



Planning Committee Date	14 February 2024
Report to	South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee
Lead Officer	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
Reference	23/01581/FUL
Site	Manor Farm, Clayhithe Road, Horningsea Cambridgeshire CB25 9JE
Ward / Parish	Horningsea
Proposal	Conversion of existing vacant farm buildings into seven dwellings with access, parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure
Applicant	Harriers Horningsea Ltd C/o Dakin Estates Ltd
Presenting Officer	Amy Stocks
Reason Reported to Committee	Called-in by Councillor Cone Third party representations
Member Site Visit Date	7 th February 2024
Key Issues	1. Departure from Local Policy
Recommendation	REFUSE

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The application seeks planning permission for the conversion of existing vacant farm buildings into seven dwellings with access, parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure.
- 1.2 The site lies within the village development framework of Horningsea, the Horningsea Conservation Area and adjacent to the Green Belt and open countryside. The Manor House is a Grade II listed building, while the farm buildings are curtilage listed.
- 1.3 Horningsea is classified as an Infill Village under Policy S/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, where residential development or re-development is restricted to 2 units (indicative size). Infill Villages are generally amongst the smallest in South Cambridgeshire. These villages have a poor range of services and facilities, and it is often necessary for local residents to travel outside the village for most of their daily needs.
- 1.4 The proposal seeks permission for the provision of seven new residential dwellings on the site, which exceeds the policy restriction by five units.
- 1.5 The proposed development would represent an overdevelopment of the site and is not considered to promote a sustainable form of development that could be adequately supported by the local infrastructure and reduce the need of future occupants to travel by car for daily needs.
- 1.6 The principle of the development is therefore unacceptable and contrary to policies S/2, S/3, S/7, S/11, and TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.
- 1.7 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee **refuse** the application Planning Permission.

2.0 Site Description and Context

None relevant		Tree Preservation Order	
Conservation Area	x	Local Nature Reserve	
Listed Building	x	Flood Zone 1	x
Building of Local Interest		Green Belt	
Historic Park and Garden		Protected Open Space	
Scheduled Ancient Monument		Controlled Parking Zone	
Local Neighbourhood and District Centre		Article 4 Direction	

*X indicates relevance

2.1 The site lies within the village development framework for Horningsea, the Horningsea Conservation Area and adjacent to the Green Belt and open countryside. The Manor House is a Grade II listed building, while the farm buildings are curtilage listed.

2.2 To the north of the site is open countryside, to the east of the site are nos. 1 and 2 Manor Cottage and Clayhithe Road, to the south of the site is an area of green associated with the Manor House, to the west of the site is an area of green space and the properties which front onto Dock Lane.

3.0 The Proposal

3.1 The application seeks permission for the conversion of existing vacant farm buildings into seven dwellings with access, parking, landscaping, and associated infrastructure.

3.2 The application has been amended to address representations and further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. When submitted the application did not contain an adequate bat survey, this was subsequently submitted and reconsulted. The ecology officer considered this survey acceptable.

4.0 Relevant Site History

Reference	Description	Outcome
23/01582/LBC	Conversion of existing vacant farm buildings into seven dwellings with access, parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure	Pending Consideration

5.0 Policy

5.1 National

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Environment Act 2021

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Equalities Act 2010

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

5.2 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018

S/1 – Vision

S/2 – Objectives of the Local Plan

S/3 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

S/4 – Cambridge Green Belt

S/7 – Development Framework

S/11 – Infill Villages

CC/1 – Mitigation and Adaption to Climate Change

CC/3 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments

CC/4 – Water Efficiency

CC/6 – Construction Methods

CC/7 – Water Quality

CC/8 – Sustainable Drainage Systems

CC/9 – Managing Flood Risk

HQ/1 – Design Principles

NH/2 – Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character

NH/4 – Biodiversity

NH/8 – Mitigating the Impact of Development in & adjoining the Green Belt

NH/14 – Heritage Assets

H/8 – Housing Density

H/9 – Housing Mix

H/10 – Affordable Housing

H/12 – Residential Space Standards

TI/2 – Planning for Sustainable Travel

TI/3 – Parking Provision

TI/10 – Broadband

5.3 Supplementary Planning Documents

Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016

5.4 The following SPDs were adopted to provide guidance to support previously adopted Development Plan Documents that have now been superseded by the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018. These documents are still material considerations when making planning decisions, with the weight in decision making to be determined on a case-by-case basis:

Development affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted 2009
Landscape in New Developments SPD – Adopted March 2010
District Design Guide SPD – Adopted March 2010
Affordable Housing SPD – Adopted March 2010
Listed Buildings SPD – Adopted 2009

5.5 Other Guidance

5.6 Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019 – 2023

5.7 Conservation Area Appraisal:

5.8 Horningsea conservation area – Adopted 2005

6.0 Consultations

6.1 Horningsea Parish Council – Object

6.2 The Parish Council have provided comments on this application, the comments are as follows:

- Overlooking and loss of privacy on neighbouring properties
- Loss of light and overshadowing (namely plot 6 on nearby cottages)
- Noise during the construction period
- Impact of vehicles on the Highway during construction phase
- Increase of traffic in and out of the site when dwellings are occupied, highway infrastructure is required.
- Concerns of any potential future extensions to the dwellings will make the area appear cramped.
- All building works must adhere to rules on listed buildings and the conservation area.
- Measures to protect birds and bats in the barns should be taken.

6.3 Conservation Officer – No Objection

6.4 Comment dated 25th May 2023: No Objection- It is considered that the proposal will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area subject to the imposition of the following conditions:

- A sample of the proposed brick for use in the construction of the works hereby approved, is to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- No works shall commence on the landscaping, until a sample of the proposed pavours/setts for use in the landscaping of the works has been hereby approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- The submission of a strategy for the re-use/re-cycling of the material of the structures on the site which are to be demolished must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

6.5 The department have also requested a number of Listed Building Consent conditions of which will be discussed under application 23/01581/FUL also attending the committee.

6.6 Comment dated 21st August 2023: The additional information has been assessed and it is considered that there is no greater impact on heritage assets than previously commented on.

6.7 Contaminated Land – No Objection

6.8 Comment dated 22nd May 2023: No objection subject to the imposition of conditions relating to:

- The submission of a phase 2 desk study and remediation measures
- The submission of a verification report
- Steps to take in the event unexpected contamination is identified.

6.9 The EA should be consulted on this application to comment on the risk to controlled waters.

6.10 Definitive Maps Officer – No Objection

6.11 The public footpath no.4 shall remain open during the construction period and beyond. The following informatives shall be included:

- The public footpath must remain open and unobstructed at all times.
- The Public Footpath must not be used to access the development site unless the applicant is sure they have lawful authority to do so.
- No alteration to the Footpath's surface is permitted without our consent.
- Landowners are reminded that it is their responsibility to maintain boundaries.
- The granting of planning permission does not entitle a developer to obstruct a Public Right of Way.
- Members of the public on foot have the dominant right of passage along the public footpath.
- The Highways Authority has a duty to maintain Public Rights of Way in such a state as to be suitable for its intended use.

6.12 Ecology Officer – No Objection

6.13 Comment dated 19th May 2023: Objection. There is insufficient ecological information available for determination of this application as the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Samsara Ecology, January 2023) recommends that that two further bat surveys should be undertaken on Buildings B1 and B6 to ascertain whether bats are roosting in the buildings.

6.14 Comment dated 16th August 2023: The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report in Table 11 states that the applicant will need to apply for inclusion on district licence scheme for great crested newts. The department would like clarification on this, as the rest of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report has scoped out great crested newts.

6.15 Comment dated 4th September 2023: No objection subject to the imposition of conditions relating to:

- Compliance with approved documents
- The submission of a scheme of ecology enhancement
- The submission of a lighting design strategy
- The submission of a biodiversity net gain plan.

6.16 **Environment Agency – No comment**

6.17 No comments to make.

6.18 **Environmental Health – No Objection**

6.19 Comment dated 23rd May 2023. No objection subject to the imposition of conditions relating to:

- Construction hours
- The submission of the construction environmental management plan
- Informative for air source heat pumps
- Informative for demolition
- Informative for disturbance to neighbours
- Informative for statutory nuisance action

6.20 Comment dated 28th December 2023: No objection subject to the imposition of conditions relating to:

- Construction Hours
- Piling
- Informative relating to; air source heat pump, demolition, disturbance to neighbours, statutory nuisance action.

6.21 **Local Highway Authority – No Objection**

6.22 *Comment dated 24th May 2023:* Request the application be refused for the following reason:

- Applicant fails to provide a drawing showing the required inter-visibility splays to demonstrate suitable access can serve the development.

6.23 *Comment dated 9th August 2023:* Proposal is acceptable subject to the following conditions:

- The first 10m from the boundary of the public highway into the site shall be constructed using a bound material.
- The vehicular access shall be a minimum width of 5m for a minimum of 10m measured from the boundary of the public highway.
- The access shall be constructed so that it falls and levels that no private water from the site drains across or onto the public highway.
- The existing southern access to Clayhithe Road shall be permanently and effectively closed to motor vehicles.
- The vehicular accesses shall be laid and constructed in accordance with Cambridgeshire County Councils Construction Specification.
- An informative relating to works within public local highway land.

6.24 Ramblers Association – No Objection

6.25 No objection to the proposal subject to the following comments:

- The access for pedestrians to the footpath needs to be made clear in the plans and will need to be maintained throughout building works.
- The access point from the road will need to be waymarked.

6.26 Sustainable Drainage Engineer – No Objection

6.27 The development proposed is acceptable subject to the imposition of the conditions outlined below:

- Submission of a Surface Water Scheme
- Submission of a Management and Maintenance scheme for the surface water drainage system.
- Submission of Foul drainage Scheme.

6.28 Trees – No Objection

6.29 No objection to the proposed works.

7.0 Third Party Representations

7.1 4 representations have been received.

7.2 One comment was received in objection. The third-party representative removed their objection in favour of a comment in support.

7.3 Those in support have given the following reasons:

- Principle of development refusal is illogical in a climate where there is a housing crisis.
- There is interest in the houses being proposed.
- A 2 dwelling scheme
- To impose a limit of 2 dwellings only would result in inappropriate development.

- Two dwellings would be too large in size.
- Two appropriately sized dwellings would result in redundant buildings.
- Two dwellings would create an elitist development
- The existing buildings are unused and derelict.
- Application is being refused on policy S/11 is a huge error.
- The dwellings would secure the long-term use of good quality historic buildings.
- Proposal would provide housing within reach of employment centres.
- The development would secure population consolidation within the existing village envelope.
- The scheme would enhance the village.
- The buildings are listed and therefore cannot be demolished, the prospects for any alternative use are limited. The buildings may fall into disrepair over time and become derelict. The proposal would avoid this.
- Proposal is of high-quality design.
- Two dwellings would not be commercially viable.
- Secure population consolidation within the existing village envelope.

7.4 A representation was received from the Country Land and Business Association. The representation can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed development would represent a form of sustainable development which will see a viable use of agricultural buildings that are not longer being used for this purpose.
- The proposal would contribute to the rural housing need.
- Paragraph 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF) states that housing should be located where it will 'enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities' in order to promote sustainable development.
- Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside. Whilst the application site forming this planning application does not comprise an isolated site, the proposal is considered compliant with the requirements of the redevelopment of rural sites.
- The proposals are sympathetic in design would represent a sympathetic reuse of a former agricultural enterprise.
- The proposal would provide housing in Horningsea which is in sustainable location to allow for ease of access to the city centre and surrounding services in Milton and Fen Ditton.
- Policy S/11 allows for the development of larger sites of no more than 8 dwellings when a brownfield site will be sustainably recycled. Whilst the site is not brownfield land, the site is no longer being used for agricultural purposes. Farming has modernised at a rapid pace over the past 30-40 years resulting in many agricultural buildings becoming unsuitable for the larger machinery now being

used in the agricultural sector. Additionally, agricultural transition following Brexit, many farmers are seeking alternative income away from farming, producing more redundant agricultural buildings and sites. The proposal invites a positive development of the site.

- The site does not benefit from permitted development rights as the site comprises of curtilage listed buildings, however despite PD rights not being applicable here, the Part 3 Class Q right allows for development of a similar scale in a less sustainable location. The proposal is in a sustainable location.
- Policy H/17 supports the redevelopment of the site as it is in a sustainable location.
- Policy S/11 applies despite the restrictive nature of the policy.
- Paragraph 212 of the NPPF supports developments which seek to preserve elements in conservation areas. The proposal will enhance the residential use in Horningsea.

8.0 Member Representations

8.1 Cllr Cone has made a representation referring the application to Planning Committee and supporting the proposal on the following grounds:

- Local wide support from residents and Parish Councillors.

8.2 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of all representations are available on the Council's website.

9.0 Assessment

9.1 Principle of Development

9.2 Policy S/2 of the Local Plan sets out the objectives of the Local Plan, which includes to provide land for housing in sustainable locations (criterion c) and to maximise potential for journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, bus and train (criterion f).

9.3 Policy S/3 of the Local Plan sets out that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

9.4 The site is located within the development framework boundary of Horningsea.

9.5 Policy S/7 of the Local Plan sets out that development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks will be permitted provided that:

- a) Development is of a scale, density and character appropriate to the location, and is consistent with other policies in the Local Plan; and

- b) Retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character, and development would protect and enhance local features of green space, landscape, ecological or historic importance; and
 - c) There is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development;
- 9.6 Policy S/11 of the Local Plan identifies Horningsea as an Infill Village.
- 9.7 Policy S/11(2) states that residential development and redevelopment within the development framework of infill villages will be restricted to a size of no more than 2 dwellings (indicative in size).
- 9.8 Policy S/11(3) sets out that in very exceptional circumstances a slightly larger development (not more than about 8 dwellings) may be permitted where this would lead to the sustainable recycling of a brownfield site bringing positive overall benefit to the village.
- 9.9 The supporting text in paragraph 2.63 details that Infill Villages are generally amongst the smallest in South Cambridgeshire. These villages have a poor range of services and facilities, and it is often necessary for local residents to travel outside the village for most of their daily needs. These villages generally lack any food shops, have no primary school and may not have a permanent post office or a village hall or meeting place. Development on any scale would be unsustainable in these villages, as it will generate a disproportionate number of additional journeys outside the village.
- 9.10 Policy TI/2 of the Local Plan 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.
- 9.11 The proposal seeks permission for the conversion of curtilage listed barns into 7 dwellings. The number of proposed dwellings exceeds the limit set out by Policy S/11(2) by 5 units and is therefore in direct conflict with the agreed level of development within this area as a matter of principle and would also conflict with the aims and objectives of Policies S/2, S/3, S/7 and TI/2 of the Local Plan, as noted above.
- 9.12 In defining an appropriate quantum of development, Policy S/11(2) also stipulates the type of development which constitutes acceptable development in an Infill Village. Policy S/11(2.d) refers to the conversion or redevelopment of a non-residential building where this would not result in a loss of local employment.
- 9.13 The applicant has submitted a supporting agricultural statement, which states the farm buildings have remained unused since 2021, when the last occupant concluded their tenancy at the site. A structural report was submitted, which states the structures are of sound condition to allow for the conversion to take place but does not state the structures are not suitable for its original purpose.

- 9.14 Officers acknowledge that it is not uncommon to convert these types of buildings into residential uses, and the applicant has stated the buildings are not fit for modern day agriculture. However, the applicant has not demonstrated the proposed conversion would not result in a loss of employment. Although vacant, the buildings were used for employment in the agricultural industry and therefore a demonstration of how this conversion would not result in a loss of local employment would be required to fully satisfy Policy S/11(2.d).
- 9.15 As set out above, Policy S/11(3) deals with the potential redevelopment of a brownfield site, allowing for not more than about 8 dwellings to be developed that brings positive overall benefit to the village.
- 9.16 The site was previously used for agriculture, this land use does not constitute brownfield land and therefore would not qualify for the additional proposed dwellings allowed under Policy S/11(3). Furthermore, this part of the policy states more dwellings could be considered in 'exceptional circumstances'; officers do not consider that the applicant has demonstrated exceptional circumstances for the redevelopment of the site, in addition to the site not being brownfield land.
- 9.17 The proposed development would represent an overdevelopment of the site and is not considered to promote a sustainable form of development that could be adequately supported by the local infrastructure and reduce the need of future occupants to travel by car for daily needs.
- 9.18 The principle of the development is therefore unacceptable and contrary to policies S/2, S/3, S/7, S/11, and TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

9.19 Green Belt

- 9.20 Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 9.21 Paragraph 153 states that local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason on inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 9.22 Paragraph 154 states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate, however, it does allow the provision for exceptions.
- 9.23 Paragraph 155 states that other forms of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

- 9.24 Policy S/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) aligns with the NPPF advice and Policy NH/8 seeks to ensure that the proposals are located and designed so that they do not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt and that appropriate landscaping is secured within and on the edge of Green Belt boundaries.
- 9.25 The application site is located adjacent to the Green Belt; Green Belt land is located to the north and east of the site. The site does not see the addition of excessive built form but the conversion of structures that are present. Officers acknowledge that the proposal will generate more car movements and will allow for the presence of residential paraphernalia (i.e., parked cars, garden areas). However, as the site is not located in the Green Belt and the proposal does not seek permission for a significant increase in built form, officers do not consider the proposal would result in an adverse impact on the Green Belt.
- 9.26 The proposal is therefore compliant with paragraphs 152-155 of the NPPF and Policies S/4 and NH/8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018).

9.27 Design, Layout, Scale and Landscaping

- 9.28 Policy HQ/1 'Design Principles' provides a comprehensive list of criteria by which development proposals must adhere to, requiring that all new development must be of a high-quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to its local and wider context.
- 9.29 Policies NH/2, NH/6 and SC/9 are relevant to the landscape and visual impacts of a proposal. Together they seek to permit development only where it respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and its National Character Area.
- 9.30 The District Design Guide SPD (2010) and Landscape in New Developments SPD (2010) provide additional guidance. The NPPF provides advice on achieving well-designed places and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 9.31 The existing farm buildings consist of structures from the 19th Century, with elevations of gault brick with later 20th Century corrugated cladded additions. The proposal seeks to re-use the structures where possible to provide 7 dwellings. The courtyards between the barns have been used as a central point when converting the structures to keep the existing appearance with minimal domesticated private gardens. The properties will be separated by a mixture of fencing, brick walls and hedging.
- 9.32 Plots 1 to 5 will remain within the existing fabric of the building, retaining the appearance and character of the barns. Plot 6 will remain relatively untouched apart from the inclusion of a glazed screen to behind the front row of existing structural posts.

- 9.33 Plot 7 is the building which will be changed the most. The existing structure is an open fronted barn with flanked side elevations. Where the existing structure is open, the elevations will be filled in with walls and windows. The plot has been designed to limit overlooking into the garden of plot 6. This was addressed by recessing the entrance area, creating a small courtyard space which allows for side facing first floor windows.
- 9.34 The overall appearance of the plots will retain the existing character of the barns. The compound is relatively hidden from the street scene and therefore will unlikely adversely impact the character of the area.
- 9.35 The impact of the proposal on the Conservation Area and heritage assets is considered later in this report.
- 9.36 Overall, the proposed development is considered to be of a high-quality design that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) policies HQ/1, NH/2, NH/6, and SC/9 and the NPPF.

9.37 Trees

- 9.38 Policies NH/2, NH/4 and HQ/1 seek to preserve, protect and enhance existing trees and hedges. Para. 136 of the NPPF seeks for existing trees to be retained wherever possible.
- 9.39 In its current state, the site does not benefit from trees or other notable specimens of vegetation. As the proposal is to convert several barns on the site (apart from barn 3 which will need to be dismantled due to the dilapidated structure), it is therefore unlikely that any existing trees will be impacted by the footprint of the dwellings on site.
- 9.40 The Council's Tree Officer has advised that there are no arboricultural concerns with the development.
- 9.41 Subject to conditions as appropriate to secure soft landscape details and planting, the proposal would accord with policies NH/2, NH/4, HQ/1 of the Local Plan.

9.42 Heritage Assets

- 9.43 The application falls within the Horningsea Conservation Area. The application is within the setting of the Manor House (Grade II) listed building.
- 9.44 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, Listed Buildings. Section 72 provides that special attention shall

be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

- 9.45 Para. 205 of the NPPF set out that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Any harm to, or loss of, the significant of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.
- 9.46 Policy NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) requires development affecting heritage assets to sustain or enhance the character and distinctiveness of those assets. Policy HQ/1 states that all new development must be compatible with its location in terms of scale, density, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, material, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area.
- 9.47 The Manor House is Grade II listed and given the proximity of the farm buildings in relation to the asset, the barns are curtilage listed. The Manor House was sold separately to the barns.
- 9.48 The Conservation Officer has advised that the proposals are supported in Conservation terms as the scale and the massing of the existing buildings will be retained. Internally a lot of the remaining farm-use fittings will need to be removed for the conversions to be implemented successfully, although it is encouraged that the applicants retain those elements, i.e., the hay feeders, timber stall dividers, and use them in a decorative manner if they are not able to be used structurally, to retain that agricultural heritage. Such detailing could be reserved by condition.
- 9.49 There are many structural timbers, for example the rafters, which the Council's Conservation Officer advises should be retained in the new residential units and if possible be visible within the spaces. It is noted that many external features are to be retained, for example the sliding doors and the 'diamond' ventilation openings. The new windows that are needed in various units would be of appropriate size for the building, not being overly enlarged or out of proportion for the design of the buildings. Where new windows are being proposed, the rhythm works with the existing, albeit smaller, openings in those elevations. Details of the windows to be inserted could be secured by condition, including the materials and the depth of the framing and glazing; having the glass set back behind the timber supports retains the open character of the cart-lodges.
- 9.50 The building that will be most changed is unit 7. The proposed treatment of that structure retains the wall and the design of the roof. The infill to the front elevation combines the brick and timber that is seen within the farmyard. Officers consider this to be acceptable.
- 9.51 Although there is an opportunity for new planting, the farmyard aesthetic needs to be retained as far as possible. The proposed landscape

plan shows amenity spaces for each plot and the division of the space by the use of hedging and brick walls in what will become courtyards rather than farmyards. Where possible these divisions should remain low level to retain an overall farmyard character, details of which could be secured by condition.

- 9.52 A listed building application has also been submitted for the proposed development, which is required for internal and external alterations to facilitate the conversion of vacant farm buildings (23/01582/LBC). Conditions to secure appropriate detailing with regard to avoiding harm to the special interest of the listed building would be attached separately to that consent.
- 9.53 Overall, it is considered that the proposal, by virtue of its scale, massing and design, would not harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area or the setting of listed buildings, with the imposition of conditions to secure final detailing as part of any consent. The proposal would not give rise to any harmful impact on the identified heritage assets and is compliant with the provisions of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, the NPPF and Local Plan policies HQ/1 and NH/14.
- 9.54 Carbon Reduction and Sustainable Design**
- 9.55 The Councils' Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020) sets out a framework for proposals to demonstrate they have been designed to minimise their carbon footprint, energy and water consumption and to ensure they are capable of responding to climate change as required by policy CC/1.
- 9.56 Policy CC/3 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy', requires that Proposals for new dwellings and new non-residential buildings of 1,000m² or more will be required to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies.
- 9.57 Policy CC/4 'Water Efficiency' requires that all new residential developments must achieve as a minimum water efficiency to 110 litres pp per day and for non-residential buildings to achieve a BREEAM efficiency standard equivalence of 2 credits. Paras 152 – 158 of the NPPF are relevant.
- 9.58 As stated within the Design and Access Statement, the dwellings will be fitted with upgraded insulation within the walls, floor and roof cavity. Air source heat pumps will be used throughout the compound which will provide the energy required for heating and hot water uses. Limited information has been given in relation to water consumption on site, although appropriate details could be secured via condition as part of any consent.

9.59 Subject to conditions, the proposal would be compliant with Local Plan policies CC/1, CC/3 and CC/4 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

9.60 Biodiversity

9.61 The Environment Act 2021 and the Councils' Biodiversity SPD (2022) require development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity following a mitigation hierarchy which is focused on avoiding ecological harm over minimising, rectifying, reducing and then off-setting. This approach accords with policy NH/4 which outlines a primary objective for biodiversity to be conserved or enhanced and provides for the protection of Protected Species, Priority Species and Priority Habitat.

9.62 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises no objection to the proposal and recommends several conditions to ensure the protection of species and the estimated biodiversity net gain is delivered.

9.63 In consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, subject to appropriate conditions, officers are satisfied that the proposed development complies with policy NH/4, the Biodiversity SPD 2022, the requirements of the Environment Act 2021 and 06/2005 Circular advice.

9.64 Water Management and Flood Risk

9.65 Policies CC/7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the Local Plan require developments to have appropriate sustainable foul and surface water drainage systems and minimise flood risk. Paras. 165 – 175 of the NPPF are relevant.

9.66 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding.

9.67 The applicants have submitted a Flood Risk Assessment. The assessment proposes attenuation into underground tank and discharge into existing watercourse at discharge rate of 5l/s. However, the BGS maps indicate that the underlying site geology is chalk, therefore in the absence of ground investigation and confirmation of the ground water levels, further information is required. This information can be attained via condition.

9.68 The Council's Sustainable Drainage Engineer has advised conditions relating to a scheme of surface and foul water drainage, and the maintenance plan of water drainage systems be imposed should the application be approved. The Drainage department have requested the following elements be addressed when submitting the details:

- Ground investigation to confirm infiltration rates and groundwater levels. Where infiltration is confirmed not to be feasible, we would have no objection to the currently presented drainage strategy.

- Hydraulic calculations for the whole network to demonstrate flooding does not occur.
- Invert level of the ditch and invert level of the outfall pipe.
- Condition and downward connectivity of existing ditch.
- Site layout should include location of the ditch.
- Details of existing SW sewer serving the Manor House and any proposed works to sewer.

9.69 The applicants have partially addressed the issues of water management and flood risk, and subject to conditions, the proposal would accord with Local Plan policies CC/7, CC/8, and CC/9 and NPPF advice.

9.70 Highway Safety and Transport Impacts

9.71 Policy HQ/1 states that proposals must provide safe and convenient access for all users and abilities to public buildings and spaces, including those with limited mobility or those with impairment such as sight or hearing.

9.72 Policy TI/2 requires developers to demonstrate adequate provision will be made to mitigate the likely impacts of the proposed development and, for larger developments, to demonstrate they have maximised opportunities for sustainable travel, and provided a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

9.73 Para. 115 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

9.74 Access to the site would be provided to the east of the site. The eastern access will be new and has been designed to accommodate the additional movements in and out of the site. There is an existing access to the south of the site, but this access will be permanently closed as part of the application.

9.75 The Local Highways Authority have been consulted on this application and, following the submission of further information, have raised no objection the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions as outlined under paragraph 6.23 of this report.

9.76 Subject to conditions as applicable, the proposal would be acceptable in highway safety terms and accord with Policy HQ/1 and NPPF guidance.

9.77 Notwithstanding the in-principle conflict with Policy TI/2 with regard to promoting sustainable travel, the proposed development is not considered to give rise to harm to the highway network or require mitigation measures towards the transport network. The proposed development would therefore accord with policy TI/2 of the Local Plan and NPPF advice in this respect.

9.78 Cycle and Car Parking Provision

9.79 Policies HQ/1 and TI/3 set out that car and cycle parking provision should be provided through a design-led approach in accordance with the indicative standards set out in Figure 11 of the Local Plan. Cycle parking should be provided to at least the minimum standards.

9.80 Cycle Parking

9.81 TI/3 requires 1 cycle space per bedroom. The supporting text advises that for residential purposes cycle parking should be within a covered, lockable enclosure and that for houses this could be in the form of a shed or garage, for flats either individual lockers or cycle stands within a lockable, covered enclosure are required. All cycle parking should be designed and located to minimise conflict between cycles, pedestrians and vehicles.

9.82 Each dwelling benefits from cycle storage in accordance with policy TI/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

9.83 Car Parking

9.84 TI/3 requires 2 spaces per dwelling – 1 space to be allocated within the curtilage. The supporting text to the policy advises that the Council will encourage innovative solutions such as shared parking areas, for example where there are a mix of day and night uses, car clubs and provision of electric charging points and that a developer must provide clear justification for the level and type of parking proposed and will need to demonstrate they have addressed highway safety issues.

9.85 Each dwelling benefits from a minimum of 2 spaces each. The proposal is compliant with parking standards.

9.86 The Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD outlines the standards for EV charging at one slow charge point for each dwelling with allocated parking, one slow charge point for every two dwellings with communal parking (at least half of all non-allocated parking spaces) and passive provision for all the remaining car parking spaces to provide capability for increasing provision in the future.

9.87 Each dwelling will benefit from a charging point providing a 7kW supply.

9.88 Subject to conditions to secure appropriate parking details, the proposal is considered to accord with policies HQ/1 and TI/3 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

9.89 Amenity

9.90 Policy HQ/1 (n), sets out that proposals must protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses from development that is overlooking, overbearing or results in a loss of daylight or development

which would create unacceptable impacts such as noise, vibration, odour, emissions and dust.

9.91 The District Design Guide 2010 advises that to prevent the overlooking of habitable rooms to the rear of residential properties and rear private gardens, it is preferable that a minimum distance of 15m is provided between the windows and the property boundary. For two storey residential properties, a minimum distance of 25m should be provided between rear or side building faces containing habitable rooms, which should be increased to 30m for 3 storey residential properties. It advises that a 12 metre separation is allowed where blank walls are proposed opposite the windows to habitable rooms.

9.92 Neighbouring Properties

Impact on The Manor, Dock Lane

9.93 The Manor is a Grade II listed building which is located circa 11m to the south of the site. The Manor is 22m from the window which serves the living area of plot 1 which is north of the dwelling. Plot 1 is the only dwelling which will benefit from two floors, which is the closest to this property. No windows have been proposed on the side elevation of plot 1 at first floor, windows proposed at this level overlooks the courtyard belonging to plot 1 and the rear garden under the same ownership. Officers do not consider the conversion of the existing built form will adversely impact the neighbouring amenity nor will the conversion overbear the occupants on The Manor.

Impact on No. 1 Manor Cottage, Clayhithe Road

9.94 1 Manor cottage is located on the boundary of the site (south east). Plot 6 will be located on the boundary of this property. 8 high level obscure windows have been proposed on the rear elevation of plot 6 at ground and first floor, windows proposed at this level overlook internal infrastructure of the wider site. Plot 6 will remain relatively untouched apart from the inclusion of a glazed screen to behind the front row of existing structural posts.

9.95 Plot 7 is located 8.7m to the west of the site, the southern aspect of the building benefits from a high level first floor window and a larger window serving a bedroom on the ground floor, the middle section of the plot will benefit from windows on both floors to serve the foyer and landing. Due to the location of these windows and the rooms they serve, officers do not consider overlooking into the garden of no.1 Manor Cottage will be adverse.

Impact on No. 2 Manor Cottage, Clayhithe Road

9.96 2 Manor cottage is located on the boundary of the site (south east). Plot 6 will be located on the boundary of this property. 8 high level obscure windows have been proposed on the rear elevation of plot 6 at ground and first floor, windows proposed at this level overlook internal infrastructure of the wider site. Plot 6 will remain relatively untouched apart from the

inclusion of a glazed screen to behind the front row of existing structural posts. Officers do not consider the conversion of the existing built form will adversely impact the neighbouring amenity nor will the conversion overbear the occupants on 2 Manor Cottage.

Impact on Old Tiles, Clayhithe Road

9.97 The Old Tiles is located to the northeast of the site (4.5m from the site boundary, 9.9m from plot no. 6). A large obscure window has been proposed on the north-east elevation of plot 6, this window would be visible from the rear garden of the Old Tiles. The window will serve a home office. Despite the proximity between the dwellings, as the window is obscured, officers do not consider views can be achieved into the rear garden of the Old Tiles. Where windows have been obscured a condition should be imposed to ensure compliance.

Conclusion

9.98 The proposed development is not considered to result in significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties by way of a significant loss of light, loss of privacy or overbearing impact. Where obscure glazing is proposed, this detailing could be secured by condition.

Future Occupants

9.99 Policy H/12 of the Local Plan states that new residential units will be permitted where their gross internal floor areas meet or exceed the Government’s Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or successor document.

9.100 The gross internal floor space measurements for units in this application are shown in the table below:

Unit	Number of bedrooms	Number of bed spaces (persons)	Number of storeys	Policy Size requirement (m ²)	Proposed size of unit	Difference in size
1	4	7	2	115	224	+109
2	3	4	1	74	122	+48
3	4	6	2	106	211	+105
4	4	5	2	97	200	+103
5	2	3	1	61	110	+49
6	3	4	2 (Mezzanine)	84	161	+77
7	3	6	2	102	139	+37

9.101 It should be noted that bedroom 4 of plot 4 measures as a single bedroom only and has been counted as such in the table above, bedrooms 2 and 3 of plots 6 have been measured as single bedrooms and bedroom 3 of plot 7 is not compliant with bedroom standards and is therefore not been counted. However, as the buildings are being converted and cannot be considered new builds, the internal residential space standards do not apply.

- 9.102 Officers consider as the proposed dwellings size overall exceed space standards, the proposed dwellings will be of sufficient size and would serve as adequate dwellings.
- 9.103 Garden Size(s)
- 9.104 The District Design Guide 2010 advises that each one or two-bedroom house should have private garden space of 40m² in urban settings and 50m² in rural settings; whilst each house with 3 bedrooms or more should have private garden space of 50m² in urban settings and 80m² in rural settings. Ground floor apartments should have a minimum of 10m² private amenity space immediately outside their living accommodation, or use of a communal garden, where 25m² is allowed for each apartment. Upper floor apartments should have use of a private balcony, of a minimum of 3m², plus use of a communal garden, where 25m² is allowed for each apartment.
- 9.105 The plots will benefit from the following garden sizes:
- Plot 1: 111m²
 - Plot 2: 129m²
 - Plot 3: 128m²
 - Plot 4: 94m²
 - Plot 5: 150m²
 - Plot 6: 238m²
 - Plot 7: 133m²
- 9.106 Each property would benefit from a private garden area or communal amenity space which would meet or exceed the recommendations of the Council's District Design Guide.

Construction and Environmental Health Impacts

- 9.107 The land contamination, air quality, noise and vibrational impacts associated with the construction and occupation of the site are addressed by Local Plan policies CC/6 'Construction Methods', CC/7 'Water Quality', SC/9 'Lighting Proposals', SC/10 'Noise Pollution', SC11 'Contaminated Land', SC/12 'Air Quality' and SC/14 'Odour'. Paragraphs 189 - 194 of the NPPF are relevant.
- 9.108 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Contaminated Land Team and Environmental Health Team, who raise no objection to the proposed development, as set out above.
- 9.109 The proposal is considered acceptable in Contamination and Environmental Health terms, subject to the conditions as recommended by the relevant technical officers as part of any consent.
- 9.110 Summary

9.111 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants. Subject to conditions, the proposal is compliant with policy HQ/1 and the District Design Guide 2010. The associated construction and environmental impacts would be acceptable in accordance with policies CC/6, CC/7, SC/9, SC/10, SC/12, and SC/14 of the Local Plan.

9.112 Other Matters

Bins

9.113 Properties 1, 2 and 5 show bin provision outside while all other properties will benefit from a bin store. The bins allocated to plot 1 within the walkway to the courtyard belonging to plot 1, this leaves the walkway a width of 900mm for access. Appendix E of the submitted Transport Statement provides tracking details of how refuse lorries will enter and exit the site. The tracking details are considered acceptable. However, the applicant has stated the access into the site will be gravel, officers consider this to be an unsuitable surface material for refuse lorries to drive on but further details of hard landscaping could be achieved via condition.

Broadband Provision

9.114 Local Plan policy TI/10 'Broadband' requires new development to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure suitable to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services across the District. A condition could be imposed to ensure this provision.

9.115 Planning Balance

9.116 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).

Summary of harm

9.117 The proposal is in direct conflict of policies S/2, S/3, S/7, S/11 and TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan as a matter of principle; therefore, officers are unable to accept the principle of the development as being suitable.

9.118 The development would represent overdevelopment of the site and is not considered to provide a sustainable form of development that could be adequately supported by the local infrastructure and reduce the need of future occupants to travel by car for daily needs. Furthermore, the applicant has failed to demonstrate the buildings are no longer fit for agricultural activities and have not put forward any special circumstances as to why policy S/11 should not apply to this development.

Summary of benefits

- 9.119 The development would see the re-use of structures to provide housing, of an appropriate design, responsive to heritage assets and neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

- 9.120 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, 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 views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for Refusal.

10.0 Recommendation

10.1 Refuse for the following reason(s):

1. The proposal, by virtue of the number of dwellings proposed, would be in direct conflict with Policy S/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) and provide a quantum of development that is not appropriate to its location. The site is not a brownfield site and no exceptional circumstances have been provided to justify the number of dwellings proposed.

The proposed development would represent an overdevelopment of the site and would fail to promote a sustainable form of development that could be adequately supported by the local infrastructure and reduce the need of future occupants to travel by car for daily needs, generating a disproportionate number of additional journeys outside the village of Horningsea.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies S/2, S/3, S/7, S/11, and TI/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

Background Papers:

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework SPDs