

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

10 May 2017

AUTHOR/S: Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

Application Number: S/2047/16/FL

Parish(es): Caldecote

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings, and erection of residential development to provide up to 71 no. dwellings including 28 no. affordable dwellings, with associated vehicle and pedestrian accesses and open space, and a car park for school/community use.

Site address: Land r/o 18-28 Highfields Road, 18, Highfields Road, Highfields Caldecote, CB23 7NX

Applicant(s): CALA Homes (North Home Counties) Ltd

Recommendation: Delegated approval (subject to complete section 106 agreement)

Key material considerations: Five year supply of housing land
Principle of development
Sustainability of the location
Density of development and affordable housing
Character of the village and impact to street scene
Highway safety
Residential amenity of neighbouring properties
Surface water and foul water drainage
Ecology
Provision of formal and informal open space
Section 106 Contributions
Cumulative Impact

Committee Site Visit: 9 May 2017

Departure Application: Yes (advertised 23 August 2016)

Presenting Officer: Rebecca Ward, Senior Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: The officer recommendation of approval conflicts with the recommendation of Caldecote Parish Council and Approval would represent a Departure from the Local Plan

Date by which decision due: 1 February 2017 (Extension of time agreed)

Executive Summary

1. The key issues to be assessed in the determination of this planning application are considered to be the principle of development, drainage, residential amenity and the highway safety implications of the scheme.
2. Assessment of the principle of development rests on the case as to whether the scheme is considered to be sustainable and whether any harm identified significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the scheme.
3. The application site lies within the village framework, with other residential units sharing its boundaries. Part of the site also brownfield containing existing outbuildings and residential units. Unlike some other five-year supply sites in the District, there would be no wider landscape harm and there would be no encroachment to the edge of the village. Weight should be attributed to these factors.
4. The site is situated in the heart of the village and opposite the primary school and other essential facilities such as the recreation ground, village hall and some retail outlets. It is, however, acknowledged that Caldecote does lack some of the basic services; including GP practice and emergence services. A bus service does runs north of the village connecting up to service centres were absent services can be found, however, officers are mindful this cumulative journey times might put some people off using this alternative mode of transport. As such, officers conclude some social and environmental harm might arise from this.
5. All other relevant materials planning considerations are assessed in detail in the report and there are no outstanding objections from consultees.
6. Overall, it is considered that the proposal would make a significant contribution to the deficit in the Council's five year housing land supply and the environmental, social, economic benefits that would result from the development outweigh any dis-benefits such as the absence of some services and facilities within the village.
7. None of these dis-benefits mentioned above 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 National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF).

Planning History

8. S/1387/94/O Residential Development And New Roundabout – Appeal Dismissed (1998)

S/1242/07/F Erection of 25 Dwellings Together with Construction of New Access – Refused (2007)

S/1397/09/O Outline application for 97 dwellings including access & layout – Refused and dismissed at appeal (2011). Reasons: The proposal would conflict with policy ST/6 'Group Village' and would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. The inspector also concluded that the section 106 agreement would mitigate the impacts to local infrastructure and would provide some benefit to the existing community but nevertheless these would not outweigh the harm identified

S/2510/15/OL Outline planning permission for up to 140 residential dwellings

(including 40% affordable housing) - Appeal for non-determination with inquiry starting March 2016

S/2764/16/OL -Outline planning permission for the residential development of up to 58 dwellings with associated infrastructure, landscaping and public open space. All matters reserved except for access - Application has been appealed for non-determination and will be considered by the Planning Inspector

National Guidance

9. 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.

10. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Core Strategy DPD, 2007**
ST/2 Housing Provision
ST/6 Group Villages

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
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
CC/7 Water Quality
CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
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

12. **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
Health Impact Assessment SPD– Adopted March 2011

13. **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
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/9 Managing Flood Risk
SC/2 Health Impact Assessment
SC/5 Hospice provision
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
SC/12 Contaminated Land
SC/13 Air Quality
TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
TI/3 Parking Provision
TI/8 Infrastructure and New Developments
TI/10 Broadband

Consultation

14. **Caldecote Parish Council** – Please see Appendix 1 for full comments. In summary the Parish Council have objected on the following grounds:

- Group village with 71 units representing significant departure from policy
- Surface Water and foul water drainage concerns with existing network
- Lack of education spaces
- Lack of health care spaces
- Lack of sustainable public transport

15. **District Council Environmental Health Officer (EHO)** – On balance we have no objection in principle to the proposals subject to the imposition of conditions. The following areas have been considered with the following recommendations :

- Noise and vibration – conditions to control construction phase, demolition notice, noise from traffic using the primary route, noise insulation scheme, details of the LEAP, scheme to protect existing residential properties from noise from the parking areas
- Air Quality – conditions
- Artificial Lighting – Condition for details of lighting to be submitted
- Contaminated Land – see relevant consultee comments
- Health Impact Assessment
- Operational Residential and Commercial Waste / Recycling Provision
- Surface Water Drainage – see relevant consultee comments
- Renewable Energy Strategy / Report - see relevant consultee comments

16. **District Council Urban Design Officer** – Approve subject to minor amendments and the imposition of some planning conditions. The following comments were highlighted:

The Design & Access Statement provides a brief consideration of local context, which identifies some architectural elements that are utilised in the design proposals. No overall architectural character is identified from the contextual considerations; however a clear architectural approach is applied to the proposals, albeit not explained.

The site layout is in keeping with adjacent developments which provides for integration with its surroundings. Minor amendments were requested to elevations of the buildings including addition windows to increase natural surveillance and details of materials.

In terms of the public realm and open space, it was regrettable that the LEAP is located adjacent to the main vehicle access to the site and as such there might be potential for conflict.

The LAP is within a good location and will act as a community node on journeys to and from school. Additional details requested to indicate what public space is and what would be private space.

17. **Design Enabling Panel (DEP) and Design Workshop** – An earlier scheme (PRE/0767/14) comprising 60 dwellings, public open space and dedicated 24 parking spaces for Caldecote Primary School was presented to the SCDC Design Enabling Panel on 29 January 2015. Following feedback from this meeting a revised scheme was taken to the DEP on the 22 May 2016.

It was acknowledged that the scheme remained a “work in progress” and that the architects were relatively new to the project. The proposal was considered to demonstrate an improvement on previous schemes and addressed the principal concerns expressed within the previous DEP report.

The scheme was to demonstrate an appropriate response to the site in terms of density and character, both of which are material considerations. The proposal was in the process of design development and the Panel considered the scheme had the potential to be further improved. The quantum of the proposed development, i.e. 70 dwellings, was considered an acceptable maximum in design terms. This represents a reduction of twenty seven from the previous (Refused) scheme.

18. **District Council Landscape Design Officer** – In principle, there are no objections to a development upon this site. There would be limited landscape and visual effects. The following landscape considerations have been made by the applicant:

- Linking the two residential developments to the north and south
- An area offered to the school to help release traffic from the main road
- A pedestrian, cycle and emergency access path into the development via Highfields Road
- A secondary pedestrian access to East Drive and Clare Drive
- A central green
- Large trees in open spaces, street trees along road verges and small trees in gardens
- SuDs – porous paving provided within the site
- A LAP informal open space and a LEAP Local Equipped Area for Play
- Off street parking

There are a number of green spaces adjacent to the road verges throughout the scheme. Applicant to incorporate them into private front gardens. This will reduce potential future management costs for Parish Council. Avoid wedge like gardens which are difficult to maintain.

Arrival into the site - there is a high proportion of hard paving. Applicant to consider a special entrance within the use of both hard and soft materials.

LEAP - located at the main entrance. There is potential conflict with vehicles and children. Applicant to consider relocation or access treatment. Average height of a mounted rider is 2.55m – Existing hedgerow to be protected and not cut back.

Opportunities for the applicant to also consider within the detailed design:

- Ensure developments are well integrated with the local patterns of tree planting and hedgerows.
- Mark street boundaries by the use of simple picket or trellis fencing, hedges, or low brick walls as appropriate
- Retain hedges and introduce them as boundaries alongside roads outside village cores
- Avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials, street furniture, lighting and signage as part of traffic calming measures wherever appropriate

19. **Renewable Energy Officer** - The applicant has provided two very detailed documents suggesting how the proposed development can be constructed to reduce the energy, carbon emissions and water requirements of the new dwellings.

Relevant water modelling suggests that water use will be no more than 105 litres/ person/ day. This would make the development compliant with local policy. If the figures used for modelling energy and carbon are baselined against Building Regulations Part L 2013, then the development meets the requirements of local energy policy by providing a 21% reduction in carbon emissions, and 10% of the developments predicted energy use via onsite renewable energy technology.

If the applicant can confirm that Part L 2013 standards have been used in the baseline for this development, then, if constructed to the specifications contained within these two documents, the dwellings will be compliant with the requirements of local policy by providing a 21% reduction in carbon emissions, and 10% of the developments predicted energy use via onsite renewable energy technology.

20. **Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team** – Confirmed they

would raise no in principle objections to the proposed development in regards to highway safety/trip generation subject to the following mitigation measures. Without each of these mitigation measures being agreed the proposal would be unacceptable to the CCC :

1. The County Council require the developer to provide a 2.5m wide shared pedestrian/ cycle facility on the west side of Highfields Road from the junction of Bossert's Way with Highfields northwards to the junction of West Drive with Highfields – This will address the existing gap in cycling provision. This is to encourage residents from this development and existing residents in Highfields Caldecote to travel by cycle in place of the car and further improve access and the attractiveness of the route to the bus stops on St Neots Road and onwards to Cambridge.
2. The applicant should install an additional 2 sheffield parking stands at the eastbound bus stop at the roundabout junction of St Neots Road with Highfields.
3. A revised Residential Travel Plan Welcome Pack should be submitted to the County Council prior to occupation of the development.

It is the view of the CCC that each of the above meet the tests of CIL and can be requested in this instance.

21. **Cambridgeshire County Council Local Highways Authority (Development Control)** – No objections to the application subject to amendments to the internal road/footpath layout. An update will be provided to members.
22. **Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team** – Our records indicate that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. Archaeological investigations adjacent to the proposed development area have revealed evidence of Late Iron Age and Early Roman field systems (Historic Environment Record reference 11913, CB14750) and medieval and post-medieval cultural remains in the form of ridge and furrow (CB15023).

Archaeological investigations opposite the application area at Caldecote Primary School revealed evidence of Iron Age occupation and medieval cultural remains in the form of ridge and furrow (13008). In addition, to the north archaeological investigations have revealed evidence of Iron Age settlement and occupation (ECB4622) and to the south is evidence of Roman occupation (11914).

We do not object to development from proceeding in this location but consider that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the inclusion of a negative condition.

23. **Cambridgeshire County Council Flood & Water Team** – Since our initial objection letter dated 30th August 2016 we have met with the applicant onsite and they have provided the following additional details:

- Full hydraulic calculations including an updated allowance for climate change.
- An updated Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.
- A closed-circuit television (CCTV) survey of the Anglian Water drainage system along Blythe Way (from MH1359 to MH 0354).

- A survey of a small section of the ditchline on the eastern side of Highfields road.

The reports confirm that surface water can be dealt with by using a combination of permeable paving and geocellular attenuation, discharging at the QBAR rate into the Anglian Water surface water sewer on Blythe Way.

In light of drainage issues within the village, the applicant has undertaken additional surveys to determine the condition of the ditch to which the Anglian Water system currently discharges into. This found a number of blockages and a final outfall from the ditch was not identified. As a result it is likely that the applicant will create a new surface water sewer connection across Highfields Road into the ditch on the western side which flows in a southerly direction. The applicant will need to liaise with and seek permissions from land and asset owners to progress this; however we understand some initial discussions have taken place.

Based on the above we can confirm as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) that we are able to **remove our objection**. We recommend the following conditions are imposed requiring the following details.

Conditions

Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before development is completed. The scheme shall be based upon the principles within the agreed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) prepared by Conisbee (ref: 151069/J Foster, Version 1.2) dated 16th September 2016 and shall also include:

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

The drainage scheme must adhere to the hierarchy of drainage options as outlined in the NPPF PPG.

Reason

To ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained and to ensure that there is no flood risk on or off site resulting from the proposed development.

Conditions

Details for the long term maintenance arrangements for any parts of the surface water

drainage system which will not be adopted (including all SuDS features) to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the first occupation of any of the dwellings hereby permitted. The submitted details should identify runoff sub-catchments, SuDS components, control structures, flow routes and outfalls. In addition, the plan must clarify the access that is required to each surface water management component for maintenance purposes. The maintenance plan shall be carried out in full thereafter.

Reason

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

Informative

Constructions or alterations within an ordinary watercourse (temporary or permanent) require consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority under the Land Drainage Act 1991. Ordinary watercourses include every river, drain, stream, ditch, dyke, sewer (other than public sewer) and passage through which water flows that do not form part of Main Rivers (Main Rivers are regulated by the Environment Agency). Please note the council does not regulate ordinary watercourses in Internal Drainage Board areas.

24. **Drainage Officer (Cambridge City Council)** – No objections to the application subject to the applicant indicating who would be responsible for what as part of the FRA.
25. **Environment Agency** - No objection in principle, offered recommendations and informative regarding surface water drainage, foul water drainage, potential ground contamination, pollution prevention and conservation.
26. **Anglian Water** - No objections received, and advised:

Foul Sewage Network – The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment area of Bourn Water Recycling Centre, which currently does not have capacity to treat flows from the development site. Anglian Water are obligated to accept the flows from development with the benefit of planning consent and would therefore take the necessary steps to ensure that there is sufficient treatment capacity should planning consent be granted.

Surface Water Disposal – The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option. Building regulations (part H) on Drainage and Waste Disposal for England includes a surface water drainage hierarchy, with infiltration on site as the preferred disposal option, followed by discharge to watercourse and then connection to a sewer. Anglian Water recommends a condition attached to any grant of planning approval with regard to a surface water strategy.
27. **Contaminated Land Officer** – The Phase 1 Site Appraisal by BRD dated July 2016 identifies agricultural buildings including stockpiles of scrap metal and derelict cars and has a sensitive proposed use (residential). As such further investigation has been recommended in the form of intrusive investigation. Officers are in agreement with this recommendation and recommend a condition is included.
28. **Air Quality Officer** - 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

29. **Affordable Housing Officer** - The site is located within the development framework of Caldecote. The Council will seek to secure at least 40% affordable housing. The developer is proposing 71 dwellings, 28 of these would have to be affordable. There are currently 13 people with local connections to Caldecote Parish and currently approximately 1,700 applicants on the housing register district wide.

The greatest demand both district wide and in Caldecote is for 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings. The mix proposed by the developer is reflective of the housing need both locally and district wide. There are also approximately 500 applicants registered with the Home buy agent for shared ownership in South Cambs. The highest demand for shared ownership are 2 and 3 bedroom properties.

Affordable Rented

11 x 1 bed flats
4 x 2 bed flats
3 x 2 bed houses
2 x 3 bed houses (5 person houses)

Shared Ownership

4 x 2 bed houses
3 x 3 bed houses (4 person)
1 x 3 bed house (5 person)

This is our preferred mix and tenure split and is reflective of the housing need both for rented and shared ownership affordable housing and has been discussed and agreed with the developer. However, we can have more detailed discussions with the Registered provider once they have been appointed.

Similar applications of this nature have been determined at planning committee for properties to be allocated in this way. We are proposing a policy to apply to schemes such as this which is that the first, 8 properties should be allocated to those with a local connection to that village and that the remaining dwellings should be allocated on a 50/50 basis between local connection and on a district wide basis.

30. **Section 106 Officer** – the Councils S106 officer has reviewed the scheme with the parish council and relevant stakeholders. Details of the summary of section 106 requirements are appended to this report. Specific policy compliant contributions and necessary mitigation measures are discussed in detail in the main body of the report.

31. **Cambridgeshire County Council Growth Team (Education)** –

Early years: According to County Council guidance the development is expected to generate a net increase of 15 early years aged children of which 8 would be eligible for s106 contributions. In terms of early years' capacity, County education officers have confirmed that there is insufficient capacity in the area to accommodate the places being generated by this development.

The County Council has identified two options to mitigate the impact of the development. These are as follows:

- Convert the existing Children's centre into early years accommodation – The total cost of this project would be £60,000 and will provide 2 additional early years classrooms. Contributions will be sought on the basis of £60,000/52 = £1,154 per children.
- Build a new pre-school facility in the school site. The total cost of this project would be £500,000 and will provide an additional classroom. Contributions will be sought on the basis of £19,231 per children (£500,000/26). Therefore a total contribution of **£153,848** would be sought. Both options to be included in the s106 and payment will trigger once the decision by Members about the Children Centre is made in summer.

Both options to be included in the s106 and payment will trigger once the decision by Members about the Children Centre is made this Summer.

2 triggers – 50% prior to commencement and 50% prior to occupation of 50% of the scheme.

There have not been 5 or more contributions pooled towards this early years facilities.

Primary need: According to County Council guidance the development is expected to generate a net increase of **13 primary** school places. The catchment school is Caldecote Primary School. County education officers have confirmed that there is insufficient capacity over the next five years to accommodate the primary school places being generated by this development.

The County Council will request developer contributions to mitigate the impact of the development. The County Council's proposed solution is to expand the primary school with 4 additional classrooms to take the school from school from 1FE/210 to 1.5FE/330 providing 120 additional primary school places.

The total cost of the project is currently is £2,590,000 (4Q16). Contributions are sought on the basis of £21,583 per place. Therefore a total contribution of **£280,579** (£21583 x 13 places) is required.

2 triggers – 50% prior to commencement and 50% prior to occupation of 50% of the scheme.

There have not been 5 or more contributions pooled towards this primary school project.

Secondary need: According to County Council guidance the development is expected to generate a net increase of 9 secondary school places. The catchment school is Comberton Village College. County education officers have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity over the next five years to accommodate the places generated by the development. Therefore no contributions towards secondary education are sought.

Libraries and lifelong learning : The proposed increase in population from this development (71 x 2.22 (average household size) = approximately 157.5 new residents) will put pressure on the library and lifelong learning service in the village. Therefore a contribution is required.

In order to do this, the County Council would require a developer contribution of £4.02 per head of population increase. This figure is based on the MLA Standard Charge

Approach for public libraries (Public Libraries, Archives and New Development: A standard Charge Approach (Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, May 2010).
Contribution = 157.5 x £4.02 = £633.15

Strategic waste - This development falls within the Cambridge and Northstowe HRC catchment area for which there is insufficient capacity. However, the HRC already has 5 S106 contributions pooled; therefore, the County Council is prevented from seeking a further S106 strategic waste contribution from this development and will mitigate impact through existing provisions and efficiencies.

Monitoring fees - The County Council requires a monitoring contribution of £650 from this scheme.

32. **NHS England (Health Care)** - The additional population growth expected from the development is 170 and an additional 11.66 square meters of floor spaces would be required to meet growth. As such the NHS request a sum of £26,818 to provide and additional space by the way of an extension, reconfiguration or refurbishment at Combertons sister surgery Little Eversden.

The NHS requests that this sum be secured through a planning obligation linked to any grant of planning permission in the form of a S106. Subject to this being secured there were no objections raised.

33. **District Council Ecology** - The submitted Precautionary Working Method Statement is welcomed and the proposed approach is proportional to the risk of great crested newt being present and impacted. The Method Statement addresses my previous concerns and demonstrates likely compliance with UK and EU law.

Therefore, please attach appropriately-worded conditions such as the following to protect and enhance the site for important habitats and protected and notable species including great crested newt:

1) Ecological Mitigation

All works must proceed in strict accordance with the recommendations detailed in Section 9 of *Ecological Assessment: Land east of Highfields Road, Caldecote* (Ethos Environmental Planning, October 2016), Section 3 of *Precautionary Working Method Statement: Great Crested Newts* (Ethos Environmental Planning, December 2016) and habitat enhancement as shown on Drawing L1042-2.1-1000 Rev P3. This shall include avoidance and mitigation measures for great crested newt, nesting birds, bats, reptiles and glow worm and protection of retained hedgerows. If any amendments to the recommendations as set out in the reports are required, the revisions shall be submitted in writing to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority before works commence.

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

2) Biodiversity Management Plan

A Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) shall be submitted to the LPA for approval in writing before any development commences. The content of the BMP shall include:

- Description and plan showing the features to be managed including a

- specification for created or enhanced habitats;
- Aims and objectives of management;
- Prescription of management actions;
- A work schedule i.e. an annual work plan;
- Details of responsibilities for the long-term funding and implementation of the plan; and
- Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect existing priority habitats and to enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with the NPPF, the NERC Act 2006 and Policy NE/6 of the adopted Local Development Framework 2007.

Please also attach a condition for a plan detailing external lighting including lux contour plans to be provided, with protection of wildlife habitat as a reason for the condition. This should be reviewed by the project ecologist before submission.

34. **District Council Tree Officer** – No objections to the application provided that the tree protection scheme is implemented. Please impose a condition to that effect. The updated Arboricultural report and accompanying tree protection plan / scheme is fit for purpose.

Representations

35. Approximately 38 letters of objection have been received on this application. In summary they raise the following material considerations -
- a) Development out of scale with the surroundings
 - b) No requirement for additional housing in the village
 - c) Doesn't accord with the Group Village policy
 - d) SHLAA 213 identified Caldecote as unsustainable
 - e) Access onto East Drive is not permitted as the hedges and drive are privately owned
 - f) Health and safety concerns linked to the pedestrian access onto East Drive.
 - g) Sole access point from Blythe Way has potential to give rise to accidents
 - h) Public footpath to remain open during the course of construction
 - i) Alter the character and appearance of East Drive
 - j) Highway safety concerns linked to the number of traffic movements and the children's play area
 - k) Overlooking concerns to residential amenity from plot 1-8 and plots 9-15
 - l) Overbearing and over shadowing to neighbouring amenity from plots 1-8 and 9-15
 - m) Loss of light from plot 1-8 and plot 9-15
 - n) Landscape scheme would effect amenity
 - o) Removal of trees and hedgerows that provide screening and habitats
 - p) Additional bridle path along the southern boundary
 - q) Disruption to residents during construction phases
 - r) Tree Survey and landscape plans do not take into account trees outside the boundaries
 - s) Loss of open green space
 - t) Creation of continuous hard standing – surface water issues
 - u) Concerns about new trees planted in close proximity to existing units
 - v) No capacity at the local primary school and secondary school
 - w) No local shop
 - x) No capacity at the Doctors Surgery at Bourn or Camborne
 - y) Limited bus services through the village

- z) Not located near any employment
- aa) Closest well serviced bus stop is outside of the village on St Neots Road
- bb) Connivance store is currently closed
- cc) Additional impact on foul drainage system – capacity levels of the pumping station
- dd) Noise concerns from the car parking area
- ee) Red-line boundary not meeting up to properties on the southern part of the site
- ff) Increased traffic movements through the village and around the primary school

Five letters of support of the application have been received, and in summary they raise the following points:

- a) The proposed scheme is a lower density than the Banner homes application
- b) Good level of affordable units provided
- c) Would like S106 money to improve junctions on Highfields Road
- d) Site needs to be developed
- e) Improve local business
- f) Additional houses needed

Site and Surroundings

- 36. The application site is currently a vacant parcel of land, with a few abandoned buildings including a residential unit and other part demolished outbuildings. The site is located in the centre of Highfields Caldecote, opposite the Primary School and other facilities. The whole application site lies within the village development framework boundary.
- 37. The eastern boundary of the site adjoins East Drive which is a private road and a Bridleway. Beyond which are disperse residential units. To the north and south of the site are residential estates of Claire Drive and Blythe Way. Highfields Road runs parallel with the western boundary of the site and on the opposite side of the road is the Primary school.

Proposal

- 38. The applicant seeks full planning permission for the erection of 71 no dwellings and associated infrastructure works. The application also includes the provision of a Local equipped area of play (LEAP), LAP and a car park for the local school.

Planning Assessment

- 39. 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, the impact of development on the character of the surroundings, the sustainability of the location given the Group Village status of Caldecote, the density of development and affordable housing.
- 40. An assessment is required in relation to the impact of the proposals on the character of the area and street scene, highway safety, impact on 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.
- 41. The cumulative impact of this proposal and other developments within the village of a size that trigger the need for contributions to infrastructure capacity also need to be considered.

Principle of Development

Five year housing land supply

42. 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.
43. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply in the district as required by the NPPF, having a 4.1 year supply (as updated in the Annual Monitoring Report, dated December 2016) using the methodology identified by the Inspector in the Waterbeach appeals in 2014.
44. 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 March 2017).
45. 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.
46. 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.
47. Those policies were listed in the decision letters and 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 policies "for the supply of housing".
48. 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.
49. 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.
50. 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.

51. Sustainable development is defined in paragraph 7 of the NPPF as having environmental, economic and social strands. When assessed 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).
52. Policy DP/7 of the LDF states that development and redevelopment of unallocated land and building within development framework will be permitted provided that: retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character and development would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historical importance and the amenities of neighbours and that there is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development.
53. Officers recognise this policy is out of date; however, one of its main aims is to restrict gradual encroachment of development into the countryside. The application site lies within the framework with built development on four of its boundaries and as such, the impact it would have to the countryside is going to be more limited than other five year housing supply sites that have been submitted on the outskirts of the village. In accordance with policy ST/6 and emerging policy S/6, development in Group Villages (the current status of Caldecote) is normally limited to schemes of up to 8 dwellings, or in exceptional cases 15, where development would make best use of a single brownfield site. 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.
54. The site is not currently allocated for development in the existing or the emerging Local Plan. The site has, however, been promoted by the agent as an Omissions Site and what should be considered as part of the emerging Local Plan. Historically, Highfields Caldecote was allocated as a village that would see a substantial amount of growth in order to sustain and improve the school and other facilities in the village. The areas now known as Claire Drive, Blythe Way and the site subject to this application was apart of the allocations in the 1993 Structure Plan and 2004 Local Plan. Development on the application never came forward and its uncertainty meant it was removed from the Local Development Framework in 2007. As such, no weight can be given to its previous allocation, as the policy is not up to date.
55. Based on policy ST/6, the quantum of development proposed in this location would not normally be considered acceptable in principle. However, due to the lack of five year housing supply, 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.
56. This limit is considered to be a significant consideration as it emphasises that such villages are less sustainable than minor rural settlements with a more limited range of services to meet the needs of new residents in a sustainable manner than in Rural Centres.
57. Within the context of the lack of a five-year housing land supply, Officers are of the view that development sites in Group Villages, can, in principle, accommodate more than the indicative maximum of 15 units. This principle has also been tested in recent appeal

decisions for Group Villages in Foxton (96 units), Over (55 units) and Balsham (29 units).

58. Notwithstanding this, a site specific assessment needs to be undertaken on the delivery of the proposed development, level of services, facilities, distance to employment centres provided in or close to these villages, quantum of development and impact on local character.

Delivery Programme

59. As part of the applicants case 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. A detailed delivery statement has been submitted. CALA homes (the applicants) are a developer and the submission of this full planning permission evidences their intentions to build out the scheme imminently subject to the correct approvals. Details have also been submitted to reduce the number of pre-commencement conditions. Discussions have already been held with affordable housing providers to take on the affordable units.
60. Officers are of the view that the applicant has demonstrated that the site can be delivered within a timescale whereby significant weight can be given to the contribution the proposal could make to the deficit in the housing land supply in South Cambridgeshire.

Sustainability of the location

61. One of the objectives of the Core Strategy (policies ST/b and ST/6) is to locate development where access to day-to-day needs for employment, shopping, education, recreation and other services is available by public transport, walking and cycling. The main objectives are considered to be consistent with paragraph 37 of the Framework, despite the policies being out of date.
62. Where health care services and schools are at capacity, mitigation is considered in 'social sustainability section of the report' below.
63. The village is served by an early years and primary school although not a secondary school. The recreation ground is to the rear of the school and accommodates a MUGA and sports pavilion. These facilities are located across the road from the site. Officers consider the site is generally well served by local community and social facilities and benefits being across the road from these uses.
64. There is a coffee shop (previously a small convenience store) and hairdressers across the road from the site. A BP garage and spar shop is the north of the village on the old A428 (1.4km from the site) providing some basic food needs. Compared to other villages in the district, it is recognised that retail services are more limited. The village also lacks a GP and dental surgery. As such, there would be limited access to essential shops and services needed on a day-to-day basis within the village itself. In general residents would have to travel outside the village for other facilities.
65. Caldecote itself has a limited range of employment opportunities. It is recognised that other employment opportunities within a five-mile radius of the site. The applicants have submitted a detailed assessment with the application that indicates where these businesses are situated. This includes but not limited to employment facilities along St Neots Road, Hardwick, Cambourne Business Park and edge of Cambridge employment sites.

66. In terms of sustainable transport links, it is roughly 1.4km from the site (roughly a 15 minute walk or 5 minute cycle) to the bus stop to the north of the village where services run into Cambridge or to Cambourne, every 20 minutes during the day (Mon-Sat) and hourly on Sunday. Cambridge and Cambourne are considered to be key employment, education and leisure hubs within the area with the bus offering direct access.
67. The route to the bus stop is flat, lit and lined with houses stretching roughly 1.3km; as such occupiers would feel safe when making this journey, although the walk/cycle would add to the journey times of the occupants. Improvements to the existing footpath would be beneficial along with improved cycle parking at the bus stop to encourage usage.
68. Although in its early stages of preparation, the Cambridge City Deal, has recognised the Cambridge to Camborne route within its bus priority scheme by way of improving existing or creating new bus and cycle infrastructure.
69. To draw these matters together, in terms of shopping, employment and health care there would be likely to be a need to travel outside the village and cumulative journey times to these places might put off and get into the car. However, there would be access to a local bus service during the working day/evening giving residents alternative options to travel.
70. For these reasons, officers consider there would be some harm arising from access of the site to facilities, due to the limited access to shops, employment and secondary education within the village and the cumulative journey times it might take for people to arrive at their designation. This harm would also give rise to conflict with policy DP/1a and b. This harm, however, has to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and cannot be considered in isolation.

Environmental sustainability

71. In accordance with paragraph 111 of the NPPF, the proposed development would go some way in meeting the definition of 'brownfield' development. This policy seeks to encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has previously been developed. The application site currently contains or has contained a number of outbuildings and residential unit (including its garden curtilage).
72. In terms of the impact to the wider landscape and setting of the village, the harm this proposal would cause is considered to be minimal given the fact the site is surrounded by residential units and located within the village framework of Caldecote. Furthermore, there would be no loss of agricultural land.
73. Officers have given weight to the fact there would be no significant landscape or environmental harm caused and it would bring the land into an effective use. This has not been the case on several other five-year housing supply sites.
74. The local environmental issues such as ecology, trees and local landscape features, are assessed later on in this report.

Social sustainability

75. 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.

76. The development would provide a clear benefit in helping to meet the current housing shortfall in South Cambridgeshire through delivering up to an additional 71 residential dwellings, 40% of which would be affordable (28 units). In addition, the housing mix in the market element of the scheme would accord with emerging policy H/8.
77. The site is also located in the heart of the village with direct access to the primary school and social facilities such as the MUGA. As such, its position within the village does positively contribute to the social strand of sustainable development in this sense.
78. Officers are of the view that the additional houses, including the affordable dwellings and their position is a social benefit and significant weight has been attributed to this in the decision making process.
79. Education Provision: The County Council has identified a deficiency in capacity levels at the early year level and has requested a contribution from the development towards the projects that have been identified in appendix 2. In terms of primary school years, there is currently capacity for 13 students, however, given the unknown outcome of the site to the north of the village which is currently at appeal (140 units), officers are working with the County Education Authority to agree a suitably worded S106 agreement which will review when the contribution is to be paid and trigger points for the payment.
80. Caldecote is within the catchment area of Comberton Secondary School. The County Council has confirmed there is spare capacity at this school for the proposed development.
81. Contributions towards libraries, lifelong learning and waste have also been requested. The agents have agreed to this contribution and this can be secured within the S106. Further details have been included in appendix 2.
82. Health care mitigation: As both Comberton and Bourn are at capacity, the developers would be required to militate against this deficiency in accordance with paragraph 204 of the NPPF. The additional population growth expected from the development is 170 people. Additional floor space would therefore be required. NHS have requested a sum of £26,818 towards an extension, reconfiguration or refurbishment at Comberton surgery (or sister surgery at Little Eversden).
83. As the money requested needs to directly relate to the development, officers have visited the practice manager of the Comberton surgery who confirmed there is scope to extend Little Eversden branch. Whilst Little Eversden is some-way from Caldecote, officers would expect patients to be re-distributed between the two surgeries.
84. The agents have agreed to this contribution and this can be secured within the S106. Further details have been included in appendix 2.
85. Sustainable transport mitigation : Original proposal by the Developer re Sustainable transport infrastructure mitigation:
86. The original proposal put forward by CALA Homes will deliver small improvements along the journey to the bus stop on the A428, the works would include; tactile paving at crossing points over Clare Drive, Bossets Way, West Drive and formal crossing point over Highfields Road carriageway close to mini roundabout. CALA Homes have indicated they will do the works under a S278 agreement. In the absence of any other identified projects, officers consider the improvements suggested to the pavements

along the stretch of road to be reasonable to the scale of the development proposed and therefore if members support CALA's original proposal these works can be secured via a planning condition.

87. Provision for additional cycle parking stands has also been requested and agreed by the Developer, to the eastbound bus stop. The cycle stands can be conditioned on any decision notice. A travel plan has also been requested and will be conditioned to ensure future occupiers are aware of sustainable modes of transport in the area

County Council's request re Sustainable transport infrastructure mitigation:

88. The original proposal put forward by CALA Homes would see small improvements along the journey to the bus stop on the A428, the works would include; tactile paving at crossing points over Clare Drive, Bossets Way, West Drive and formal crossing point over Highfields Road carriageway close to mini roundabout. CALA Homes have indicated they will do the works under a S278 agreement. In the absence of any other identified projects, officers consider the improvements suggested to the pavements along the stretch of road to be more reasonable to the scale of the development proposed and will therefore secure these works take place via planning condition.
89. Provision for additional cycle parking stands has also been requested and agreed by the application, to the eastbound bus stop. The cycle stands will be conditioned on any decision notice. A travel plan has also been requested and will be conditioned to ensure future occupiers are aware of sustainable modes of transport in the area.
90. The County Council Highways Authority have requested the Developer provide a 2.5m wide shared pedestrian and cycle facility on the west side of Highfields Road from the junction of Bossets Way with Highfields northwards to the junction of West Drive with Highfields (roughly 550m of extended footway). The Highways Authority has justified this position on the basis it would improve connectively up to the bus stop at the A428 and in their view would comply with the CIL tests. .
91. CIL Test
The key test under the CIL Regulation 2010 (amended) and Para 204 of the NPPF is whether the provision requested by the County Council is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind
92. The application site is well connected to services such as the primary school, playing fields and social club with adequate footpaths. Future occupiers will have to travel slightly further to get to the bus stop with connections into Cambridge and to the BP Garage. The footpaths up to the main bus stop are considered to be in good condition on both sides of the road for the majority of the route. A small section on the eastern side does, however, remain narrower towards West Drive.
93. The Transport Assessment submitted on behalf of the Developer with the planning application indicates that based on existing census data it is estimated that a scheme of this size would generate roughly 12 return bike movements per day and 110 pedestrian movements to various locations in and around the village (not just to the bus stop). Of these trips it is expected that up to 3 cyclists and 4 pedestrians would go up to the A428.
94. Given that the existing footpaths, on either side of the road, are in a reasonable condition for the majority of the length and taking into the limited number of cycling movements that are expected from the scheme, District council officers consider the

request from the Highways Authority to enhance the existing arrangement to provide a 2.5m cycleway is neither reasonable or necessary.

95. Furthermore the scale of works that have been proposed by the Highways Authority could also change the character of the street scene to a more engineered one and would see the removal of some grass verges. Members are invited to give consideration to this when forming their views as to the proposal by the Highways Authority.

Officer's Recommendation re Sustainable transport infrastructure mitigation

96. Because of CIL issues it is the recommendation of District Council Officers that members endorse the Developer's original proposal rather than the request made by the Highway Authority.

Economic sustainability

97. The provision of up to 71 new dwellings will give rise to employment during the construction phase of the development. The applicants have commissioned a report that stated roughly 110 employment jobs (direct and indirect) will be created as a result of the proposed development.
98. CALA homes have also provided details on their graduate scheme with the application and encourage local residents to consider opportunities with them. The applicants are currently in discussions with affordable housing providers and a preferred party will be elected following the determination of the application.
99. Given that the proposed scheme would only employ workers on a more short-term contract, it is considered these factors represent more limited economic benefits. In terms of the graduate scheme, the planning decision cannot secure this benefit and therefore cannot be afforded weight.
100. The development has the potential to result in an increase in the use of what local services, facilities and employment exist, all of which will be of benefit to the local economy. However, given the number of units proposed and capacity levels at the school are healthy it would also be a more limited benefit.

Conclusion

101. Whilst it is recognised future occupiers will have limited access to services within the village its self, the facilities the village does offer are directly across the road from the site. Other facilities would be available in nearby service centres. The service centres are accessible by a bus services situated to the north of the village.
102. The enhancements to the footpath and provision of addition secure cycle storage will make the journey to the bus stop more attractive. The dwellings will put pressure on education and health care facilities; however the impact would be sufficiently mitigated.
103. The scheme will seek to secure a wide range of market and affordable housing within a short timeframe. The location of the site is within the village framework, not on designated agricultural land and part brownfield. As such, there would be limited environmental impacts.
104. On balance and for these reasons, it is considered that the proposed development would partly achieve the social, environmental and economic elements of the definition

of sustainable development, subject to the mitigation measures, which the applicant has agreed to in principle and can be secured via a Section 106 agreement.

Density of development, housing mix and affordable housing

105. The NPPF states that appropriate density of any particular location will be determined by the nature of the area and by its surroundings and by a need to use land efficiently as a finite resource.
106. 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 (just below 2.9 hectares in area). The density equates to approximately 24 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 existing residential units surround the application site (of which amenities need to be protected) and due to the landscape constraints around the site, it is considered that this proposal meets the exception tests of the current and emerging policy with regard to the density of development.
107. 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, 25% 3 bedroom and 25% 4 bedrooms plus.
108. 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 for 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.
109. Policy H/3 of the emerging Local Plan states that a scheme of over 3 units should provide a minimum of 40% affordable housing. The policy states that the mix/tenure of affordable units (including shared ownership units) should respond to local circumstances. Officers are giving significant weight to this emerging policy.
110. The market and affordable mix (including shared ownership) is proposed for the 71 units in this development. Please see the table below. Rooms that have earmarked as 'study' in Larfield type are of a reasonable size and therefore have been considered as bedrooms for the purposes of determining mix.
111. The market mix for three bedroom units does not strictly meet the emerging policy requirements, however, policy compliant provision has still been provided for smaller 2 bedrooms units on the site, of which the strategic housing market assessment indicates there is a strong need for. As such, there is not a significant departure to the policy to warrant the scheme for refusal.
112. The affordable mix is considered to meet local requirements. The plans have been amended (April 2017) to ensure the 'clustering' of affordable housing is avoided. The affordable units have now been pepper potted through the development. Officers consider this amendment to be a marked improvement. The layout of the affordable units is considered to meet the aims the Affordable Housing SPD in this regard.

	Market	Percentage
2 bed house	13	30%
3 bed house	8	20%
4&5 bed house	22	50%
Total out of 71 units	43	60%

	Affordable	Percentage
1 bed apartment	22	80%
2 bed apartment		
2 bed house		
3 bed house	6	20%
4&5 bed house	0	0%
Total out of 71 units	28	40%

Impact to the street-scene and character of the area

113. This is a full planning application and as such Members will need to have regard to the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping details that have been submitted when making a decision.
114. An outline planning application (S/1397/09/OL) for the construction of 97 dwellings, with vehicular access from Blythe Way and pedestrian link to Highfields was refused by SDCD in 2010 and the appeal (APP/W0530/A/10/2134804) was dismissed in 2011.
115. In dismissing the appeal, the Planning Inspector concluded that the development would appear unusually intensive in this rural context. The Planning Inspector noted an existing group of trees in the southwestern part of the site, as a potentially worthwhile landscape feature, within a site otherwise devoid of visual interest. He commented that the loss of these trees would represent a lost opportunity to enhance any development. It is understood that these trees, which were not statutorily protected, have unfortunately been removed since the appeal decision.
116. The site is within the village framework and comprises approximately 2.9 hectares of largely unused land to the rear of existing properties on Highfields Road. To the north and south the site adjoins modern housing developments. To the east East Drive bounds the site. Hedgerows currently define the majority of the boundaries of the site.
117. In accordance with policy DP/2 of the Local Development Framework all new development must be of high quality design and, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development.
118. In addition policy DP/3 of the Local Development Framework states that all development proposals should provide, as appropriate to the nature, scale and economic viability of the scheme; appropriate access, provision, enhancement public and community transport infrastructure (including pedestrian and cycling), provide adequate communal and private spaces along with a number of other key considerations.
119. The applicant has submitted a layout plan for the site showing a development of 71 dwellings, served from Blythe Way to the south. Pedestrian access is proposed from Highfields Road to the west and East Drive to the east. An area of car parking is provided between Nos.28 and 30 Highfields Road. It is envisaged that this car park will be used by Caldecote Primary School subject to appropriate agreements.

Layout

120. Officers consider the proposed layout to be broadly compatible with the existing housing layouts to the north and south of the site. The layout has also been well informed by the arboricultural and hedgerow constraints on the site.

The layout of the proposed dwellings along East Drive are considered to be sufficiently set back from the boundary so that they would not result in future pressure to remove substantial planting along this green buffer. This was a concern raised in the previous appeal. At the same time, the dwellings on plot 25-26 offers an opportunity to provide overlooking/natural surveillance in the area where the pedestrian link is proposed to meet with East Drive.

121. The rationale of providing car parking for the school directly opposite the land fronting Highfields Road (to the north-western part of the site) is considered to be acceptable from a design point of view. Each property will have convenient access to onsite vehicle and cycle parking and bin storage areas.

122. The pedestrian access points to and from the site are considered to be a good asset to the scheme, especially the play equipment down to the school. They will help connect the site to its surroundings allowing for good level of permeability to be achieved. The equipment will be of a benefit to the wider community also. Occupiers of East Drive are also likely to benefit from this arrangement, as they will have a safe and convenient access down to the school.

123. In terms of the location of the LEAP in the centre of the site, officers can see some merit in this location, as there will be ongoing surveillance from people entering and exiting the estate. It will also have a visual connection to the area of open space on Blythe Way and creates a better sense of place upon arrival. The disadvantage is that the LEAP would be located close to the road and as such has the potential to cause conflict. However, the appropriate use of fences and landscaping to keep the LEAP enclosed would mitigate this impact. Full details of the LEAP equipment have been submitted with the application and a compliance condition will be added to any consent.

Design and appearance

124. There are variations of the proposed the house types with the scheme also providing two blocks of flats. The design of the dwellings and flats will take the form of simple gabled roofs with contemporary clean line elevations. There will be key focal buildings within the development that will use alternative materials. Officers consider the proposed designs reflect the general character of the surrounding area.

125. A materials strategy has been submitted with the application to indicate that the external walls will predominately be constructed of bricks (cream multi stock and brown multi stock) along with grey and brown concrete tiles for the roofs. The proposed materials are considered to be broadly in accordance with the surroundings. Samples of the brick and roof tiles will be submitted prior to the erection of the dwellings and Officers will condition this aspect on any approval.

126. The majority of the roof slopes face the orientation of the sun for renewable energy sources and Officers consider this to be of benefit to the scheme.

Trees and Landscaping

127. The arboricultural assessment submitted with the planning application indicates that the site contains roughly 17no trees, 6no groups of trees and 3no important hedgerows. There is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) covering a group of trees close to Highfields Road, in the location of the pedestrian access.
128. The vast majority of hedgerows around the edge of the site will be removed apart from the eastern side. The proposal will also include the loss of an area of scattered trees in the centre of the site. The TPOs will be retained as part of the development. This includes the retention of the East Drive hedge, which was highlighted as an important asset in the previous appeal.
129. Space for a new pedestrian access point will be made in the East Drive hedge for permeability; however, this is consider to cause limited harm given the extent of the hedgerow.
130. The Council's Landscape Officer has reviewed the proposed landscape details and recommended a number of amendments, including the areas of private and public land and the softening of the access from Blythe Way. Further amendments have also been made to remove an additional pedestrian footpath and enhanced planting to this hedgerow.

Ecology

131. The majority of the habitat currently occupying the site will be removed within the development proposal. Much of this habitat was assed as having moderate-low ecological value; however some features such as the species rich hedgerow and fruit trees were assessed as having a high value.

Due to the loss of some hedgerows and trees within the site, the Phase I Habitat Survey submitted with the planning application proposes mitigation and biodiversity enhancement measures to be introduced as part of the scheme. This includes selective planting, alternative nest sites for breeding birds, bat boxes, log piles for glow worms, low light levels

In relation to Great Crested Newts, the Ecology Officer requested further survey work to identify the location of a receptor site, details of the size and habitats to be supported of the receptor site and the amount of habitat to be lost, retained and created. This additional work has been undertaken and the holding objection removed as a result.

The recommended mitigation measures in relation to all protected species can be secured by condition. A habitat management plan and a biodiversity enhancement and management plan can also be secured by condition.

Highway safety and parking

132. The vehicle access into the site will be via Blythe Way, which then connects onto the main road running through the village. Following the submission of amendments and additional information, the Local Highways Authority has removed their holding objection to the application.
134. A number of local representations have raised concern in regards to the increase in traffic movements and the impact this would have to the junctions on Blythe Way. The Local Highways Authority has indicated the required visibility splays can be achieved and the level of movement for a scheme of 71no units would not cause any adverse impact to the network.

135. In relation to parking provision, it is considered that there would be sufficient space to for 2no parking spaces per plot, thereby meeting the requirements of the LDF in this regard. The garages meet the District Design Guide standards and will be fit for purpose. This factor is considered to indicate that the proposed development would not lead to pressure for on-street parking in a way that would disrupt the free passage of the adopted highway.
136. In accordance with the above, the proposal is considered to accord with policy DP/3, TR/1 and TR/2 of the adopted Local Development Framework.
137. A Construction Management Plan has been submitted to mitigate the need for any pre-commencement conditions in the event the application is approved. The Highways Authority have not clarified their position to date on this plan and therefore the condition will remain for now.

Residential amenity

138. The application is for full planning permission and as such officers need to be satisfied that the site is capable of accommodating the amount of development proposed, without causing significant or adverse impact on the residential amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties and future occupiers of the site.

Impact on existing occupiers

139. During the course of the application process, a number of representations were received from third parties with concerns about the impact of the proposed development on their amenity. Areas of particular concern surround the two apartment blocks and the impacts they would have in terms of overlooking and overshadowing garden spaces. Officers visited a few of the properties along the northern boundary to assess the potential impact and have assessed these issues thus;
140. Overlooking: The side facing windows on flat block A and B sit roughly 15m from the shared garden boundary of the site with the properties on Orchid Fare and Claire Drive. The three first floor windows in block A will serve a bedroom, hallway and kitchen (plan AA6205/2060rev0). The three first floor side facing windows in block B will serve a hallway (plan AA6205/2065rev0).
141. To prevent overlooking to residential gardens, the Councils District Design Guide (SPD) paragraph 6.68, states that it is preferable that a minimum distance of 15m is provided between the habitable windows and the property boundary. Both blocks of flats meet and exceed (15-17m) this guidance note, some of which are not 'habitable rooms' and therefore the windows would not cause significant or adverse overlooking impacts to warrant the scheme for refusal.
142. No.4 Orchid Fare sits at an angle facing onto flat block B. Between the rear facing elevations there is a distance between 20m-25m. As the windows of habitable rooms are offset and not direct looking into each other, officers consider the proposed distance to be acceptable.
143. Amendments have been made to the forward facing balcony closest to the garden of No.33 Main Road. It has been pulled away from the boundary and an obscure glass sheet will be installed to protect views into garden space.
144. Overbearing and Overshadowing: No.84 Claire Drive (closest to flat block B), has an 'L'

shaped garden with decking area down the southern side. On the southern side elevation of No.84 is a secondary ground floor window serving the dining room/kitchen. Other openings face into the rear garden.

145. Flat block B would sit roughly 1.5-2m from the shared boundary and will have roughly the same depth as the house. With an eaves height of 5m, the side facing flank wall will enclose and overshadow the side section of their garden space where the decked area is located. However, a large proportion of the garden directly outside the patio doors will remain open and un-impacted as the distance of the flat block increases to 15m. As such, the central aspect garden will still be exposed to the sun when it moves from east to west in the afternoon.
146. In determining whether a building is overbearing or causes overshadowing contrary to policy DP/3, it has to cause an unacceptable adverse impact. As only one section (under 50%) of the garden will be impacted by the flat block, officers do not consider the impact to be unacceptably adverse in this instance.
147. The flank wall to flat A will sit roughly 2m from the boundary with No.33 Main Road. The building is not considered to have a significant or adverse overbearing or overshadowing impact on the occupiers of No.33 or No.5 Orchid Fare given its position at the end of their garden.

Noise from Car Parking Areas

148. Representations have been submitted raising concern with the noise impacts that could be generated from the car parking areas to plots 1-8 and 9-15. Given that the parking spaces will be used in association with four residential units each (1-2 bedrooms per unit) the level of use would not generate significant levels of noise that would adversely impact residential amenity.
149. Due to the relationship to garden areas, the Environmental Health Officer does consider it reasonable to add a condition for a mitigation strategy along that shared boundary. This could include a sound barrier to provide a more substantial buffer than just a boarded fence. Officers consider this condition to be reasonable and the applicants have showing willingness for this condition to be included to mitigate concern.

Impact on future occupiers

150. Each dwelling and flat will have access to private residential amenity space in the form of a balcony or garden. The gardens provided are of a reasonable size ranging from 74 square metres on some of the smaller units to 405 square meters on the larger units. The Councils District Design Guide (SPD) requires garden spaces to be between 50-80 square metres in urban-rural locations. The proposed development would accord with this guidance.
151. Standard conditions relating to the construction phase of the development have been recommended by the district Environmental Health Officer and these can be attached to the decision notice.
152. In conclusion, 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 those neighbouring properties in terms of unreasonable overlooking or overshadowing in accordance with Policy DP/3 of the Local Development Framework.

Surface water drainage

153. In accordance with paragraph 162 of the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities should work with other authorities and providers to assess the capacity of infrastructure for surface water and its treatment.
154. The site lies in Flood Zone 1. Despite this low classification, it has been confirmed that in August 2014, 11 properties were flooded in the local area. When there is a period of heavy rainfall the south of the village regularly floods due to neglect of the system as a key problem. This flooding issue seems to be an on-going occurrence for the village.
155. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFRA) has not raised an objection following the submission of a revised surface water drainage strategy. Officers have discussed the current issue of the drainage and the capacity of the pumping station raised by the Parish Council with the LLFRA and Anglian Water.
156. The surface dwellings will be directed towards a storm attenuation tank that lies underneath the grassed area in the centre of the site. The drainage strategy indicates that the tank is larger than that normally required for a development of this size, in the event of high volumes of water run-off. From here the water will be discharged and directed through new pipe work into the brook that runs alongside Highfields Road. No surface water from the proposed development will be directed to the pumping station.
157. Dye and CCTV tests have recently taken place to ensure the run-off into the brook is clear and that water from the development will flow. This information has been reviewed by the LLFRA and considered to be acceptable. Officers recommend the imposition of a condition should the application be approved to ensure a more detailed scheme is conditioned, but its principles will relate to the findings of the reports to date. Any variations to the proposed scheme are considered in writing by the Local Planning Authority beforehand.
158. The Environment Agency requires conditions to be included in any consent preventing surface water and contamination issues in a sensitive area. These can be included in any consent.

Foul Drainage

159. In accordance with paragraph 162 of the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities should work with other authorities and providers to assess the capacity of infrastructure for wastewater and its treatment.
160. Policy NE/9 states that planning permission will not be granted where there is an inadequate sewerage drainage system (including sewage treatment works) available to meet the demands of the development unless there is an agreed phasing plan between the developer and the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructure.
161. The public foul water system currently utilises a pumping station to the south of Highfields Caldecote. Local representations indicate that this has been subject to failure and as a result has previous meant effluent has discharging onto the nearby roads.
162. Officers have held a meeting with Anglian Water, in recognition of the concerns regarding the capacity of the pumping station. Anglian Water have explained that during periods of wet weather the receiving flow often increases, and a storm chamber is used to relieve the pumps workload. A typical storm downpour is handled without any impact

to customers or the environment, however, prolonged wet weather periods have proved harder to manage.

163. The site has recently received fresh pumps and Anglia Water confirmed they are working as expected. The station also has a pumping flow meter which allows their teams to monitor performance.
164. They confirmed that recent concerns and customer complaints in the area have been due to tanker movements and hired diesel pumps through the village. These actions were required because of blockage caused by non-flushable waste in the systems rather than the pump/assets failure.
165. This is an on going issue and is the responsibility of the owners or the public system Anglia Water, riparian owners and the local community to fully address. It is not for the planning system to duplicate controls or place the onus onto developers to address a wider matter.
166. Notwithstanding this, Anglian Water are obligated to accept the flows from development with the benefit of planning consent and would therefore take the necessary steps to ensure that there is sufficient capacity should planning consent be granted. Anglian Water confirmed that it is only at the point of certainty a scheme will be built i.e. granting of planning permission whereby a specific project will be identified to upgrade facilities where necessary.
167. Therefore consider an adequate sewage drainage system is available to meet the need of the development in accordance with policy NE/9 of the Local Development Framework.

Section 106 contributions

168. As the consent is for a full planning permission, the S106 contributions proposed are fixed. Appendix 2 lists what needs to be provided and trigger points if the application is approved. This secures the following items:
 - Affordable housing (40% - 28 units) (including shared ownership)
 - Household waste receptacles
 - Contribution towards upgrades to the village hall/pavilion
 - Contribution towards upgrades to the MUGA and recreation ground
 - NHS contributions
 - Education contributions
 - Provision and maintenance of the LEAP, LAPs and other public spaces
 - Management and ownership of the car park
 - Monitoring fee

Other matters

Cumulative Impact

169. Officers are aware that there are other large scale applications for residential development in Caldecote where the principle of development relies on the District Council's deficit in five year housing land supply.
170. These are the applications listed in section 'Planning History'. 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.

171. 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 these schemes on the capacity of services and facilities in Caldecote and have worked with consultees to ensure that they have done the same, including in relation to education provision.
172. The County Council as Education Authority have considered the anticipated population increase if all schemes came forward and have come to the conclusion that there would not be capacity at the primary school. If members a suitably worded S106 approve the application will be written up to cover eventualities.
173. The NHS have acknowledged there would be insufficient capacity at both Bourn and Comberton Surgery to take growth from the development. As such a contribution towards an extension to Comberton Surgery and associated Little Eversden surgery has been requested.
174. 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 Caldecote.
175. 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.
176. Following this assessment, officers are content that the sustainability credentials of this proposal would not prejudice the outcome of the other applications.

Archaeology

177. The County Council Archaeologist considers that the site is of high archaeological potential. On this basis, no objection is raised by the County Council Archaeologist, subject to a condition being attached to the outline planning permission requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation to be completed and any agreed mitigation measures implemented prior to the commencement of development.

Environmental Health

170. The site is considered to be a low risk in relation to land contamination and reports submitted have evidenced this. Therefore no condition is recommended by the Contamination Officer.
171. Details of any lighting to be installed will also need to be provided.
172. 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 have been submitted by the applicant but are yet to be agreed by the environmental health officer. If no feedback is received in time for the committee meeting this part 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 request for a noise assessment to be undertaken for a LEAP is not considered

reasonable given that it will serve as a small area of play.

173. The applicant has committed to 10% of the energy requirements generated by the development being produced by renewable sources. A compliance condition will need to be added to any consent.

Conclusion

174. In considering this application, the following relevant (to varying degrees, as assessed in the report) adopted Core Strategy and Development Plan policies are to be regarded as out of date while there is no five year housing land supply:

Core Strategy

175. ST/2: Housing Provision
ST/6: Group Villages

Development Plan

DP/1: Sustainable Development
DP/7: Village Frameworks
HG/1: Housing Density
HG/2: Housing Mix
NE/6: Biodiversity

176. Policies ST/6 and DP/7 of the LDF are considered to carry some weight in the determination of this application. Despite being considered out of date, the purpose of these policies is to restrict the number of residential units permitted in Group Villages as third behind Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres in the hierarchy of settlements. Whilst the purpose of guiding development to the most sustainable locations is consistent with the NPPF, the blanket application of the village hierarchy is considered to be flawed in assessing applications against the definition of sustainable development in the NPPF, as was highlighted in the recent appeal decision to allow 55 dwellings in Over.
177. Emerging policy S/9 is considered to limited weight in the determination of this application. However, the 2012 Village Classification Report, which is part of the evidence base behind the emerging Local Plan, acknowledges that Caldecote has a poorer range of services and facilities than many Group Villages, including sources of employment.
178. Policies HG/1, HG/2 and HG/3 are all housing policies which are considered to carry some weight in the decision making process as these relate to the density of development, housing mix and affordable housing, all of which contribute to sustainable development. In relation to the other relevant policy of the LDF quoted in this report, this is considered to be consistent with the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF and therefore has been given some weight in the assessment of this application.
179. Within the context of a lack of five year housing land supply and the consequent status of ST/6 as out of date, it is considered that the fact that the proposed housing numbers exceed what would normally be expected is not sufficient to warrant refusal, unless harm is identified in relation to the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.
180. 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.

181. In terms of the environmental role, the application site lies within the development framework of Highfields Caldecote and is surrounded by residential units. As such there will be limited impact on the wider landscape or countryside. Any harm to the local environment can mitigate through the use of appropriate conditions.
182. In terms of the social role, officers recognise that there are fewer facilities and services within the village itself when compared to some other group villages and minor rural centres in the district. As such, some harm might be caused by additional vehicle movements. However, the site is located in the heart of the village opposite the local school and other community facilities. In this instance the harm is not considered to be significant.
183. Whilst officers recognise the concerns of local residents and the Parish Council, it is considered that the mitigation measures proposed address the areas of weakness, including drainage and footpaths, in infrastructure capacity to the extent that the benefits of the proposals outweigh the dis-benefits.
180. The County Council as Education Authority consider that the issues relating to the capacity of the Early Years and Primary School can be addressed through a suitably worded S106 agreement.
181. It is considered that the scheme includes positive elements that enhance social sustainability. These include:
- the positive contribution of up to 71 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
 - Re-use of a part brownfield site
 - limited wider landscape harm and impact on village setting
 - the contribution of 40% affordable housing in the context of a significant level of district wide housing need
 - provision of public open space, including equipped areas of play.
 - the package of contributions to be secured through the Section 106 agreement towards the enhancement of offsite community facilities and pedestrian links
 - potential for access to public transport, services, facilities and employment
 - employment during construction to benefit the local economy.
 - potential to result in an increase in the use of local services and facilities
182. 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 potential dis-benefits including accessibility to employment and some daily services.
183. None of these disbenefits are considered to result in significant and demonstrable harm when balanced against the positive elements. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal achieves the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

Recommendation

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

Section 106 agreement

185. Completion of an agreement confirming payment of the items outlined in Appendix 2.

Draft conditions

186. See appendix 3

Informatives

187. See appendix 3

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/1027/16/OL

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