

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

10 July 2019

AUTHOR/S: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Application Number: S/0029/19/FL

Parish(es): Whittlesford

Proposal: Proposed demolition of existing factory premises and construction of 7 dwellings and associated infrastructure, including access, parking, landscaping and ancillary works

Site address: Factory, 84, Duxford Road, Whittlesford, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB22 4NH

Applicant(s): Mr Peter Wedd

Recommendation: Refusal

Key material considerations: Principle of Development in the Green Belt
Principle of the Loss of Employment Land
Principle of the Erection of Dwellings in the Countryside
Visual Amenity and Local Character
Highway Safety and Parking
Residential Amenity and Noise
Ecology
Trees and Landscaping
Contamination
Sustainability Issues

Committee Site Visit: 09 July 2019

Departure Application: Yes (advertised 30 January 2019).

Presenting Officer: Rebecca Whitney, Senior Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: Departure from the Development Plan (development in the countryside and Green Belt)

Date by which decision due: 12 July 2019 (Extension of Time Agreed)

Executive Summary

1. The application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing factory and for the erection of 7 dwellings. The site is located outside of the Development Framework of Whittlesford and is therefore located in the countryside, as well as the designated Green Belt.
2. The key issues relating to the principle of the development are the impact upon the

Green Belt, the loss of the site as employment land, and the principle of the erection of dwellings in the countryside.

Green Belt

3. The development is considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt as the development would not have a greater impact upon the openness of the surrounding Green Belt, and would therefore be acceptable under Paragraph 145 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) and Policy NH/9 of the Local Plan.

Employment Land

4. Policy E/14 of the Local Plan seeks to retain employment sites in and on the edge of villages to provide a range of employment opportunities and reduce the need to travel. The application fails to demonstrate that the site is inappropriate for employment use having regard for market demand; that the development would provide benefits to the community such that these could be considered to outweigh any adverse effect on employment opportunities, land and premises; or that environmental problems in terms of pollution or traffic are being caused or that any employment use would create similar problems. The application also does not justify the lack of any employment provision as a part of the proposal. Therefore the proposal is contrary to Policy E/14 of the Local Plan.

Residential Development in the Countryside

5. Policy S/7 of the Local Plan and supporting Policy S/10 seek to prevent gradual encroachment into the countryside and to guard against incremental growth in unsustainable locations. The provision of residential development outside of the Development Framework of Whittlesford would result in incremental growth in a location which is unsustainable by virtue of its location outside in the countryside. The proposal is therefore contrary to the aims of Policy S/7 and Policy S/10 of the Local Plan.

Conclusion

6. The other material considerations relating to the proposal are assessed in this report, however as the principle of the development is not supported in terms of the loss of employment land and the principle of erecting dwellings in the countryside, it is recommended that the application is refused for these reasons.

Planning History

7. S/1541/82/F - Extension to form timber store (Approved 1982).

S/0700/75/F – Extension to factory building (Approved 1975).

SC/0634/71/D - To extend existing buildings for use as workshop and tower to house the dust extraction plant (Approved 1971).

SC/0367/69/D– Replacement of existing structures to provide new office and workshop (Approved 1969).

National Guidance

8. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019
National Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan Policies

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**
9. S/1 Vision
 S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
 S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 S/4 Cambridge Green Belt
 S/5 Provision of New Jobs and Homes
 S/6 The Development Strategy to 2031
 S/7 Development Frameworks
 H/8 Housing Density
 H/9 Housing Mix
 H/12 Residential Space Standards
 S/10 Group Villages
 CC/1 Mitigation and Adaption to Climate Change
 CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Development
 CC/4 Water Efficiency
 CC/6 Construction Methods
 CC/7 Water Quality
 CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
 CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
 HQ/1 Design Principles
 NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
 NH/4 Biodiversity
 NH/8 Mitigating the Impact of Development in and adjoining the Green Belt
 NH/9 Redevelopment of Previously Developed Sites and Infilling in the Green Belt
 NH/14 Heritage Assets
 E/14 Loss of Employment Land to Non Employment Uses
 SC/9 Lighting Proposals
 SC/10 Noise Pollution
 SC/11 Contaminated Land
 TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
 TI/3 Parking Provision
 TI/10 Broadband

- South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**
10. Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016
 District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010
 Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted March 2010
 Biodiversity SPD - Adopted July 2009
 Trees & Development Sites SPD - Adopted January 2009

Consultations

11. **Whittlesford Parish Council – Objects.**

“Whittlesford Parish Council observations and objection to Planning Application S/0029/19/FL – Demolition of factory and erection of 7 houses at 84 Duxford Road Whittlesford.

The Parish Council objects to the proposals of this Application:-

1. The access road to the 7 dwellings has (a) no pavement and (b) must be fitted with speed bumps to deter speeding on the narrow road with a right-angled blind bend;
2. The 1st floor rear windows of the proposed 4 semi-detached properties

- overlook the rear garden of 102 Duxford Road;
3. The heights of the houses exceed the heights of the present buildings on site and could interrupt the views from Duxford Road to the A505 and Duxford Airfield;
 4. Information supplied indicates that there will be an increase in shadowing of the neighbouring properties at 98-102 Duxford Road especially from 5p.m. in the period from September to March and from 3p.m. in December for 102 Duxford Road.”

Requests that the application is referred to the South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee.

12. **Scientific Officer (Contaminated Land)** – No objection, subject to conditions.

Requests a condition requiring a risk assessment, a remediation method statement, a verification report and regarding the identification of any contamination not considered in the remediation method statement.

13. **Ecology Officer (informally consulted)** – No objection, subject to conditions.

Requests a condition requiring the submission of a biodiversity enhancement scheme, and an informative regarding the need for clearance works to be undertaken outside of bird breeding season.

14. **Environmental Health Officer** – No objection subject to conditions.

Requests conditions regarding noisy works, the burning of waste and contractors' access, storage and parking arrangements, and the control of debris, mud and dusts arising from the development.

15. **Landscape Officer** - No objection, subject to conditions.

Requests condition to require hard and soft landscape details, a 2m wide mixed native hedgerow to the western boundary and details of boundary treatments.

16. **Local Highways Authority** – No objection, subject to conditions.

Confirms that it will not be adopting any part of the development in its present format and requests that a condition is attached to any permission granted to require the developer to confirm that the site will not be presented for adoption now or at any time in the future.

Also requests conditions to require the submission of details of the proposed access arrangements for future management and maintenance of the proposed streets within the development, to require that the access is a minimum width of 5m for the first 5m, to require a bin collection point to be located no more than 25m from the highway, and to require the submission of a traffic management plan.

17. **Sustainable Drainage Engineer** – No objection, subject to conditions.

Requests a condition requiring details of a surface water drainage scheme, including its maintenance and management, and details of a foul water disposal scheme.

18. **Trees Officer** – No objection.

Requests a condition requiring an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Strategy.

19. **Representations** – 5 comments were received with the grounds for objection summarised as follows:
- a. Overlooking and loss of privacy,
 - b. Overshadowing and loss of light,
 - c. Loss of views,
 - d. Noise and disturbance,
 - e. Impacts upon trees and hedges,
 - f. Parking provision,
 - g. Clarification regarding boundary treatments requested.

Site and Surroundings

20. The site is located outside of the Development Framework of Whittlesford, and within the Green Belt. The site is located on potentially contaminated land. The site lies in Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest category and considered to be low risk. The site is not located in a conservation area, nor is it near any listed buildings. There are some significant trees on and adjacent to the site, however the trees are not the subject of any Tree Preservation Orders. The site is surrounded by relatively flat and open countryside to the south, with the Development Frameworks of Whittlesford and Whittlesford Bridge to the north-west and south-east respectively, along Duxford Road.
21. The proposal site currently hosts a factory building and associated outbuildings, and is accessed via a Duxford Road.

Proposal

22. The proposal seeks to demolish the existing factory building and associated outbuildings, and to erect 7 dwellings with associated amenity space and car parking provision.
23. The proposed dwellings would be one-and-a-half to two storeys in height, and would comprise 3 detached four bed dwellings and 4 semi-detached three bed dwellings. The dwellings would share an access off of Whittlesford Road, which would involve the widening of the existing access to 5m in width.

Planning Assessment

24. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application are: principle of development (including Green Belt and Countryside issues), visual amenity and local character, highway safety and parking, residential amenity and noise, ecology, trees and landscaping, land contamination, and sustainability issues.

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

25. The site is not considered to be in a prominent position or immediately evident from Duxford Road, being set back approximately 60 metres west of the public highway, separated by the dwellings at Nos.86-100 Duxford Road. There are no public rights of way near to the site which would afford additional viewpoints. Nonetheless, the site can be observed from the public highway and any development on the site increases the potential for the site to be observed. It must also be remembered that when

considering the impact on the openness of the Green Belt, this is not affected by planting or tree screening as this is not a permanent feature.

26. The application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing factory building and associated outbuildings, and for the erection of 7 dwellings. The three detached dwellings would be one and a half storeys in heights, with a maximum height of approximately 7.3m, and the four semi-detached dwellings would be two storeys, with a maximum ridge height of 7.9m. Garden space, car parking and cycle stores are proposed for each dwelling, as well as shared access and unallocated visitor parking and a soft landscaping scheme.

Green Belt Policies

27. Chapter 13 of the NPPF focuses on protecting Green Belt land.

Paragraph 133 of the NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

28. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that the Green Belt serves five purposes: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
29. Policy S/4 of the Local Plan states that a Green Belt will be maintained around Cambridge that will define the extent of the urban area. The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt in South Cambridgeshire are defined on the Policies Map, which includes some minor revisions to the inner boundary of the Green Belt around Cambridge and to the boundaries around some inset villages. New development in the Green Belt will only be approved in accordance with Green Belt policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.
30. The supporting text to Policy S/4 of the Local Plan reiterates that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and a specific function of some Green Belts, such as the one around Cambridge, is to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. A number of factors define the special character of Cambridge and its setting, which include the distribution, physical separation, setting, scale and character of Green Belt villages; and a landscape that retains a strong rural character.
31. Policy S/4 of the Local Plan states that new development in the Green Belt will only be approved in accordance with Green Belt policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.
32. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances
33. Paragraph 144 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

34. Paragraph 145 of the NPPF states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, but lists 7 exceptions, which includes:
 - a. limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - i. not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - ii. Would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority (criterion g).
35. Policy NH/9 of the Local Plan states that the redevelopment of previously developed sites and infilling in the Green Belt will be inappropriate development except for the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development (criterion e).
36. The Planning Statement submitted in support of the application states that the total footprint of the proposed development would be reduced by 59.48% when compared to the current situation, that the total floor space would be reduced by 25.93% and that the volume would be reduced by 35.99%. The reduction in built form is considered to address the requirement under Paragraph 145 of the NPPF and Policy NH/9 of the Local Plan that the development of the previously developed land would not have a greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development and therefore, it is considered that the application proposes appropriate development in the Green Belt.

Loss of Employment Land

Employment Policies

37. Chapter 6 of the NPPF focuses on building a strong, competitive economy.
38. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.
39. At a local level, Policy E/14 of the Local Plan deals with the loss of employment land to non-employment uses. The Policy states that the conversion, change of use or redevelopment of existing employment sites to non-employment uses within or on the edge of development frameworks will be resisted unless one of the set criteria are met. The criteria are as follows:
 - a. It is demonstrated that the site is inappropriate for any employment use to continue having regard to market demand. Applications will need to be accompanied by documentary evidence that the site is not suitable or capable

of being made suitable for continued employment use. Evidence would be required that the property has been adequately marketed for a period of not less than twelve months on terms that reflect the lawful use and condition of the premises.

- b. The overall benefit to the community of the proposal outweighs any adverse effect on employment opportunities and the range of available employment land and premises.
 - c. The existing use is generating environmental problems such as noise, pollution, or unacceptable levels of traffic and any alternative employment use would continue to generate similar environmental problems.
40. Policy E/14 is considered to apply in this instance, however the phrasing of the policy as applying to sites “within or on the edge of development frameworks” is considered to create some ambiguity. The site access is located approximately 130m south of the southern Development Framework boundary of Whittlesford, and approximately 650m to the centre of the village. The site is located within easy walking and cycling distance of the village (an approximately 10 minute walk), and commuting to the site for employment would not necessarily require residents of Whittlesford to use private motor vehicles.
41. The application does not include marketing information in order to demonstrate that the site is inappropriate for employment use having regard for market demand and to therefore address criterion a of Policy E/14.
42. The application does not demonstrate that the development would provide benefits to the community such that these could be considered to outweigh any adverse effect on employment opportunities, land and premises, in order to address criterion b of Policy E/14.
43. The application does go some way to documenting the noise issues associated with the existing use of the site; however the application does not demonstrate that environmental problems in terms of pollution or traffic are being caused or that any employment use would create similar problems.
44. Policy E/14 also states that redevelopment proposals which propose the loss of all employment uses will need to be accompanied by clear viability or other evidence as to why it is not possible to deliver an element of employment development as part of the scheme. This requirement of the policy has also not been addressed.
45. The proposal does not comply with the requirements of Policy E/14 and therefore the loss of the land as employment land to a non-employment use is not supported, resulting in an in-principle objection to the proposal.

Principle of the Erection of Dwellings in the Countryside

46. Notwithstanding the in-principle objection to the loss of the site as employment land, the principle of the erection of dwellings on the site is assessed below. The site is located outside of the Development Framework, in the countryside and Green Belt.

Development Outside of Development Frameworks

47. Policy S/7 of the Local Plan seeks to prevent gradual encroachment into the countryside and to guard against incremental growth in unsustainable locations. The Policy states that outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force and development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in

the countryside or where supported by other policies in this plan will be permitted.

48. Officers acknowledge that in Whittlesford a neighbourhood area has been designated and a Neighbourhood Plan for the area is currently being prepared. The draft plan does not comment on this particular site and does not include a policy which would be applicable to this application. Nevertheless, had a policy been drafted which would be relevant, only limited weight could be afforded to this due to the early stages of the Neighbourhood Plan. For the purposes of the assessment of this planning application with respect to Local Plan policy S/7, no Neighbourhood Plan has come into force in Whittlesford.
49. The proposed residential development comprising the erection of 7 dwellings on the site is not considered to meet the criteria of Policy S/7 in relation to development in the countryside, and this in itself forms a further in-principle objection to the proposal. In addition, the proposal is considered to result in incremental growth in an unsustainable location, by virtue of the location of the site outside of the Development Framework.
50. Policy S/10 of the Local Plan is a supporting policy to S/7 and relates to Group Villages, restricting residential development and redevelopment to an indicative scheme size of 8 dwellings within the Development Frameworks of such villages. The proposed development would be outside of the Development Framework and would therefore be contrary to Policy S/10 of the Local Plan.

Redevelopment of Previously Developed Land

51. Policy S/10 states that development may exceptionally consist of up to about 15 dwellings where this would make the best use of a single brownfield site. Whilst it is noted that the site is on previously developed land, otherwise known as brownfield land, the site is not within the Development Framework and therefore this part of the Policy does not support the principle of residential redevelopment of the site. The site is not identified on the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Brownfield Register. In this instance, the benefits of the redevelopment of previously developed land are not considered to address the conflict with Policies S/7 and S/10 of the Local Plan.

Density

52. Policy H/8 of the Local Plan requires an average net density of 30 dwellings per hectare in Rural Centres, Minor Rural Centres and Group Villages. The Policy also states that the net density of a development may vary from the above where justified by the character of the locality, the scale of development or other local circumstances.
53. The site area measures 0.3527 hectare, therefore the provision of 7 dwellings would result in a housing density of approximately 20 dwellings per hectare. The proposed density is considered acceptable due to the specific circumstances of this application, noting that the application site is on the edge of the village and due to the requirement of Green Belt policies that there is a reduction in the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt when considered against the existing situation, requiring a reduction in developed area.

Housing Mix

54. Policy H/8 of the Local Plan sets out housing mix requirements for developments of 10 or more dwellings, and states that developments of fewer than 9 dwellings will take account of local circumstances. The development would comprise 3 detached four bed dwellings and 4 semi-detached three bed dwellings. No objections are raised to the proposed mix.

Visual Amenity and Local Character

55. Notwithstanding the above in-principle objection to the loss of the site as employment land, and to the principle of the erection of dwellings in the countryside, the impacts of the proposal in terms of visual amenity and local character are assessed below.
56. Officers consider that the proposed layout of the site would have an acceptable impact on the visual amenity of the area, locating the built form of the development in the southern portion of the site in a courtyard layout which aims to keep the built form as close to the footprint of the existing factory building as is practicable. By clustering the buildings to the southern corner of the site, with the hardstanding, access and turning area located further north in line with the existing, the proposed development minimises and seeks to mitigate the level of visual encroachment into the countryside.
57. In addition, the Planning Statement notes that the proposed development would increase the opportunity for soft landscaping by 111.38% over the existing development, allowing the impact of the development upon the visual amenity and character of the area to be further mitigated. Matters relating to landscaping are addressed below, however it should be noted that the Landscape Officer has raised no objections.
58. Officers consider the scale and appearance of the buildings to be acceptable and to have taken account of the scale of the existing factory building on the site and the dwellings to the north-east.
59. The detached dwellings would be one and a half storey in height with a maximum ridge height of 7.3m. There would be slight design variations between Plots 5 and 7 and Plot 6, however the overarching character and form would be similar. The dwellings would have a barn-like appearance with red brick plinths, stained black timber clad elevations and stained black timber window frames. The roofs would be gabled with asymmetric roofs featuring catslides to the front elevations. The roofs would be punctuated with conservation style roof lights, which would be set flush to the roof. The barn-like appearance of the dwellings is considered suitable for their location to the south-western boundary of the site, furthest from the established residential built form along Duxford Road and proposed in this application.
60. The four semi-detached dwellings would be two storeys in height with a maximum ridge height of 7.9m and would be traditional in form and design with a gabled roof, shared gable projection to the rear and a chimney on each gable end. Tradition brick detailing is proposed to the front elevation, alongside window cill and lintel details which are considered to create interest in the elevations. The proposed materials are buff brickwork, natural slate tiles to the roofs and timber door frames.
61. The proposed car parking arrangement and provision of cycle stores are considered to be ancillary to the development and would not result in significant harm to the character or appearance of the area.
62. Officers considered it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the submission of materials for the proposed buildings, should permission be granted.
63. Overall, the design, layout, scale and appearance of the proposed development is considered acceptable and Officers consider that the visual impacts of the proposed development can be adequately mitigated against. The proposal accords with Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety and Parking

Highway Safety

64. The application is supported by a Transport Assessment.
65. The Local Highway Authority has commented on the application and whilst no objections are raised, the Authority has confirmed that it will not be adopting any part of the development in its present format and requests that a condition is attached to any permission granted to require the developer to confirm that the site will not be presented for adoption now or at any time in the future. This condition is not considered to be reasonable or necessary in planning terms, however this wording could be attached to any permission granted as an informative.
66. The Local Highway Authority requests that conditions are attached to any permission granted to require the submission of details of the proposed access arrangements for future management and maintenance of the proposed streets within the development, to require that the access is a minimum width of 5m for the first 5m, to require a bin collection point to be located no more than 25m from the highway, and to require the submission of a traffic management plan. These conditions are considered to be reasonable and necessary and should be attached to any planning permission granted in the interest of highway safety.
67. The Parish Council objected on the basis that the access road to the 7 dwellings has no pavement and must be fitted with speed bumps to deter speeding on the narrow road with a right-angled blind bend. The Local Highway Authority has not raised any objections in this regard, and therefore it is not considered to be reasonable or necessary to require the provision of pavement or speed bumps.

Parking

68. The proposed development would two on-plot car parking spaces for Plots 5-7, with one on-plot car parking space provided for Plots 1-4 with 4 off-plot, unallocated car parking spaces provided within a grassed area to the north of the site. Cycle stores for four bicycles would be provided on-plot for each dwelling. A neighbour objection raises concerns regarding car parking provision, particularly for visitors. The provision of unallocated spaces is considered to address this potential requirement.
69. The proposed provision is considered to comply with the requirements of Policy TI/3 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity and Noise

Overlooking and Loss of Privacy

70. The Parish Council and neighbours have raised concerns regarding the overlooking of neighbouring properties and a loss of privacy.
71. The proposed dwellings would be located to the south-west of the row of dwellings at Nos.86-100 Duxford Road, with the rear garden of No.102 along the south-eastern boundary. The proposed dwellings at Plots 1-2 would not have side (north-eastern) elevation first floor windows, and therefore direct overlooking of the gardens at Nos.86-100 would not be possible. It is noted that a ground floor side window is proposed to the northern elevation to serve a kitchen/living area, however views from these windows would be obstructed by boundary treatments.
72. There would be two first floor rear elevation windows to each of the four semi-detached dwellings which would allow for views toward the south-east of the site, over

the rear garden of No.102 Duxford Road. This would result in direct views of the rear garden space, and would have the potential for oblique views toward the main dwelling. The overlooking of the south-westernmost areas of the rear garden is not considered to result in significant harm to the privacy of the occupiers of the dwelling at No.102 as the primary amenity space immediately to the rear and side of the dwelling would not be overlooked as a result of the proposal due to the separation distance of approximately 15-20m and due to the oblique angle of views. The overlooking from these windows is not considered to result in a significant impact upon the occupiers of No.104 as there would be separation distance of approximately 33m between the two site boundaries.

73. It is noted that the window to Plot 1 which is set to the rear of the main part of the dwelling rather than the rear projection may allow for views toward the rear garden of No.100 Duxford Road, however these views would be at an oblique angle making direct overlooking views very difficult to achieve.
74. Plot 7 would have first floor rooflights and windows to the front (north-east) elevation which would be capable of creating views toward the rear garden spaces of Plots 1-4. The proposed plans indicate that the first floor window would be obscured glazed, which would preserve the privacy of the primary amenity space directly rear of the rear elevation French doors to Plots 3-4 and should be secured via condition should planning permission be granted. The bedroom would be served by a side elevation window so this would not result in an unacceptable negative impact upon the enjoyment of this bedroom. The rooflights would be capable of creating overlooking views, however these would be limited to the south-eastern ends of the rear gardens of Plots 1-4 which would be overlooked in any event by the adjoining semi-detached dwellings. The rooflights may result in views toward the rear garden of No.102, however these views would be oblique, and the separation distance between Plot 7 and the dwelling at No.102 measures approximately 55m and therefore is such that any impact is not considered to be so significant that it would warrant refusal of the application. Whilst there may be overlooking of the rear garden, some defensible amenity space would be retained immediately to the rear and to the side of No.102.
75. On balance, the potential for overlooking of the neighbouring properties is not considered to result in significant harm to the residential amenity of the occupiers of the adjoining properties, and is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan.

Overshadowing and Loss of Light

76. The application is supported by a Shadow Study, included within the Design and Access Statement.
77. It is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in an increase in overshadowing of the neighbouring properties at Nos.86-102 Duxford Road, as raised by the Parish Council. However the most significant additional impacts over and above the existing situation are considered to be limited to later than 5pm in the winter (on the basis of the information provided relating to 21st December, the winter solstice). The impacts would also relate primarily to the south-westernmost parts of the rear gardens of the affected properties, with impacts upon the habitable rooms of the dwellings not considered to be affected such that this would warrant refusal of the application.

Noise

78. The application is supported by an Environmental Noise Assessment. This document assesses the suitability of the site for residential development and assesses the

impacts of the existing use upon the neighbouring dwellings should the existing use be retained and intensified (which is a potential site use which has been considered by the Applicant).

79. The Environmental Health Officer has assessed the application in relation to noise disturbance and is satisfied with the methodology and subsequent findings of the Environmental Noise Assessment carried by Loven Acoustics (Report ref: LA/1637/02bR/ML) and acknowledges that noise levels in the proposed residential dwellings will be within the upper threshold of limits set by BS 8233:2014 and World Health Organisation guidelines, so long as an appropriate scheme of glazing and ventilation are adopted, as stipulated in Table 4 of the aforementioned report. This should be required by condition if any permission is granted, in order to ensure that the proposal is compliant with Policy SC/10 of the Local Plan.
80. Officers requested that the Environmental Health Officer provide comments on the existing use of the site as a joinery factory. Given the type of operations typically undertaken by the business, and the close proximity to the nearest noise sensitive receptors (being the adjacent residential dwellings), it was considered apparent that a business of this nature, if expanded at the site, would likely lead to complaints from nearby residents. Not only would there be the potential for noise complaints from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) accessing and leaving the site, fork lift truck movements and reversing alarms, manufacturer associated noise (machinery and/or impact noise) but also noise from any burners if used at the premises, which could be expected for this type of use.
81. The Environmental Health Officer is of the view that the use of the proposed development site for expansion of the Wedd Joinery business is far more likely to have an adverse impact on the amenity of existing nearby residents, than if the proposal for replacement of the existing factory premises with dwellings is granted planning permission.
82. The Environmental Health Officer requests conditions regarding noisy works, the burning of waste and contractors' access, storage and parking arrangements, and the control of debris, mud and dusts arising from the development.
83. The condition regarding the burning of waste is not considered to be reasonable or necessary, however it is recommended that this wording is attached as an informative to any permission granted.
84. The condition requested regarding contractors' access, storage and parking arrangements, and the control of debris, mud and dusts arising from the development has been considered, however the requirements are considered to have been addressed by the condition requiring a traffic management plan requested by the Local Highway Authority. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to impose this condition.
85. The remaining condition regarding noisy works and the informatives recommended should be attached to any permission granted, in the interest of residential amenity of the neighbouring occupiers in accordance with Policy HQ/1 of the Local Plan. This is considered to address the concerns of neighbours regarding noise and disturbance throughout the construction phase, should permission be granted.
86. Concerns raised by neighbours in relation to noise could be considered to relate to noise and disturbance created following the occupation of the development, should permission be granted. The siting, layout and scale of the development is not

considered to result in noise and disturbance over and above what may be expected of a residential area.

Lighting

87. No details of any external lighting have been provided as part of the application. Should planning permission be granted, Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition that no external lighting is installed on site without written approval, given the sites location in the countryside and Green Belt and potential impacts of external lighting, which have not been fully considered as part of this application.

Loss of Views

88. It is noted that some objections received comment on the loss of views of the surrounding countryside. Private views are not a material planning consideration and therefore significant weight cannot be attached to this ground for objections. The Parish Council raised an objection on the basis that the development may interrupt views from Duxford Road to the A505 and Duxford Airfield. These views are not offered any level of protection and due to the distance between the site and these landmarks, the potential interruption of these views is not considered to be a material consideration in this instance.
89. Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposed development is considered to accord with policies HQ/1, SC/9 and SC/10 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

90. The application has been supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which has determined that the site is dominated by habitats of negligible or low biodiversity and ecological value and is of very limited value to protected animal species. The main protected animal species interest of the site relates to the probable presence of a small garden breeding bird assemblage that could make use of existing hedges, trees and introduced cover habitats for nesting.
91. The Appraisal makes recommendations regarding biodiversity enhancement which Officers consider should be required via condition should permission be granted, and advises that clearance of vegetation is to be undertaken outside of bird breeding season. It is recommended that advice to this effect is attached to any permission granted as an informative.
92. The condition is considered reasonable and necessary to ensure that the development secures an improved level of biodiversity for the site, in accordance with the policy NH/4 of the Local Plan and chapter 13 of the NPPF, in particular paragraphs 170, 174 and 175, which requires that applications aim to enhance, restore and add to biodiversity.

Trees and Landscaping

Trees

93. There are some significant trees in and adjacent to the site, with the removal of two trees proposed. New tree planting is proposed as a part of the soft landscaping plan. The development is therefore not considered to result in the loss of any significant trees that make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area.
94. The Council's Trees Officer has raised no objection, commenting that an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been submitted and is sufficient for this stage

of the application, However a further detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Strategy would be required by condition should planning permission be granted in order for the development to comply with Policy NH/4 of the Local Plan.

Landscaping

95. Policy NH/8 of the Local Plan states that any development proposals within the Green Belt must be located and designed so that they do not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt. Where development is permitted, landscaping conditions, together with a requirement that any planting is adequately maintained, will be attached to any planning permission in order to ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.
96. The Landscape Officer has raised no objection, subject to conditions to require hard and soft landscape details, a 2m wide mixed native hedgerow to the western boundary and details of boundary treatments. Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose the above conditions in order to ensure that the development is acceptable in landscape terms in accordance with Policy NH/8, particularly as the landscaping around the site plays an important role in visual amenity and local character of the area and any boundary treatments needs to be carefully considered. The condition regarding boundary treatments is considered to address the comment submitted by a neighbour that clarification is required in this regard.

Other Matters

97. Comments from neighbours raise concerns regarding impacts upon existing trees and hedges, outside of the application site boundary. These trees are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order or by virtue of being sited in a Conservation Area, and therefore this is a Civil matter rather than a matter that can be addressed via a planning application. This ground for objections cannot be given significant weight in this assessment.
98. Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposed development would accord with Policies HQ/1, NH/4 and NH/8 of the Local Plan.

Contamination

99. The application has been supported by a Phase 1 Desk Study Report. The Council's Scientific Officer has stated that the site has historically been used as a factory which is a potentially contaminative use, and that the desk study has identified risks associated with the former use of the land and has recommended intrusive investigation to determine any risk to future users, noting that residential use is sensitive to contamination. In accordance with the findings of the submitted report, the Council's Scientific Officer recommends that an intrusive site investigation should be carried out to investigate potential risks identified in the report, secured by condition.
100. Subject to the recommended condition, the proposed development would accord with policy SC/11 of the Local Plan.

Sustainability Issues

101. Policy CC/3 of the Local Plan states that proposals for new dwellings will be required to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies. Should planning permission be granted, Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the submission of appropriate details to ensure the development accords with Policy

CC/3 of the Local Plan.

102. Policy CC/4 of the Local Plan states that proposals for residential development must achieve a minimum water efficiency equivalent to 110 litres per person per day. Should planning permission be granted, Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the submission of such details to ensure the development accords with Policy CC/4 of the Local Plan.
103. Policy TI/10 of the Local Plan states that new development (residential, employment and commercial) will be expected to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure suitable to enable the delivery of high speed broadband services across the district. As a minimum, suitable ducting to industry standards should be provided to the public highway that can accept fibre optic cabling or other emerging technology. Other forms of infrastructure, such as facilities supporting mobile broadband and Wi-Fi, should be included where possible and viable. Should planning permission be granted, Officers consider it reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the submission of appropriate details, prior to the first occupation of the development, to ensure the development accords with Policy TI/10 of the Local Plan.

Other Matters

Drainage

104. Should planning permission be granted, it is recommended that the conditions regarding surface water and foul water drainage schemes are attached to any permission granted in order to ensure that the development is in accordance with Policies CC/8 and CC/7 respectively.

Residential Space Standards

105. The proposed development has been assessed in relation to the requirements of Policy H/12 of the Local Plan which relates to residential space standards. The policy sets out requirements for rooms and dwellings as a whole to have minimum dimensions dependent on the number of people they are designed to accommodate. The proposed internal dimensions are compliant with the requirements of Policy H/12.

Permitted Development

106. It is noted that should planning permission be granted, the dwellings would benefit from Permitted Development Rights once occupied. Officers note that the development is only considered acceptable in Green Belt terms due to the reduction in floor space and overall volume to the existing development and the positive impact upon the openness of the Green Belt, an argument which could be undermined should the owners of the dwellings carry out development which would not ordinarily require planning permission.
107. It is recommended that a condition is attached to any permission granted to restrict the Permitted Development Rights associated with the development. It is recommended that Permitted Development Rights within Classes A (extensions and alterations to dwellings), B (additions and alterations to roofs of dwellings), D (porches) E (outbuildings), and F (hardstanding) of Schedule 2, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) and Class A (means of enclosure) of Schedule 2, Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) in order to protect the openness of the Green Belt.

Developer Contributions

108. Due to the nature and scale of the development, should planning permission be

granted, developer contributions would not be required under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Other nearby applications

109. One response received from a neighbour queries a refusal of householder planning permission on their property on the grounds of impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. Each application is to be assessed on its own merits, and therefore the particulars of that application cannot be assessed further in this report.

Conclusion

110. Having taken all material planning considerations into account, it is recommended that planning permission is refused on the grounds of the application seeking permission for unsustainable development in the countryside contrary to Policies S/7 and S/10 of the Local Plan, and the application not having adequately demonstrated that the site is inappropriate for employment use contrary to Policy E/14 of the Local Plan.

Recommendation

Refusal, for the following reasons:

1. The application seeks permission for residential development outside of the village framework of Whittlesford in the designated countryside. The development is therefore contrary to Policy S/7 and supporting Policy S/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 which seek to prevent gradual encroachment into the countryside and to guard against incremental growth in unsustainable locations. The principle of development is not supported by a Neighbourhood Plan or other policies within the Local Plan. The provision of residential development outside of the Development Framework of Whittlesford would result in incremental growth in an unsustainable location contrary to the aims of Policy S/7 and Policy S/10 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.
2. The development would involve the loss of employment land to a non-employment use. The application does not provide sufficient evidence to adequately demonstrate that the site is inappropriate for employment use having regard for market demand; that the development would provide benefits to the community such that these could be considered to outweigh any adverse effect on employment opportunities, land and premises; or that environmental problems in terms of pollution or traffic are being caused or that any employment use would create similar problems. The application also does not justify the lack of any employment provision as a part of the proposal. Therefore the proposal is contrary to Policy E/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 which seeks to retain employment sites at villages to provide a range of employment opportunities and reduce the need to travel.

Background Papers:

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)
- Planning File References: S/0029/19/FL

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