrived at through valuation conducted by the developer) or the delivery of a community building on Parish Council controlled land (which will require a planning application but is considered feasible), is considered to be a significant benefit of the scheme. Provision of this facility is considered to be CIL compliant in that it would address the loss of the community rooms at the school (due to a capacity issue arising from this development) but this would be achieved in a self contained development. This would provide a better quality of community space, independent of the school site, in a village where such facilities are currently limited. As there have been less than 5 pooled contributions made towards this infrastructure previously, this contribution is considered to be compliant with the CIL regulations.
120. A contribution of £30,000 would be provided towards the development of a referee changing room facility (in the form of an extension to the existing pavilion) at the recreation ground. A contribution of £30,000 towards the provision of play equipment offsite in addition to the onsite provision is to be secured through the Section 106 Agreement. These schemes would enhance the quality of recreation space within the village, in compliance with policy SF/11 of the LDF and are considered to be CIL compliant given the additional demand on the recreation ground facilities as a result of the increased population of the village. As there have been less than 5 pooled contributions made towards these projects previously, these contributions are considered to be compliant with the CIL regulations.
121. The provision of cycle stands and a community transport vehicle, the footway improvements and real time passenger information installations referred to previously in this report as enhancing the environmental sustainability of the scheme, would also be secured via financial contributions in the Section 106 Agreement. Both of these contributions are considered to be CIL compliant as necessary to improve the connectivity of the development to the northern edge of Hardwick, which is the location of the more regular public transport service from the village to Cambridge. As an additional incentive, the applicant is proposing to provide vouchers entitling the occupants of the development to 6 months free bus travel, further incentivising the use of public transport and enhancing the sustainability of the scheme.

Other matters

Archaeology and Heritage:

122. 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 building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”
123. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF, in the section dealing with the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, states that “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater

the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification”.

124. Paragraph 133 of the NPPF states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm or to a total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.
125. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF says that “(where) a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”.
126. Recent planning case law has confirmed that having “special regard” to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building under section 66 involves more than merely giving weight to those matters in the planning balance. In particular, case law has confirmed that “preserving” in the context of Listed Buildings means doing no harm.
127. There is evidence from the Historic Environment Records that the application site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. The site is located to the south of the 14th Century St. Mary’s Church and is on the southern edge of land which formed a medieval settlement. Earthworks to the north of the site and a moat site to the east, as well as traces of Ridge and Furrow have all being recorded within close proximity of the site. There is further evidence of Roman and Iron Age settlement in the locality, which is also registered on the Historic Environment Record.
128. The County Council Archaeologist has raised no objection to the proposal on the basis that a standard condition requiring a scheme of investigation to be agreed and any necessary measures carried out prior to the commencement of development, to ensure that any risk to archaeology is mitigated is attached to the decision notice. This can be secured at this outline stage.
129. St. Mary’s Church, a grade II* listed building, lies in excess of 270 metres to the north east of the site, with the properties on Sadlers Close providing visual separation between the site and that heritage asset. The property at no. 87 Main Street (approximately 170 metres north east of the site) and The Blue Lion Public House (approximately 160 metres north east of the site) are both grade II listed. The presence of the dwellings in Sadlers Close and fact that the site is set off Main Street, beyond the properties on The Pastures and Grace Crescent are factors which are considered to ensure that no significant harm would result to the setting of these heritage assets as a result of the development. This assessment has taken into account the significant obstruction that the existing residential development to the north of the site causes to views of the setting of each of these heritage assets from the Public Right of Way which runs parallel with the southern boundary of the application site.

Environmental Health:

130. The Public Health Specialist has reviewed the Health Impact Assessment and considers that it meets the required standard of the SPD Policy. The scheme is therefore acceptable in this regard.
131. There is no objection to the proposal in respect of air quality. However, to ensure that sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the development are not affected by the negative

impact of construction work such as dust and noise, as well as ensuring that the applicant complies with the Council's low emission strategy for a development of this scale, conditions should be included that require the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan/Dust Management Plan, and an electronic vehicle charging infrastructure strategy.

132. Further assessment of the potential noise generated by traffic on adjacent roads (Grace Crescent, The Pastures and Main Street) and the impact that this may have on the residential amenity of the occupants of the dwellings will be required to ensure that adequate attenuation measures are put in place, if required. Details of any lighting to be installed will also need to be provided. These matters can be dealt with by condition.
133. The site is considered to be a low risk in relation to land contamination and as such it is considered that a phase I contaminated land assessment can be required by condition at this outline stage, to ensure that the detailed layout does not result in any adverse impact in this regard, acknowledging the sensitive end use proposed for the site.
134. Noise, vibration and dust minimisation plans will be required to ensure that the construction phase of the scheme would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. These details shall be secured by condition, along with a restriction on the hours during which power operated machinery should be used during the construction phase of the development and details of the phasing of the development.
135. The applicant will be required to complete a Waste Design Toolkit at the reserved matters stage in order to show how it is intended to address the waste management infrastructure, and technical requirements within the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide. In addition conditions should secure the submission of a Site Waste Management Plan. Provision of domestic waste receptacles by the developer will be secured via the Section 106 agreement. The developer should ensure that the highway design allows for the use of waste collection vehicles and this is a detailed matter relating to the layout of the scheme at the reserved matters stage.
136. The applicant has committed to 10% of the energy requirements generated by the development being produced by renewable sources. A condition will be required to ensure that the noise impact of any plant or equipment for any renewable energy provision such as air source heat pumps is fully assessed and any impact mitigated. It is considered that each of these issues could be dealt with through the imposition of conditions at this outline stage.

Cumulative Impact:

137. Officers have considered this proposal alongside the other large scale application for residential development in Hardwick (the as yet undetermined application ref. S/3064/16/OL proposes up to 155 dwellings on land to the south of St. Neots Road), where the principle of development relies on the District Council's deficit in five year housing land supply. Each planning application has to be assessed in its own merits. Whilst officers realise that all development has the potential to contribute to a cumulative impact, the CIL regulations require that each applicant must only be responsible for mitigating the impact of that specific scheme.
138. Therefore, officers are of the view that only schemes of a size that would attract contributions to increasing education and health provision can be reasonably included in the assessment of cumulative impact. Officers have considered the cumulative impact of the two schemes on the capacity of services and facilities in Hardwick and

have worked with consultees to ensure that they have done the same, including in relation to education provision.

139. The County Council as Education Authority have considered the anticipated population increase from this development and the St. Neots Road scheme referred to above. In relation to early years provision, 26 children of pre-school age (14 eligible for free school provision) would result from the population of this application and 46 children of the same age group (23 eligible for free school provision) would result from the scheme at St. Neots Road. The additional capacity required would be provided within the 2 rooms currently used as community meeting space within the school building (this loss being compensated for via the erection of the new community building). This would mitigate the impact of both of these developments. This assessment has taken into account the planned increase in the entitlement of those with free provision rising from 15 to 30 hours per week.
140. In relation to the capacity of health services, whilst a specific scheme is not identified, the amount of space required to mitigate the population increase arising from this proposal amounts to less than one tenth of the space required per GP according to the NHS England guidelines. The size of the additional floorspace required suggests that this could be achieved through internal modification. If it was the case that a physical extension to a practice was required, there is space to achieve this at the Little Eversden branch which falls under the same management as the surgery in Comberton.
141. Given this information, it is considered that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate a refusal of this application as part of a cumulative effect on the capacity of social infrastructure within Hardwick.
142. In relation to drainage, it is considered that the revised information submitted with this application would achieve the requirement not to result in additional surface water on the site once the development has been constructed. This is evidenced by the removal of the LLFRA's initial objection and the lack of objection from Anglian Water to the proposed scheme. In relation to landscape impact, it is considered that this development would be sufficiently separated from the other scheme to avoid cumulative impact in this regard.
143. Following this assessment, officers are content that the sustainability credentials of this proposal have been demonstrated satisfactorily when assessed alongside the proposal at land to the south of St. Neots Road. It is therefore considered that approval of this application would not prejudice the outcome of that application.

Conclusion

144. Given the fact that the Council cannot currently identify a five year supply of housing land, policies which restrict the supply of housing outside of village frameworks are out of date and should therefore only be afforded limited weight in the decision making process. In accordance with the guidance in paragraph 14 of the NPPF, in balancing all of the material considerations, planning permission should be granted unless the harm arising from the proposal would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits.
145. The proposed development would provide a significant number of dwellings, 40% of which would be affordable. This is a benefit which should be given significant weight in the determination of the planning application. The provision of a new community facility (or a financial contribution equivalent to meeting the cost of this provision) would provide a better quality stand alone facility to compensate for the loss of the community

rooms within the primary school building, which would be given over to the expanded early years provision. The provision of a self contained community building independent of the school site would allow Hardwick to rank alongside a number of the more sustainable group villages in the District, which the 2012 Village Classification Report recommended for elevation to Minor Rural Centre status in the emerging Local Plan.

146. It is considered that the proposal would not result in a significant adverse impact on the character of the landscape. Whilst the extent of the landscape 'buffer' on the western edge of the development may need to be reduced at the reserved matters stage, as previously discussed, a distance of at least 10 metres could still be retained between the western edge of the development and that boundary of the site. Given this factor and the depth and maturity of the landscaping on western boundary, it is considered that the development would appear relatively contained within the context of the wider landscape.
147. In closer views, the development would be visible from the Public Right of Way which runs adjacent to the southern boundary. However, the significant landscape 'buffer' between the southern edge of the development and that boundary of the site would reduce the level of harm to the character of the village edge. This assessment is made within the context of the existing development on Grace Crescent, which extends right up to the boundary with the public footpath and would therefore remain more visually prominent. The density of the development is considered to be acceptable given these mitigating factors. The restriction in the height of the development to 2 storeys and a maximum ridge height of 9.5 metres would limit the bulk and massing of the scheme that comes forward at reserved matters stage, further reducing the landscape impact of the development.
148. It is acknowledged that this proposal would significantly exceed the indicative maximum number of dwellings suggested as an appropriate scale of development in Group Villages by the policies of the LDF. However, in the absence of a five year housing land supply, the key issue is the extent of the services and facilities available in and accessible from Hardwick and whether these have the capacity to accommodate the additional population growth.
149. In addition to the provision of the community building, the proposal would provide a community transport vehicle, which would be managed by the Parish Council. This would compensate for the fact that this site is approximately 1 mile south of the more regular bus service along St. Neots Road and would enhance the alternatives to the use of the private car. This, along with the proposed footway and bus stop upgrade works would enhance the environmental sustainability of the scheme.
150. It is considered that the scheme includes positive elements which enhance social sustainability. These include:
 - the positive contribution of up to 98 dwellings towards the housing land supply in the district based on the objectively assessed need for 19,500 dwellings and the method of calculation and buffer identified by the Waterbeach Inspector
 - the provision of 39 affordable dwellings on site, making a significant contribution to the identified need in Hardwick (currently 44 people within the village currently on the Housing Register) and the wider District
 - significant public open space, including a Local Equipped Area of Play on the site and a committed sum towards the provision of additional equipped play space elsewhere in Hardwick, a village which currently has a significant under provision in this regard.
 - The provision of a self contained, purpose built community centre building (or

financial contribution equivalent to this) which would address the fact that the existing provision is considered to be below the required standard.

- The provision of a community vehicle, to be operated by the Parish Council, providing an alternative to single occupancy car journeys and a supplement to the regular bus service operating from St. Neots Road in to Cambridge.
- The provision of upgrades to bus stops on St. Neots Road, the provision of 10 cycle stands at the east bounds stop on that road and improvements to the footpath network between the site and St. Neots Road. These improvements would all enhance the environmental sustainability of the scheme.
- potential to result in an increase in the use of local services and facilities

151. None of the disbenefits arising from the proposals are considered to result in significant and demonstrable harm when balanced against the positive elements and therefore, it is considered that the proposal achieves the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

Recommendation

152. Officers recommend that the Committee grants planning permission, subject to the following:

Section 106 agreement

To secure commuted sum for the provision of affordable housing, the provision of public off site open space, the management of the public open space and surface water drainage within the development and the community benefits and education contributions listed in Appendix 1.

Draft conditions

- (a) Outline planning permission
- (b) Time limit for submission of reserved matters
- (c) Time limit for implementation (within 2 years of approval of reserved matters)
- (d) Approved plans
- (e) Limit on height of development to 2 storeys and maximum ridge height of 9.5 metres
- (f) Landscaping details
- (g) Contaminated land assessment
- (h) Dust, noise, vibration mitigation strategy
- (i) Noise assessment relating to impact of road traffic on Main Street, Grace Crescent and The Pastures on the amenity of the occupants of the proposed development– including necessary mitigation measures
- (j) Details of renewable energy generation (including water efficiency/conservation measures) within the development and associated noise assessment and mitigation measures – 10% renewables and compliance.
- (k) Scheme to detail upgrading of bus stops on St. Neots Road
- (l) Scheme for provision of additional cycle stands adjacent to bus stop on St. Neots Road
- (m) Details of scheme for improving footways and street lighting adjacent to the site
- (n) Foul water drainage scheme
- (o) Surface water drainage scheme (management and maintenance to be secured through Section 106)
- (p) Sustainable drainage strategy
- (q) Tree Protection measures
- (r) Retention of existing planting on site boundaries

- (s) Compliance with flood risk assessment
- (t) Traffic Management Plan – including subsidised bus travel for 6 months
- (u) Time restriction on the removal of trees
- (v) Detailed plans of the construction of the accesses
- (w) Pedestrian visibility splays
- (x) Ecological enhancement and habitat management plan
- (y) Scheme of archaeological investigation
- (z) Site waste management plan
- (aa) Restriction on the hours of power operated machinery and deliveries during construction
- (bb) Phasing of construction
- (cc) Additional ecological surveys to be undertaken
- (dd) Compliance with ecological survey submitted
- (ee) External lighting to be agreed
- (ff) Cycle storage
- (gg) Housing mix within market element to be policy compliant
- (hh) Minimum of 5% bungalows to be provided
- (ii) Boundary treatments
- (jj) Waste water management plan
- (kk) Construction environment management plan
- (ll) Details of piled foundations
- (mm) Fire hydrant locations
- (nn) Screened storage for refuse
- (oo) Detail of the location of the proposed allotments
- (pp) Scheme for the provision of the parking spaces on Grace Crescent
- (qq) Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

161.

Informatives

- (a) Environmental health informatives
- (b) Exclusion of indicative plans from approval – indicative layout plan not to be approved at this outline stage

Background Papers:

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission 2014
- Planning File Reference: S/1694/16/OL

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