

**Report to:** South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee 28 January 2022

**Lead Officer:** Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

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## **20/02142/OUT – Northstowe Phase 3B, Station Road, Longstanton (Longstanton and Oakington/Northstowe Parishes)**

**Proposal:** Outline planning application for the development of Northstowe Phase 3B, comprising up to 1,000 homes, a primary school, secondary mixed-use zone (with retail and associated services, food and drink, community, leisure, employment and residential uses), open space and landscaped areas, engineering and infrastructure works, with details of appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and access reserved. Application accompanied by an Environmental Statement

**Applicant:** Homes England

**Key material considerations:**

Principle of development  
Amount, use, indicative layout, and scale parameters  
Access and transport  
Housing delivery  
Social and community infrastructure, including education  
Environmental considerations  
Cumulative impacts  
Financial obligations / section 106  
Other material planning considerations  
Planning balance

**Date of Member site visit:** n/a

**Is it a Departure Application?:** No

**Decision due by:** An extension of time has been agreed until 28 March 2022 to complete the Section 106 Agreement.

**Application brought to Committee because:** The proposal is a large-scale development of strategic importance.

**Presenting officer:** Paul Ricketts, Principal Planning Officer (Strategic Sites Team)

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## **Executive Summary**

1. The application site forms part of Northstowe New Town under Policy SS/5 of the Local Plan. This policy updated Policy NS/3 of the Northstowe Area Action Plan. The principle of the site being developed has therefore been accepted.
2. The application proposals include up to 1,000 homes, and includes green buffers to the south, north, and eastern boundaries of the site. The application proposes to retain the existing woodland in the centre of the site which also include a small pond. The proposals also include a green edge to the western boundary and join up with Phase 1.
3. The proposed parameter plans show a comprehensive consideration of the issues and create a suitable framework for the creation of a high-quality environment.

4. The comments and concerns raised through two formal public consultations and at pre-application stages have been given thorough and full consideration and have influenced the design and layout of the proposals. The comments of consultees have been given full consideration and matters of drainage and transport in particular have been the subject of robust assessment.
5. The application proposes a full package of s106 contributions and the delivery of 40% affordable housing.
6. It is considered that the proposal comprises sustainable development having regard to paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Approval is therefore recommended subject to necessary safeguarding conditions and the prior signing of a section 106 agreement.

### **The site and its surroundings**

7. Phase 3B comprises approximately 47 hectares (ha) of land that is made up of a large agricultural field with a central woodland area that surrounds a small pond. The site is bounded by residential and commercial properties which front onto Station Road to the east with the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB) line running along the northern boundary. The site boundaries generally consist of hedgerows with further arable fields to the west and the B1050 to the South.
8. To the east are also other development sites which form part of the wider allocation under Policy SS/5 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The existing commercial premises of Hypro Ltd are also located to the east. To the southeast is the completed Parcel H1 of Northstowe Phase 1.
9. Further across Station Road is the main Northstowe Site with Phase 1 under construction. Sites for employment and the local centre (currently undeveloped) are immediately to the Station Road frontage with other features, such as the Longstanton Park and Ride also located off Station Road. The local centre will also include a Community Building.
10. Phase 1 also includes the Pathfinder Primary School. Phase 2 contains the principal Northstowe Education Campus which includes Secondary, Sixth Form and SEND schools as well as a further primary school. Phase 2 will also include the Northstowe town centre. Phase 3A is further to the south.
11. A range of green infrastructure, including allotments, sports pitches and a Water Park are contained across Northstowe Phase 1 and 2.

12. To the south and on the opposite side of the B1050 is the village of Longstanton, which contains a number of facilities including a recreation ground, local shop, GP surgery, public house and places of worship.
13. There are fields to the west leading to the village of Swavesey. Willingham is situated to the north.
14. The site gently slopes down to the western boundary at 4.45 metres above ordnance datum (AOD). The site is at its highest (about 8-8.5 metres AOD) at the eastern boundary (close to the boundary with Parcel H1) with an isolated spot of just over 9 metres in the southeastern corner of the site and on the Station Road frontage.
15. The majority of the site is in Flood Zone 1, there are small areas towards the west of the site which are within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
16. In terms of agricultural land classification, the site includes just over 21 ha of Grade 2 land, 12 ha of Grade 3a and 13 ha of Grade 3b land.
17. Whilst there are a number of designated heritage assets in the vicinity, there are no assets within the site. The nearest asset is the Longstanton village water pump which is located approximately 120 metres south of the site.

### **Relevant Planning History**

18. Phase 1 outline planning permission was granted under planning permission reference S/0388/12/OL for 1,500 homes with associated infrastructure, a local centre and employment also being approved.
19. There have been a number of detailed submissions with reserved matters being granted so far for 1,278 homes, play areas, parks, the water park, and greenways. The primary school and its community wing are open, and the local centre square was completed in 2019. Work continues on site on a number of aspects including a some of the development parcels.
20. Phase 2 outline planning permission was granted under planning permission reference S/2011/14/OL. This permission also included the Southern Access Road West. This road is nearing completion and its planned connection to the B1050 is understood to be imminent.
21. This outline planning permission for Phase 2 has been varied through non-material minor amendments.

These amendments have included the following –

- a. S/2435/17/NM – Minor revision to the Parameter Plans
  - b. S/2792/18/NM – Amendment to Condition 24 (Landscape Management)
  - c. S/3255/18/NM – Amendment to the position of the Town Centre Greenway
  - d. S/3503/19/NM – Inclusion of additional commercial floorspace in Phase 2a
22. The Design Code for phase 2 was approved under planning reference S/2407/17/DC and the Phasing Strategy was approved under reference S/2890/18/DC.
23. The Education Campus was approved by Cambridgeshire County Council (reference: S/0092/18/CC) and is being constructed under a Phased Delivery.
24. The delivery of the Town Centre is of crucial importance and therefore work has commenced on the delivery mechanisms for this aim. The Town Centre Strategy was approved under S/2423/19/DC.
25. Other Homes England applications have included –
- a. Strategic Engineering - S/4208/18/RM
  - b. Strategic Landscaping - S/1552/19/RM
  - c. Water Park - S/1002/18/RM
  - d. Earthworks - S/2940/18/RM
26. The first two development parcels on Phase 2 have been approved and work has commenced on site. First occupations are expected in 2022.
27. The Phase 3 Scoping Opinion was issued on 4 March 2019 under reference S/4379/18/E2 following consultation with statutory consultees in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.
28. The two other applications in the allocation of Policy SS/5 of the Local Plan are:
- Digital Park – up to 106 dwellings and associated infrastructure following demolition of existing buildings (Application Reference: S/3854/19/OL)
  - Endurance Estates – up to 107 dwellings, employment/café/community development and associated infrastructure (Application Reference: 20/03598/OUT)

## Description of Proposal

29. The application is in outline with all matters (scale, layout, appearance, access, and landscaping) reserved.
30. The proposed development comprises up to 1,000 homes, a primary school, secondary mixed-use zone (with retail, services, community, leisure, employment and residential uses), open space and landscaped areas, engineering and infrastructure works, with details of appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and access reserved.
31. The proposals are set out in three Parameters Plans:
  - a. Heights – 5709-OPA-3B-03-V2
  - b. Movement and Access – 5709-OPA-3B-02-V2
  - c. Open Space and Land Use – 5709-OPA-3B-01-V2
32. Other Supporting plans include:
  - a. Site Location Plan - 5709-OPA-3B-05-V1
  - b. Phase 3b Existing Site Levels - 10037019-ARC-XXXX-DR-CE-0001-P01 -Layout Rev P01
  - c. Phase 3b Proposed Site Levels - 10037019-ARCXX-XX-DR-CE-0002-P01 Rev P01
  - d. Coordinated vision
33. The application is accompanied by the following supporting information:
  - a. Design and Access Statement (incorporating a Development Principles document)
  - b. Economic Development Strategy
  - c. Energy Strategy
  - d. Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy
  - e. Framework Travel Plan
  - f. Geo environmental Interpretative Report
  - g. Hedgerow, Tree Survey and High-Level Arboricultural Impact Assessment
  - h. Housing and Community Infrastructure Strategy
  - i. Landscape Strategy
  - j. Low Emissions Strategy
  - k. Planning Statement
  - l. Stakeholder and Community Engagement Report
  - m. Strategic Construction Environmental Management Plan
  - n. Sustainability Statement

- o. Transport Assessment
  - p. Utilities Report
  - q. Waste Strategy
  - r. Coordinated vision
34. The parameter plans, set alongside the Design and Access Statement and Development Principles, seek to establish the overall principles that underpin the proposed development, whilst also allowing sufficient flexibility to enable subsequent reserved matters applications to respond to the detailed considerations associated with each element of the proposals. This allows for the general disposition of land uses across the site, layout of routes and infrastructure, and key development parameters such as building heights, to be assessed and approved at the outline application stage.
35. The indicative masterplan contained within the DAS shows access from Station Road, and access to a main street leading to the Primary School and a mixed-use area surrounded by housing. To the west of the site is open space and play facilities and the central copse which includes a small pond is proposed to be retained as a natural feature. Within the site a range of walking, cycling and other links are proposed with the capability of other links to the east, including Phase 1 (Parcel H1), and the sites known as Digital Park and Endurance Estates.
36. The application sets out the constituent parts of the submission as follows:

### **Housing**

37. A range of housing types, sizes and tenures is intended so as to provide a wide choice of housing options for different households. The mix of housing types and sizes will be determined at the reserved matters stage and aims to be policy compliant.
38. The Application proposes to provide up to 40% of the dwellings on site as affordable housing. The total amount of affordable housing delivered will depend upon a range of viability considerations consistent with the Local Plan and national planning policy. With respect to affordable tenure mix, the proposals for affordable housing will contain a variety of affordable tenure types to meet local needs. The precise tenure mix will be subject to agreement with SCDC.

### **Secondary Mixed-Use Zone**

39. A secondary mixed-use zone is proposed where there will be opportunities to use ground floor space for retail and associated services, food and drink, community, leisure, employment and residential uses, responding to the needs of the local community as it evolves.
40. The secondary zone is located near to the primary school on the main route into the site (see Open Space and Land Use parameter plan).
41. The total capacity of the ground floor space in the secondary zone is 1,320 sqm gross internal area (GIA). Whilst this has been identified on the submitted application forms as A1 retail, it will reflect a wider range of uses to be determined at a later date.

### **Education**

42. A 2FE primary school is proposed within Phase 3B. The school will have a site area of 2.4 ha and will comprise approximately 2,200 sqm of floorspace (GIA).
43. Public provision for early years education will be accommodated within the primary school.

### **Sport and Recreation**

44. The proposed development includes 16.26ha of open space, which comprises formal and informal open space, children's play space, allotments and community orchards.

### **Co-ordination statement**

45. In addition, a Co-ordination Statement has been submitted which details the efforts that Homes England and representatives of the other two sites on this part of Northstowe (Endurance Estates and Digital Park) have worked together to ensure that this part of the new town is master planned in a comprehensive way.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment**

46. The development proposals have been assessed as falling within the remit of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (EIA) Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the EIA Regulations). This is because of the characteristics, location, and potential impacts of the proposed development. The EIA process ensures that any potentially significant effects

of the development are considered and, where appropriate, mitigated by measures to prevent/avoid, reduce and, where possible, offset.

47. The EIA Regulations require the Environmental Statement (ES) to identify the 'likely significant environmental effects' of a development. The government's Planning Policy Guidance highlights that the ES should focus on the 'main' or 'significant' environmental effects only, and that the ES should be proportionate.

### **Scope of the ES**

48. The Applicant recognises that the proposed development constitutes EIA development and as such a voluntary ES has been submitted in support of the planning application. As part of the EIA process, an EIA Scoping Opinion was requested and received from SCDC. The Scoping Opinion confirmed the scope of the EIA, and the EIA has been undertaken in accordance with the comments received through the Scoping Opinion as well as the EIA regulations.

### **Methodology for the ES**

49. The ES considers the likely significant effects of the proposed development during its construction and once it is complete and operational. The ES assesses the maximum quantum, physical extent and development principles defined for the proposal, as set out in the submitted parameter plans which are put forward for approval.

### **Topics covered by the ES**

50. The ES Main Report (Volume 1) sets out the following chapters and submission:

- a) Introduction
- b) The Application Site and Proposed Development
- c) Development Need and Consideration of Alternatives
- d) Agriculture and Soils
- e) Air Quality
- f) Biodiversity
- g) Climate
- h) Cultural Heritage
- i) Ground Conditions, Contamination and Hydrogeology
- j) Health
- k) Landscape and Visual Impact
- l) Noise and Vibration

- m) Socio-Economic
- n) Transport
- o) Waste and Resource Management
- p) Cumulative Effects
- q) Mitigation and Monitoring

51. The ES Main Report (Volume 1) includes a number of Appendices (Volume 2) and Figures (Volume 3).
52. As the ES is a detailed technical and wide-ranging statement, in order to assist the consideration of the application is supported by a non-technical summary.
53. Regulation 26 of the EIA Regulations states that when determining an application in relation to which an environmental statement has been submitted, the relevant planning authority, the Secretary of State, or an inspector, as the case may be, must—
  - a. examine the environmental information;
  - b. reach a reasoned conclusion on the significant effects of the proposed development on the environment, taking into account the examination referred to in sub-paragraph (a) and, where appropriate, their own supplementary examination;
  - c. integrate that conclusion into the decision as to whether planning permission or subsequent consent is to be granted; and
  - d. if planning permission or subsequent consent is to be granted, consider whether it is appropriate to impose monitoring measures.
54. This requirement is dealt with throughout the report.
55. The ES sets out any mitigation measures designed to address significant adverse effects of the Proposed Development on the surrounding environment.
56. Mitigation measures can be used to prevent, avoid, reduce, and offset the environmental effects of a development project, and may even enhance the receiving environment. As such mitigation measures can be classified in the following way:

**Avoidance:**

57. Making changes to the design of the project to avoid adverse effects on environmental features. This is considered to be the most acceptable form of mitigation;

**Reduction:**

58. Where avoidance is not possible, adverse effects can be reduced through sensitive environmental treatments/design.

**Compensation:**

59. Where avoidance or reduction measures are not available, it may be appropriate to provide compensatory measures. It should be noted that compensatory measures do not eliminate the original adverse effect; they merely seek to offset it with a comparable positive one.

**Remediation:**

60. Where adverse effects are unavoidable, management measures can be introduced to limit their influence; and

**Enhancement:**

61. Projects can have positive effects as well as negative ones, and the project preparation stage presents an opportunity to enhance these positive features through innovative design. Mitigation measures identified by the ES will be required by planning conditions or s106 agreement. These are listed in **Appendix G**.
62. ES Addendums have been submitted by the Applicants in response to requests for further information, and these were subject of further consultation. A review of the ES was also carried out by the Applicants to provide a status update on the assessments undertaken as part of the ES. This confirmed the robustness of the baseline information and the conclusions of the assessments presented within the ES.
63. Regulation 29 sets out the information which is required to accompany decisions for EIA developments. Having assessed the submitted application, officers are satisfied that the ES and other additional information provided complies with the 2017 EIA Regulations (as amended) and that sufficient environmental information has been provided to assess the environmental impacts of the development proposals.

## **Amendments to the Application**

64. In January 2021, amendments to the Environmental Statement were made under Regulation 25 of the EIA regulations. The Transport, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration, Cultural Heritage and Socio-economics Chapters of the Environmental Statement were updated. The updated submission also updated a number of documents outside the Environmental Statement and the applicant also reviewed and responded to the matters raised through the first consultation exercise, including those of the local residents. These were consulted on fully under the Coronavirus Regulations at the time.
65. Further information was received in January 2021 following discussions with the County Council and Highways England, and in July 2021 minor corrections were also received to parameter plans to update a number of aspects including amendments to neighbouring developments (Endurance Estates and Digital Park), and to include faith and community land on the site following s106 discussions. Further technical documents to support highways discussions were also submitted in August 2021.

## **Pre-application Engagement**

- Applicant Stage 1 Consultation
66. In July 2018 the applicant carried out a Council Members' session, interactive workshops and two public drop-in sessions which were supported by an online questionnaire.
  67. During this stage 90 people engaged with the drop-in sessions and 466 responses to the questionnaire were received. In terms of the topic areas, Design/Layout (24%), Greenspace (21%) and Public transport and cycle/walking (15%) were the most important topic areas raised.
  68. In summary the need for high quality green space, a local identity (not a suburb of Cambridge) and good quality transport alternatives from the private car were seen as important issues. There was a general positive (62%) to the principle of a Fenland design with only 10% against this design ethos.
    - Applicant Stage 2 Consultation
  69. A second phase of engagement took place in November and December 2018. This included a further Member Session, workshops and two further public drop-in sessions. A further questionnaire was also developed for the drop-in sessions. At this stage, a design review was carried out by the national Design Council (formerly CABE).

70. A further Design Review also took place locally, with a site visit, on 8 May 2019, with the Cambridgeshire Design Quality Panel.
71. During this stage 90 people engaged with the drop-in sessions and 388 responses to the questionnaire were received. In terms of the topic areas raised, Design/Layout (26%), Public transport and cycle/walking (22%) and road transport (14%) were the most important topic areas raised. In particular, reducing the dominance of the car was seen as important.
72. In summary the need for high quality green space, the creation of a Northstowe and good quality transport alternatives from the private car were seen as important issues.
73. A total of 55% respondents agreed that that the proposals reflected the historic context with the remainder being neutral on the issue. A total of 27% were positive about taller buildings in selective locations, 27% were neutral, and 45% were against. The retention of woodland and creation of public transport were unanimously supported whilst pedestrian and cycle links were also seen as very important by 94% of respondents.
74. The Design Council supported the green and blue spaces at the centre of the masterplan. They challenged the designers to be ambitious in relation to transport movement, integration of parking, health, and well-being; and designing a place that can change over time. They also made a point about the desirability of linking with the wider footpath/cycleway network including Northstowe Phase 1.
75. Cambridgeshire Design Quality Panel commented that the design strategy addressed potential future trends and aims, with the capability for self-sustaining healthy communities, landscape quality and recreation at the heart of the design of the future town. It noted the aspiration to make Northstowe a low carbon development that can accommodate the impacts of climate change.
76. The Panel also noted that the likely population and demographics would be beneficial to providing the level of services and facilities required to support the development and would help to promote walking and cycling. Furthermore, they commented on the opportunity to challenge levels of car parking and provide creative solutions to parking, ensuring that areas of the public realm would not be car dominated.

- Applicant Stage 3 Consultation

77. During 2019 (April-October) meetings were held with SCDC and County Council Officers on a range of topics to inform the submission. Several meetings were also held from September 2019 to March 2020 discuss the scope of the s106 contributions.
78. Further engagement also took place in September 2019 with Members and the public with a further event in November 2019. 153 people attended the public drop-in sessions.
79. During 2019 (April-October) a range of meetings were held with SCDC and County Council Officers on a range of topics to inform the submission and to identify supporting evidence. Several meetings were also held from September 2019 to March 2020 discuss the scope of the s106 contributions.
80. Further engagement also took place in September 2019 with Members as well as a further event in November 2019 with members of the public. 153 people attended the public drop-in sessions.
81. Over the course of the total consultation events 345 people have attended the various drop-in sessions whilst 857 comments have been received to the proposals.
82. It is also noted that the applicant has been a regular presence at the Northstowe Community Forum which is attended by Northstowe residents, several parish councils and other interested local residents. Updates have been regularly presented to the Forum.

## **Policy, guidance, and other material planning considerations**

83. A full list of policies, background papers and other documents can be found at **Appendix A**.

### **National Guidance**

- a. National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)
- b. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- c. National Design Guide (NDG)
- d. National Model Design Code (NMDC)

### **The Development Plan**

84. For the purposes of the s38(6) of the 2004 Act, the Development Plan is the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, Northstowe Area Action Plan (except

where superseded by the Local Plan) and the County Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Allocations.

### **South Cambridgeshire Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

85. Open Space in New Developments SPD - Adopted 2009  
Trees & Development Sites SPD - Adopted 2009  
Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted 2010  
Biodiversity SPD - Adopted 2009  
District Design Guide SPD - Adopted 2010  
Affordable Housing SPD – Adopted 2010  
Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted  
Health Impact Assessment SPD – Adopted  
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted 2016  
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

### **Equalities Act**

86. The application has been assessed against the relevant sections of the Equalities Act 2010, and it is not considered that the application discriminates against people with protected characteristics specified in the Act. The protected characteristics are: -
- a) age
  - b) gender reassignment
  - c) being married or in a civil partnership
  - d) being pregnant or on maternity leave
  - e) disability
  - f) race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
  - g) religion or belief
  - h) sex
  - i) sexual orientation

### **Other material planning considerations**

87. From 1st September 2020 the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 (2020 No. 757) came into force. Three new use classes have been created by this change: Class E (Commercial, business and service), Class F.1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) and F.2 (Local community).

88. Class E creates a new commercial, business and service use class which subsumes retail (A1), financial and professional services (A2), restaurants and cafes (A3) and business (B1a/b/c) use classes. Uses such as gyms, nurseries/creches and health centres (previously in use classes D1 Non-residential institutions and D2 Assembly and leisure) and other uses which are suitable for a town centre area are also included in Class E.
89. Since 1st September planning permission is not required for changes between these, what were until recently, different kinds of uses. This is because they are now grouped into the same use class and therefore will not constitute development. For example, a retail shop can change to a restaurant, or an office building could change to a retail supermarket without needing planning permission for a change of use (providing there are no restrictive covenants, conditions, section 106 obligations restricting the existing use).
90. The regulations also create Classes F1 and F2 which include local community, non-residential and learning uses, which are considered important to local communities and which will be protected through the planning system rather than given the additional flexibility provided to Class E uses
91. Class F1 'Learning and non-residential institutions' such as schools, non-residential education and training centres, museums, public libraries, places of worship and law courts.
92. Class F2 'Local community' uses such as community halls, meeting places and recreational facilities such as swimming baths and sports facilities. This also includes small-scale shops (up to 280 square metres, located 1000 metres or more from another retail unit).
93. Uses which can have potential amenity impacts on neighbouring properties will become sui generis and any material change of use will require planning permission. This includes pubs/bars, takeaways, cinemas, concert, dance, and bingo halls.
94. Once a use has been implemented under the planning permission then it will benefit from the permitted development subject to these new use classes.

## **Public Consultation and Engagement**

95. Paragraph 126 of the NPPF sets out the importance of effective engagement for achieving well-designed places. Policy SC/4 of the Local Plan sets out

the importance of stakeholder engagement in identifying community needs in large-scale major developments over 200 homes or more.

96. The Council has also adopted a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which seeks to promote and encourage applicants to carry out early engagement with the Council and local community before submitting a planning application.
97. The applicant has submitted a supporting Stakeholder and Community Engagement Report which outlines how the community have been engaged in the development of the masterplan and design. The level of consultation that has been undertaken is described below.

*During the application*

98. In excess of 2,500 letters have been sent out to local residents and approximately 20 site notices have been displayed across Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe. In accordance with the Coronavirus Regulations, the Council's social media was also used to publicise the submission and was widely shared on Parish Council and Community social media pages.
99. Officers also emailed the two principal Parishes (Longstanton and Oakington) and the application is also detailed on the Council's website. The application has also been advertised in local press and interviews with SCDC's Portfolio Holder for Planning also took place on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire to further raise awareness of the application.
100. Additional time was also given to local residents due to lockdown measures and the level of information received, for example a total of 56 days was given from the first publication to the end of the first consultation period or 44 days from the receipt of the letters.
101. Additionally, a further online Northstowe Community Forum took place on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020 where Officers and Members of the team from Homes England were available to answer questions. The forum was advertised widely in the local community with Longstanton and Oakington communities invited. The presentation focused on consultation responses received at the time and is online and available to view post the meeting.
102. Following the closure of the public consultation a range of meetings were held between the applicant, County and Council Officers seeking to address and consider detailed comments from consultees and residents. Officers and Homes England representatives have continued to be present at the virtual

Community Forums following the closure of formal consultation to update viewers on the progress of the applications.

103. Further information was submitted on 27 January 2021 and public consultation was commenced through the Council's website and social media accounts with further consultation with consultees.
104. A final tranche of minor amendments to the parameter plans were submitted in July 2021 which included a covering letter outlining a response to a number of consultees. Due to their specific nature a focused consultation with Parishes and relevant technical officers was carried out but wider consultation with the general public was not carried out as a result of this information.

### *Conclusion*

105. It is considered that there has been extensive engagement with the community, stakeholders, and members. There has been the opportunity to comment and influence the design process and provide useful local knowledge which have been incorporated into the masterplan.
106. Officers of the County Council and SCDC have also been part of the process informing the technical requirements of the submission and two design reviews have also added credibility to the submission and masterplan.

### **Consultation**

107. Full detailed comments of those who have been consulted and of local residents are available on the Council's public access website. The following is a synopsis of key issues raised for the benefit of clarity to the decision maker.

### **Consultation – Ward Members**

#### ***District Councillors Cheung-Johnson and Malyon***

108. We broadly support this application and welcome the work done on the Northstowe Co-ordination Statement between Homes England, Endurance Estates and Digital Park estates to ensure the co-ordinated development between all three developments for a cohesive and consistent development.
109. Where possible we would request formal commitments to be sought so that this document is not merely an ideal state but something all three developers could commit to.

110. We would request that to maintain separate identities of Longstanton village and Northstowe that the edge houses visible from the northern end of Longstanton be no higher than 2-storeys – these are the houses along the B1050 and running diagonally along the length of Phase 3b to the west.
111. We note concerns on potential air pollution around the school site and request that air monitoring could be provided along here as well as research for adequate arboreal mitigation of air pollution. Should permission be granted we wish to request specific enforceable conditions be laid down by the Council in the Construction Management Plan to include (but not limited to):
- Strict, enforceable limits on construction times
  - Specific and proactive measures to monitor dust and noise and measures to mitigate and resolve issues
  - Construction vehicle access only from the B1050 and A14 and not via Longstanton or Willingham villages or Northstowe itself.

### ***Cllr Bill Handley***

112. Would like to make the strongest representation that a planning condition should be applied such that no construction vehicles are allowed to travel through the village of Willingham. This is a condition for the earlier phases of the development, and it is essential that it also applies to this and subsequent applications for Northstowe. I would ask to be given the opportunity to make this appeal in person to the Planning Committee when they consider the application.

## **Consultation – Parish Councils**

### ***Longstanton Parish Council***

113. Having considered this application at the online meeting of Longstanton Parish Council on 8th June, councillors acknowledged the application as part of the wider Northstowe allocation, and that Councillors recognise that in their position of Trustees of adjoining land it would be a conflict of interest to comment much more than to say that they understood that there would be a visible green separation between the village of Longstanton and Northstowe. They would like to see enhanced green separation where currently shown and that the properties on the B1050 be a maximum of 2 storey as it faces the current established village. It would be prudent to encourage more local provision in the area as it is a long way to the town centre.

***Northstowe Town Council (Representation received 18 January 2022)***

114. Objects for the following reasons:

*Site Drainage*

115. Notes that concerns around the ability of the Swavesey drain's ability to cope with projected outflows have been raised. Requests that agreement with these consultees should be sought before the approval of this application.
116. Notes that the B1050 is subject to flooding events during sustained rainfall. Whilst the County Council has recently undertaken work to improve the highway drainage situation, the issue persists, in particular on the side of the B1050 where the new development is proposed.

*Site Access*

117. The only proposed highway linkage for motor vehicles is the existing roundabout on the B1050; this is deemed unsuitable for 1,000 homes. Additional ways to link with the existing highway should be sought. A more substantive road linkage opportunity should be looked for.
118. Requests that a condition is put in place that an adequate monitoring and mitigation plan is put in place if the B1050 becomes too busy as a result of the additional homes built.
119. Concerned how separation of construction traffic from that of residents within the development parcel with the single linkage as proposed can be meaningfully achieved.

*Building Heights Along the B1050*

120. Supportive of, and wish to reiterate, the comments made previously by Longstanton Parish Council with regards to the building heights along the edge of the B1050 and these should be changed to a maximum of two stories.

*CEMP*

121. Seeks submission of CEMP document in advance of development taking place, covering the areas detailed, with specific restrictions on development work times, noise and dust monitoring and mitigation, and strict limitations on construction traffic routes not using the villages of Longstanton or Willingham and which should not pass through the Phase 1 development site.

### *Delivery Phasing*

122. Seeks robust conditions to ensure that roads and cycleways within the development are completed in a timely manner, linked with housing completion in the local area. Clarity on which phase of the development the local centre will be started and subsequently completed is also needed, with the need in particular for more clarity on trigger points for delivery of key community facilities; this in particular as phase 3B will be fairly remote from facilities planned for Northstowe Phases 1 and 2.

### *Tenure Blind Construction*

123. Supports the applicant's plans for the phase to be built in a tenure blind way.

### ***Oakington and Westwick Parish Council***

124. Object - it is clear that for the full development of both Northstowe Phase 3A and 3B that the Travel Assessments show that most if not all junctions in the immediate vicinity of the developments will be over capacity and in the case of Oakington and Westwick peak traffic flows are substantially increased on all roads both in and out of the parish. This is a major non-compliance against the Northstowe Area Action Plan item D6.4 and 5.

### ***Over Parish Council***

125. Objects to this application on the following grounds:
126. Access - There are two exit sites for 1000 homes and the one posing most concerns exits near to the guided busway. This will cause traffic bottle necks.
127. Location - The location of the site is on an area that was originally sourced as a Strategic Reserve Site in the Northstowe Area Action Plan of 1997, so this area has now been given a changed designation.
128. Increased Traffic Flow - The B1050 is also an inadequate road infrastructure currently without any added traffic passing along it. This road needs to be improved to cope with the excess traffic that the Northstowe development will generate.
129. Over Parish Council would like to see a proper analysis of traffic flows based on the inhabitants already housed at Northstowe and taking into consideration the new homes in this phase. It was proposed that concerns exist over the Northern Exit which is placed too close to the guided busway.

This is a poor location and will increase traffic onto the B1050. A bypass or alternative exit should be considered.

***Swavesey Parish Council***

130. Objects to this application on the following grounds:
131. Insufficient detail has been submitted within the documentation to demonstrate that sufficient capacity will be available within the recipient Utton's Drove Water Recycling Centre (WRC) to serve the entirety of the development.
132. The Flood Risk Assessment contains incorrect and inaccurate information.
133. An outflow restrictor on the water flowing into the Swavesey Drain from this development should be installed. To activate when Webb's Hole Sluice closes at the river. In the same way as has been conditioned on housing developments within Swavesey Parish. There are restrictors on other Northstowe SW outflows into the Beck Brook and Cottenham Lode to cope with high water situations. The same should be conditioned for outflow to Swavesey Drain.
134. Parish Council agrees with the Environment Agency comments, that the decision on this application should be deferred until further discussions regarding flood risk are held, as the detail in the Flood Risk Assessment is incorrect and missing.
135. Noted that the water supply in Cambridgeshire is becoming in high demand due to lack of rainfall in recent years and the diminishing levels in the aquifers. How can such a huge rate of new development be sustained in this situation?
136. Construction traffic to/from the development site. This needs to be managed to ensure that traffic does not use Ramper Road and Swavesey village.
137. Phase 3B was never part of the original proposal and was a strategic reserve site. The traffic from the site will come out onto the already overburdened B1050 and unless a management system is put in place, that traffic wishing to head towards St Ives and Huntingdon is likely to use Ramper Rd and Swavesey village to access the A1307 at the Swavesey junction. This would be unacceptable and put additional pressure on Ramper Rd and Boxworth End, Swavesey which cannot cope with current levels of traffic, let alone increased levels from additional housing.

### ***Willingham Parish Council***

138. Original Comment - Object - Phase 3b was never part of the original proposal and was a strategic reserve site. The housing could go South of the new road. The traffic from the site will come out onto the already overburdened B1050 and Willingham will have to bear the brunt of the additional traffic loads. The Council would re-emphasise the need for a bypass round Willingham as was previously reported in the press where County Councillors stated that they wanted Willingham to have a bypass before any construction took place. The Council feel that until the issue of a bypass is resolved, this application is premature.
139. Willingham Parish Council also made further comments on 22 February 2021, raising that there does not appear to be any mention of a dedicated medical practice and that failure to provide this may put yet more pressure on Willingham surgery.

### **Consultation - South Cambridgeshire District Council Consultee**

#### ***Air Quality***

140. No objection to the proposed development. Air Quality Officers are in agreement with the methodology of the Air Quality Assessment presented in Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement and accept the findings of the assessment.

#### ***Contaminated Land***

141. No objection subject to conditions. Comments. The site does not have a particularly potentially contaminative history, but it has been used and is to be redeveloped to a more sensitive end use. Some levels of investigation have been carried out to date, from WSP in 2007 to Arcadis in 2020. These investigations are considered, preliminary and more detailed investigation has been suggested in the conclusions and recommendations of the interpretative report (section 8).

#### ***Drainage***

142. No objections subject to conditions. Comments. The conclusion of Appendix B (Northstowe Phase 3B: Swavesey Drain Catchment Review and Proposals for Discharge Regime - Technical Report) includes the following options for surface water runoff discharge from the site into the Swavesey Drain:

- i. Adopting the same discharge regime for site 3B as for other parts of the Northstowe site will slow down the release of water into the Swavesey Drain and risk the discharge from the site coinciding with water levels rising on the Great Ouse and the Webbs Hole sluice gate closure.
- ii. Adopting a regime for higher discharge from site 3B will reduce the impact of the site's runoff on the Swavesey Drain during periods of sluice gate closure; this is even more effective at lower return periods.
- iii. Increasing the discharge rate to 500 l/s for all storm events (i.e., all return periods) can be accommodated within the channel and would reduce the time for runoff to be discharged from the site significantly.

### ***Ecology***

143. No objection. The changes made to the ES and associated appendices are welcomed and supported.
144. Further details will be required though the detailed design stage. Further points to consider at detailed design:
  - i. Dark corridors for commuting bats/badgers. Highways are unlikely to adopt footpaths and cycleways that include low level bollard lighting. Where there are clear conflicts between pole lighting and nocturnal/cryptic species movement alternate lighting solutions will be necessary; and therefore, solutions will need to be presented.
  - ii. High density of badgers – there is likely to be a high volume of badger movement throughout the site especially as both main sets are to be retained in situ. Mammal tunnels should therefore be considered where the likelihood of Road Traffic Accidents involving badgers is significant.

### ***Health Officer***

145. As per the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Health Impact Assessment (HIA SPD) the outline application has been reviewed using the HIA Review Package checklist contained in Appendix 3. The outcome is that the Health Impact Assessment as submitted has been assessed as grade A which meets the required standard of the HIA SPD policy (only HIA's graded A or B are acceptable).

***Historic Environment Team***

146. No objection

***Housing Strategy***

147. Recommend approval of the scheme subject to matters of detail in terms of affordable housing policies in the s106 and self/custom build.

***Landscape Team***

148. No objection. Comments. Outstanding elements associated with sections and relationships between landscape areas with housing, edges or movement corridors can be considered during the Design Code process and subsequent Reserved Matters applications.

***Sustainability Officer***

149. Support the proposals. Recommends conditions to secure the submission of detailed Energy Strategies as part of future reserved matters applications, and for the baseline carbon reduction target of a 19% improvement on Part L 2013 to be updated and uplifted in line with future changes to either Part L of the Building Regulations or on adoption of higher standards as part of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

***Sustainable Communities Team***

150. Comments. Highlights the importance of Phase 3B's integration with the wider development, particularly the town centre and the Western Park in Phase 1.
151. Would like to better understand the cycle/pedestrian connections between phase 3B and Western Park. Phase 3B will not provide any sport facilities so the residents will need to be access the sport facilities at Western Park.
152. Would also like to highlight dedicated faith provision, either in Phase 3B itself or an extension to the adjacent Phase 1 community facility.

***Tree Officer***

153. No objection. Recommends a condition relating to the location and minimum encroachment onto the existing hedgerow and woodland features (future open spaces and Longstanton Farmland Edge) be clearly defined and

therefore secured through a development exclusion zone/buffer distance condition.

### ***Urban Design***

154. The proposed scheme is supported.

### **Consultation – County Council**

155. On 16th September 2021, the County Council's Environment and Green Investment Committee agreed the County Council's Heads of Terms and the transport mitigation package.

### ***Archaeology***

156. The proposed development is located in an intensively settled and managed historic landscape. The site is located in a landscape of high archaeological potential. Excavations undertaken in and around Longstanton, including Northstowe Phases 1 and 2 and the large residential development to the west of the village have identified extensive and intensive land use throughout the Iron Age, Roman, Saxon, and medieval periods.
157. Cropmarks and geophysical survey within the proposal area identify a complex pattern of enclosures. A preliminary evaluation undertaken in 2004 indicated a Roman period date for this site, with artefacts of Iron Age, Saxon and medieval date providing evidence for the longevity of land use. Pre-application meetings were held with the County Council's Historic Environment Team, where HET's view that field evaluation was necessary, to be undertaken prior to planning permission in order to inform the assessment.
158. The Environmental Statement provides reference to the currently known archaeological resources within the application area and suggests further trench evaluation to be undertaken prior to the commencement of construction works. It goes on to suggest excavation and "watching brief" of areas to be determined at a later date, with mitigation to be undertaken in conjunction with enabling works.
159. We advise against this approach as the current baseline understanding of the archaeological potential of the site is insufficient to determine an appropriate mitigation response.
160. Recommends further field evaluation to define the character and extent of known and anticipated heritage assets throughout the proposal area. The

results would enable an informed assessment of the development impacts and the measures required to mitigate the impact of development.

161. This programme of work should be undertaken to inform the planning application and enable revisions to the Environmental Statement to clarify the character, significance, and extent of heritage assets of archaeological significance in the area and inform clear proposals to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development.

***Lead Local Flood Authority***

162. No objection in principle to the proposed development subject to conditions.
163. The 47-ha site is split into two catchments, both draining northwards towards the Swavesey Drain. The strategy is based on restricting surface water leaving the site to 3 l/s/ha; however, it is appreciated this rate may change depending on the outcome of conversations with Swavesey Internal Drainage Board related to potential flood risk. Impermeable areas across the site will be limited to:
  - a. 62% for residential parcels
  - b. 40% for schools
  - c. 100% for primary and secondary streets and access road

***Transport Assessment Team***

164. No objection subject to mitigation package agreed with the applicant: Sufficient detail has been presented to make a sound assessment.
165. Northstowe benefits from the improved A14 and the Cambridge Guided Busway and is well placed to take advantage of the Cambridge to St Ives Greenway and future upgrades to the City's bus network. The Transport Assessment has been the subject of extensive engagement since May 2018. Whilst most details have been agreed with the applicant, the details of the SARE and the mitigation at each junction are subject to safety audit and agreement. Work on these aspects is expected to be resolved and continues as part of the continued engagement with the applicant and their technical team.
166. The proposals have a critical dependency on the new town's vehicle trip generation and distribution of these trips, the capacity of the Bar Hill interchange and when the SARE is required to be constructed, and the impact of traffic on surrounding villages. These matters have been subject to investigation with the applicant. CCC provided technical comments on the

Transport Assessment in August 2020, to which the applicant has provided additional information and clarifications, particularly relating to trip rates, distribution and mitigation. A revised TA has been submitted by the applicant and has been reviewed.

## **Consultation – Other**

### ***Anglian Water***

167. No objection. Recommends a planning condition relating to a Phasing Plan and Foul Water connection details.

### ***Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)***

168. The NHS has previously submitted comments on the planning applications for Phases 1 & 2 and is working in collaboration with the local planning authority, and the associated working groups on the design and development of the Civic Hub for Northstowe. The justification for a new Health Centre for Northstowe is well documented and this letter does not repeat these earlier comments, nor does it set out the potential shortfall which may arise from the s106 agreement for Phases 1 & 2.
169. Confirms the need for this application to be responsible for a financial contribution, within a s106 agreement, towards the construction, fitting out and revenue costs associated with the new health facility. The CCG will work with the planning authority to prepare the necessary information to safeguard a financial contribution to deliver a fully functional and financially viable Healthy Centre, within the Civic Hub, for the new residents of Northstowe.

### ***Cambridgeshire Police***

170. Comments. While there is no specific section in the DAS relating to security or crime prevention at this stage, it is obvious throughout the document that consideration is being given to it. Further comments will be provided at the reserved matters stage when there will be more context to the design and plans. It would be good to see the complete mixed development achieving Secured by Design and this office would be happy to consult with the applicants to discuss this and measures to reduce the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour.

### ***Environment Agency***

171. No objection. Comments. Anglian Water Services (AWS) have been in

contact regarding amending the Utton's Drove Water Recycling Centre (WRC) discharge permit. Within this they are examining the permit limits for the water quality (chemical) and quantity (discharge rate). This will be used to identify how they then upgrade and operate the works. Current and potential discharge rates will remain below the 239 litres per second rate that was agreed within the agreed Land Drainage Solution.

172. AWS have advised that they are managing the direction and volumes of foul water within their systems in line with their responsibilities under the Water Industry Act 1991. Papworth Everard WRC, the intended treatment plant for Cambourne West was not considered suitable by AWS as they would not be able to comply with the discharge permit limits associated with water quality.
173. The EA is assured that the operation of Utton's Drove WRC will be in compliance with the Land Drainage Solution. Additional developments will also be able to utilise Utton's Drove for foul water treatment, subject to AWS' operation of the WRC being compliant with the relevant discharge permit (existing or future).
174. The EA therefore advise that the concerns that were raised against a number of planning applications (including Northstowe Phases 3A and 3B), relating to Utton's Drove, have been addressed and that there is no material reason, in terms of foul water drainage, to prevent permission(s) being granted. The associated foul water drainage conditions may therefore be discharged.
175. In respect of water supply, we confirm that Northstowe is in Cambridge Water Company's (CWC) supply area for drinking water, but in AWS' supply area for sewerage. Therefore, CWC would be the incumbent supplying for the development. However, new household developments can be supplied by an inset company, which could be AWS, or any number of 3rd party providers. Typically the water would still come from CWC, but the inset company would buy the supply from CWC and sell it onto the customers.

#### ***Fire Service***

176. No objection. Requirement for fire hydrants, which can be secured by planning condition.

#### ***Health and Safety Executive***

177. HSE does not need to be consulted on any developments on this site.

***Highways England***

178. No objection. Recommends conditions.

***Historic England***

179. On the basis of this information, we do not wish to offer any comments. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers, as relevant.

***National Trust***

180. Request planning contributions to support its facilities and activities.

***Natural England***

181. No objection. Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

***Public Health England***

182. No comment.

***Sport England***

183. Offers its support for this application, subject to the securing of a financial contribution towards off-site sports facilities.

***Swavesey Drainage Board***

184. Object – comments summarised below -
185. The submission does not currently meet aspects, or the spirit, of national policy including, amongst others, Paragraphs 155-165 of the Governments NPPF, or local guidance documents, including aspects of the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.
186. It would be inappropriate for the planning authority to accept the current proposals without the issues raised meeting not only its satisfaction but also those of other Risk Management Authorities. Failure to do so could have implications that affect their environmental responsibility.

## Consultation – Community groups

- **British Horse Society**

187. Object. Comments. Whilst Homes England have been in regular and positive contact with a local BHS Access Officer, the documents which have been submitted under this planning application contain no equestrian access.

- **Cam Cycle**

188. Object, comments including -

189. The primary school has been located on the primary road, which means that nearly every motor vehicle journey will pass next to the school, thus guaranteeing that the children there will be maximally exposed to pollution and traffic danger.

190. Given the increasing popularity of larger cycles such as cargo cycles, tandems, tricycles and handcycles, strongly recommend that the applicants use cycle parking designs that accommodate larger cycles in reasonable ways.

191. Designs must consider ease of accessibility and safety for people of all ages and abilities, we expect that new cycling design guidance from the Department for Transport will be released shortly, which will help with the reserved matters applications.

- **Cambridge Past Present and Future**

192. Notes that these applications are largely in line with the Local Plan and subsequent expectations, but that close attention must be made to making more specific the general commitments to the following:

193. Provision of 40% Affordable Housing, including self-build, and three-generational housing, better facility for home-working and more flexibility in the potential for conversion of ground floors of houses to office space.

194. Sustainability and energy levels, in particular, regarding the stated (and welcome) target of 40% below Building Regulation levels with the installation of heat pump and PV green energy provision.

195. Satisfactory extent and quality of the tree/green area between Phase 3A and Oakington;

196. Sufficient S106 payments to Cambridge Guided Busway (CGB) for the enhancement of local bus provision, and the installation of the two new CGB stations.02142/f

- **Longstanton District Heritage Society**

197. Comments. The natural heritage assets of this site are not being adequately protected, green separation with Longstanton is poor and this whole scheme is too dense and has a negative impact on wildlife. Substantial wildlife mitigation should be required, if necessary, by providing land within Longstanton parish. Off-site mitigation elsewhere is not acceptable. The density of the scheme should be reduced, and this will alleviate pressure on the landscape assets associated with the site. This can be achieved by providing more flats and taller buildings particularly on the edges of the development towards the old station where further Northstowe development is being planned but, yet to be built.

- **Over Swift and Swavesey Swift Conservation Project 2020**

198. The development at Northstowe presents the opportunity of thousands of effective new nest sites to be created, supporting the important local authority declarations of emergency for climate, environment, and biodiversity.

- **RSPB**

199. Request planning contributions to support its facilities and activities.

## **Representations from members of the public and Community Groups**

200. There has been a total of 25 comments received from members of the public and local residents. Of these 3 are in support, 6 are neutral and 16 are objections. The following is a summary of issues raised. The full representations can be viewed on the online planning register.

201. The impact of traffic on the B1050. This could be planned better to reduce the impact of traffic, congestion, noise and improve safety.

202. Consideration should be given to alternatives such as accessing from the B1050/Ramper Road roundabout instead or a bypass around Northstowe for onward traffic to Willingham and other villages, etc.

203. The impact of noise from the new roundabout, particularly to Peppercorn Drive and the validity of noise monitoring locations.
204. The primary school is surrounded by the two main roads leading in and out of Phase 3b. It makes it dangerous for children cycling to school as all traffic in and out of Phase 3b has to pass the school but also creates a bottleneck whereby any school traffic will effectively shut off traffic trying to enter or leave phase 3b.
205. Drainage and flooding impacts and the impacts on Uttons Drove and the impact of the development on Swavesey Drain including questions with regard to the adequacy of the Flood Risk Assessment.
206. On matters of principle that the council has a five-year supply, there is no need for further housing, land was reserve land and not part of Northstowe.
207. Heights should be no more than 2 storeys/Need for a green barrier to B1050
208. Impact on Longstanton as a village.
209. Need for green space, garden spaces and better room sizes.
210. Loss of countryside and farmland
211. Trees and hedgerows should be protected.
212. Concern about the carbon footprint and how this would be mitigated.
213. Access should be from Ramper Road.
214. Inadequate information about the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) with regard to soil and water and there is inadequate information about the impacts that the development will have on the soil, water, biodiversity and landscape, and inadequate consideration of the cumulative effects of the proposals with other existing and / or approved projects including the known existing environmental problems relating to Phases 1 and 2.
215. The neutral comments are summarised as follows:
216. Some concern about the strong building line along the B1050 which overlooks Longstanton. Which could blur the boundaries between these two areas. The Original Northstowe statement allowed for green separation which has been allocated along the rest of the phases.

217. Before considering this application, the councils should be insisting that the developers start work on essential infrastructure on phase 1.
218. Improve the sustainability credentials from Phase 1 – solar panels and charging points in particular.
219. Create a good link to the busway at each end. From the north, Fen Drayton Lakes RSPB is less than 4 miles away so provides a good target even for young families, fully off road
220. Affordable housing should be provided to be policy compliant on Phase 3 there should be a clear statement of intent to provide this direct route for buses at the earliest reasonable opportunity, and that this should be explicitly accommodated both in designs for the site under consideration here, and in any plans drawn up in the future for the Endurance Estates site.
221. There appears to be no specific mention of integral bird nest bricks in the dwellings as part of the strategy for demonstrating biodiversity gain. While there is an understandable focus on Biodiversity Net Gain, which relates to green habitats, it should not be forgotten that bird nesting places incorporated within the structure of dwellings can also bring nature close to people.
222. In support of the application, the following comments were made:
223. That pedestrian and cycle links be provided directly through to Northstowe Phase 1 (west of station road) at an early stage to encourage walking and cycling through to Phase 1 and the local centre.
224. Would also like to see walking and cycling improvements and highway safety improvements along Ramper Road towards Swavesey
225. B1050 is always flooding needs to be addressed.
226. There needs to ensure that all green spaces are available when the first set of residents move in.
227. It is important to also keep the edges of Northstowe and Longstanton Village separate
228. Need to keep construction to a minimum around the school and ensure safety around traffic for the children and monitor the air quality.
229. Concern that the development would only have a single vehicular access point and would rather there be two to improve the highway resilience

# Planning assessment

## Section 1 – The principle of development

230. Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) addresses the issue of the presumption in favour of sustainable development in decision-making.
231. The SCDC Local Plan 2018 constitutes an up-to-date local plan with respect to the requirements set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF.
232. Policy S/6 'The Development Strategy to 2031' states that major site allocations from the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007-2010 together with the Area Action Plan for Northstowe (except as amended by SS/5) are carried forward as part of the development plan to 2031 or until such time as the developments are complete.
233. Policy SS/5 'Northstowe Extension' states that the reserve land identified in the Northstowe Area Action Plan (AAP) is allocated as an extension to the site of the new town of Northstowe. It will help provide the 10,000 homes allocated in the AAP at an appropriate density and design and will not increase the overall number of homes.
234. The Area Action Plan for Northstowe (NAAP) identifies the site for a sustainable new town with a target size of 10,000 dwellings and associated development as well as the off-site infrastructure needed to deliver and serve the town. It establishes an overall vision for the new town including its relationship with surrounding villages and its countryside setting. It also sets out the policies and proposals to guide all the phases of development.
235. Chapter 4 of the ES looks at development need and the consideration of alternatives. The site is an established part of the Development Plan and the Council's Growth Strategy and has been for a number of years. The site has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations and the conclusions of this Chapter are accepted.
236. Notwithstanding comments of Willingham Parish Council, the area was a reserve site, but Policy SS/5 now allocates the site for development.
237. The land lies within the Mineral Safeguarding Areas for Sand and Gravel in accordance defined in Policy 5 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2036. Development that is consistent with an allocation in the Development Plan however means that the County Council Minerals and Waste team does not need to be consulted.

238. The land allocated in Policy SS/5 is wider than the application site submitted. It also includes two other development parcels which front the B1050. Submissions have been made under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations to either the Local Planning Authority or the Secretary of State. It should be noted that the Secretary of State determined that neither of these sites should be the subject of an Environmental Statement. These sites are under separate ownership. A co-ordination statement has been produced between the three developments, which is discussed in section 2(g).

### **Conclusion**

239. The application proposals are in accordance with the Local Plan and the principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable.

## **Section 2. Amount, land use and parameters**

### **2 (a) Introduction**

240. The application includes 3 parameter plans. These are based upon the following topics -
- a) Movement and Access
  - b) Open Space and Land Use
  - c) Building Heights
241. The purpose of the parameter plans submitted with the application are to detail the key elements of the development proposals and to show how these respond to the environmental constraints of the site and the assessment of the site set out in the Environmental Statement.

### **2 (b) Vision**

242. NAAP Policy NS/4 'Green Separation from Longstanton and Oakington' sets out the principles for the Green Separation from Longstanton and Oakington which are outlined as having a high degree of public access and also containing land uses primarily open in character.
243. Objective C2/a of the NAAP is to create an appropriate setting for the new town, minimising any adverse visual or landscape impacts on the surrounding area including the setting and character of the surrounding

settlements, in particular the closest villages of Longstanton, Oakington and Westwick and their Conservation Areas as well as more distant neighbours at Rampton, Willingham, Over and Bar Hill.

244. The applicants have submitted a Design and Access Statement (DAS). The DAS sets out an Illustrative Masterplan and Landscape Strategy. The DAS establishes a framework of key design principles and is intended for formal endorsement as part of the outline consent.
245. The key defining design principles for Phase 3b are as follows:
246. Character - creating development edges that achieve a clear distinction between countryside and town and establish a sense of arrival into Northstowe from the north.
247. Connectivity - creating a clear and legible street hierarchy that accommodates direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
248. Community - Maximise opportunities to connect 3b to Longstanton and the wider town to enable residents to access community, leisure, education and sport facilities via safe and convenient walking and cycle routes.
249. Climate - Widespread use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to provide sustainable storm water management and maximise available water resource from rainfall, as well as the creation of new wildlife corridors and spaces whilst incorporating existing wetlands and ponds, with a variety of flora and fauna, creating valuable open amenity areas.

## **2 (c) Movement and Access**

250. The movement and access parameter plan shows a new access from the existing roundabout on the B1050 as the principal access into the Phase. There are also routes around and through the development and pedestrian/cycle and non-vehicle routes linking this Phase to elements of Phase 1 (including the local centre, employment, and community facilities). The proposals also utilise existing emergency vehicle links through Parcel H1 which were secured as part of the planning approval for that development parcel.

## **2 (d) Land uses**

251. The open spaces and land use parameter plan shows the location of key public realm and open space proposed throughout this phase of the

development and how key features have influenced the layout of the proposed masterplan.

252. The proposals create green corridors and a green edge together with links to the wider countryside as well as creating areas for sustainable drainage and tree planting. The built form would be, predominantly, to the eastern and northern edge of the Phase.

### **2(e) Scale and Density**

253. The heights parameter plan shows that a majority of Phase 3b will be up to 3 storeys in height. This does not mean that all the development within these areas will be of single height and a design-led approach will be needed to ensure that legibility and identity can be developed.
254. The edge alongside Parcel H1 would be two storeys in height whilst there would be two areas of potential four storeys within mixed use areas and a key point to the south. Overall, the proposed parameter plan indicates a suburban/edge of settlement design approach.
255. The plan shows the distribution of housing and the position of a mixed-use commercial area next to the primary school. The plan also shows details such as the retention of the woodland and further tree planting and the creation of play areas and greenspace to the west.

### **2(f) Phasing**

256. Should planning permission be granted, based on how the previous phases have been developed, it is estimated that it will take approximately 8 years to complete this phase. This will include agreeing measures such as the design code, the formal phasing strategy, and other strategies. There is also a need to carry out substantive pre-commencement work in terms of archaeological investigation.
257. It is expected the first reserved matters for housing will be in the eastern edge and the development would be delivered across an anticipated three key phases.
258. It is anticipated that the earliest house occupations and completions will take place approximately seven to ten years from the date of permission meaning that there is a limited impact of the development in terms of the Council's current housing land supply. Targeted completion of the proposals is estimated at approximately 2038.

259. Whilst the third-party concerns regarding the delivery of the development are noted, the details of the phasing of the development (including the local centre), can be secured by planning condition (**Condition 9 – Phasing**).

### **2(g) Co-ordination with other development parcels within Phase 3B**

260. The applicant has submitted a Northstowe Development Co-ordination Statement and Guiding Principles document. This has been prepared to provide a framework for the co-ordinated development of three adjoining parcels of land to the west of Station Road within the Northstowe new town.
261. The Statement covers the three parcels of land in this part of the new town and has been entered into by Homes England (for phase 3B, Endurance Estates and Middlereach Ltd for Digital Park).
262. The three parcels all sit within the Northstowe Local Plan allocation, identified under Policy SS/5 (Northstowe Extension) in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.
263. Each of the three land parcels are in separate land ownership, each with different objectives and operating to different timescales. Each of the three parcels is capable of being delivered independently, there is no dependency on development of the adjoining parcels. Each permission would be accompanied by a separate S106 Agreement.
264. The Northstowe Phase 1 and 2 Design Codes include 'Town Wide' guidance to be applied across Northstowe. Detailed proposals across all three parcels will adhere at a high level to the Town Wide aspects of those Design Codes.
265. The co-ordination statement includes an Integration and Movement Principles Framework (IMPF). This illustrates how movement, green space and key frontages will work adjacent to, and across, common boundaries between the three sites. Although illustrative, the principles set out within the IMPF have been incorporated into the individual parameter plans imbedded into each of the Outline Planning Applications that have been prepared by each of the three parties. The parameter plans have been designed to ensure that effective collaboration, co-ordination, and continuity of movement is realised. This will allow for the delivery of each parcel over different timescales, whilst ensuring that each of the proposals can be read as one cohesive whole.

## **Conclusion**

266. The proposed masterplan has been prepared through detailed public consultation which has carefully considered, amongst other things, the balance between the amount of development, land uses and the relationship with neighbouring uses. On the basis of the above assessment, the proposals are considered in accordance with the Local Plan and NAAP Policies NS/4 and NS/13 in particular.

## **Section 3. Transport**

### **Introduction**

267. Paragraph 104 of the NPPF sets out the transport issues which should be addressed within Development Plans and decisions.
268. Paragraph 105 of the NPPF states that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.
269. Cambridgeshire's Third Local Transport Plan, also referred to as LTP3, covers the period 2011-2031. The three main parts of the Plan consist of Policies and Strategy, the Long-Term Transport Strategy, and the Transport Delivery Plan.
270. The Policy and Strategy document sets out the overarching policy context for transport in Cambridgeshire, informed by a number of local and national strategies, policies and plans. The Policies and Strategy document assists in informing the LTP Transport Delivery Plan, which sets out overall programme for transport.
271. In May 2017, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CA) was formed as part of the devolution deal agreed with Central Government. The CA now has the strategic transport powers and is the Local Transport Authority for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. The Mayor sets the overall transport strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, called the Local Transport Plan.
272. The CA are now preparing their first Local Transport Plan. It sets out their goals, objectives and policies. The document describes how transport interventions can be used to address current and future challenges and the opportunity for Cambridgeshire by setting out policies and strategies needed

to secure growth and ensure that planned large-scale development can take place in the county in a sustainable way.

273. Policy HQ/1 'Design Principles' requires that development proposals must achieve a permeable development with ease of movement and access for all users and abilities, with user friendly and conveniently accessible streets and other routes both within the development and linking with its surroundings and existing and proposed facilities and services, focusing on delivering attractive and safe opportunities for walking, cycling, public transport and, where appropriate, horse riding.
274. Policy TI/2 'Planning for Sustainable Travel' states that development must be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and promote sustainable travel appropriate to its location.

### **The Transport Assessment**

275. The applicant has submitted a transport assessment (TA) with the application. The TA sets out the baseline conditions for transport, the proposed access and travel strategy and assesses the impact of the proposals on sustainable travel modes and on the road network and traffic. Following the assessment, the measures to mitigate impacts are outlined.
276. The TA was amended in January 2021 following a review of comments from the Highways Authority and Highways England. Further clarification was provided in July 2021 (but did not amend the Environmental Statement). This further work has been centred around sensitivity testing and understanding potential implications to higher levels of traffic than those anticipated. A number of other points of clarification around ensuring that the mitigation proposed is directly related to the development has also been discussed and agreed.
277. The transport modelling has nevertheless demonstrated that the forecast transport effects of the development can, subject to mitigation achieved by way of planning conditions (**Condition 13 – Access to B1050; Condition 14 – Public footpaths; Conditions 15-18 – Transport; Condition 18 – Bus stops**) and the s106, be satisfactorily accommodated on the surrounding road network in line with the policy objectives of the development plan and national planning policy.
278. The TA has identified the impact of traffic on the highway network and junctions. A comparison was provided of the performance of junctions 'With' and 'Without' development. This chapter discusses the mitigation proposed

to address the impacts, as well as anticipated triggers for mitigation and how this can be monitored.

279. Chapter 11 of the TA provides a schedule of proposed mitigation and anticipated triggers.
280. The detailed TA mitigation is listed in **Appendix B (Draft S106 Heads of Terms – Summary)** but is précised below:
- a) Public rights of way and cycle paths
  - b) Cambridge Guided Busway
  - c) Local Bus Service Pump Priming
  - d) Junction schemes
  - e) Village Traffic Calming schemes
  - f) Traffic Monitoring – ANPR enhancement in Northstowe Area
  - g) Transport Enhancement Fund to matters arising post the application
  - h) Bus Link Road Construction and Enforcement completion
  - i) Electric Bike Hire
  - j) Bar Hill A14 improvements – Direct Delivery – completion of the junction scheme to additional planned capacity
  - k) Bus stops on site
281. Notwithstanding concerns regarding the overall increase in volume and speed of traffic, the TA concludes that with the land use mix, the design of that will allow for increased pedestrian and cycle use, high quality public transport infrastructure and transport mitigation, the transport network can accommodate the development. Active transport uses such as walking, cycling and public transport will be prioritised.

### **Access**

282. The development proposals include the provision of a new access from the existing roundabout on the B1050. Whilst third party representations have raised concern regarding the suitability of this access, the acceptability has been confirmed by County Council Highway Officers, who have raised no objection to the proposals.
283. Further details, including the site access strategy, can be secured by planning condition (**Condition 1 – Details of reserved matters; Condition 10 – Each defined key phase**).

## **Travel Plan**

284. The applicant has submitted a framework travel plan with the application. This will provide the basis for travel planning for the proposed Development, combining requirements for residential and school travel planning into a single overarching document. It is a Final Framework Travel Plan which will form the basis of detailed requirements for developments brought forward through reserved matters.
285. The Travel Plan is intended to be a live document which sets out a strategy and package of measures designed to manage access by sustainable travel modes to / from site 3B. The purpose of the Travel Plan is to reduce the dependency on the private car, promote sustainable accessibility and promote healthy lifestyles. The typical initiatives covered may be amended or changed to suit future travel patterns or issues. The Travel Plan will be overseen by a Travel Plan Co-ordinator.

## **The Environmental Statement**

286. Chapter 15 of the Environmental Statement provides an assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development on Transport, in the context of national planning policy and guidance, local planning policy, legislation and consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees.
287. The assessment has considered the following types of impacts within the study area:
- Pedestrian severance;
  - Pedestrian delay;
  - Pedestrian amenity;
  - Fear and Intimidation;
  - Congestion and driver delay;
  - Accidents and safety; and
  - Hazardous Loads.
288. The assessment has identified that there will be an increase in HGV traffic visiting the Site during the construction period. HGV movements will be principally associated with the delivery of plant and materials, and the removal of construction waste. In addition, construction personnel and visitors to the Site will also generate car and van movements as they arrive and depart.

## **Public Transport and Sustainable Travel**

289. As the Application site forms part of the wider Northstowe New Town, the aim is to deliver facilities that would be to the benefit of future residents but also to those in villages around Northstowe. In addition, through the delivery of Phase 1 and 2 employment opportunities will deliver local jobs and opportunity, the requirement and necessity to travel by car is reduced.
290. The main guided busway around the outside of the town provides regular and speedy links to Cambridge and Cambridge Science Park. Initial take up of this facility has been reasonably good pre-covid and there had been planned increases to the service and frequency.

## **A14**

291. The upgrades to the A14 have now been completed. Officers have noted the comments of Oakington, Girton and local residents who express concern about the potential for Northstowe to generate traffic to Cambridge through their villages and express the desire to reinstate the 2005-2007 scenario of a junction being provided at Dry Drayton Road to eliminate this possibility.
292. The previous scheme, referenced by residents, included a junction at the A14 for Dry Drayton Road. The as built scheme was the subject of detailed Development Consent Order (DCO) and public inquiry.
293. At paragraph 4.4.92 of the DCO report, it was noted that there had “been no objection to the effect of the Northstowe development on traffic flows in Dry Drayton from the relevant statutory authorities [County Council]”.
294. Works proposed as part of Phase 3a (20/02171/OUT) to the Bar Hill Junction are known and planned phased capacity improvements to the A14 junction. These works have been assessed and can be delivered through appropriately worded conditions for Phase 3A and are not necessary as part of the Phase 3b proposals.

## **Conclusion**

295. Based upon an assessment of the applicant’s ES and Transport Assessment and its associated proposed mitigation measures, and taking all other comments into account, it is considered that the development has provided appropriate provision to encourage future residents to use modes of transport other than the car, and subject to monitoring, will satisfactorily mitigate the impact of the development on the surrounding villages and roads in accordance with the NPPF and Policy TI/2 of the Local Plan.

## **Section 4. Employment Assessment**

296. NAAP Policy NS/8 'Northstowe Employment' sets out the objective is to provide approximately 20 hectares of employment land throughout the town, with the crucial factor is job numbers as opposed to land provision. This includes making more efficient use of land than on traditional low-density business parks....
297. The applicant has submitted an Economic Development Strategy (EDS). The EDS provides an overarching approach to supporting economic development over the whole of Northstowe and more specifically the Northstowe Phase 3 and the Phase 3A and Phase 3B Outline Planning Applications.
298. Northstowe will include a significant amount of employment. Employment will be provided in a wide and varied range of uses and will thus form a 'critical mass' of employment uses to attract new businesses and provide employment opportunities for Northstowe's new residents.
299. For Phase 3B, a "secondary mixed-use zone" is proposed where there will be opportunities to use ground floor space for retail and associated services, food and drink, community, leisure, employment, and residential uses, responding to the needs of the local community as it evolves. The total capacity of the ground floor space in the secondary zone is 1,320sqm (GIA).
300. The secondary zone is located near to the primary school on the main route into the site (see the Open Space and Land Use parameter plan). On the application form this 1,320sqm GIA of mixed uses has been listed as A1 retail but will in reality reflect a wider range of uses to be determined at a later date.

### **Conclusion**

301. The proposals for the secondary mixed-use zone will contribute towards meeting the aims and objectives of NAAP Policies by delivering services and facilities which will meet the day-to-day needs of the local community. In addition, this element of the proposals will also act as a focus for small scale local employment. On the basis of the above evaluation, officers are satisfied that the proposals are in accordance with the Local Plan and NAAP policies with regard to employment provision.

## **Section 5. Housing Delivery**

### **Introduction**

#### **5 (a) Quantum, density, and mix**

302. Local Plan Policy SS/5: Northstowe Extension identifies the reserve land shown in the Northstowe Area Action Plan (AAP) to be allocated to help provide the 10,000 homes as an extension to the new town of Northstowe.
303. Policy H/8 'Housing Density' states that new settlements will be required to achieve an average net density of 40 dwellings per hectare (dph), but that net density may vary from the above where justified by the character of the locality, the scale of the development, or other local circumstances.
304. NAAP Policy NS/7 Part 3 'Northstowe Housing' identified that Northstowe will achieve an average net housing density of at least 40 dwellings per hectare across the town, as a whole. It states that 'a range of densities will be provided following a design-led approach, including higher densities in and around the town centre, local centres and at public transport stops, and lower densities on sensitive edges of the town.'
305. Policy H/9 'Housing Mix' requires a wide choice, type and mix of housing to be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community. An appropriate mix of market housing is set out in the policy which gives a target of at least 30% 1- or 2-bedroom homes, at least 30% 3-bedroom homes, and at least 30% 4-bedroom homes. This policy relates to any development, but on a development of this scale, this mix may not be appropriate in all locations, for example the mix in the higher density areas may be skewed towards 1- and 2-bedroom apartments and in the lower density areas to larger homes.
306. The proposed development is proposed to be built at densities between below 35 and up to 60 dwelling per hectare (dph). The new settlement will require a much broader range of house types and densities than is usually found in the villages of South Cambridgeshire. Lower densities of below 35pdh or between 35-40dph are envisaged towards the northern, western, and southern parts of the site to be sympathetic to the landscape setting and to the character of Longstanton, with potential higher densities of between 41-60dph envisaged in the central and eastern parts of the site.
307. Phase 3B equates to an overall net density of 38 dph. It should however be noted that densities are lower in other parts of the site (about 35dph) on Phase 1 and about 45 dph on Phase 3A which reflects the differing

circumstances across the new town and the emphasis on design led approaches.

308. An indicative housing mix can be determined at each phase of the development to guide reserved matters parcels. Each phase would need to have regard to the cumulative housing mix across the application site and the need for specialist accommodation such as for disabled and elderly persons in accordance with Policy H/9.
309. A condition is recommended which will require that when each residential parcel comes forward it will need to be accompanied by a statement demonstrating how it accords with the agreed indicative housing mix and delivery strategy for that phase or, if justified, why it deviates from that mix and strategy (e.g. if there is a change in market conditions) **(Condition 48 – Housing Mix)**.
310. Third party comments have been received relating to the principle of development, which also seek the reconsideration of the allocation and return to previous masterplans (before the current Area Action Plan) which were based on lower numbers of housing to be delivered on Northstowe. The adopted development plan and the current proposal are nevertheless consistent in terms of the overall quantum of development identified for Northstowe.
311. Policy H/9 establishes the following guidance for market housing mix for market homes within new development
  - a. 1-2 Bedrooms At least 30%
  - b. 3 Bedrooms At least 30%
  - c. 4+ Bedrooms At least 30%
312. A 10% flexibility allowance is included to any of these categories, taking account of local circumstances.
313. The application proposals set out to provide a mix of housing types across Phase 3B as a whole will comply with the Local Plan and NAAP policies, however the specific mix of each development parcel will be established through the reserved matters applications. It is expected that parcels in higher density areas around the local centre will deliver a lower proportion of larger homes and lower density areas will deliver a higher proportion of larger homes.
314. Customisable and modern methods of construction may also provide flexibility in the number of bedrooms being proposed within a similar house

type, as seen on Northstowe Phase 2a. This delivery approach will therefore need to be kept under review as each parcel of development comes forward across the site.

### **Housing for Older People**

315. Policy H/9 requires a wide choice, type and mix of housing to be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community including older people. The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 indicates the direction of policy relating to the provision of homes for older people. With the application due for first occupations beyond 2023, it is expected that updated evidence would be used to inform housing formats and the need for specialist accommodation across the development – and that this will inform the mix and quantum on each phase of the site’s delivery.
316. Current policy seeks approximately 5% of new supply to be age exclusive homes which meet Building Regulations Part 4 (2 or 3). It also seeks approximately 7% of new supply to be specialist housing for older people, which could take the form of care ready type accommodation, extra care or an alternative type of accommodation (e.g. retirement accommodation).
317. The application sets out that provision for age exclusive homes and specialist housing for older people will be informed by the need identified using up to date modelling and determined at the reserved matters stage. Given the anticipated delivery timeline for the entire phase, a framework condition and detail through the Design Code would therefore be appropriate for delivering the range of housing over the life of any permission (**Condition 11 – Design Code; Condition 47 - Housing Delivery Statement; Condition 48 – Housing Mix**).

### **Conclusion**

318. Based on the above assessment and recommended conditions, it is considered that up 1000 dwellings can be delivered on the site at an appropriate density and mix, together with all the necessary infrastructure and open space, in accordance with Policy H/9

### **5 (b) Affordable housing**

319. Local Plan Policy H/10 (1a) ‘Affordable Housing’ requires 40% affordable homes on development sites of 11 dwellings or more except where it can be demonstrated unviable considering changing market conditions, individual site circumstances and development costs.

320. Policy H/10 (1b) 'Affordable Housing' requires that, to address evidence of housing need, an agreed mix of housing tenures will be determined by local circumstances at the time of granting planning permission.
321. The applicant has proposed in its Affordable Housing Statement to deliver 40% affordable housing with the following mix –
- a. 50% affordable rent.
  - b. 20% shared ownership
  - c. 10% discount market sale
  - d. 20% rent to buy
322. These tenures fall within the definition of affordable housing as defined in the NPPF and has been accepted by the Council's Joint Housing Development Officer (Growth). The proposed affordable housing provision would meet the policy target of 40% affordable housing, and has an agreed mix of housing tenures, in accordance with Policy H/10 (1a) and (1b).
323. The proposed affordable housing mix will meet varying household incomes and will help to facilitate a more diverse and balanced community in accordance with the social objectives of sustainable development set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF.

### **5 (c) Accessible housing and internal space standards**

324. Policy H/9 'Housing Mix' requires 5% of both affordable and private new homes (split evenly between the two tenures) to be built to the M4 (2) standard (accessible and adaptable dwelling standard) or any successor document. This can be addressed by way of planning condition (**Condition 49 – Accessible and Adaptable homes**).
325. Policy H/12 'Residential Space Standards' requires that all new residential units will only be permitted if the gross internal floor areas meet or exceed the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or successor document. This level of detail would not be expected at outline planning stage and would be assessed at reserved matters stage. A planning condition is recommended to ensure this standard is implemented (**Condition 48 – Space Standards**).

326. Overall, the commitment to the space standards within the current Local Plan is welcomed as a baseline for the appropriate delivery of space with the potential for reviews over time in relation to changing working from home habits.

### **Fire Strategy**

327. The application proposed that all residential premises within Phase 3B, including all tenures and all forms of housing, will be fitted with domestic fire sprinklers. This is welcomed and considered acceptable as a way forward. Details of the location of fire hydrants within each subsequent development parcel will be secured through a condition (**Condition 9 - Reserved Matters Requirements; Condition 57 - Fire Hydrants**).

### **5 (d) Community-led housing**

328. Policy H/9 and NAAP Policy NS/7 require a wide choice, type, and mix of housing to be provided to meet the needs of different groups of the community. The Council is supportive in principle (subject to viability and deliverability) to working with a Community Land Trust (CLT) to support the provision of housing in the new town. Future opportunities for CLT involvement can be captured at each Phased approval stage where there is a requirement for the applicant to submit a Housing Delivery Statement.

### **5 (e) Gypsy and Traveller provision at New Communities**

329. National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) requires Councils to maintain a five-year land supply of Travellers sites, in a similar way to housing, and identify deliverable sites to meet the needs to meet identified for the first five years. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2016) identified no need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches during the plan period, taking account of existing available supply. Provision is required for Travelling Show people and Policy H/20 makes safeguards for land use in this regard and opportunities for such sites could be captured in a Housing Delivery Statement (**Condition 47 – Housing Delivery Statement**).

### **5 (f) Self and custom build**

330. The delivery of self-build and custom-build housing is strongly supported by national policy and offers the opportunity for residents to be involved in the design and construction of their own homes.

331. The Local Plan requires that in each phase of strategic sites, developers supply dwelling plots for sale to custom and self-builders. Policy H/9 requires strategic sites to provide plots for self and custom builders, although no specific level of provision is specified for new development sites. Given the significant role Northstowe will plan in delivering housing over the current and following Local Plan period, the development should be able to contribute positively to meeting the District's self and custom build requirement.
332. A Custom and Self-build Housing Strategy can be secured for this phase by planning condition **(Condition 47 – Housing Delivery Statement)**, with the design principles for these types of houses addressed through the site-wide Design Code. Any scheme secured by condition will also determine the broad location of where the self-built homes will be located.

### **Conclusion**

333. In summary, the overall housing quantum, mix and density of the development is considered to make best use of a sustainable site in accordance with Policy H/9 as well as NPPF paragraphs 124 and 125. Conditions as identified above are recommended to ensure accessible homes, residential space standards, and opportunities for Gypsy and Traveller sites, self/custom built site and community-led housing are captured at each phase of the development, in accordance with Policies H/p, H/10, H/12, and H/21 of the Local Plan and Policies NS/2 and NS/7 of the NAAP

## **Section 6. Social & Community Infrastructure**

### **6 (a) Introduction**

334. Policy SC/4 'Meeting Community Needs' requires large scale major developments to provide detailed assessments and strategies for community needs, which take account of capacity and accessibility at existing facilities in the locality. Community facilities and services to be provided can include:
- a) Education
  - b) Community Meeting Places
  - c) Health Facilities
  - d) Libraries
  - e) Open Space, Productive Space, Children's Play Space and Sports Facilities
  - f) Commercial Facilities Important to Community Life
  - g) Provision for Faith Groups

- h) Provision for Burials
- i) Provision for Waste and Recycling
- j) Community Development Workers and Early Development Collaborative Support
- k) Public Realm / Public Art
- l) Outdoor Performance Space

335. Such facilities should be provided in accessible locations with opportunities sought for joint provision or co-location of compatible services and facilities. The timely delivery of services and facilities will be required, including consideration of early phase requirements of the development.
336. The applicant has submitted a s106 Heads of Terms document setting out their strategy for meeting community needs. This identifies that any community facilities that will be provided will complement other community facilities in Northstowe and the surrounding villages. The development proposes a schedule of new community facilities/services, and each of these will now be examined in turn with consideration for the delivery and timing of each in accordance with the requirements of Policy SC/4.

#### **6 (b) Education**

337. Local Plan Policy SC/4 requires all new housing developments to contribute to the timely provision of the services and facilities necessary to meet the needs of the development, including primary and secondary schools.
338. The need for a primary school within Northstowe Phase 3B has been assessed through demographic modelling of the proposed development and discussions with the County Council during the pre-application process.
339. Phase 3B will provide one 2FE primary school on site, the indicative location for which is shown on the Land Use Parameter Plan as being to the south-east of the site. The County Council has confirmed that the provision of this amount of land is sufficient to meet the educational requirements, which will be secured through the s106 agreement.

#### **Secondary schools**

340. No on-site secondary education is proposed for Phase 3B, as a 12FE secondary school is being delivered on the Phase 2 education campus. A proportional financial contribution for secondary provision will be secured through the s106 agreement.

341. The Special Education Needs school provided on Phase 2 will meet the needs of Northstowe and the wider area, so separate provision is not proposed in Phase 3B.

### **6 (c) Community Meeting Places**

342. Policy SC/6 requires that all housing developments will contribute towards the provision of indoor community facilities to meet the needs generated by the development. Community provision will primarily be within Phases 2 and 3A, so no specific provision is proposed in Phase 3B. There will be potential for flexible floorspace to provide for these uses within the secondary mixed use zone.

### **6 (d) Health facilities**

343. Local Plan Policy SC/4 requires that all housing developments contribute towards the provision of health facilities to meet the needs of that development. Whilst a health care centre will be provided within the civic hub located in Phase 2, the development proposals will generate the requirement for a Section 106 contribution to expand this facility to meet the needs of Phase 3B. This can be captured through the s106 agreement.
344. In addition, the ground floor space within the secondary mixed use zone could be used to accommodate outreach health care clinics on a commercial basis, should demand requires.

### **6 (e) Library**

345. Planned library provision for the needs of the whole town will be met through Phase 2. A financial contribution towards the delivery of this facility is secured through the s106 agreement.

### **6 (f) Open space, productive space, children's play space and sports facilities**

346. SC/6 'Indoor Community Facilities' and SC/7 'Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments' require all housing developments to contribute towards indoor community facilities and outdoor playing space (including children's play space, formal outdoor sports facilities) and informal open space. There is a minimum but no maximum standard for this provision. This is reinforced by the NPPF, which highlights the importance that access to open space has to the health and wellbeing of a community.

347. NAAP Policy D10 'Meeting Recreational Needs' seeks to ensure that adequate provision is made for sports facilities and public open space for play and informal leisure within Northstowe so that residents "can lead a healthy lifestyle and enjoy a high quality of life and leisure time".
348. The Phase 3B development will deliver over 16 hectares of new open space, including approximately 2.5 hectares of allotments and community orchards. This is illustrated in the Landscape Strategy, Design and Access Statement and Open Space and Land Use parameter plan.
349. The main elements are:
- a) Formal children's play space: A Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) located on the western boundary of the site, 3 Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) spread across the Site and 10 Local Areas for Play (LAPs) within development plots.
  - b) Informal open space: A wide variety of green spaces and routes spread across the Site, providing opportunities for informal and 'semi-formal' recreation, including play areas, walking/cycling trails, allotments and orchards.
350. Whilst there are no formal sports pitches to be provided as part of this phase, this needs to be seen in the wider context of demand for and provision of formal sports pitches across the town.
351. In addition, the development will provide a financial contribution towards off-site sports facilities, which will be secured through the s106 agreement.
352. The provision of open space has been reviewed by officers and Sport England, who are supportive of the proposals. Sport England has advised of the acceptability of the Applicant making a financial contribution towards off-site provision for formal sports facilities which could be delivered across Phase 1 or 2 of Northstowe. If not delivered on Northstowe (due to the proximity of Phase 3B with the village), it would be possible to consider schemes within Longstanton and those set out by the Parish Council.
353. The timing and phasing of the delivery of the open space and recreational facilities within Phase 3B will be established through planning conditions **(Condition 50 – Open space and play facilities details)** and part of the s106 agreement, with delivery in accordance with the phased development of the site.

354. In conclusion, subject to conditions and appropriate provision of s106 contributions, the proposals would be in accordance with Policy SC/7 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and Policy D10 of the NAAP.

### **6 (g) Commercial Facilities Important to Community Life**

355. Local Plan Policy SC/4 'Meeting Community Needs' requires development to meet community needs and ensure the delivery of commercial facilities important to community life such as childcare nurseries, local shops, restaurants, cafes, and public houses. Such uses are only likely to come forward in response to market demand. In other large settlements in the area, land availability for childcare provision has been either limited or non-existent, leading to unsustainable travel movements away from the site and difficulty for residents in accessing childcare provision.
356. To address this, a condition is recommended to ensure that a strategy is submitted and agreed for the appropriate marketing of land/units for potential uses important to community life such as childcare nurseries and local shops **(Condition 12 – Local Centre Development Framework)**.
357. The town centre and other local centres will be expected to provide a substantial amount of comparison and convenience / food shopping facilities for the future residents of the new town. The precise details of the retail and other facilities will be defined through future phased submissions, including the use of design codes and in reserved matters applications.
358. It will not be appropriate to use s106 triggers to deliver these facilities, as these will be delivered by commercial operators when there is enough demand, but a planning condition can help to ensure that these types of uses can come forward, in accordance with SC/4 **(Condition 12 – Local Centre Development Framework)**.

### **6 (h) Provision for faith groups**

359. Faith provision will primarily be within Phases 2 and 3A, but there will also be some provision within Phase 3B. There will be potential for flexible floorspace to provide for these uses within the secondary mixed-use zone.

## 6 (i) Provision for Burials

360. Phase 2 has a requirement to produce a burial space strategy as part of its planning conditions and the s106 agreement. This will address the needs of the whole of Phases 2 and 3.

## 6 (k) Public Realm / Public Art

361. Policy HQ/2 'Public Art in New Development' states that the Council will encourage the provision or commissioning of public art that is integrated into the design of development as a means of enhancing the quality of development proposals. The provision of public art must involve the local community and could be community-led, potentially relating to the former use of the site.
362. The provision of quality visual arts and crafts as part of new developments can bring social, cultural, environmental, educational, and economic benefits, both to new development and the local community. Given the aims of Policy HQ/2 and community benefits related to public art, it is considered appropriate to apply a condition seeking a public art strategy as part of the design code (**Condition 11 – Design code**), along with a public art delivery plan at reserved matters stage (**Condition 9 – Reserved Matters requirements**).

## 6 (l) Governance

363. Policy SC/4 'Meeting Community Needs' requires that all housing developments will include or contribute to the provision of the services and facilities necessary to meet the needs of the development.
364. As part of the discussions relating to the Phase 3 proposals, it is recognised that there should be consideration given to community-led management of community uses so that they can be retained for the benefit of the community in the long term. At least initially, this is expected to be the responsibility of a management company. There is expected to be more opportunity for and take up of community led management arrangements once the community has started to take over management responsibility in the earlier phases and

demonstrated an ability and willingness to do so. Such transfer provisions will be secured through the s106 agreement.

## **6 (n) Conclusion**

365. Subject to the recommended conditions as set out above and securing the described s106 obligations, the development proposals accord with the social and community objectives of Local Plan policies SS/5 and SC/4 by providing a range of uses appropriate to Northstowe, including community services and facilities, as well as measures to assist the development of the new community and the involvement of the existing stakeholders.

## **Section 7. Environmental Considerations**

### **7(a) Air Quality, Dust and Odour**

366. Local Plan Policy SC/12 'Air Quality' requires applicants to produce a site based Low Emission Strategy. Chapter 6 of the ES provides an air quality assessment with an analysis of the likely effects of the proposed development on air quality during the construction and operational phases of the development. The potential impacts would include nuisance, loss of amenity and health impacts caused by construction dust and changes in traffic related pollution. This is reinforced in the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) submitted with the application.
367. The submitted Travel Plan (TP) provide a package of measures to help specifically mitigate the transport emissions impacts of the development as well as reduce car usage. This would be achieved through sustainable transport measures, incentives and supporting infrastructure discussed in the transport chapter of this committee report. This objective will be supported by an appointed Travel Plan coordinator, monitoring plan and provision of contingency measures to be agreed.
368. The submitted Low Emission Strategy sets out measures principally to consider transport impacts upon air quality during both the construction period and operational phases of the proposed development and draws on the conclusions from the transport assessment, framework travel plan, construction and environmental management plan and chapter 6 of the ES on Air Quality.

369. Provision is also made for electric vehicle charging facilities for both residential and commercial properties across the site. The principle of these strategies is agreed by the Council's air quality officer and implementation of the proposed measures contained within the travel plan will now be delivered by Part S of the Building Regulations.
370. The Council's Environmental Health Officers have agreed the methodology for the Air Quality Assessment presented in Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement. The assessment included consideration of air quality across the site through the construction phases and beyond the site boundaries to the geographical extent of the traffic assessment data. The ES considered the impacts upon human receptors but also ecological receptors, having regard to nitrite sensitive ecological receptors particularly.
371. The applicant has submitted as part of the Environmental Statement details of air quality measures, and this is supported by planning application documents including the low emissions strategy and a framework travel plan.
372. Having been assessed by Air Quality Officers, there is agreement to the methodology of the Air Quality Assessment presented in Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement. The submitted Low Emission Strategy and the Framework Travel Plan are acceptable as the proposed measures are in line with the requirements of Local Plan 2018. Details and the implementation plan for each of the proposed sustainable transport measures can be covered in more detail at the detailed design stage and Reserved Matters applications.

### **Dust**

373. ES Chapter 6 provides an assessment of construction dust and explains that the main cause of unmitigated dust generation from construction sites is from demolition and vehicles using unpaved haul roads, and off-site from the suspension of dust from mud deposited on local roads by construction traffic.
374. Given the large scale of construction on the site there is a high potential for dust emission and therefore appropriate mitigation is required through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) condition, as agreed by the Council's environmental health officer (**Condition 38 – Construction Environmental Management Plan**).
375. The CEMP would incorporate measures to limit dust and particulate matter generated during the construction of the proposed development, and therefore no significant effects on air quality are predicted.

## **Odour**

376. There are no odour issues anticipated to be associated with the development.

## **Other matters**

377. The Environmental Health Officer in consultation comments, advises that the management and mitigation of uses may result in conflict or require careful design and mitigation – for example, managing flue and plant equipment, to prevent noise and disturbance, particularly in mixed use areas where residential and commercial uses may have a close physical relationship. Conditions have been recommended in accordance with the advice offered (**Condition 40 – Construction Environmental Management Plan**).

## **Conclusion**

378. The submitted documentation has been reviewed in respect of air quality, dust and odour. Based on the above assessment and the submitted ES, subject to the implementation of the recommended conditions, the development would have an acceptable impact on health and quality of life in relation to air quality, dust and odour in accordance with Policy SC/12 and the NPPF.

## **7(b) Archaeology and Heritage**

### ***Introduction***

379. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that in exercising an authority's planning function, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Heritage Assets.
380. Section 16 of the NPPF requires that applications recognise the significance of any designated and non-designated heritage asset and that an assessment of the impact of development on the asset including any appropriate mitigation be undertaken. Paragraphs 185, 189, 193 and 194 are of particular relevance.

381. Policy NH/14 'Heritage Assets' requires development to take account of and preserve or enhance heritage assets.
382. The Cultural Heritage chapter in the ES assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development in terms of the built heritage and historic landscape.
383. Development that relates to Cultural Heritage are areas of ground disturbance which could impact on below ground heritage assets and archaeological features within the Application Site and changes to the setting of heritage assets in the vicinity of the proposed Development such as historic buildings and Conservation Areas.
384. There are two non-designated heritage assets within the application site and a wide range of heritage assets including designated archaeological remains, non-designated heritage assets, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas in the surrounding area.
385. The ES has determined the significance of the effects on these assets through consideration of their value and / or importance and the magnitude of the impacts.

#### ***Designated Heritage Assets***

386. The Site is not within a designated conservation area, but the Longstanton Conservation area is located about 1 km to the south, focussed on the two churches which were the centres of the two original villages of St Michael's and All Saints.
387. The ES states that there will be a slight adverse effect on a listed building, the village water pump which is not considered to be significant.
388. The setting of Longstanton Conservation Area is influenced by the remaining urban form of Longstanton to the north, as well as the wider flat agricultural land to its west and south. Due to the intervening urban form to the north of the conservation area, this setting does not extend to the 3b Site. It is considered that the proposals accord with the NPPF and Local Plan policy with respect to the impact of the development on the Longstanton conservation areas.

#### ***Non-Designated Heritage Assets***

389. There are no non-designated historic buildings located within the site.

### ***Historic landscape and archaeology***

390. A range of historical activity can be traced across the site which predates historical mapping. The 2019 geophysical survey shows what appears to be a large palaeo-channel running north-south as well as the known Roman settlement with Saxon continuation in the east of the site. It is likely that the area of the site and the immediate surrounding area was in agricultural use during the medieval period as LiDAR data has shown evidence of ridge and furrow adjacent to the site to the north-west.
391. The general approach to archaeology follows that established for Phases 1 and 2. The proposed development will involve extensive groundworks during the construction phase that will have a permanent effect on below-ground archaeological remains where they are known or suspected to exist.
392. Whilst parameter plans show broad areas of development, the precise location of the new buildings and the proximity of the works to the sensitive heritage assets will not be known until the reserved matters stage so the exact form and scope of construction mitigation to take place will be defined following the completion of the evaluation trenching and outlined in an archaeological mitigation strategy.
393. It is expected that this strategy will follow the same approach as undertaken for Phase 1 and 2; through excavation and recording of the features of interest, which will broaden our understanding of how humans occupied the site in the past.
394. Paragraphs 9.4.2 to 9.4.4 of the ES highlight that the exact form and scope of construction mitigation to take place would be defined following the completion of evaluation trenching. This is planned to take place within the site during enabling works post determination and outlined in an archaeological mitigation strategy to be secured by planning condition **(Condition 40 – Archaeology Written Scheme of Investigation; Condition 41 – Heritage and Public Art Mitigation Strategy)**.
395. Whilst the Open Space and Land Use parameter plan defines the extent of development, the precise location of the new buildings and the exact proximity of the works to the sensitive heritage assets is also not set. Therefore, the archaeological mitigation strategy would be developed once this is known and the mitigation measures proposed below are in keeping with the nature and scale of the proposed. Development and would involve the following:

- a) Preservation 'by record of archaeological remains' involving a series of open area excavations on parts of the proposed Development where there is dense archaeology or where archaeological potential is thought to be high. This would take place pre-construction.
  - b) Preservation 'by record' involving discrete areas of the proposed Development being subject to archaeological monitoring ('watching brief') during construction.
396. Notwithstanding the comments of the County Archaeologist, there has been substantive field evaluation in recent times and the impact of the proposals on the non-designated heritage asset would be significant in terms of the EIA regulations. There would be a requirement for management and mitigation as proposed in the paragraph above. The Phase 2 permission also requires the establishment of the Heritage Core Team, which would involve local interest groups to decide how to assets will be preserved, enhanced and interpreted, and would include open days for the public during excavations.
397. Taking into consideration the proposed mitigation measures, residual effects on heritage assets would be mostly neutral but there would be a moderate / large adverse effect on the Roman settlement with Saxon continuation.
398. The NPPF advises that applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
399. In this case therefore it is considered that the asset is well documented and has been the subject of previous investigations. There has been no requirement for increased significance or designation as a result of these investigations and as such the asset whilst of local interest is not considered be of greater importance.
400. As such the harm to the asset should be balanced in the planning consideration of the application but there is considered no fundamental conflict with Policy NH/14 of the SCLP, Policy NS/18 of the NAAP or the guidance in the NPPF.

### ***Conclusion***

401. Officers are satisfied that the applications proposals with regard to archaeology and built heritage is acceptable, amounting to less than substantial harm to designated and non-designated heritage assets which would be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme summarised at the end of this report.

402. Based on the above assessment and recommended conditions, the development is therefore considered to accord with cultural heritage objectives set out in Policy NH/14, NAAP Policy NS/18, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and section 16 of the NPPF.

### **7(c) Biodiversity**

#### ***Introduction***

403. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
404. Local Plan Policy NH/4 'Biodiversity' states that development proposals will be permitted where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity. Opportunities should be taken to achieve positive gain through the form and design of development. Applicants will be expected to provide an adequate level of survey information and site assessment to establish the extent of a biodiversity impact.
405. Alongside this, Policy NH/6 'Green Infrastructure' encourages proposals which create new green infrastructure and enhance the public enjoyment of it. All new developments will be required to contribute towards the enhancement of the green infrastructure network within the district.
406. NAAP policy NS/16 'Existing Biodiversity Features' identifies a variety of existing features at Northstowe. These include trees, tree plantations, the lake and ponds which are to be retained as biodiversity and landscape features to make a positive contribution to the environment of the town. NAAP policy NS/27 outlines a series of new biodiversity features that should be created, including the following applicable to Phase 3A.
407. Chapter 7 of the applicant's ES provides an assessment of the likely significant effects on designated sites, protected and priority habitats and species, both during the Construction Phase and Operation Phase of the Proposed Development.
408. In terms of supporting information, a number of documents including reptile survey report, a badger survey (kept confidential due to protective species requirements), a great crested newt and toad survey report, a water vole and otter survey, a bat survey report and a breeding bird survey report including barn owl assessment all form part of the submission.

409. There have been a number of amendments and points of clarification during the submission and as part of further information to reduce potential human-wildlife conflicts between the use of areas for both ecological mitigation and amenity have been fully assessed within the submitted documents.
410. An assessment has been undertaken on the effects of the proposed Development on biodiversity during both the construction and operational phases. Baseline data was identified following a review of designated sites in the vicinity of the Application Site, as well as habitats and species present within the Application Site identified through ecological surveys.
411. Habitats present within the Application Site are varied. Arable land makes up 81% of the Application Site while species-poor semi-improved grassland accounts for 12%. The remainder of the Application Site is comprised of improved grassland, semi-natural broadleaved woodland, semi-improved neutral grassland, scrub, standing water, ditches and broad-leaved scattered trees.
412. The ES identifies a series of measures to safeguard the conservation status of key species, and this has been incorporated into the development proposals. These can be secured planning condition (**Condition 9 – Reserved Matters requirements; Condition 22 – Biodiversity; Condition 38 – Construction Environmental Management Plan**). The parameter plans have evolved through changes to the design to maximise the retention of the most valuable habitats, namely the central tree copse and hedgerows.
413. The parameter plans incorporate multiple green corridors and open spaces with the potential to benefit biodiversity, and a comprehensive package to compensate for the loss of farmland bird habitat on the whole of the new town has been secured off-site.
414. Key wildlife corridors within the Application Site are being retained or created with tunnels and other connective measures adopted to avoid or minimise fragmentation of habitats. Throughout the Application Site, habitats have been retained, buffered, created and/or enhanced. Overall, the proposed enhancement measures combined with the retention of habitats within the site will achieve a quantifiable net gain of at least 20%, which addresses concerns raised relating to this issue.
415. In response to third party comments made in relation to wildlife corridors, the green corridor along the southern boundary was widened, during the course of the application proposals.

## **Conclusion**

416. Based upon the above assessment, and subject to appropriate planning conditions and s106 agreement, as well as taking into account proposed mitigation, including the creation and management of habitats and improvements to connectivity through green infrastructure, the proposed development would benefit a wide range of fauna and result in an overall demonstrable net gain for biodiversity, in accordance with the NPPF, Policy NH/4 and NAAP Policy NS/16.

#### **7(d) Land contamination**

417. Policy SC/11 'Contaminated Land' requires developers to undertake site wide investigation and assessment of land contamination to ensure the land is suitable for the proposed end use and is not presenting a risk to the environment.
418. The site is, due to its agriculture nature, relatively free from contamination. Whilst preliminary borehole investigation has already taken place within the site, further investigation would be expected during the course of site preparation. These can be secured by planning condition, see below.
419. The ES provides an assessment of the likely significant effects on land contamination both during the Construction Phase and Operation Phase of the Proposed Development. This impact is considered to be Not Significant in the context of the EIA Regulations. The Environmental Health Officer has confirmed the acceptability of this approach and raised no objections subject to appropriate conditions.
420. Soil handling and management through the construction process will be undertaken in accordance with best practice. This includes the re-use of soils stripped from the construction areas will be re-used appropriately to provide suitable conditions for the required end use, maximisation of recycled or reused soils (Para 5.4.3 of the ES), the location and details of storage of soils would be stored away from watercourses (or potential pathways to watercourses) and any measures to handle potentially contaminated soil would be stored on an impermeable surface and covered to reduce leachate generation and potential migration to surface waters. This will be secured through conditions (**Condition 43 – Land Investigation, Remediation and Verification Scheme; Condition 44 – Land Remediation and Verification; Condition 45 – Contamination (unexpected)**).

## **Conclusion**

421. Based on the above assessment and the submitted ES, and subject to relevant planning conditions, the development is considered to accord with land contamination objectives set out in the NPPF and Policy SC/11.

### **7(e) Drainage and Flooding**

#### **Introduction**

422. Paragraph 167 of the NPPF advises that when determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
423. Paragraph 167 of the NPPF also states that development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of a Flood Risk Assessment it can be demonstrated that:
- a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;
  - b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient;
  - c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is straightforward evidence that this would be inappropriate;
  - d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and
  - e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.
424. Policy CC7 'Water Quality' states that in order to protect and enhance water quality, all development proposals must demonstrate that:
- a) There are adequate water supply, sewerage, and land drainage systems (including water sources, water, and wastewater infrastructure) to serve the whole development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of the necessary infrastructure prior to the occupation of the development. Where development is being phased, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and wastewater conveyance, treatment and discharge capacity;

- b) The quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed, and opportunities have been explored and taken for improvements to water quality, including re-naturalisation of river morphology, and ecology;
  - c) Appropriate consideration is given to sources of pollution, and appropriate SuDS measures incorporated to protect water quality from polluted surface water runoff.
425. Policy CC/8 'Sustainable Drainage Systems' requires that development incorporates sustainable drainage systems appropriate to the nature of the site, and CC/9 'Managing Flood Risk' requires development to minimise flood risk elsewhere, including limiting the discharge of surface water from the site to natural greenfield rates or lower.
426. Policy NS/21 of the NAAP 'Surface water drainage' stated that surface water drainage system for Northstowe will only release surface water run-off into the watercourses surrounding Northstowe at least at a rate no greater than if the site was undeveloped.
427. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2016) provides guidance on the approach that should be taken to manage flood risk and the water environment as part of new development proposals.
428. The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Foul and Surface water drainage strategy to accompany the planning application.
429. The FRA assesses a number of areas, including identifying watercourses and waterbodies which include the local drainage ditches, Webb's Hole Sluice, Longstanton Drain (an Ordinary watercourse) and the Swavesey Drain and River Great Ouse (Main Rivers) and how these interact with the site topography, hydrogeology, soils and geology.
430. The report establishes the key principles for flood mitigation and for the management of surface water and foul drainage for the proposed Development in line with national and local planning policy.
431. According to EA modelled data, whilst the majority of the Application Site is in Flood Zone 1, there are small areas towards the west of the Application Site which are within Flood Zones 2 and 3. No built development is proposed in these locations.
432. It is considered that the potential for flooding within the Northstowe Phase 3B Development is low from the majority of sources, with fluvial and surface water flooding as potential sources of flooding in specific locations within the site.

433. Mitigation measures are proposed as part of the proposed development strategy and these will ensure the development is safe throughout its lifetime. The mitigation is outlined as part of the surface water drainage strategy below.
434. The application site falls towards the west, with a high point of 9.1m AOD in the SE of the site. The low point in the west is 4.5m AOD.
435. It is envisaged that Anglian Water will adopt and maintain the on-site surface water management system and SUDS, with highway drainage adopted by the Highway Authority.
436. A review of the impact of surface water from the development on the downstream catchment in Swavesey Drain has been undertaken and agreed with the IDB, EA and LLFA. The IDB would prefer to see water discharged quickly into the Swavesey Drain such that it can enter the River Great Ouse system in advance of peak flows on this larger system. This reduces the potential for overtopping and flooding from the Swavesey Drain upstream of the sluice-controlled entry to the River Great Ouse. The EA and LLFA have agreed in principle with this approach. Should such a solution not be achieved due to for example the maintenance of the off-site watercourse, then it is proposed that existing greenfield runoff rates as currently allowed for are maintained.
437. Concerns have been raised that the flood risk strategy is not sufficient and will result in an increased risk of flooding, however as previously described, the majority of the site is within flood zone 1, with the lowest risk of flooding. The proposals have also been designed to limit the surface water runoff and satisfy the LLFA and the EA.
438. In conclusion, officers agree with the approach set out in the submitted Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy, which steers new development away from the highest areas of flood risk and promotes sustainable drainage mechanisms and long-term management. The proposals are considered in accordance with the Local Plan and accords with the key principles of the NPP with regard to flood risk.

### **Foul drainage**

439. Foul water from the development will be treated at Utton's Drove Water Recycling Centre (WRC), and this has the agreement of the EA.

440. It is envisaged that, the majority of, the site will drain via gravity along main spine roads towards a pumping station located at a low point at the west of the site. The pumping station will lift these foul water flows into the existing Phase 2 infrastructure alongside the CGB, with the exact route to be agreed at the detailed design stage.
441. The comments of the IDB are noted in relation to treated foul water from the WRC, but this does not accord with the comments of the EA who have no objection to the proposals.

### **Groundwater**

442. The applicant has indicated that as a result of the high-water table in parts of the site, it may need to undertake some dewatering activity as part of the implementation of the planning permission (notably for the installation of services).
443. Dewatering is now an operation controlled and licensed by the Environment Agency and any dewatering through the construction phase in particular, would need careful management given the potential for disruption to existing water movement patterns across and below the site. Noting the role of the EA, it would, officers consider, be appropriate for conditions to ensure that water levels in key amenity and habitat water bodies is considered and managed throughout any such activity.
444. The submitted Drainage Strategy has been carefully reviewed by officers and consultees, noting the sensitivities of the water environment in the area. The strategy, subject to appropriate conditions is considered to be acceptable (**Conditions 30-35 – Surface Water**). The application is also supported by a range of documents including Geo-environmental assessment and Unexploded Ordnance Assessments and the proposed drainage strategy includes the location and detail of the proposed SuDs and conveyance of water flows across the site.
445. The application submission has been assessed by consultees and others in respect of the assessment in Chapter 10 of the Environmental Statement. No adverse or significant issues have been raised with regard to the assessment carried out. It should be noted that as an allocated site a number of matters related to the allocation, e.g., water supply, have already been accounted for within the Council's Strategic Environmental Assessment. It is not for the application submission to re-rehearse matters that have already been the consideration of the adopted Development Plan and have already been through independent examination and been found to be sound.

446. The proposals, under the construction phase would highlight issues with regard to the areas of construction management and potential contamination of water, noise and dealing with pollutants. Risks to construction workers and nearby residents have been assessed. Assessment through the construction phase have been identified as Minor Adverse to Neutral in terms of the impact and Not Significant in the context of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.
447. Within the operational phase it is noted that it is assessed that the proposed development and SuDS included in the proposed development to manage surface water drainage could alter the groundwater regime. This impact is assessed as a Minor Adverse and Not Significant impact in the context of the EIA Regulations. Other aspects such as managing ground gas through the development and potential concentration of such gas on the application site are also considered Minor Adverse and Not Significant.
448. The applicant has prepared a groundwater management note which summarises how the development proposals interact with groundwater during the construction of the site and longer term.
449. The main impacts that may affect groundwater levels are localised dewatering to facilitate construction and longer-term localised infiltration changes, as a result of increasing the impermeable area. Approximately 55% of the site will remain green space that will drain naturally to the ground and the rest of the site will be impermeable where runoff will be managed through SUDS.
450. Changes in the drainage regime as part of the development proposals may alter groundwater recharge across the site and the applicant is proposing groundwater monitoring. This will be secured by planning condition.
451. Groundwater monitoring around the perimeter of the site is being undertaken ahead of construction works commencing to create a baseline groundwater level to monitor fluctuations during construction. This will facilitate measurement and management of any localised impacts during construction to safeguard levels within the surrounding areas.
452. Measures such as water conservation in new dwellings and workspace will be addressed by planning conditions (**Condition 27 – Water efficiency**).

## **Conclusion**

453. In conclusion, and in the absence of objections from the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Lead Local Flood Authority there are no

substantive or material grounds for objection to the application proposals on drainage related issues.

454. Whilst the comments of Swavesey Internal Drainage Board, Parish Council and Northstowe Town Council are noted with regard the impact of the development on Uttons Drove, this has been considered in light of concerns raised with the Environment Agency confirming that the scheme can be accommodated.
455. As such, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with Development Plan policy and subject to conditions can be considered to be acceptable.

### **7(f) Health Impact Assessment (HIA)**

456. Policy SC/2 'Health Impact Assessment' of the Local Plan requires the submission of an HIA to consider the positive and negative impacts of development on the health of different groups in the population, in order to enhance the benefits and minimise any risks to health.
457. This applicant has submitted an HIA which considers how the proposal will have an effect on the key factors that can influence people's health and wellbeing and suggests ways in which any potential negative health impacts can be mitigated and positive health impacts enhanced.
458. The HIA has satisfactorily addressed the following issues –
- a) Housing Quality and Design
  - b) Access to Healthcare Services and other Social Infrastructure
  - c) Access to Open Space and Nature
  - d) Air Quality, Noise and Neighbourhood Amenity
  - e) Accessibility and Active Travel
  - f) Crime Reduction and Community Safety
  - g) Access to Healthy Food
  - h) Access to Work and Training
  - i) Social Cohesion and Lifetime Neighbourhoods
  - j) Minimising the Use of Resources
  - k) Climate Change
459. These elements will either be implemented through detailed reserved matters applications, or by planning condition / s106 agreement.
460. Chapter 11 of the ES has assessed the impact of construction and operational phases on health. Residual adverse effects as a result of

construction are limited and considered not significant in EIA terms. The construction phase will also result in moderate beneficial effects associated with access to work and training, which is significant in EIA terms.

461. During the operational phase and has assessed that the impacts mostly range from minor beneficial to major beneficial which are significant in EIA terms particularly in relation to the access to open space, opportunity to promote active travel and healthy living, alongside other aspects such as the creation of jobs.

### **Conclusion**

462. Overall, it is considered that the development will have a net beneficial impact on health and well-being through the provision of well-designed homes, employment opportunities, extensive community facilities, open space and providing links to the surrounding villages which will encourage community interaction and provide opportunities for active transport, in accordance with the NPPF, Policy SC/2, and the Health Impact Assessment.

### **7(g) Landscape and trees**

#### **Introduction**

463. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF requires developments to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities). Proposals should also be visually attractive resulting from good architecture, layout, and appropriate and effective landscaping.
464. Policy NE/4 'Landscape Character Areas' states that Development will only be permitted where it respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the individual Landscape Character Area in which is it located.
465. NAAP Policy NS/12 sets out that the aim and objective is to create an appropriate setting for the new town, minimising any adverse visual or landscape impacts on the surrounding area including the setting and character of the surrounding settlements, in particular the closest villages of Longstanton, Westwick and Oakington, and their Conservation Areas as well as its more distant neighbours at Rampton, Willingham, Over and Bar Hill.

466. A Hedgerow, Tree Survey and High-Level Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been submitted to understand and support the application in line with the masterplan. It was supported with further information in January 2021.
467. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has also been submitted to understand and support the application in line with the masterplan.

### **Landscape and Visual Impact**

468. The LVIA was updated in January 2021 to reflect comments from landscape specialists as well as other comments. The parameter plans have been amended to include improvements to clarity, qualify height parameters and incorporate and clarify the landscaped edge to the B1050 which forms part of the recommendations within the arboricultural assessment.
469. A development of 1,000 houses and flats, a primary school, associated infrastructure and with an area of mixed-use commercial facilities will alter and change the pre-development landscape as have previous approvals for Phases 1 and 2. This is however not a reason for refusal.
470. The proposal has been developed to retain and enhance landscape features and to provide a landscape feature to the B1050 in particular. This will ensure that the relationship between Longstanton and Northstowe will remain separate entities whilst also ensuring that links and movement to facilities (e.g., the primary school and community facilities) will not be prohibitively cut off from the surrounding area.
471. The landscape submission also provides a large green corridor to the central copse and green infrastructure to the western boundaries and green routes and connections through the development which will enhance the natural environment and the opportunity for recreation.
472. Overall whilst concerns of Longstanton Parish Council and local residents are noted the proposed scheme has responded to concerns raised and have been carefully considered. The proposals are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the aims and objectives of Policies NS/4 and NS/12 of the NAAP in particular, and the aims and objectives of the NPPF.

### **Biodiversity, Hedgerows and Trees**

473. The application site includes a number of hedgerows around the outer edge and a copse of trees at the heart of the development. These have been

assessed and outlined in the applicant's Hedgerow, Tree Survey and High-Level Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA).

474. Due to the intensive agricultural nature of the application site, there are relatively few trees and hedgerows across the site. There are in 16 identifiable trees, tree groups, woodland groups or hedgerows (also known as arboricultural items or features) identified across the application site.
475. Section 3.4 and table 5 of the AIA has assessed the hedgerows on the site. Three hedgerows (H1, H2 and H6) are considered as "Important" under the Hedgerow Regulations. As a result, suitable permission (i.e., planning permission) would be required to remove these or a section of these hedgerows.
476. Partial removal of hedgerows would be required to facilitate road infrastructure within the site. Notwithstanding this loss and comments that have been made regarding protecting all the existing hedgerow, it is proposed to increase the hedgerow biodiversity by over 65% largely due to enhancements proposed to the remaining lengths of hedgerow. 390 metres of new hedgerow is also proposed.
477. As the application is in outline, then a significant number of trees could be retained within the phase 3b. As part of any Reserved Matters submissions further detailed tree survey work and design detail will be able to inform any further mitigation that would be required. It is expected that substantive new tree planting would take place within the phase as part of strategic landscaping and within development parcels.

## **Conclusion**

478. Officers have reviewed the application documentation, including the EA with regard impact on biodiversity, hedgerows and trees. The protection and enhancement of the natural environment forms a key part of the application submission, and the proposals are considered in accordance with Local and National policy, subject to a series of planning conditions recommended to take forward the outline proposals and the requirements of the environmental statement and the mitigation. On this basis the proposals are considered acceptable with regard to biodiversity, hedgerows and trees.

## **7(h) Lighting**

479. Para 185c of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location and should

mitigate the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.

480. This aim is reflected in Policy SC/9 which also recognises that artificial lighting is essential for reasons of safety or security and for living, working and recreational purposes. In some cases, it can also add to the amenity of the built environment by highlighting buildings and open spaces of character.

### **Conclusion**

481. Based on the above assessment and the submitted ES, officers are satisfied that the operational artificial lighting is unlikely to rise to unacceptable adverse impacts. The development is therefore considered to accord with environmental objectives relating to lighting set out in Policy SC/9 of the Local Plan and para 180c of the NPPF.

### **7(j) Noise and Vibration**

#### **Introduction**

482. Para 180 of the NPPF advises that planning policies should aim to avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life resulting from new development. Reference in this regard is also given to the National Noise Policy Statement for England 2010, which sets out the long-term vision of government noise policy which is to “promote good health and a good quality of life through the effective management and control of all forms of noise within the context of government policy on sustainable development.” In addition, the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 and accompanying National Noise Action Plans have the aim of avoiding, preventing, or reducing the harmful effects of environmental noise from roads, rail, aviation, and industry.
483. Policy SC/10 ‘Noise Pollution’ has an overarching objective to ensure development is appropriate and compatible for its location regarding noise impacts. It advises that noise sensitive developments should be located away from existing sources of significant noise unless its impact can be mitigated by planning conditions or obligations to provide an adequate protection against noise both internally and externally.
484. The applicant has included a noise and vibration assessment as part of the Environmental Statement (Chapter 11). The ES reports that most of the site is at ‘low’ or ‘medium’ risk for noise, depending on the proximity to internal roads. It also goes on to say that noise modelling has been undertaken which

calculates the contribution from various noise sources and predicts sound levels at selected locations.

485. The submitted ES recommends that limited environmental noise and vibration monitoring may be required during the construction phase and this would be established and secured through the agreement of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which is agreed. A strategic CEMP has been submitted with the application and will be implemented through planning condition (**Condition 38 – Construction Environmental Management Plan**).
486. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has recommended approval subject to conditions. One of those conditions is to agree the phasing of the site, which would in any case be secured through the agreement of the applicant's proposed phasing approach. All matters relating to noise and vibration for each phase, including a CEMP, would need to be agreed and applied to each reserved matter parcel in turn.
487. A condition requiring the submission of a noise assessment to be submitted with each reserved matter application to protect new residents from road traffic and any other alternative transport options will be required (**Condition 9 – Reserved Matters requirements**). Concurrent with any application for commercial, community, leisure, or retail use (that is any uses other than individual residential premises) a noise assessment as necessary and a scheme for the insulation of the building(s) and/or associated plant / equipment or other attenuation measures, in order to minimise the level of noise emanating from the said building(s) and/or plant will also be required.
488. Due to the nature of the submission and the outline nature of the parameter plans, it is not possible to specifically conclude exact mitigation or enhancement measures at the present time as these would relate specifically to the building/site layouts proposed within the later detailed designs.

## **Conclusion**

489. Subject to conditions to implement the appropriate mitigation, the proposed development would have an acceptable impact on health and quality of life in relation to noise and vibration, in accordance with the NPPF, Planning Practice Guidance and Policy SC/10.

## 7(k) Sustainable Construction and Design

### Introduction

490. NAAP Policy NS/23 'An Exemplar in Sustainability' states that Northstowe will include within the development exemplar projects in sustainable development, including energy efficient measures.
491. Policy CC/1 'Mitigation and Adaption to Climate Change' states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that demonstrate and embed the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation into the development. Applicants must submit a Sustainability Statement to demonstrate how these principles have been embedded into the development proposal.
492. Policy CC/3 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments' states that proposals for new developments of 1,000 square metres or more will be required to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% (to be calculated by reference to a baseline for the anticipated carbon emissions for the property as defined by Building Regulations) through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies.
493. Policy CC/4 'Water Efficiency' requires that all new residential developments must achieve as a minimum water efficiency equivalent to 110 litres per person per day. This will be achieved by planning condition (**Condition 27 – Water efficiency**).
494. Policy NS/23 of the NAAP sets out to achieve an exemplar in sustainability, Northstowe will include within the development exemplar projects in sustainable development, including energy efficient measures. The policy sets out that this could be achieved by:
- a) Providing an increased level of sustainability across the development as a whole above current requirements to a material extent;
  - b) Building a proportion of the development to advanced practice which fully addresses sustainability issues and minimises any environmental impact by pushing at the boundaries of the proven technology available at the time of the development.
495. Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – In July 2019, South Cambridge District Council and Cambridge City Council published a Sustainable Design and Construction SPD for consultation. The SPD sets out guidance on a

range of sustainable design criteria and requirements for new development to ensure the delivery of sustainable development.

496. In November 2018 SCDC committed to supporting the transition to zero carbon by 2050. Whilst this is clearly a matter to be addressed through the next Local Plan, all possible opportunities will be taken to secure enhanced sustainability measures in developments already allocated in the adopted Local Plan.
497. The national government and South Cambridgeshire District Council has declared a Climate Emergency through the Climate Act and this is echoed by the Government's stance within the NPPF.
498. The application is supported by a Sustainability Statement and an Energy Strategy, which includes summary of opportunities for the application site and a set of objectives for the development. These are assessed below.

### **Sustainability Statement and Energy Strategy**

499. This Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the proposed new development will:
- a) Minimise carbon emissions through the approach to energy use
  - b) Minimise water usage and flood impacts
  - c) Provide a sustainable approach to waste and materials and resources
  - d) Provide for a high level of accessibility by sustainable travel modes
  - e) Provide substantial amounts of high-quality green infrastructure
  - f) Develop sustainable new buildings;
  - g) Create a cohesive community and culture;
  - h) Support the local economy; and
  - i) Be an exemplar for health and wellbeing.
500. The statement proposes that all non-residential dwellings over 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> will achieve at least BREEAM 'Very Good' with key public buildings (education and inpatient healthcare), where applicable, to achieve at least BREEAM 'Excellent' with an aspiration of achieving BREEAM 'Outstanding'.
501. The submitted Energy Strategy has proposed an approach using the Energy Hierarchy of Be Lean (considering energy efficiency measures) and Be Green (introduction of low and zero carbon energy generation) and has been used against current Part L 2013 of Building Regulations.

502. The strategy shows that energy efficiency alone, has the potential to make an improvement on Building Regulations Part L1A and L2A 2013 of around 5.3%.
503. The strategy also shows that PV systems and air heat pump systems demonstrate how the carbon dioxide reduction target requirements (10% renewables and 19% overall) can be met for the present and the future. This is supported by the Sustainability Officer, who has recommended a condition to secure the submission of detailed Energy Strategies as part of future reserved matters applications, and for the baseline carbon reduction target of a 19% improvement on Part L 2013 to be updated and uplifted in line with future changes to either Part L of the Building Regulations or on adoption of higher standards as part of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (**Condition 24 – Sustainability strategy; Condition 25 – Review of Sustainability and Energy Strategies and Targets; Condition 26 – Renewable Energy**).
504. Homes England has stated in the strategy that it will work with stakeholders specifically in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire to develop ideas and refine proposals within the changing energy landscape to ensure that potential technology options, smart services and innovations can be included in the Northstowe Energy Strategy.

### **Conclusion**

505. The applicant's proposals for addressing climate change have been assessed and reviewed by the Council's Sustainability Officer and are acceptable. Whilst the starting point for assessment reflects current national and corresponding local policy provisions, the duration of the project and dynamic nature of national policy in this area means that it is probable that standards for new development will evolve from the current baseline used in the application submission over time.
506. Providing for any permission to recognise this shifting national (and local) position means that a condition is considered necessary in order to ensure that individual phases of development address the objectives set out in the SCDC (and the future development plan) (**Condition 25 – Review of Sustainability and Energy Strategies and Targets**).
507. Subject to recommended conditions, the development is in accordance with the sustainability objectives set out in the Local Plan and the NPPF.

## **7(l) Utilities**

- 508. Policy TI/8 'Infrastructure and New Developments' requires the new town to ensure the provision, management, and maintenance of infrastructure to meet the needs of the town.
- 509. Policy TI/8 states that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
- 510. The applicant has submitted an Utilities Report to identify any existing utility infrastructure that may constrain development within the site boundary and to provide advice on the most suitable course of action to mitigate these constraints in a timely and cost-efficient manner. The report identifies no major constraints on site.

### **Electricity**

- 511. UKPN is the electricity provider in this area. As part of the Phase 2 development proposals existing supply is being extended along the Cambridge Guided Busway (CGB) from the Histon strategic 132kV substation to a proposed new Primary Substation (with sufficient capacity to serve the Northstowe Phase 2 and 3 development proposals) in the south-eastern corner of the new town. This work was completed in 2020.

### **Gas**

- 512. Cadent Gas is the electricity provider in this area. As part of the Phase 2 development proposals, existing supply is being extended along the new Link Road through Phase 3a, from the existing medium pressure gas main in Longstanton Road to a new gas governor located on the Phase 2 southern boundary (adjacent to the Busway). For phase 3b however it is intended that all dwellings will have electric heating.

### **Potable Water**

- 513. The Local Water Authority is Cambridge Water. Reinforcement works have taken place to secure water supply for the entirety of Northstowe.
- 514. Potable water is provided by Cambridge Water, which supplies the area around Northstowe from the Coton/Madingley reservoir to the west of Cambridge. The Utilities Report which was submitted in support of the application identifies that there is a 200mm potable water main located within

Longstanton Road to the west of the main application site. Longstanton Road bisects the main Application Site and the proposed SARE.

515. As part of the Phase 2 development proposals existing supply is being extended along the new SARW and link road through the site from the existing 450mm diameter pipe located to the west of the site. Reinforcement works have also taken place to secure water supply for the entirety of Northstowe.
516. The Utility Statement states that Cambridge Water has confirmed that they have adequate water resources to serve the proposed Northstowe development. There is insufficient capacity in the current infrastructure network to supply the Site. Off-site reinforcement works will therefore be required. The reinforcement of the water main will be the responsibility of the developer.
517. Works for designing and constructing the infrastructure works are progressing as part of Phase 2, in anticipation of the Phase 3 development. Additional Phase 3 water mains have already been included within the Link Road to allow for the additional capacity when it becomes available.
518. The Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) published by Cambridge Water in November 2019 sets out Cambridge Water's draft long-term WRMP for the 25 years between 2020 and 2045 and describes how Cambridge Water will continue to meet the demand for water in the Cambridge region.
519. The growth in new properties and water demand as set out in the WRMP is based on the South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge Local Plans, and as such includes the future demand which will be generated by allocated sites, including the application site. Officers are therefore satisfied that sufficient available resources will be available in the longer term to serve the site, and that the availability of water is not a constraint for development.

### **Foul Water**

520. Anglian Water is the sewerage provider for the area, which is served by Uttons Drove Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW), which discharges into the Uttons Drove drain. It was identified by Anglian Water as the treatment facility best suited for improvement in order to receive the increased effluent associated with new development in the area.
521. An upgrade to the watercourses between Uttons Drove and Webb's Hole Sluice together with a pumping station at Webbs Hole Sluice has been undertaken as part of previous phases development works. This will

accommodate the increased treatment outflow from the WWTW for the whole of Phase 2 and Phase 3.

### **Digital Infrastructure**

- 522. Policy TI/10 requires new development (residential, employment and commercial) to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure suitable to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services across the district.
- 523. This is reflective of the objectives of the NPPF (para. 114), which encourages planning policies and decisions to support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.
- 524. There are multiple options for serving the site with full Fibre to the premises to each dwelling. Existing infrastructure will be utilised where possible to minimise any offsite working.
- 525. A planning condition is recommended to agree the site-wide implementation of broadband infrastructure and next generation mobile technology for both dwellings and commercial premises to ensure the objectives of Policy TI/10 is met (**Condition 56 – Broadband provision**).

### **Conclusion**

- 526. Subject to recommended conditions, the development is in accordance with the infrastructure objectives for utilities delivery, including electricity, gas, foul and potable water set out in the Local Plan and the NPPF.

### **7(m) Waste**

- 527. The NPPF requires Local Plans to consider a wide variety of infrastructure needs including waste management, and this is reflected in Local Plan Policy TI/8. The main issues to consider in this instance are refuse collection and waste management.

### **Construction Waste**

- 528. The ES describes the amount of waste that will be produced by the development over the build out period. As the development design progresses, waste would be managed through key strategies and reports which will form part of the wider Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

529. The submitted Waste Strategy provides a good outline as to the overall approach to be taken for minimisation of waste, sorting, re-use, recovery, and recycling. However, there are details which cannot be provided at outline stage and therefore provision is made for Site Waste Management Plans to come forward in due course; and for completed RECAP toolkits Assessment (both of which are required by the Adopted Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, Policy CS28). A planning condition is recommended to secure these details as well as a separate CEMP to control issues of noise, vibration, dust, and odour sources relating to waste management (**Condition 39 – Construction Waste Management and Minimisation Plan; Condition 38 – Construction Environmental Management Plan**).

### **Operational Waste**

530. The ES describes the amount of municipal household and commercial waste that will be produced by the development and is considered to be not significant in terms of the EIA regulations.
531. Section 106 contributions will be required for the provision of refuse freighters and bins for the development.

### **Conclusion**

532. Based on the above assessment and the submitted ES, the development is considered to accord with environmental objectives relating to waste set out in the relevant Local Plan policies. The provision of refuse freighters and bins to serve the development will be secured through section 106 agreement.

### **Section 8. Cumulative Impact**

533. The EIA Regulations include the requirement to identify the full range of environmental effects that are likely to result from a development which includes a range of secondary effects including cumulative, synergistic, and inter-relationship effects. This wider range of effects is often simply grouped together under the term “cumulative environmental effects”. EIA practice recognises two major sources of cumulative effects: intra-project effects and inter-project effects.
534. Intra-project effects occur when an effect from one environmental discipline may affect another environmental discipline, for example an increase in traffic

flows will also result in a change to the noise levels at a particular receptor. These are defined as impact interactions within the ES.

535. Inter-project effects occur resulting from the likely impacts of the Proposed Development interacting with the impacts of other developments in the vicinity, including earlier phases at Northstowe. These are defined as cumulative effects within the ES.
536. The assessment identified all the receptors that would be subject to intra-project cumulative effects and considered the extent to which these effects could interact with one another resulting in residual effects of a greater significance than those already identified.
537. Intra-project cumulative effects would arise on existing residents, early occupants of the proposed Development whilst construction is ongoing, construction workers and local businesses as a result of various adverse effects (i.e., dust; noise; visual amenity; traffic) interacting with one another. The assessment concluded that any cumulative effects on these receptors would be temporary, very limited in scale and not raise any residual effects above Minor Adverse which is considered to be Not Significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.
538. The potential for inter-project cumulative effects during the operation phase resulting from the combination of adverse effects with those from other developments relating to visual amenity and traffic on local residents, residents of completed properties, local businesses and users of the local Public Right of Way network were identified. The assessment concluded that these cumulative adverse effects would not raise residual effects above Minor Adverse which is considered Not Significant in terms of the EIA Regulations. During operation there would also be Moderate Beneficial cumulative effects relating to socioeconomics (related to the provision of housing, community facilities and school places) and Moderate and Major Beneficial health effects (related to housing, social infrastructure, open space, access to work, social cohesion, accessibility, crime, healthy food and resources). These beneficial effects are considered to be Significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.

## **Conclusion**

539. Officers have considered the cumulative impact assessments and are in agreement with the conclusions reported in the ES, that no significant adverse cumulative effects will arise.

## **Section 9. Financial contributions / section 106 heads of terms**

### **Section 106 planning obligations**

540. The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the CIL Regulations) generally set out regulations relating to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Part 11 refers specifically to planning obligations (including those in Section 106 Agreements) and is relevant to the consideration of this application and will influence the final content of the Section 106 Agreement if planning permission is granted.
541. Statutory tests set out in the CIL Regulation 122 require that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for development where it is: -
- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
  - directly related to the development
  - fairly and reasonably, related in scale and kind to the development
542. In accordance with the NPPF 2021, planning obligations can only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.
543. Regard has also been had to the requirements and infrastructure delivered under the following planning permissions:
- Planning Permission and associated s106 Legal Agreement to S/0388/12/OL (Northstowe Phase 1)
  - Planning Permission and associated s106 Legal Agreement to S/2011/14/OL (Northstowe Phase 2)
  - Planning Permission - S/0092/18/CC (Education Campus)
544. Following extensive discussions between the County Council, the Local Planning Authority and the applicants, the proposed schedule of S106 terms is attached at **Appendix B Draft s106 Heads of Terms table**, with a summary set out below.
545. The Heads of Terms sets out that contributions, excluding on site delivery will total £20,070,043. This brings infrastructure contributions delivered by Northstowe developers, across the phases to close to £200m when factoring

proposals for Phase 3A, Digital Park and Endurance Estates. These benefits, as part of a new town will also have a positive impact on surrounding communities.

546. The areas of s106s identified for Phase 3b are –

- **Affordable and other housing**

40% of the total housing development with the following tenures.

Affordable Rent – 50%

Shared Ownership – 20%

Discount Market sale – 10%

Rent to Buy – 20%

Plots for self-build housing

- **Education**

1 x 2FE primary school with early years

Contribution towards secondary school expansion at Northstowe

Contribution towards existing special educational needs school at Northstowe

Contribution towards post 16 education provision

- **Sport and Recreation**

Expansion of community sports hall in phase 2

Contribution towards new sports hall and swimming pool

Contribution towards off-site local sports facilities

- **Healthcare**

Contribution to Phase 2 civic hub health facility

- **Community**

Contribution to library on phase 2

Contribution towards phase 1 community centre

Faith provision

Community development officer

Community chest

- **Transport**

Oakington to Girton Cycle Route

Links to Fen Drayton, Over, Oakington to Cottenham Cycle Route and other countryside links

Improvements to Public Rights of Way

Cambridge Guided Busway

Local Bus Service Pump Priming

Junction improvement schemes

Village Traffic Calming schemes

Traffic Monitoring – ANPR enhancement in Northstowe Area

Transport Enhancement Fund to matters arising post the application

Bus Link Road Construction and Enforcement completion

Electric Bike Hire

Bar Hill A14 improvements

Bus stops on site

- **Drainage**

Webb's Hole Sluice pumping station

## **Waste**

- Refuse freighters and bins

## **Parish Council and Other Group Requests**

### **All Saints Church**

547. All Saints Church has requested contributions to be sought towards improving the Church, although no specific request has been submitted. The Northstowe development will however provide community facilities and faith provision across its site. The contribution therefore cannot be sought as it would not be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms or directly related to the development as future residents and is therefore not reg 122 compliant.

### **Friends of St Michaels Church**

548. The Friends Group seeks a range of enhancements to the church including improving the accessibility and re-thatching of roof in providing a community facility for the area. The Northstowe development will however provide community facilities and faith provision across its site. The contribution therefore cannot be sought as it would not be necessary to make the

development acceptable in planning terms or directly related to the development as future residents and is therefore not reg 122 compliant.

### **Longstanton Parish Council**

- 549. Longstanton Parish Council would ideally like to be able to build a new facility on the Recreation Ground Extension.
- 550. The parish council would also like to set up a new allotment site and a Multi-Use Games Area.
- 551. Where requests relate to facilities already provided in full on site, such contributions cannot be sought as they would not be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms or directly related to the development and is therefore not reg 122 compliant.

### **National Trust**

- 552. The National Trust, also supported by Cambridge Past, Present and Future, submits that a contribution should be sought towards enhancement of Wicken Fen.
- 553. In requesting this contribution, the National Trust highlights that there is concern about the potential impact of the substantial scale of planned new development in Greater Cambridge upon National Trust property within the local vicinity. Specific reference is made in that letter to the Trust's land at Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve and at Anglesey Abbey, both of which have seen significant increases in visitor numbers over recent years.
- 554. The mitigation delivered on Northstowe extends beyond the application site to include public footpath and cycleway enhancement and wider recreational links onto strategic footpath and cycleways. Further the off-site mitigation provides over 70 hectares of enhancement in the local area which would be available to Northstowe residents directly and in Cottenham. On this basis, it is considered that contributions towards the enhancement of Wicken Fen is not necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms and is therefore not reg 122 compliant.

### **RSPB**

- 555. The RSPB, supported by Cambridge Past, Present and Future, requests a contribution to upgrade the infrastructure at the nearby Fen Drayton Lakes RSPB Reserve. This is to allow the reserve to safely and comfortably

accommodate the increased visitor numbers that will inevitably follow from this 5000-house phase of the new settlement (Phase 3a and 3b).

556. It is considered that contributions towards the enhancement of Fen Drayton Lakes RSPB Reserve is not necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms and is therefore not reg 122 compliant.

### **Conclusion**

557. Officers are satisfied that the agreed planning obligations set out in the draft heads of terms table meet the statutory tests of CIL Regulation 122. The Application has confirmed the acceptability of committing to this complete mitigation package, by way of planning obligations, which will be secured through a S106 Agreement.
558. With the planning obligations identified in **Appendix B Draft S106 Head of Terms table** in place, the proposed development would be acceptable. The proposals will therefore comply with Local Plan policies.

## **Section 10. Planning Balance and Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

559. Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
560. The NPPF represents up-to-date government planning policy and is a material consideration that must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application. This includes the presumption in favour of sustainable development found in paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which requires approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 is an up-to-date development plan and the proposal accords with it.
561. The NPPF lists the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve sustainable development. The benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals have been evaluated against the objectives of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as summarised below.

## **Economic Role**

562. The NPPF places a clear emphasis on the importance of economic growth and delivering economic benefits as a key component of sustainable development. The proposals will create construction jobs and employment through businesses, shops and services within the local centre and mixed-use employment areas within the application proposals. Due to the scale of the development these should also be afforded substantive positive weight

## **Social Role**

563. In terms of the social role of sustainability, the proposals will contribute significantly to the Council's Housing Supply in terms of the medium and long term due to the size and duration of the project. The development is expected to be constructed beyond the end of the plan period (2031) and therefore will provide a longevity in the support of housing delivery.
564. The proposals support the Council's Growth strategy and provides support to the Development Plan. These elements, in accordance with decisions of similar sized projects should be afforded very substantial positive weight.
565. The proposals will provide a policy compliant 40% affordable housing at a tenure providing housing for those in need and a significant social benefit. The opportunity for self/custom build and age specific accommodation should also be noted. The social benefits of the housing elements are considered to be a significant positive element.
566. The proposals would also provide significant social benefit from on-site sports, recreation and play facilities. The provision of allotments, community orchards and other infrastructure would also be of significant community benefit to future residents and provide recreational opportunity and routes.
567. The development will provide an opportunity for social and informal recreation. Other cycling routes and transport mitigation would also have a positive social benefit and the contribution to the Cambridge Guided Busway should also be noted. These is a significant positive benefit. The capability and support to further public transport is also a moderate benefit.
568. The provision of a range of community-based infrastructure in terms of community support and a further building to be delivered by the developer would also be of significant benefit. Further contributions to the Phase 2 civic hub, as a focus for the new town in providing health, community and library facilities is also significant.

569. The proposals would also provide another further primary school and further contributions towards the secondary school on Phase 2 would also be of significant community social benefit, meeting the educational needs of future residents.

### **Environmental Role**

570. The retention and management of the trees for landscape and ecological benefit are given positive weight. The proposals also committing to a minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain also carries significant positive weight.
571. The proposals commit to the provision of a development that will progress to zero carbon and adopting the latest best practice in seeking to develop the site through a stepped approach to energy, which includes a fabric first approach, a stepped move away from fossil fuelled heating, low carbon heating technology, and the incorporation of renewables (e.g, air source heat pumps and photovoltaics). Other initiatives will include electric charging points and development of low energy that will exceed a carbon reduction above the current 19% on 2013 levels.
572. It is also recognised that the proposals will promote the reduction in car travel through the provision of attractive alternatives and facilities being provided both in the Phase 2 town centre and local centre, all within easy walking distance. Further the mixed-use commercial areas also provide further opportunity for employment, working hubs (for those working remotely) and shops and services for the community. All these reduce the need to travel and create a sustainable community that can utilise alternative modes of transport which have positive environmental credentials. This should be afforded significant positive weight.
573. Whilst seeking to manage the traffic creation, a negative impact, the provision of transport mitigation and new infrastructure in addition to that created as part of Phases 1 and 2 would be a positive impact to the wider infrastructure and air quality objectives in terms of low carbon technologies. As such this is a neutral impact when balancing the positive and negative elements of the scheme.
574. Whilst the archaeological impact would be a dis-benefit of the scheme, it is considered that the other environmental benefits outweigh this dis-benefit, given the provision of net gain in biodiversity and measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change. As such, moderate weight can be attached to the environmental benefits of the scheme.

## **Overall planning balance**

575. Overall, the proposed development will bring significant measurable economic, social and environmental public benefits that accord with the three dimensions of sustainable development set out in the NPPF. In exercising the planning balance, officers consider there are no sustainable planning objections that would outweigh the positive benefits arising from the development which forms a longstanding and established allocated site.
576. The balance of these benefits in the circumstances of the application is considered to weigh in favour of granting planning permission.

## **Conclusion**

577. Having examined the proposals against material planning considerations, none are identified that would on their own, or in combination, lead officers to consider recommending refusal of planning permission for the Application.
578. Officers' analysis, as set out in this report, triggers the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
579. Furthermore, the direction at Section 38 (6) of the 2004 Planning Act that the proposed development 'must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise' points firmly towards the granting of planning permission in this case.
580. Officers have carefully considered all the issues raised by the planning application, including evidence and opinions submitted on behalf of the applicants, the contributions of consultees, wider stake holders and members of the public.
581. Having also taken into account the provisions of the development plan, the NPPF and PPG, the statutory requirements of section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the proposed development is recommended for approval subject to the completion of a section 106 planning agreement to secure necessary developer contributions and subject to a number of controlling and safeguarding conditions.

## **Recommendation**

582. DELEGATED APPROVAL 'to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development' of outline permission 20/02142/OUT, as amended, subject to:
583. Planning conditions as set out below (including Explanatory Notes and Terms), with the final wording of any amendments to these (and to include others considered to be appropriate and necessary) to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee prior to the issuing of planning permission; and
584. Satisfactory completion of a Section 106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on the terms broadly referenced in Section 9 of this report, with delegated authority granted to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development to negotiate, secure, and complete such agreement on terms as are otherwise considered to be appropriate and necessary.
585. This includes the Heads of Terms (HoTs) as set out in the report, and any other HoTs or the detail, including phasing and triggers, that are still under negotiation. The final wording of any significant amendments to HoTs listed in the report to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee prior to the issuing of planning permission; and
586. Delegated authority given to officers to set out as part of the decision notice and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017, reg. 29 'information to accompany decisions' a reasoned conclusion of the significant effects of the development on the environment and to carry out appropriate notification under reg. 30 accordingly.
587. If necessary, a summary/progress report on the s106 obligations to be referred to Planning Committee six months after the Planning Committee.
588. A list of the planning conditions and the structure of the conditions is contained below. The detailed wording of the conditions is set out in **Appendix D**, with a list of key definitions in **Appendix C**.

## **Obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990**

589. Set out at Appendix B

## **Informatives**

590. See Appendix D.

## **Background Papers**

591. See Appendix A.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Legislation and Policies

Appendix B: Draft S106 Heads of Terms – summary

Appendix C: Key Definitions

Appendix D: Proposed planning conditions (full wording)

Appendix E: Application Site Plan

Appendix F: Parameter Plans

Appendix G: Environmental Statement (ES) summary of mitigation measures

Appendix H: Glossary

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