

# LINTON PARISH COUNCIL



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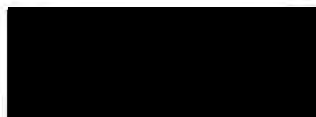
**RE: Consultant comments on behalf of Linton Parish council for S/2501/19/RM – Land to the North and South of Bartlow Road, Linton**

Dear Rebecca,

Please find attached the comments from a Consultant acting on behalf of Linton Parish Council for Planning Application S/2501/19/RM.

Further comments from Linton Parish Council will follow.

Yours Sincerely



Ms Kathryn Wiseman  
Clerk and RFO to Linton Parish Council

## Introduction

Linton Parish Council's Holding Objection is summarised as follows:

1. The RM application does not provide adequate information for certainty of decision-making, and reports that are material are missing.
2. The RM application seeks to vary the extent and scope of the OL approval. This is unlawful.
3. The RM application seeks to vary the conditions and reduce developer obligations under S106. This is also unlawful.
4. The applicant has carried out unauthorised works, which are material and urgent.

LPC also has numerous concerns with the design of the submitted reserved matters scheme based on the documents received so far. On the basis of these, the RM design appears not to comply with NPPF and Local Plan policy relating to layout, scale, appearance, means of access, and landscaping.

## Context

**Policy HQ/1: Design Principles** requires all new development to be of high quality design that makes a positive contribution to its local and wider context.

The Site is very prominent at the entrance to the village and provides important visual separation from the busy A1307. This is a key view, providing a significant panorama of the rural village.



*Image 1. Key view 1 at the entrance to the village. The Southern Site is circled directly ahead. To the right there is a terrace of modest historic buildings, originally separate to the rest of the village and still visually separate due to the modest scaled buildings and landscape around them. To the left there is the river valley.*



*Image 2. At the approach to the village. The Northern Site and the Listed Water Tower are directly ahead.*

As the photographs show, the Site is characteristic of rolling chalklands fields, sloping continuously in a single profile, down to the river valley (beyond Image 1 on the left) and up to the chalkland hill tops. The existing village edge is modest in scale and massing, even where two storey, and the houses on the higher ground are sparsely set bungalows, set in to the slopes, which preserves the long views across the countryside and the rolling rural skylines.

The Site is a prominent part of a particularly good example of the chalklands landscape and townscape as described in the District Design Guide (paragraphs 3.16 onwards).

Those key landscape characteristics defined by the Design Guide that apply to this context include:

- *A distinctive landform of smooth rolling chalk hills and gently undulating chalk plateau.*
- *A mostly large-scale arable landscape of arable fields, low hedges and few trees, giving it an open, spacious quality.*
- *Small beech copses on the brows of hills, and occasional shelterbelts, are important features.*
- *A wealth of historic and archaeological features, including; ancient trackways, earthworks, small chalk pits and pre-nineteenth century enclosures.*
- *Shallow valleys of the River Granta and River Rhee have a rich mosaic of grazing meadows and parkland.*





*Image 3a. The Key View of the Site from the river and valley of the Granta. This is looking from the tranquil public open space and river edge at Leadwell Meadows. The open field backed by historic cottages forms the current backdrop.*



*Image 3b. Continuation of the Key View, with the open rural skyline with intermittent trees across most of the Site and the historic 2-storey cottages set down low on the left. Beyond this Southern Site, the Northern Site continues to slope up beyond the hedgeline.*





*Image 3c. Continuation of the Key View, towards the village, showing how, even viewed from the lowest ground, the houses follow the contours and are lowered into the slope so they are not prominent on the natural skyline.*



*Image 4. The entrance to the village on A1307 showing typical edge of village spacing that allows the rural landscape to predominate. The Northern Site is the small edge of village field in front of the bungalows. The existing houses are set down below the natural skyline.*

The existing landscape is acknowledged to be a **Valued Landscape** as set out in NPPF criteria by the Inspector assessing the Appeal at Back Road (APP/W0530/W/17/3174153). This decision post-dated the OL consent on the application Site, so is material to any new application, as is NPPF 170 which **requires valued landscapes to be protected and enhanced**.

The photographs show that the existing townscape in this part of Linton is appropriate to its sensitive valued context, and works with the topography to protect the simple modest landscape and its distinctive open rural character and historic natural skylines.

The same cannot be said of the proposed scheme for the reasons set out below.

To expand on the Holding Objection concerns we raise above:

**1. The RM application does not provide adequate information for certainty of decision-making, and reports that are material are missing.**

Please refer to the letter that accompanies this report for the list of reports / information that Linton Parish Council has noted are missing. We agree with responses from statutory consultees that additional reports also appear to be needed to deal with new and outstanding issues.

We note that Section 6.13 of the latest document, the Design and Access Statement, lists a number of conditions it proposes be discharged along with this Reserved Matters application. The information provided so far would not be sufficient to assess these additional items.

However, even if sufficient information was provided, the proposal is unlawful:

As confirmed on the application form, this application was only made for Reserved Matters. Even if the developer sought to change the description and the LPA were willing to delay the application whilst re-advertising and re-consulting on this, Reserved Matters are submitted under Article 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. That application cannot lawfully discharge conditions that are not reserved matters because conditions are not submitted under Article 6 (2015) and, as the Planning Portal confirms, discharge of conditions needs to be done under the 1990 Planning Act, which requires a different application form.

**2. The RM application seeks to vary the extent and scope of the OL approval.**

The Outline application S/1963/15/OL was for **up to 55 houses and 2 accesses**.

The approved plans comprised only 3 drawings – the application boundary, the parameters plan, and the access arrangements (for the 2 accesses). The Layout was an indicative plan and not approved.

The RM application proposes to vary, at least:

- The description of the development, such as by adding the pumping station which is not a house and is not ancillary to a house;
- Substantially increasing the number of accesses onto the existing highway;
- Increasing the extent of development, by not providing the continuous landscape buffer where defined, by extending into a neighbouring garden, and by extending fencing, mounds, drainage and hard surfacing into the 'undeveloped area'.



We note the 1990 Act para 55 defines development as:

*“the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land.”*

Excavations, driveways and mounds are engineering works in, on, over or under land and are therefore development. Where they are in the area of land allocated as ‘undeveloped land’, they do not comply with the OL approval.

A number of the changes would not be able to be controlled under planning conditions. For example, the Highways Condition 7 specifically states it applies to 2 accesses. That was because the application was only for 2 accesses. Visibility from the other accesses onto the existing Highway would not be controlled, which is material to the safety of this scheme.

As noted above, Reserved Matters Approval (Article 6) is not a planning permission; therefore Section 73 and S96A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 do not allow the changing of the scheme from the outline approval.

The Planning Portal confirms a new planning application is therefore required.

### **3. The RM application seeks to vary the conditions and reduce developer obligations under S106.**

As noted above, a Reserved Matters application cannot vary conditions of an Outline consent.

We have noted the submitted design does not comply with at least Conditions 10 and 11 of the OL consent:

- Condition 10. (flood and surface water) The retention of the unauthorised spoil heaps is likely to cause environmental damage and increase flood risk to the village. The flood scheme proposals do not comply with the Rossi report; the basis and calculations of the scheme have not been demonstrated; and a sequential approach has not been demonstrated. The scheme does not demonstrate it deals with flood risk from all sources, and the submitted plans show it is likely to result in flood risk within the development and increase flood risk elsewhere. The surface water mitigation is based on a soakaway scheme, not a SuDS scheme, and risks damage to the Protected chalk stream and Protected aquifer water supply for the whole Cambridge area. It does not comply with the most up to date flood maps and does not follow agreement with Linton Parish Council.
- Condition 11 (foul water drainage). Connecting drainage to manhole 1502 (as now designed) was specifically not approved due to the environmental damage it was likely to cause. Manhole 1502 is on the old Victorian 6” main, but does not have the capacity for demand and risks flooding the homes, village facilities, local environment, heritage buildings and Outstanding Conservation Area, which are all lower than manhole 1502. The condition requires connection to Manhole 7501 which is on the newer 375mm pipe which is further away and requires agreement with landowners to access.

These conditions were imposed to make an unacceptable scheme acceptable (NPPG 001). The submitted scheme reverses this by changing the principles stated in the conditions, which makes the RM submission unlawful.

The information submitted in the Design and Access Statement and on the submitted plans appears to vary the S106 Agreement, to provide less benefit, such as

- It omits the highways improvements at the A1307/Bartlow Road junction,
- It reduces the proposed play equipment (and locates them on a steeply sloping play site),
- It reduces the developer responsibility by making the contractor and individual householders responsible in the first instance, and
- It provides less certainty than at OL stage about the future holistic management and maintenance of the site, its facilities, drainage, pumping station, ecology, trees and landscape.

In addition, all these changes would give significantly less public benefit than the OL scheme and therefore they change the planning balance that was applied to S/1963/15/OL. A change this material would need a new planning application and not to be determined under RM.

**The applicant has carried out unauthorised works which affect the statutorily protected environment, appearance of the site and viability of the approved scheme and its conditions:**

1. Earth removal and re-engineering over the development area and near the river;
  2. A new vehicular access;
  3. Fencing; and
  4. Mounds
- There is no evidence there was approval for discharge of any of the pre-commencement conditions prior to carrying out the works;
  - The works caused a nuisance which was reported by neighbours, and was not in accordance with conditions of the approval;
  - The premature work is highly likely to have jeopardised pre-commencement conditions which required natural undisturbed topsoil to be present (e.g. to test porosity);
  - The earth moving at the river edge was within the banks of the Protected chalk stream and the habitat area for protected species. Work was carried out with a large digger, and there is no evidence of ecological supervision and wildlife protection. As a result, it is likely to have been detrimental to the protected habitats.
  - The excavations have exposed the chalk coating of the Protected Cambridge aquifer. Water level assessments previously taken indicate that this excavation was likely to have occurred within 1-2 metres of water level. It does not comply with Policy CC/7.
  - Initial ground moving appears to have been done without archaeological supervision and photographs of the edges of the excavation show the removal of upper chalk archaeological layers in the area of the anglo-saxon village, where evidence of round houses was likely to be only on the surface.
  - The site was not reinstated to its former condition once the archaeological works were complete.

The application shows the retention of the unauthorised mounds. These are spoil heaps ('alien landforms' in Local Plan Policy CC/6) next to the excavations, deliberately shaped as shown on the proposed levels plans. They are not characteristic of the local landscape and have deteriorated in the weather. As well as looking unsightly, runoff from the site goes directly into the Granta watercourse along the site boundary, which is a water source, a Protected chalk stream, and a Flood Management Area.



Once the rainy season starts, it is highly likely that earth from these unstable mounds will be washed into the river and surface water, putting ecology, water supply and the village flood defences at risk (NPPF170).

We therefore ask for Enforcement Action to be carried out urgently to deal with these unauthorised works and to reinstate the Site to its former condition.

## 5. Reserved Matters:

This section is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying letter from LPC and Appendix 1. Linton Parish Council will update this when the missing information is provided:

### APPEARANCE

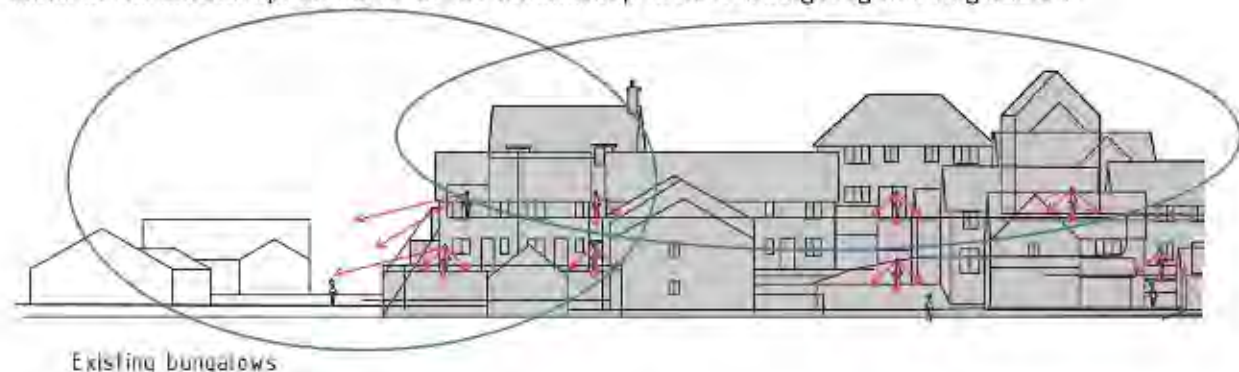
The proposed development is based on the maximum of 55 houses, and relies on a spread across and beyond the allocated development area in order to accommodate the houses and associated development. This is even though the lower third of the site is subject to river flooding (see below).

The proposed development substantially changes the physical profile of the site, and builds up to 2 metres above the existing topography. This would increase the prominence of the site in the landscape, and dominate the existing houses.

### Landscape, townscape and relationship to the village

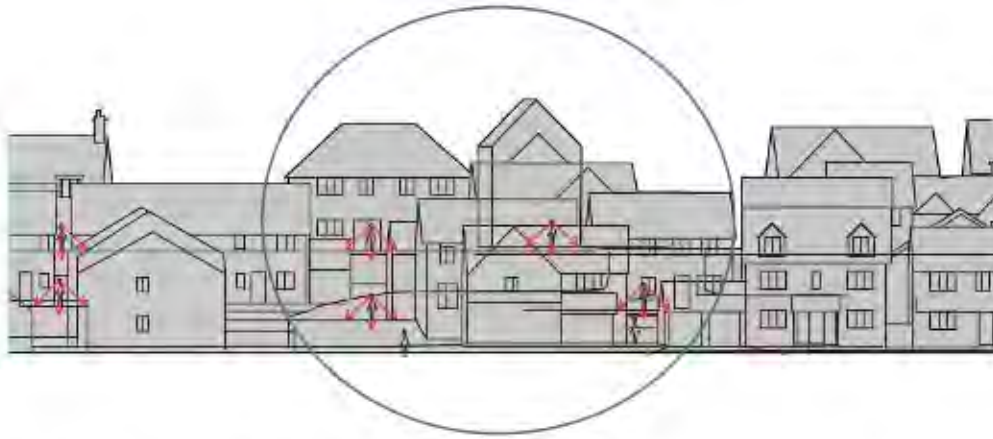
On the Southern site, the most prominent buildings are substantially built up, on the skyline of the development, to reduce the slopes and flooding into their properties. For the highest houses, the levels show a raised platform layer built out with terracing facing the river valley (Image 5a upper circle). There are other terraces and retaining structures built up at intervals down the slope. Some site sections have now been provided but only Site Section 3 shows a section through the terraced gardens, and this is not the steepest example. None of the Sections show the existing profile and the extent of raising ground levels, which is more than 2 metres in places on the prominent upper part of the site. Some of the Sections are inconsistent, in that some show the lower houses raised as well (probably because they are in the flooded area of the site).

None of the Sections provided show the relationship to the existing neighbouring houses.



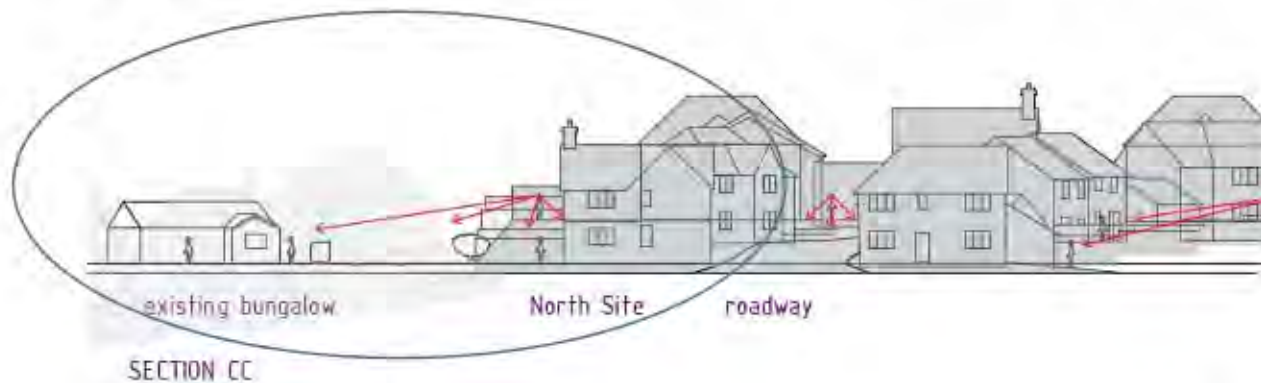
*Image 5a. South Site Section FF showing the effect on existing houses and overlooking from the upper terraces. The upper circle shows the raised upper level of houses.*

The terracing and building up the land profile results in a development that would dominate the existing houses, which are built into the slopes, and are predominately bungalows, as demonstrated in images 1-3 above.

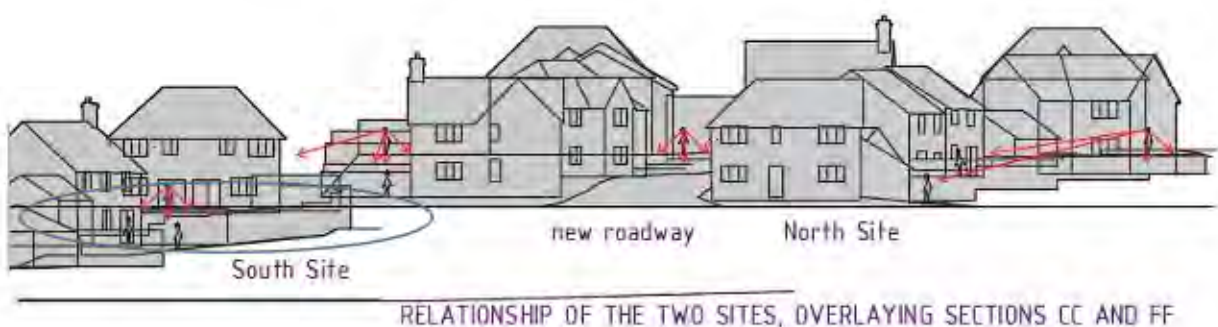


*Image 5b. South Site Section FF continued, showing the relationship of upper terraces and the properties below, and the potential overlooking.*

Whilst the differences in level are up to 8½ metres on the Southern Site, they are less on the Northern Site, but there are similar problems of dominance and overlooking from the higher terraces.



*Image 6a. North Site Section CC, showing the effect on existing houses and overlooking from the upper terraces.*



*Image 6b. North Site Section CC showing the houses raised above Bartlow Road and the Southern Site. The boundaries on the left indicate how much build-up there is to provide platforms above the natural ground level.*

(The images above have layered the sections on submitted drawings 1552-104H, 105E, 1007A and 1008A, to show the depth of the development and the comparative heights).





Image 7. South Site terracing, levels and slopes down the proposed development. The Levels Plan used as a base shows the three unauthorised mounds within the proposed scheme.



Image 7a. Google streetview shows the Victorian cottages, which are heritage assets; how modest they are, even though 2 storey, and how much the ground levels of the site would be raised to be level with Bartlow Road.

From the key views, the spread and height of the development is likely to have a substantial and harmful impact on the appearance of the area. The photograph below shows the existing mounds, which read in conjunction with Image 7 above, show the extent of spread of the proposed houses, terraces and fences across the Southern field.



*Images 8a & 8b. Key view 1 showing the positions of the unauthorised mounds. Compare below.*

*These mounds and fence also show how close development would appear to the A1307 and how little of the original field separation would remain with the current design.*





*Image 9a. On the approach to the village, as before. Key View 1. The A1307 is separated from the village by the field, there are characteristic long views and the natural skyline, historic buildings and intermittent native tree planting contribute to the interest and rural character of the scene.*



*Image 9b. On the approach to the village, with the spread of the proposed scheme (indicative). Because of the elevation of A1307 causeway and spread of the development, little of the remaining 25% of the field can be seen, and the houses and platforms dominate the approach and skyline. The rural character and appreciation of the scale and heritage of the settlement is lost.*





*Image 10a. Before - Part of Key View 3 (Images 3a-3c above) showing the rural backdrop to the valley and public Leadwell Meadows area. Whilst there are existing houses across the left half of the photograph, they sit well into the landscape and do not intrude onto the skyline. Instead they contribute by adding scale and (in the case of the most visible cottage) historic interest.*



*Image 10b. After - The proposed development would intrude on the skyline and character of the area.*





*Image 10c. Part of Key View 3 showing the historic assets within the open rural backdrop.*



*Image 10d. After – There would be no appreciation of the heritage assets.*



As Key Views 1 and 2 show, there is harm in principle in the loss of any part of the arable fields, which provide important separation between the village and the busy A1307, and loss of the open rural backdrop to the valley and public open space. It was exceptional that the OL gained consent.

However, the photographs also show existing development, and critically, that the existing houses at the edge of the village are subservient to the landscape and designed to respect its characteristics, rather than against them. They retain the distinctive intimate character of the river valley (Design Guide 3.16) and the long views and smooth rolling landscape characteristic of the area (Design Guide 3.17). They succeed in nestling into the slopes, and their layouts and designs (old and modern) are neutral or contribute positively to the environment.

In contrast, the proposed design fails to sit comfortably in its landscape, and intrudes upon the key views and the skyline, contrary to Design Guide 5.2. It does not preserve or enhance the character of the local area and respond to its context in the wider landscape (HQ/1a), does not provide a place-responsive design that is positive and respects local distinctiveness (HQ/1c), and is not compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, density, mass, form, siting and proportion in relation to the surrounding area (HQ/1d).

**The proposed design and layout of this scheme is inappropriate for this context, and causes visual harm, contrary to Policy HQ/1 and the District Design Guide.**

### **Buildings and Materials**

The D&A Statement 6.1 promises *“An architectural style which reflects the local vernacular particularly as found in the historic village centre and conservation area as well as a more rural approach for some of the larger boundary houses.”*

However, none of the proposed houses reflects the local vernacular in Linton’s historic village centre and conservation area:



*Image 11a. Landmark buildings in the CA  
Are modest and enhance the surroundings*



*Image 11b. Proposed landmark building  
No evidence it reflects the CA*





*Image 11c. Modest detached houses in the CA*



*Image 11d. Smallest detached houses (double the span)*



*Image 11e. Grandest merchant houses in CA (the exception).  
Horizontal proportions, well-spaced openings.  
High quality natural materials, handmade clay tiles  
Roof pitches suit the vernacular materials.*



*Image 11f. Proposed large houses  
Numerous 4 and 5 bed ensuite units.  
Modern executive home types.  
Exaggerated proportions, generally vertical  
Similar footprints, but taller  
“Indicative materials”, not typically local,  
Different combinations for the same standard house type  
Roof pitches based on maximum internal space, not on materials*



The taller houses have similar footprints to the existing bungalows, but instead of being one storey high, they are 2 and 3 storeys high. In general, the most prominent houses on this Site are proposed more than double the mass of the existing adjacent houses.





*Image 12a. Natural timber black tar weatherboarded barn  
Typical in Linton's CA and the locality*



*Image 12b. Proposed black & grey  
'weatherboard' houses, not typical  
of CA and area*



*Image 13. There are no buildings in the CA that resemble the FOGs, with homes over carparking and vehicle accesses.*

The photos and a visit to Linton's (Outstanding) Conservation Area and historic village centre demonstrate that there is no evidence that the architectural styles "reflects the local vernacular particularly as found in the historic village centre and conservation area", and the evidence points to the designer having been looking elsewhere.

The policies and Design Guide makes clear distinction between the architecture of village contexts such as Linton, versus those of more urban environments and urban extensions. The proposed buildings include buildings such as FOGs that are typical of suburban or closely packed urban environments instead, and are what the Design Guide describes as "anywhere housing".



Nearly half the houses in the proposed scheme have excessive spans, most of them being 10 metres deep, which is double the depth of the houses characteristic of Linton. The excessive spans give very poor gable proportions compared to vernacular buildings (the roof looks too slack and the standard windows too small).

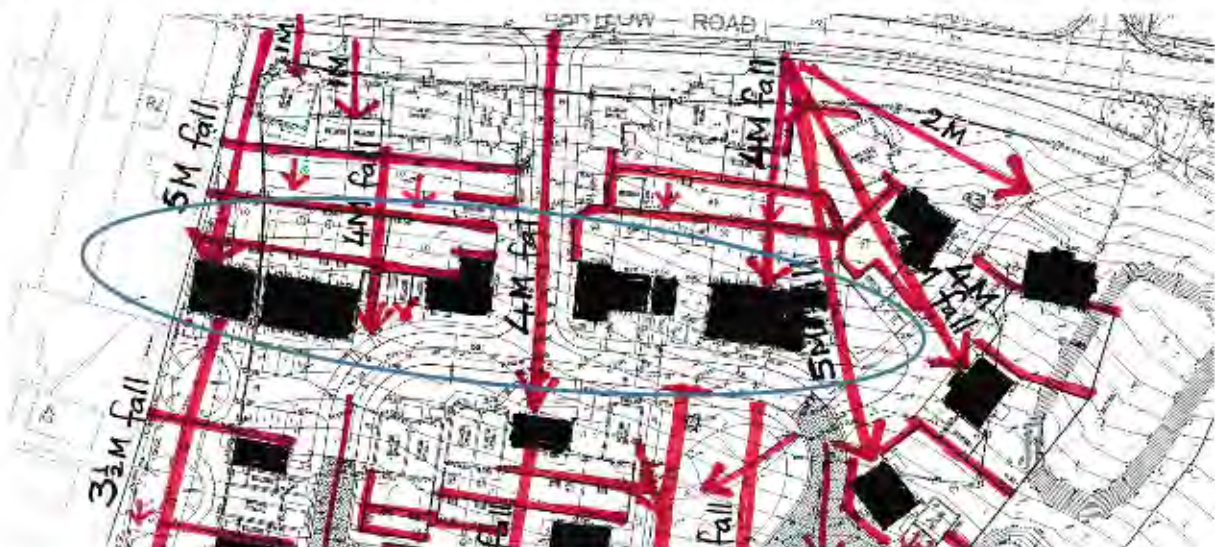


*Images 12. Houses Type D3; 2A and C2 similar.*

The gable is longer than the frontage, which makes the building look sliced and incomplete. It also makes the fenestration of the front and rear elevations look cramped and is contrary to the linear proportions of vernacular buildings in this locality (see above).

The carports also have poor proportions, with thin posts and again a truncated appearance because the ridge follows the short direction.

The terraces of deep-span houses create a block-like appearance in a band across the centre of the site, at odds with the generous spacing of existing houses in this part of the village and the rural character of the edge of the village. They are also cramped and leave insufficient space for the species-rich western boundary hedge to be retained and any replacement hedge to thrive.

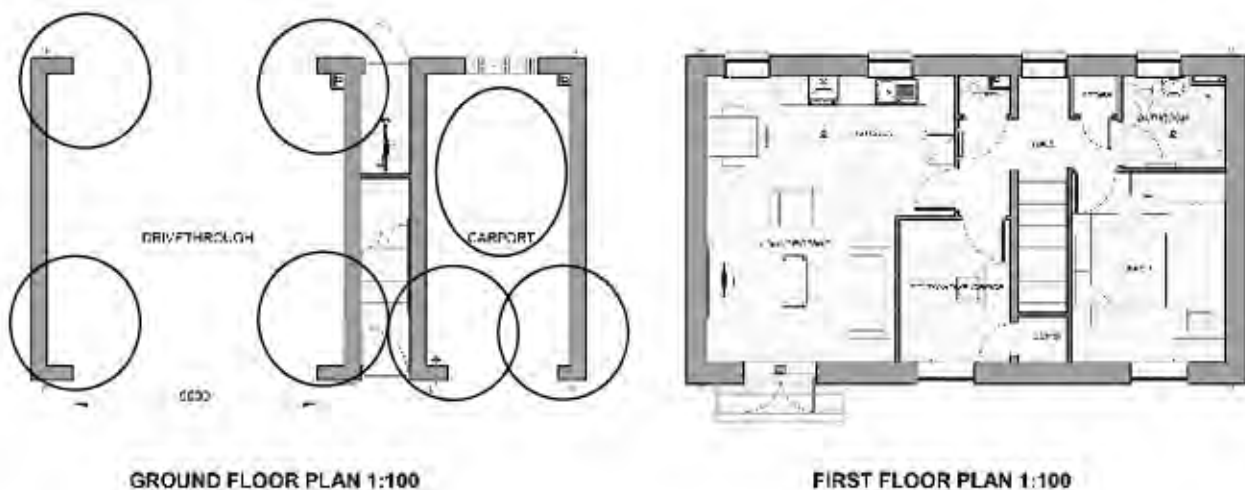


*Image 14. Central bank of deep span houses.*

The D&A 6.1 states that the design gives “Active frontages and natural surveillance”, but the poor quality environment of FOG units in particular, demonstrates an inactive frontage of tarmac and spaces that are difficult to supervise, which is likely to encourage crime.



*Images 15a – 15b. Typical FOG unit, comprising a flat above car parking, or a flat above a parking courtyard access.*



*Images 15c – 15d. Typical FOG plan, with poor street presence at ground floor and many potential hiding places. Together with the bars on the openings, they create an inhospitable and poor street presence.*

These FOG units are flats with very poor townscape appearance, dominated by vehicle provision. They are very urban in appearance and not typical of a rural village like Linton. They have top-heavy proportions, and at street level, where most people would experience them, the view would be dominated by cars, services, bins and barred openings. This is not high quality design as required by HQ/1.



The Tower house is 3 storeys high, which would dominate the scale and heights of the surrounding houses of the locality, which are single storey and a modest two storey. The dominance is increased by the vertical proportions of the design. Whilst 'landmark tower' buildings are advocated in the District Design Guide, that document makes clear that this is for urban contexts, not for rural villages. The large 'landmark tower' is not typical of Linton, where landmark buildings are often modest and become a landmark because of the quality of the streetscape (Image 11b).

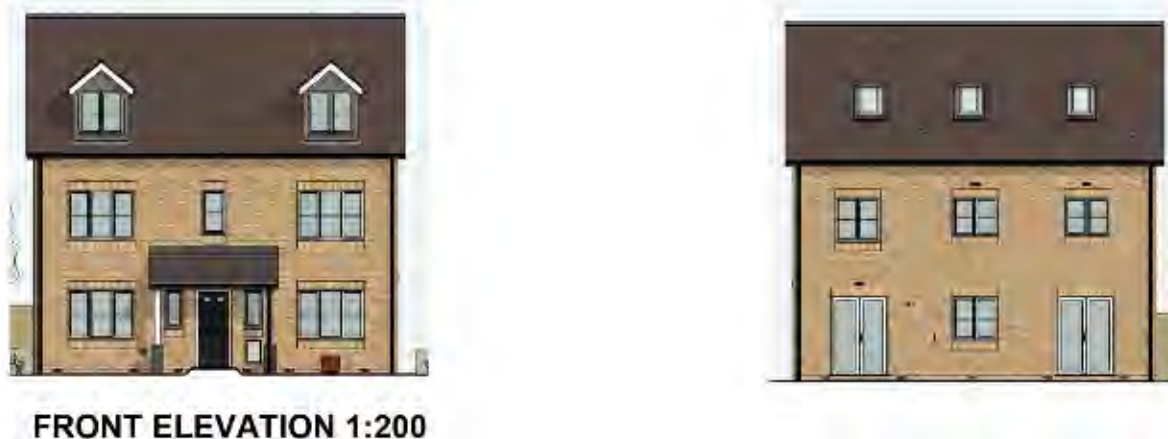


*Images 16 a-c. Tower House showing proportions and dark un-fenestrated elevations.*

The proportions and alignments of openings on the prominent elevation facing the entrance road are unsettling (because of duality and a mix of balance and unbalance), and there is an unfriendly blank black elevation facing the neighbours, where it would tower above a narrow pathway, rather than the green idyllic context indicated on the drawing.

There are numerous prominent examples of Type S25, a tall and large 5-bedroom house. This is significantly taller than vernacular Linton houses, even those that were grand houses in their time (see image 11c). In comparison, its elevations appear cramped.

These houses have 3 floors, each of which is similar to the whole floor area of the adjoining bungalows. The bulk is exacerbated by the vertical proportions and the height of the roof in order to provide another storey. Most of the Type S25 houses are on built-up platforms, increasing their apparent height. The porch posts are overly thin and its proportions overall do not have the quality of the existing vernacular buildings.



*Images 17 a-b. Type S25 5 bedroom house.*

HAF10 houses are similar to the 'back-to-back' houses characteristic of Victorian cities, where houses were crammed in against other houses, giving little space for windows. As a result, the windows are cramped on the front elevation, with none at the back, and no cross-flow possible in hot weather. The living conditions are also likely to be poor as rooms are deep and minimally lit from one end.



Images 18 a-b. Type HAF Maisonette.

The D&A Statement 6.1 promises "An architectural style which reflects the local vernacular... as well as a more rural approach for some of the larger boundary houses." The large 'rural approach' houses also fail to resemble rural houses typical of this locality.

The 'Farmhouse' units look like large modern houses in inappropriate materials, with a modern car port rather than traditional farm groupings.

Typical farmhouses of the area –



Typical farmbuildings & sheds -



Images 19a-b.

Characteristics of Linton's farmhouses –

- Groupings of vernacular buildings
- Narrow spans
- Local vernacular materials
- Vernacular proportions and details derived from the materials of the area



Proposed 'farmhouse units -



**FRONT ELEVATION 1:200**



**RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION 1:200**

*Images 20a-b.*

- *They resemble no vernacular farmhouse in the locality*
- *Hierarchy is confused as it uses farmbuilding tarred materials for the farmhouse.*
- *Once the 'indicative' materials are removed, there is an 'anywhere' modern house*
- *Thin legged cartlodge proportions*
- *Non-vernacular colouring*
- *There are either no chimneys, or 'bolt-on' chimneys that are not reflected on plan.*

The proposed houses are from a range of house types designed previously for urban extensions rather than for the local village context. They do not respect the local distinctiveness of Linton (HQ/1c) and are not simple and small in scale (Design Guide 3.20).

### **Materials**

The drawings are all annotated as "indicative" and the Design and Access Statement has omitted all mention of specific makes of materials, following LPC comments on the last RM that they were inappropriate for the context and amongst the cheapest materials available. The current application therefore does not demonstrate the materials are appropriate.

The DAS generalised descriptions still apply to the concrete tiles, fibre cement boards and the cheap bricks previously specified. The same textures and colours are being shown, so it is likely they are still the same materials and still of poor quality.

The "indicative" drawings still propose many of the houses in a brown brick and in black weatherboard, neither of which is characteristic of the identified materials of this locality. This is contrary to Chapters 3 and 4 of the District Design Guide. Para 3.49 notes that black (i.e. tar finished) boarding was used on outbuildings, not houses. Tar was a smelly waste material, unsuitable for use for domestic buildings, and its extensive proposed use for houses and 'farmhouses' in this development is therefore alien. The cover letter proposes that there is a positive change in that some of the boarding will be grey instead of black. Grey is not part of the character of the locality, as limewash and tar are incompatible, so would not mix.

Picking out of details such as verge boards, eaves, window heads and utility boxes in white is also not part of the character of the locality, again for practical reasons (e.g. maintenance). These houses are in some of the most prominent positions on site. References to upvc have been omitted, but the lack of clarity does not demonstrate they would be high quality and weather well.

It does not demonstrate high quality materials so does not comply with HQ/1.

### **Exterior of the Development**

Very large houses are proposed on the most prominent edges of the development. As illustrated above, these would dominate this part of Linton and the entrance to the village.

The group of houses at the entrance are scattered about with no logical build line and the first view on the approach to this historic village and conservation area is an almost-blank side of unit 32 and the back of number 31, both of which are poor quality elevations.

There is insufficient information about how the changes of landform are to be treated along this most prominent elevation.

The new site section 2 on drawing 1552-1007A shows the front edge of the Site may comprise a brick retaining wall about 1.5 to 1.8 metres high, to retain the higher ground levels and terraces behind it. This is not characteristic of rural field edges of this locality and would give a hard urban edge to this development.

Part-way down the development, there is a gap in the wall, indicating roads and entrances behind, and making it likely that residential activities will spread into the remainder of the field, where they would be very prominent and conflict with the agricultural use of the field.

The section shows some “indicative” species planting that is typically uniformly some 10 metres high. Uniform growth this high is not part of the village edge character of Linton and blocks Key View 1. The ground has nominal depth of soil over solid chalk, and the lower part of the site floods from the river, so is unlikely to safely support such growth. The soft landscaping plan species show typically small tree types, confirming the large trees are unrealistic.

The supporting statements now state that the mature frontage hedge will be retained, but the drawings do not. The soft landscaping plan shows a coloured line some 2 metres wide, but there appears to be no annotation for existing hedges to be retained. The future of any tree or hedge is jeopardised by the design which has substantial earth movement and terracing close to the existing hedges and trees, as well as houses within approximately 1 metre of the western boundary.

The boundary retaining structures and pressure on existing mature boundaries indicates that the scheme for 55 houses is overdevelopment.

As the images above show, the development is denser than the housing it abuts, and that greater density will be evident from outside the Site.

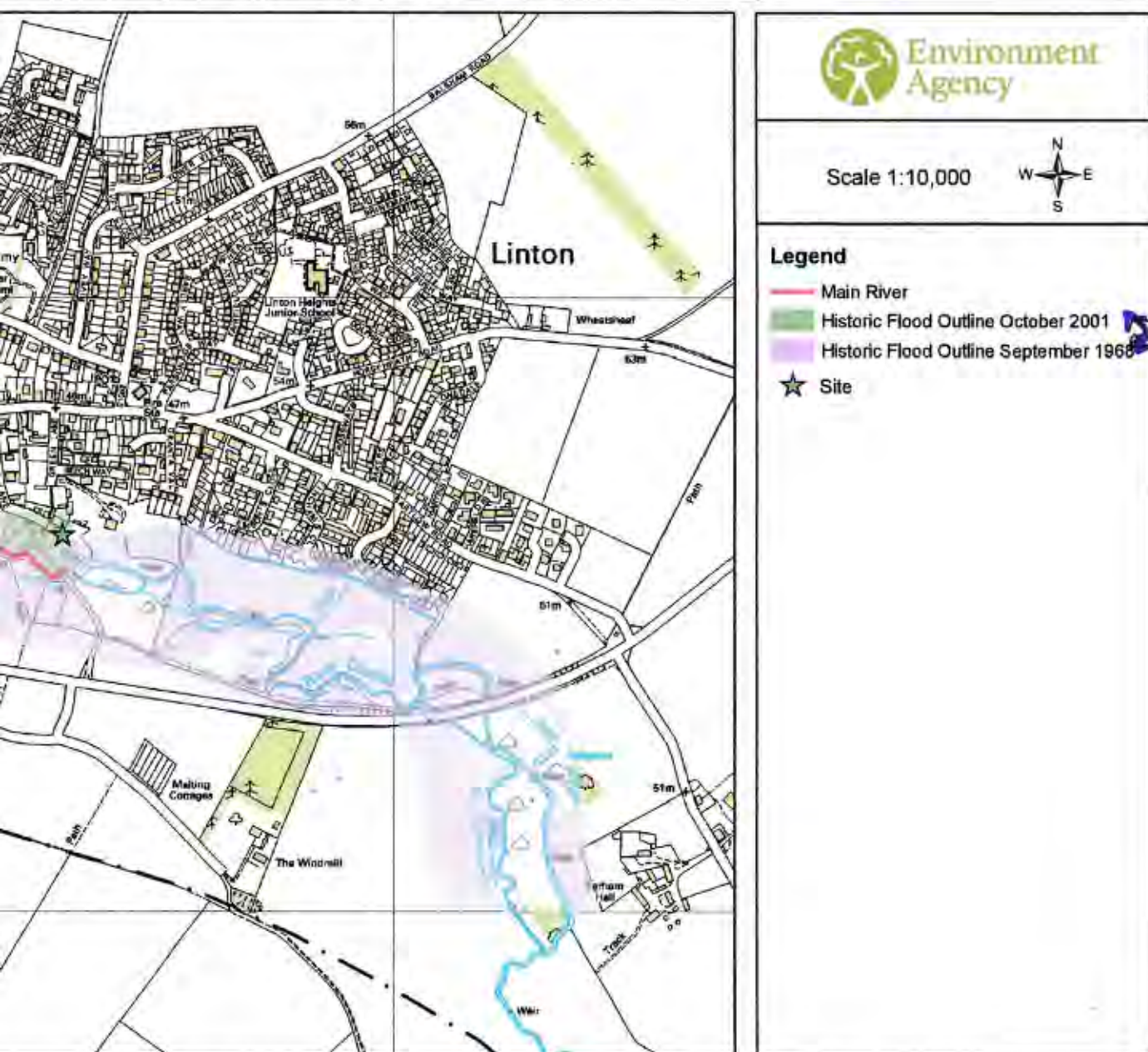
The scheme is therefore not place responsive design and does not comply with Policy HQ/1 and Section 3 of the Design Guide (including 3.22).



## Flood Protection

The Sections, including Site Section 1, show that all the houses are proposed to be built up on platforms. The lowest part of the site does not slope, and therefore the new raised platforms are likely to be due to the fact that the site floods from the river.

Centred on Mill Lane, Linton, Cambridgeshire.  
Created on 16 January 2017.



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e, PO Box 544, Rotherham, S60 1BY. Tel: 03708 506 506 (Mon-Fri 8-6). Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

*Image 21. 2017 Environment Agency map data, showing an average of 50% of the site has flooded. The data is based from EA's own aerial surveys during the most extensive of the latest floods*



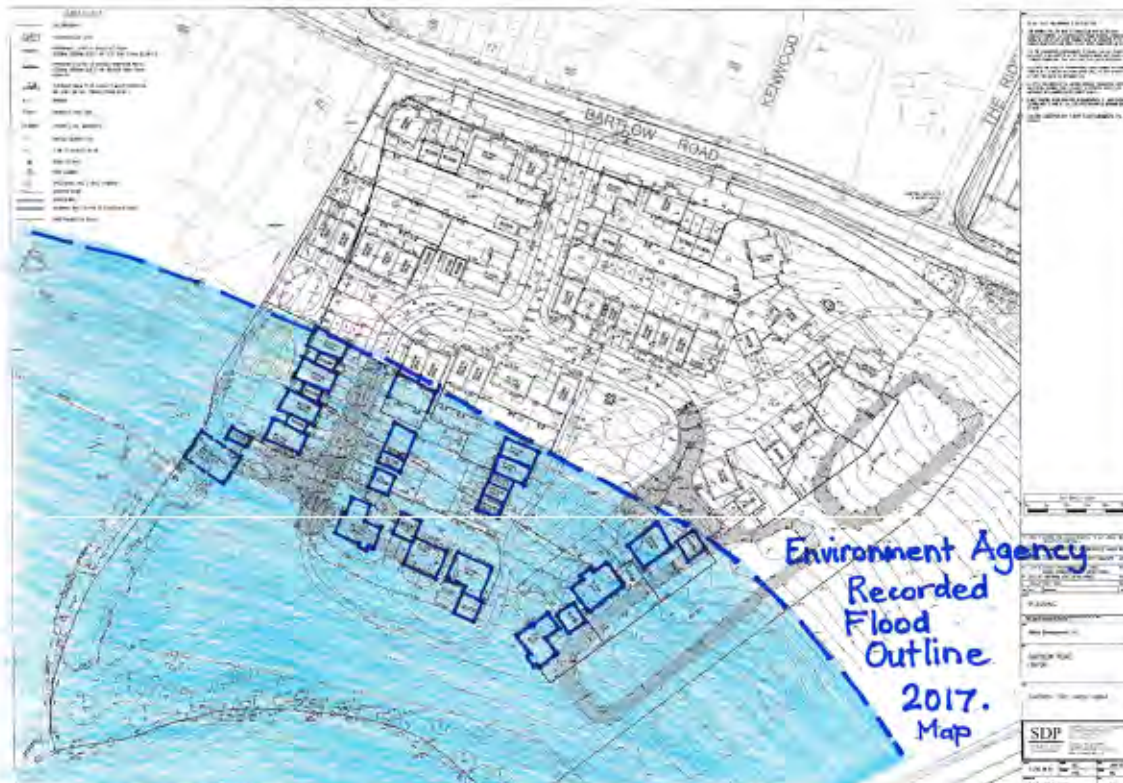


Image 22. An overlay of the Environment Agency flood map data over the proposed site layout.

These show that a significant number of houses are within an area that has flooded within the last two generations, and is therefore likely to flood again, and to a greater extent than before due to Climate change.

The submitted site sections show that the houses on the lower part of the site are built up above the natural ground level, giving them greater prominence in the landscape and key views, and providing barriers that do not absorb water and are likely to increase flood risk elsewhere.

The levels plan for the Southern site also shows a substantial slope down the primary road into the site, diverting water currently flowing down the Northern site and along Bartlow Road, directly into the affordable houses, as follows:



Image 23. Site Section 4. Note Bartlow Road is at 49.800 (so higher) according to the Levels Plan.

The surface water runoff calculations were based on a fall of 1:100 on this road, but it is much steeper. The calculations are also unlikely to have taken into account the lack of permeability of terraces and the disturbed ground conditions inherent in this scheme.

The drainage schemes have not been adequately resolved, as noted above, but cannot be left to condition because they potentially affect the appearance and design of the development.



For example:



*Image 24. Indicative position of the aquifer.*

The Site is directly on top of the Cambridge area aquifer. Surveys carried out as part of the OL consent (during a long period of dry weather), established the water table at one place only 1.7 metres below the development area. The recent excavations have reduced that clearance and exposed the solid chalk casing to the aquifer.



*Image 25. Excavation down to solid chalk.*

This casing is not permeable, so is unlikely to be suited to the proposed infiltration drainage scheme. It is also vulnerable to damage when installing the foundations, retaining structures, underground pumping station and drainage structures, which are designed to include underground concrete soakaway chambers.

If they cannot be installed below ground, they are likely to be installed above ground, or not at all, and the proposed pumping station position is very prominent in Key View 3.

The scheme has not demonstrated that the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed. It has not demonstrated that flood risk from all sources has been avoided or managed and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

It is therefore contrary to Policy HQ/1, CC/1 climate change, CC/7 and CC/9.

## **LAYOUT**

The RM application has not demonstrated that the design and layout as proposed above ground will be viable on this site, and that 55 houses can be accommodated within the constraints.

Particular aspects of the layout have resulted in these problems, and include:

- The terracing;
- The building-up of other ground levels to a higher new level;
- Failing to design out noise, flooding, and overlooking at the outset;
- The numerous new accesses onto Bartlow Road;
- Building down the slope rather than along the contour lines;
- Building on the lower part of the site that floods;
- Locating a new pumping station in part of the site that floods, and in a prominent position when viewed from the valley.

## **Slopes**

The slopes on the public pathways within the site do not provide a DDA accessible route into and out of the site and individual properties. The 'green route' proposed in the previous RM application has been omitted. Housing has been relocated into the space taken up by the green route, with an almost straight, and much steeper path, instead.

Only two units were designed over a single ground floor (Maisonettes) and these have internal arrangements that would not allow wheelchairs to access the rooms. They are also not accessible between the houses and Bartlow Road.

The scheme has therefore not been designed appropriately for the local housing need, nor is it in compliance with Building Regulations and DDA. It is not a permeable development with ease of movement and access for all users and abilities. Other than up or down the slope to the busy Bartlow Road, there is no linkage with the existing village, so it discourages connection with the existing settlement, and does not comply with HQ/1 1f, g, j and k.

## **Accesses**

It is noted that the latest Sections still omit Bartlow Road to appreciate how steeply the accesses join the main road. The Sections still do not show the steepest slopes and at least one of them (Section 4) is inaccurate in that the road edge is shown lower than the levels on the Levels Plan E17-084-140, making the slope appear less steep than it is. In the case of Section 4, as noted above, the road level is 49.800 and the driveway is drawn about half a metre lower, making access to Bartlow Road potentially hazardous.

Insufficient information has been provided to establish the status and design of the new accesses onto Bartlow Road, which are likely to involve significant earth-moving.



These accesses would breach the mature species-rich hedge, but proposals to clarify how much of the hedge is needed for this are unclear. The hedge is missing from the section drawings and the junctions on section are unrealistic, such as Section 4 above. The design is not therefore place responsive and coherent, so is contrary to HQ/1 1c.

### **Ecology**

The proposed layout, terracing and re-profiling is likely to put the existing ecology at significant risk, and the sections show no existing hedge or tree is likely to remain.

### **Density**

The proposed development is located on the edge of the village, where the existing photographs above show that the houses are subservient to the landscape, and therefore have an appropriate density for their location. The density of this scheme for the maximum of 55 houses, in combination with the larger houses and the terraces and retaining structures, together make this development appear cramped. This is not appreciated within the submitted sections and elevations, as they are single depth or faded out, but the images above show that, once all the relevant layers are added, the development is too dense, urban and bulky for its sensitive location.

### **CONCLUSION**

On the basis of the current submission and the most recent Design and Access Statement, this RM application does not exhibit good design and therefore does not amount to the effective use of land because of the harm which would be caused. It is therefore not sustainable development as defined by NPPF.