

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

11 May 2016

AUTHOR/S: Planning and New Communities Director

Application Number: S/2833/15/OL

Parish(es): Willingham

Proposal: Outline planning permission with full details of access only (matters of landscaping, scale, appearance and layout are reserved) for the erection of up to 72 residential units, relocation of allotments and provision of open space and associated development

Site address: Land to the west of Rockmill End, Willingham

Applicant(s): Diocese of Ely

Recommendation: Delegated approval (to complete section 106)

Key material considerations: Five year supply of housing land
Principle of development
Sustainability of the location
Density of development and affordable housing
Character of the village edge and surrounding landscape
Highway safety
Residential amenity of neighbouring properties
Surface water and foul water drainage
Provision of formal and informal open space
Section 106 Contributions

Committee Site Visit: 10 May 2016

Departure Application: Yes

Presenting Officer: David Thompson, Principal Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: The officer recommendation of approval conflicts with the recommendation of Willingham Parish Council

Date by which decision due: 31 May 2015 (extension of time agreed)

Executive Summary

1. The application site is located outside of the Willingham village framework. The site is 160 metres north of the Willingham conservation area. A large part of the site is proposed to be allocated for housing in the emerging Local Plan. This factor and the sustainable nature of the location, along with the benefits of the provision of affordable housing, the relocation but retention of the allotments which currently occupy part of

the site and the provision of equipped and informal open space are all considered benefits which are not significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the disbenefits of the scheme.

The application is outline only and the only matters to be decided at this stage are the means of access and the principle of the erection of up to 72 dwellings and the other facilities listed in the description of development on the site. It is considered that the revised illustrative masterplan submitted with the application demonstrates that a maximum of 72 units could be provided on the site, along with the allotments, the required level of formal and informal open space and surface water attenuation measures can be accommodated on the site. It is considered that the illustrative layout indicates that this could be achieved without having an adverse impact on the character of the village edge by including a significant landscape 'buffer' on the eastern edge of the development.

There are no objections to the proposals from the Highway Authority, the Flood Risk Authority or the Environment Agency and none of the Council's internal consultees have recommended refusal of the scheme following revisions to the illustrative masterplan. The indicative proposals are considered to demonstrate that the residential amenity of neighbouring properties would be preserved and the density of development would allow sufficient space to be retained between the buildings to preserve the residential amenity of the future occupants of the development.

Planning History

2. C/0032/61/ - application for residential development - refused

National Guidance

3. National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)
Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan Policies

4. The extent to which any of the following policies are out of date and the weight to be attached to them is addressed later in the report.
5. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Core Strategy DPD, 2007**
ST/2 Housing Provision
ST/5 Minor Rural Centres
6. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Development Control Policies DPD, 2007:**
DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New Development
DP/3 Development Criteria
DP/4 Infrastructure and New Developments
DP/7 Development Frameworks
HG/1 Housing Density
HG/2 Housing Mix
HG/3 Affordable Housing
NE/1 Energy Efficiency
NE/3 Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development
NE/4 Landscape Character Areas
NE/6 Biodiversity
NE/8 Groundwater

NE/9 Water and Drainage Infrastructure
NE/11 Flood Risk
NE/12 Water Conservation
NE/14 Lighting Proposals
NE/15 Noise Pollution
NE/17 Protecting High Quality Agricultural Land
CC/7 Water Quality
CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
CH/2 Archaeological Sites
SC/9 Protection of existing Recreation Areas, Allotments and Community Orchards
SF/10 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments
SF/11 Open Space Standards
TR/1 Planning For More Sustainable Travel
TR/2 Car and Cycle Parking Standards
TR/3 Mitigating Travel Impact

7. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):**

Open Space in New Developments SPD - Adopted January 2009
Affordable Housing SPD - Adopted March 2010
Trees & Development Sites SPD - Adopted January 2009
Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted March 2010
Biodiversity SPD - Adopted July 2009
District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010
Health Impact Assessment SPD– Adopted March 2011

8. **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission - March 2014**

S/1 Vision
S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
S//3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/5 Provision of New Jobs and Homes
S/6 The Development Strategy to 2031
S/7 Development Frameworks
S/9 Minor Rural Centres
HQ/1 Design Principles
H/1 Allocations for residential development at Villages (g relates to this site)
H/7 Housing Density
H/8 Housing Mix
H/9 Affordable Housing
NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
NH/3 Protecting Agricultural Land
NH/4 Biodiversity
NH/14 Heritage Assets
CC/1 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments
CC/4 Sustainable Design and Construction
CC/6 Construction Methods
CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
SC/2 Heath Impact Assessment
SC/6 Indoor Community Facilities
SC/7 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments
SC/8 Open Space Standards
SC/10 Lighting Proposals
SC/11 Noise Pollution
TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel

TI/3 Parking Provision
TI/8 Infrastructure and New Developments
Consultation

9. **Willingham Parish Council** – the Parish Council recommend refusal of the application due this being gross overdevelopment of the village in the worst possible location in relation to the likely increase in traffic flow and also on the grounds that the development would be in excess of the 50 houses allocated for the site in the emerging Local Plan
10. **District Council Environmental Health Officer (EHO)** – The Public Health Specialist has commented that the Health Impact Assessment has been assessed as Grade B, which meets the required standard of the SPD Policy. The scheme is therefore acceptable in this regard.

Further assessment of the potential noise generated by the noise of traffic on Rockmill End and the impact that this may have on the residential amenity of the occupants of the dwellings will be required to ensure that adequate attenuation measures are put in place, if required. Details of any lighting to be installed will also need to be provided.

Noise, vibration and dust minimisation plans will be required to ensure that the construction phase of the scheme would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. These details shall be secured by condition, along with a restriction on the hours during which power operated machinery should be used during the construction phase of the development and details of the phasing of the development.

The applicant will be required to complete a Waste Design Toolkit at the reserved matters stage in order to show how it is intended to address the waste management infrastructure, and technical requirements within the RECAP Waste Design Management Design Guide. In addition conditions should secure the submission of a Site Waste Management Plan. Provision of domestic waste receptacles by the developer will be secured via the Section 106 agreement.

11. **District Council Urban Design Officer** – does not object to the principle of development following amendments to the illustrative masterplan and acknowledges that improvements to the indicative layout have been made. Further issues raised can be addressed at the reserved matters stage when the layout and scale are to be determined.
12. **Old West Internal Drainage Board (IDB)**- no objection to the planning application. However, the applicant will be required to enter into a legal agreement to compensate for the increase surface water run off which will discharge into the drainage network controlled by the IDB.
13. **District Council Landscape Design Officer** – issues raised regarding the original proposal given the extent of hardstanding which would create a hard landscaped layout in this edge of village location. This has been improved in the revised scheme through the creation of additional areas of public open space and rationalisation of plots to reduce the extent of hardstanding and road surface. Improvements have been made to the access arrangements for the properties fronting Rockmill End which would allow the retention of a larger proportion of the hedge which currently demarcates the western boundary of the field.
14. **Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team** –

The Highway Authority considers that there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed development would exacerbate the existing road safety risks in the locality. The scheme is considered to be sustainable from an access point of view as all Willingham is within walking distance (2km) from the application site.

The Highway Authority has pointed out that the existing footpath along the northern side of Silver Street would be required to ensure safe pedestrian access into the main centre of Willingham could be secured. The applicant has agreed to the principle of this requirement, which can be secured through a legal agreement with the County Council as Highway Authority

Details of a scheme for the upgrading of the bus stop facilities adjacent to the site on Rockmill End and Wilford Furlong can also be secured by condition. A detailed travel plan for the development will be required at the reserved matters stage.

15. **Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (Archaeology)**– the site has been the subject of a detailed evaluation which has highlighted the archaeological significance of the site as there is evidence of Roman settlement in the area. The County Council will require a mitigation strategy to be implemented following investigation prior to the commencement of construction works.
16. **Cambridgeshire County Council Flood & Water Team** – no objection subject to the imposition of conditions requiring compliance with the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted with the planning application and details of a surface water drainage strategy being secured by condition.
17. **Environment Agency** - The site lies in Flood Zone 1. The Environment Agency requires conditions to be included in any consent preventing surface water and contamination issues in a sensitive area. These can be included in any consent.
18. **Anglian Water** - Anglian Water (AW) has commented that the existing Over Water Recycling Centre, which would treat wastewater from the site does not currently have capacity to treat the flows from the development. AW has confirmed that they are legally obliged to undertake the works required to treat the additional flows. AW confirm that the foul water sewage network has capacity to accommodate the development.
19. **Contaminated Land Officer** - low risk in relation to land contamination and as such it is considered that a phase I contaminated land assessment can be required by condition at this outline stage, to ensure that the detailed layout does not result in any adverse impact in this regard, acknowledging the sensitive end use proposed for the site
20. **Air Quality Officer** - to ensure that sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the development are not affected by the negative impact of construction work such as dust and noise, as well as ensuring that the applicant complies with the Council's low emission strategy for a development of this scale, conditions should be included that require the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan/Dust Management Plan, and an electronic vehicle charging infrastructure strategy
21. **Affordable Housing Officer** - The proposed site is located outside the development framework and should therefore be considered on the basis of an exception site for the provision of 100% affordable housing only to meet the local housing need. This would be in accordance with Policy H/10 of the emerging Local Plan.

However, should this application not be determined as an exception site, then the council will seek to secure at least 40% affordable housing, which is in line with policy H/9 of the emerging Local Plan.

The developer is proposing 72 dwellings, which consists of 43 market dwellings and 29 affordable dwellings which meets the 40% requirement.

There are approximately 1,700 applicants on the housing register and our greatest demand is for 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings.

The district wide tenure split is 70% rented and 30% shared ownership. The mix proposed by the developer is:

Rented

10 x 1 bed houses
3 x 2 bed houses
4 x 2 bed flats
3 x 3 bed houses

Shared Ownership

5 x 2bed houses
4 x 3 bed houses

We are happy with the mix proposed as it is reflective of the needs in the district, and the tenure split is in accordance with policy.

Properties should be built in accordance with the guidance from, the DCLG on Technical Housing Standards.

A registered provider should be appointed to manage the affordable housing; we would like to be informed when an RP has been appointed so that we can discuss the delivery of the affordable housing with them.

The rented properties should be advertised through homelink and be open to all applicants registered in South Cambs. The shared ownership properties should be advertised through BPHA (Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association) who are currently the governments appointed home buy agent in this region.

22. **Section 106 Officer** – details of the summary of section 106 requirements are appended to this report and discussed in detail in paragraph 111. Specific policy compliant contributions in the region of £110,000 (final figure dependent on housing mix to be determined at the reserved matters stage under scale of development) are requested towards the extension and improvement of the pavilion at the recreation ground and the Ploughman Hall (indoor community facility).
23. **Cambridgeshire County Council Growth Team** – This scheme has been considered alongside 2 other live planning applications for residential development of 50 or more dwellings in Willingham in formulating the contribution levels required. The County Council indicate that there is capacity in the early years provision and that the 8 children in that age bracket could be accommodated as there is sufficient capacity in the next 3 years to mitigate the impact of the development.

The proposed development would result in a projected increase of 14 primary school

aged children. There is insufficient capacity at the primary school, to accommodate this and a 123 square metre classroom with associated ancillary space will be required as an extension to the current provision to meet this capacity, when considered alongside the projected population increase taken cumulatively with the other two developments sited above. The total costs of a project to mitigate the impact would be £315,000. This calculation is arrived at via the cost of the overall extension, divided by the total number of pupils that could be accommodated by the extension, multiplied by the 15 places required specifically to mitigate the impact of the development in relation to primary school provision.

No contribution is sought in relation to secondary school provision as Cottenham Village College, the catchment area for which the site is within, has capacity to accommodate the additional 9 pupils within this age group projected to result from the proposed development.

A contribution of £9,896.10 is requested to improve the provision of library services. The County Council have calculated this figure based on 165 new residents resulting from the scheme multiplied by a sum of £60.02 as a per person contribution towards internal modification works to increase the operational space at Willingham library, shelving to accommodate new books and resources, additional books and furniture to accommodate additional capacity.

No pooled strategic waste contribution can be sought despite there being insufficient capacity in the Cambridge and Northstowe Household Recycling Centre catchment area as five such contributions have already been agreed.

A monitoring fee would also be applied

24. **Historic England** – no objection but state that a condition should be added limiting the height of the development to 2 storeys in height and that the landscaping buffer shown on the indicative plan (created by the position of the allotments) should be incorporated at the reserved matter stage to ensure that the setting of the Belsar Hill Scheduled Ancient Monument to the east of the site is preserved
25. **District Council Conservation Officer** – no objections raised
26. **NHS England** - state that Willingham surgery does not currently have capacity to accommodate the projected additional demand. On the basis of their calculation, NHS England have requested a sum of £24,140 to provide an additional 12.07 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional 176 anticipated population increase (nb. Different projection to the County Council figures above).
27. **District Council Ecology Officer** – no objection, subject to the attachment of conditions to the outline planning permission.

The application is supported by an ecological assessment and the site is generally considered to be of low biodiversity value. No suitable habitat was recorded to support reptile species, no activity/evidence of badgers observed. None of the trees present on site were considered as potential roosts but bats would be likely to use hedgerows for feeding.

In relation to Great Crested Newts (GCN), the field itself was generally considered to be of low value but there are historical records of GCN in a pond 110m south of the site. The pond could not be accessed so a full assessment could not be made on this matter. Furthermore, it was considered that if the site was developed and GCN were

present then an offence may occur. It is noted that the layout includes an attenuation area, it is very likely that should GCN be present on site that this area could be further enhanced to provide suitable habitat for the species.

In order to address the outstanding matter relating to GCN a condition is proposed to be attached to the outline application which would require a survey of the site assessing the potential for Newts, within 3 months after the commencement of development. The assessment shall include, but not be limited to, a Habitat Suitability Index assessment of the pond located approximately 110m to the south of the application site (referred to as pond TN1 in the report "Ecological Survey, Willingham Glebe Land, Cambridgeshire" by Norfolk Wildlife Services July 2015).

The hedgerows were identified as providing habitat for nesting birds, including five species of conservation concern. The hedgerows bounding the site should be fully retained where possible. The standard condition should be used to control the removal of vegetation during the bird breeding season.

A condition is recommended at the outline stage to secure the provision of a scheme of bird and bat box provision.

28. **District Council Tree Officer** – no objections to the principle of development. Additional details of landscaping proposals will be required at the reserved matters stage.
29. **District Council Environmental Health Officer** – The Public Health Specialist has commented that the Health Impact Assessment has been assessed as Grade B, which meets the required standard of the SPD Policy. The scheme is therefore acceptable in this regard.

Further assessment of the potential noise generated by traffic and vehicle movements on Rockmill End and the implications is required in terms of any sound insulation measures which may need to be incorporated into the buildings that would front onto the highway. This assessment can be secured by condition at the outline stage. An assessment of the impact of artificial lighting resulting from the development can also be secured by condition in order to ensure that the strength of such light does not have any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties or the surrounding area.

Noise, vibration and dust minimisation plans will be required to ensure that the construction phase of the scheme would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. These details shall be secured by condition, along with a restriction on the hours during which power operated machinery should be used during the construction phase of the development and details of the phasing of the development.

The applicant will be required to complete a Waster Design Toolkit at the reserved matters stage in order to show how it is intended to address the waste management infrastructure, and technical requirements within the RECAP Waste Design Management Design Guide. In addition conditions should secure the submission of a Site Waste Management Plan. Provision of domestic waste receptacles by the developer will be secured via the Section 106 agreement.

30. **Highways England** – no objection

Representations

31. This section is split into the responses received to the emerging Local Plan allocation (policy H/1:g), which need to be considered in the assessment of the application as considerable weight is being given to that in the consideration of the proposal, in line with the guidance on weight to be attached to emerging policy explained later in this report.
32. 1 objection has been received to the emerging allocation from the Old West Internal Drainage Board (IDB) who commented that the site is outside of the area controlled by the IDB but would drain onto land within the scope of their control. Adequate surface water drainage measures must be included as part of the scheme and managed by a competent authority.
(nb Members will note from the above consultation responses that the IDB have not objected to the application having been consulted at the application stage, subject to mitigation measures being agreed).
33. 4 representations which were classified as supporting the allocation were received which included representations from the agent of the land owner and Anglian Water and Defence Infrastructure Organisation who confirmed no objection to the allocation. Oakington and Westwick Parish Council also supported the allocation.
34. Neighbour consultations were carried out and 2 sites notices displayed on the site for 21 days, in accordance with the provisions of the Development Management Procedure Order. In relation to this planning application, 2 letters of objection have been received which raise the following concerns:
- There is insufficient capacity at the school or the doctors surgery to accommodate the additional population increase that will result from the development
 - The road is not suitable and the exit of the proposed estate is too close to the access onto Wilford Furlong from Rockmill End
 - Farm vehicles and lorries use Rockmill End, the additional traffic will ensure that the existing congestion would be made worse by the proposals
 - Parking on the streets in the locality is already a problem and restricts visibility which is detrimental to highway safety. This issue would be made worse by the additional traffic generated by the proposed development
 - The development will not make adequate provision for the properties to be affordable
 - New properties should be located in the new build Northstowe development, not as an extension of existing settlements beyond the framework boundary as is proposed here
 - The existing cemetery is at capacity, where will additional capacity be accommodated?
 - Rockmill End is currently part of the bus route, this adds to the congestion problems in the locality and will be exacerbated by the proposals
 - The ditch alongside Rockmill End is being used as a location for fly tipping which is detrimental to the amenity of the area and environmental health

Site and Surroundings

35. The application site is located on the north eastern edge of Willingham. The site lies outside of the existing development framework which runs along the western boundary of the land. The site is bound by the highway on two sides, Rockmill End to the west and Sponge Drove to the north. The site is currently agricultural land with allotments located in the north western corner, which is fenced off from the remainder

of the field. Land levels on the site are relatively flat, falling slightly in the north eastern corner. The southern boundary of the site is the common boundary with the property at 30 Rockmill End. The line of the hedge then cuts diagonally across to the eastern boundary which, along with the northern and western boundaries is also demarcated by a hedge.

Proposal

36. The applicant seeks outline planning permission with full details of access only (matters of landscaping, scale, appearance and layout are reserved) for the erection of up to 72 residential units, relocation of allotments and provision of open space and associated development.

Planning Assessment

37. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application in terms of the principle of development are the implications of the five year supply of housing land deficit on the proposals and the weight to be given to the emerging allocation which covers part of the site. An assessment is required in relation to the impact of the proposals on the character of the village edge and surrounding landscape, highway safety, the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, environmental health, surface water and foul water drainage capacity, the provision of formal and informal open space and other section 106 contributions.

Principle of Development

Five-year housing land supply:

38. The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) (NPPF) requires councils to boost significantly the supply of housing and to identify and maintain a five-year housing land supply with an additional buffer as set out in paragraph 47.
39. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply in the district as required by the NPPF, having a 3.9 year supply using the methodology identified by the Inspector in the Waterbeach appeals in 2014. This shortfall is based on an objectively assessed housing need of 19,500 homes for the period 2011 to 2031 (as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013 and updated by the latest update undertaken for the Council in November 2015 as part of the evidence responding to the Local Plan Inspectors' preliminary conclusions) and latest assessment of housing delivery (in the housing trajectory November 2015). In these circumstances any adopted or emerging policy which can be considered to restrict the supply of housing land is considered 'out of date' in respect of paragraph 49 of the NPPF.
40. Unless circumstances change, those conclusions should inform, in particular, the Council's approach to paragraph 49 of the NPPF, which states that adopted policies "for the supply of housing" cannot be considered up to date where there is not a five year housing land supply. Those policies were listed in the decision letters and are: Core Strategy DPD policies ST/2 and ST/5 and Development Control Policies DPD policy DP/7 (relating to village frameworks and indicative limits on the scale of development in villages). The Inspector did not have to consider policies ST/6 and ST/7 but as a logical consequence of the decision these should also be policies "for the supply of housing".
41. Further guidance as to which policies should be considered as 'relevant policies for

the supply of housing' emerged from a recent Court of Appeal decision (Richborough v Cheshire East and Suffolk Coastal DC v Hopkins Homes). The Court defined 'relevant policies for the supply of housing' widely so not to be restricted 'merely policies in the Development Plan that provide positively for the delivery of new housing in terms of numbers and distribution or the allocation of sites,' but also to include, 'plan policies whose effect is to influence the supply of housing by restricting the locations where new housing may be developed.' Therefore all policies which have the potential to restrict or affect housing supply may be considered out of date in respect of the NPPF. However even where policies are considered 'out of date' for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 49, a decision maker is required to consider what (if any) weight should attach to such relevant policies.

42. Of particular significance to this case are policies ST/5 (which defines Willingham as a Minor Rural Centre with an indicative cap on residential development of 30 units when located inside the village framework) and NE/4 (landscape character areas).
43. These policies are both considered to have significant weight in the determination of this planning application as the NPPF contains specific advice that development should conserve and enhance the natural environment, including valued landscapes. As a result, despite being out of date, they are still considered to have a relevant purpose in restricting unsustainable development and therefore conform to the overarching principles of the NPPF.
44. Where a Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It says that where relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted for development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, or where specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
45. This means that where planning permission is sought which would be contrary to the policies listed above, such applications must be determined against paragraph 14 of the NPPF. Sustainable development is defined in paragraph 7 of the NPPF as having environmental, economic and social strands. When assessed these objectives, unless the harm arising from the proposal 'significantly and demonstrably' outweighs the benefits of the proposals, planning permission should be granted (in accordance with paragraph 14).
46. It falls to the Council as decision maker to assess the weight that should be given to the existing policy. Officers consider this assessment should, in the present application, have regard to whether the policy continues to perform a material planning objective and whether it is consistent with the policies of the NPPF. Willingham is identified as a Minor Rural Centre village under policy ST/5 of the LDF and would retain that status under policy S/9 of the Draft Local Plan. Minor Rural Centres are classified as second in the hierarchy of settlements in terms of sustainable locations for development.
47. Development in Minor Rural Centres (the current and emerging status of Willingham) is normally limited to schemes of up to 30 dwellings. This planning objective remains important and is consistent with the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development, by limiting the scale of development in less sustainable rural settlements with a more limited range of services to meet the needs of new residents in a sustainable manner than in Rural Centres. However, as weight is being given to the emerging allocation status of the site, the indicative number of units within that

policy (up to 50) which exceeds this limit, due to the limited nature and number of the objections received to the emerging allocation policy.

48. As part of the case of the applicant rests on the current five year housing land supply deficit, the developer is required to demonstrate that the dwellings would be delivered within a 5 year period. Officers are of the view that the applicant has demonstrated that the site can be delivered within a timescale whereby weight can be given to the contribution the proposal could make to the 5 year housing land supply.
49. The proposals are assessed below against the social and economic criteria of the definition of sustainable development.
50. The environmental issues are assessed in the following sections of the report. In relation to the loss of higher grade agricultural land, policy NE/17 states that the District Council will not grant planning permission for development which would lead to the irreversible loss of grade 2 (in this case) agricultural land unless :
 - a. Land is allocated for development in the Local Development Framework
 - b. Sustainability considerations and the need for the development are sufficient to override the need to protect the agricultural value of the land.
51. Whilst the substantive issues are discussed in detail in the remainder of this report, it is considered that, as weight is being given to the housing land allocation of part of the site in the emerging Local Plan, the proposal would not directly conflict with part a. of the policy, in principle, and given the sustainable location of the site for residential development and the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, it could be argued that the need for housing overrides the need to retain the agricultural land when conducting the planning balance.
52. The proposal would involve the relocation of the allotments which currently occupy the north eastern corner of the site. Policy SC/9 of the emerging Local Plan requires the protection of allotments and other recreation facilities and states that their loss in development proposals would not be permitted unless:
 - a. They would be replaced by an area of equivalent or better quantity and quality and in a sustainable location
 - b. The proposed development includes provision of open space, or sports and recreation facilities of sufficient benefit to outweigh the loss; or
 - c. An excess of provision in quantitative and qualitative terms is clearly demonstrated in the all the functions played by the land...to be lost, taking into account potential future demand and in consultation with local people and uses.
53. There is not an equivalent policy in the current LDF and this policy is being given some weight in the determination of planning applications. In these proposals, the existing allotments would be relocated to the eastern part of the site. The area currently covered by the allotments is 5650 metres squared and the proposal would include only 3800 square metres allotment space in the proposed development. The applicant has indicated that 20% of the plots are currently not in use and records suggest that this has been the situation for a number of years. Aerial photographs corroborate this case since at least 2008 as the south western corner of the allotments appears to form part of the main field as agricultural land.
54. The proposal would result in a reduction in the level of provision by a relatively significant margin. However, it is considered that the significant amount of public open

space that would be provided for within the development (which could be enlarged further at the detailed stage due to the large size of the majority of the private gardens), which would compensate for this loss. A key factor in reaching this conclusion is that the emerging allocation status which applies to the part of the site where all of the allotments are to be located does not specify that these allotments would need to be retained and has allocated the site for an indicative number of 50 units.

55. The emerging allocation status is being given significant weight in the recommendation on this application due to the limited nature of the objections received. In terms of balancing the two issues, it is considered that the harm through the loss of some of the allotment space would not result in an unsustainable development given that the scheme is considered not to have a detrimental impact on environmental or social sustainability, as assessed in the following sections of this report.

Social sustainability:

56. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas advising *'housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities'*, and recognises that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
57. The development would provide a clear benefit in helping to meet the current housing shortfall in South Cambridgeshire through delivering up to an additional 72 residential dwellings. 40% of these units will be affordable (29 units). The applicant indicates that the mix of housing will be in accord with Policy HG/2. The affordable housing can be secured through a Section 106 Agreement. Officers are of the view the provision of up to 72 additional houses, including the affordable dwellings, is a benefit and significant weight should be attributed this in the decision making process, particularly in light of the Housing Officer's confirmation that there is a significant need for affordable housing in Willingham.
58. The adopted Open Space SPD requires the provision of just over 1200 metres squared of open space for a development on the scale proposed. Given that Willingham has an identified short fall in play space and informal open space this level of provision is considered to be a significant social benefit of the proposals, particularly the provision of the equipped play space (500 square metres).
59. However, the communal open space associated with the flatted development (14 units) far exceeds the Design Guide standards of 350 metres squared, even with private areas for the ground floor units in this area. The private gardens of a number of dwellings also exceed the maximum indicative standard in the Design Guide. Given that the layout will not be determined until the reserved matters stage, it is considered that there is sufficient space on the site to accommodate the number of units proposed and achieve the minimum open space standards. Given that the revised scheme proposes an equipped area of open space and that there is a significant deficit in the provision in Willingham (as identified in the 2013 Recreation and Open Space Study), this is considered to be a social benefit of the scheme.
60. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the social dimension of sustainable development includes the creation of a high quality built environment with accessible local services. The indicative layout plan demonstrates that the site can be developed for the number of dwellings proposed, although there are aspects which require further consideration at the reserved matters stage.

61. Willingham is currently classified as Minor Rural Centre in the LDF and would retain this status in the emerging Local Plan. Emerging policy S/9 states that residential development of up to a maximum indicative size of 30 dwellings will be permitted, subject to the satisfaction of all material planning consideration. The proposal would significantly exceed this number and would not be within the existing framework boundary. This scale of development must be considered in light of the facilities in Willingham and the impact of the scheme on the capacity of public services.
62. Paragraph 204 of the NPPF relates to the tests that local planning authorities should apply to assess whether planning obligations should be sought to mitigate the impacts of development. In the line with the CIL regulations 2010, the contributions must:
- necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms
 - directly related to the development
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed.
63. There are bus stops to the south of the site on Rockmill End and on Wilford Furlong to the west of the site. These bus stops are accessible from the site via public footpaths. There are 2 morning buses and 1 evening service to Cambridge at commuting times on weekdays with 4 buses throughout the day on those days, with return services available on a similar frequency. A similar level of service operates on a Saturday, no services are available on Sundays. Given the extremely close proximity of the site to the bus service and the frequency of the service at commuting times as well as during the day, it is considered that the site is well served by public transport, which enhances the environmental sustainability of the scheme by reducing reliance on car travel.
64. The County Council as the relevant Authority for providing education services have indicated that there is capacity in the early years provision. The 14 pupils estimated to be generated by the development of primary school would take the primary school beyond current capacity but this could be addressed through an extension to which the applicant would provide a contribution of £315,000. The development would be within the catchment area of Cottenham Village College and the County Council consider that this school has capacity to accommodate the additional pupils projected to be generated by the development.
65. This information corroborates the evidence used in the SHLAA assessment which applied to the majority of land included in the application site. The fact that the developer has agreed to the principle of paying the contribution to fund the additional infrastructure required to offset the impact of the development in this regard ensures that the impact of the scheme on the capacity of these facilities could be adequately mitigated, weighing in favour of the social sustainability of the scheme.
66. A contribution of £9,896.10 is requested to improve the provision of library services. The County Council have calculated this figure based on 165 new residents resulting from the scheme multiplied by a sum of £60.02 as a per person contribution towards internal modification works to increase the operational space at Willingham library, shelving to accommodate new books and resources, additional books and furniture to accommodate additional capacity. Given that the impact on the capacity of the library can be mitigated through this relatively small scheme in relation to the overall anticipated population increase, it is considered that securing this sum via a section 106 agreement would offset any negative impacts on social sustainability in this regard.

67. In terms of health impact, the applicant has submitted an Impact Assessment in this regard. This Assessment concludes that the number of GP's and the resulting amount of patients that can be accommodated by Willingham surgery indicate that the existing infrastructure could cope with the increased demand.
68. However, NHS England has commented on the application and has stated that their assessment of capacity is based on the amount of floorspace required to run a practice as opposed to the number of GP's. On the basis of their calculation, NHS England have requested a sum of £24,140 to provide an additional 12.07 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional 176 anticipated population increase (nb. Different projection to the County Council figures above). The NHS response indicates that this figure does not include an assessment of any additional car parking capacity and have indicated that they do not have the evidence base to make a request for extension/reconfiguration of the site in this regard.
69. NHS England have indicated in their response that they consider the requested sum to meet the tests for seeking contributions as set out in the NPPF, quoted above. This sum is considered necessary to mitigate the deficit in the capacity of Willingham surgery that would result from the projected population increase from the development and subject to this being secured through the section 106 agreement, the development would not be socially unsustainable in this regard.
70. Willingham has a library, a post office, a supermarket and a good range of shops selling day to day goods including food items and a pharmacy. There is a day nursery, a hardware store and a good range of retail and professional services. There is a garage, restaurant and 3 public houses. Cumulatively, it is considered that Willingham offers a range of services beyond meeting day to day needs and this is reflected in the status of the village as a Minor Rural Centre i.e. second in the list of sustainable groups of villages in the district.
71. The village also has 3 community halls: the Ploughman Hall (171 square metres main hall with additional space and facilities), the Salvation Army Hall and the Willingham Public Hall (811 square metres main hall with additional space and facilities). The village also has a recreation ground which includes multiple sports pitches (football, hockey and cricket), bowls club, cricket nets and a basketball net.
72. Given the above assessment and the supporting evidence from the SHLAA assessment of the site, it is considered that the adverse impacts of the development in terms of social sustainability could be mitigated through the contributions towards expanded library and NHS provision, to be secured via a Section 106 agreement.

Economic sustainability:

73. The provision of 72 new dwellings will give rise to employment during the construction phase of the development, and has the potential to result in an increase in the use of local services and facilities, both of which will be of benefit to the local economy.
74. Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would achieve the social and economic elements of the definition of sustainable development, subject to the mitigation measures quoted above, which the applicant has agreed to in principle and can be secured via a Section 106 agreement.

Density of development and affordable housing

75. Officers consider that considerable weight can be given to the emerging allocation status of part of the site. It is the case the proposal does extend beyond the

boundaries of the allocation site and proposes more than the 50 units given as the indicative number for the allocation. However, the proposed density of the development would be 21 dwellings per hectare, lower than the 24 dwellings per hectare density of the emerging allocation.

76. Under the provisions of policy HG/2, the market housing provision of proposed schemes is required to include a minimum of 40% 1 or 2 bed properties. As 13 of the 43 properties in this scheme would have 2 bedrooms, the proposal falls short of the requirements of that policy. The policy states that approximately 25% of dwellings in residential schemes should be 3 bed and the same threshold applies to 4 or more. Given that 15 of the properties would have 3 bedrooms and 15 would have 4 or more, these property sizes are over-represented in the mix in relation to policy HG/2.
77. Policy H/8 of the emerging Local Plan is less prescriptive and states that the mix of properties within developments of 10 or more dwellings should achieve at least 30% for each of the 3 categories, with the 10% margin to be applied flexibly across the scheme. This policy is being given considerable weight in the determination of planning applications due to the nature of the unresolved objections, in accordance with the guidance within paragraph 216 of the NPPF quoted above. As such, it is considered that the proposed housing mix is acceptable. As the application is outline only, a condition requiring this mix is recommended to ensure that the scheme policy compliant.

Character of the village edge and surrounding landscape

78. Landscape Impact
79. In the SHLAA assessment which resulted in the site being put forward to its current status as an emerging site for housing development, the landscape impact of a proposed development was considered. The South Cambridgeshire Village Capacity Study 1998 describes Willingham as a Fen Edge village with a character influenced by the strong horticultural traditions of the locality, nurseries and orchards, and the resultant linear development. The landscape around Willingham is flat, being typical Fen character, particularly to the north and east where the land is arable grassland, with some hedgerows but few trees.
80. The SHLAA assessment considers that the landscape issues can be mitigated in part through careful design, with a need to preserve the historic environment and townscape character of the locality highlighted as particular issues. This assessment has translated into the emerging allocation policy which applies to the majority of the site (H/1:g). The development requirements of the policy states that the 'creation of a significant landscape buffer along the boundary of the site where it adjoins or could be seen from open countryside to provide a soft green village edge, and provide capacity for a sustainable drainage system.
81. Whilst the proposal does extent beyond the boundary of the proposed allocation site, it is considered that the revised illustrative layout provides a significant landscape buffer to the eastern edge and the south eastern corner of the site. This would be achieved through the relocation of the allotments which are currently located in the northern part of the main section of the site. The impact on the character of the open landscape to the east would be further reduced through the low density of scheme shown on the illustrative masterplan in the eastern part of the built area of the development.
82. Only 12 of the 72 units proposed would be located directly in the area of land included

within the application site which extends beyond the emerging allocation. It is considered that the indicative scheme provides officers with sufficient confidence that the approach of locating higher density development in the western part of the site, reducing this in the central section and having a low density in the eastern part of the site can be achieved without having an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding landscape.

83. This conclusion has been reached following a number of revisions to the illustrative plans in order to satisfy the comments from the urban design and landscape officers. The driveways to serve the properties on Rockmill End have been rationalised in a way that demonstrates that larger sections of the boundary hedge should be retained than originally proposed. Whilst the hedgerow on this section of Rockmill End is less mature than the hedgerow which mark the boundaries of the fields to the north of the site (extending into the countryside), it is still of amenity value and it is considered that these revisions have addressed the landscape officer's concerns in this regard.
84. The extent of hardstanding within the illustrative scheme has also been reduced and additional public open space in the eastern part of the site has been created through an improvement in the layout of the plots. The flatted development was originally proposed as one linked building which would 'turn' the north wester corner of the site. It is acknowledged that this would have been a more urban feature which would not have aided the transition of the site from forming the edge of the built environment out into the open countryside. The amended design has split the flats into two buildings and improved the layout of the private amenity space to serve these units.
85. The orientation of a number of the plots on the east-west spine road have been altered to create a more active frontage and the proposed areas of open space are now considered to be adequately overlooked.
86. In general terms, it is acknowledged that the illustrative layout includes a relatively regimented road layout which, alongside the lack of landscaping in these areas creates a more suburban feel to the layout than would be expected in a village edge location such as this. However, the Urban Design and Landscape Officer's both acknowledge that the principle of the number of units can be accommodated on the site, alongside the provision of a landscape buffer. The detail of the road structure and the positioning of plots would be defined under the layout element of a reserved matters application, should outline planning permission be granted.
87. Comments are also made by the UDO in relation to 'Lifetime Homes' being achieved across the site and this is a matter that will be resolved in the details of the reserved matters application. The applicant has committed to the provision of 10% of the energy used by the development to be provided by on site renewable energy sources, in compliance with policy, with the detail to be provided once the exact quantum of development is known at the reserved matters stage.
88. Trees
89. The arboricultural constraints plan submitted with the application indicates that the majority of the hedgerow on the western boundary of the site would be removed. The revised indicative layout would allow for more of the hedgerow in the north western corner to be retained, following amendments to the layout and pedestrian access arrangements for the flatted development. Rationalisation of the access to the plots along Rockmill End in the revised indicative scheme would allow sections of hedging to be retained along this frontage also. The Hawthorn hedge in the south eastern corner of the site would be retained, sections of the hedge on the eastern boundary

would be removed although this is considered to a category C specimen and therefore of relatively low amenity value. The removal of whole specimens would be limited to the dead English Elm and a fruit tree which is considered to be immature and of no amenity value.

90. The incorporation of new landscaping as part of the scheme would enable the development to assimilate into the surrounding landscape and help to soften the impact of the built form on the edge of the village. The Landscape Design Officer has suggested potentially positioning the new tree belt shown on the eastern and south eastern boundaries on the indicative masterplan on the western edge of the allotments to allow the allotments to form the final edge of the transition to open countryside and this is an approach that can be investigated at the reserved matters stage without compromising the principle of locating the buildings in the positions shown.
91. It is considered that a condition can be added to the outline permission requiring tree protection measures to be agreed. All other matters, including the number and location of the trees to be retained and removed will be decided at the reserved matters stage as these issues are dependent on the layout of the site being fixed.
92. Ecology
93. The application is supported by an ecological assessment and the site is generally considered to be of low biodiversity value. No suitable habitat was recorded to support reptile species and no activity/evidence of badgers was observed. None of the trees present on site were considered as potential roosts but bats would be likely to use hedgerows for feeding.
94. In relation to Great Crested Newts (GCN), the field itself was generally considered to be of low value but there are historical records of GCN in a pond 110m south of the site. The pond could not be accessed so a full assessment could not be made on this matter. Furthermore, it was considered that if the site was developed and GCN were present then an offence may occur. It is noted that the layout includes an attenuation area, it is very likely that should GCN be present on site that this area could be further enhanced to provide suitable habitat for the species.
95. In order to address the outstanding matter relating to GCN a condition is proposed to be attached to the outline application which would require a survey of the site assessing the potential for Newts, within 3 months after the commencement of development. The assessment shall include, but not be limited to, a Habitat Suitability Index assessment of the pond located approximately 110m to the south of the application site (referred to as pond TN1 in the report "Ecological Survey, Willingham Glebe Land, Cambridgeshire" by Norfolk Wildlife Services July 2015).
96. The hedgerows were identified as providing habitat for nesting birds, including five species of conservation concern. The hedgerows bounding the site should be fully retained where possible. A standard condition can be attached to the permission to control the removal of vegetation during the bird breeding season.
97. A condition is recommended at the outline stage to secure the provision of a scheme of bird and bat box provision.

Highway safety and parking

98. The Transportation Team, having requested additional information from the applicant,

has confirmed that it has no objection to the proposed scheme in terms of impact on existing highway conditions, trip generation and distribution, and transport impact. The Highway Authority considers that there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed development would exacerbate the existing road safety risks in the locality. The scheme is considered to be sustainable from an access point of view as all of Willingham is within walking distance (2km) from the application site.

99. The Highway Authority has pointed out that the existing footpath along the northern side of Silver Street would need to be upgraded and extended to ensure safe pedestrian access into the main centre of Willingham could be secured. The applicant has agreed to the principle of this requirement, which can be secured through a legal agreement with the County Council as Highway Authority. A planning condition requiring this obligation to be secured can be added at the outline stage. Likewise, details of a scheme for the upgrading of the bus stop facilities adjacent to the site on Rockmill End and Wilford Furlong can also be secured by condition. A detailed travel plan for the development will be required at the reserved matters stage. No objection has been raised to the principle of the access point proposed.

Residential amenity

100. The application is in outline only and therefore the layout plan submitted is for illustrative purposes only. However, officers need to be satisfied at this stage that the site is capable of accommodating the amount of development proposed, without having a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of occupiers of adjacent properties. The revised indicative layout plan is considered to indicate that the separation distances as prescribed in the adopted design guide (25 metres between elevations with habitable windows, 13 metres from elevations with windows facing blank elevations) can be achieved in terms of loss of light, overbearing and overlooking issues. It is considered that sufficient separation could be retained to the side elevation of 30 Rockmill End could be adequately preserved at the detailed stage.
101. Standard conditions relating to the construction phase of the development have been recommended by the EHO and these can be attached to the decision notice. It is considered that the proposed number of units can be accommodated on the site without having any adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties or the occupants of the proposed development.

Surface water and foul water drainage

102. Surface water drainage
103. The Old West Internal Drainage Board (IDB) has been consulted on the application. No objection has been raised however, they have pointed out that, whilst outside of the area directly controlled by the IDB, surface water from the development would be likely to drain into the area within its control. The IDB has not raised any objection to the proposal on the basis that a legal agreement would need to be entered into in order to secure a pro-rata contribution of £14,800 per impermeable hectare of development to mitigate the impact of the surface water run off exceeding the greenfield rate. This can be secured as a condition on the outline planning application.
104. The site lies in Flood Zone 1. The Lead Local Flood Authority has not raised an objection and is of the view that surface water drainage from the site will not be an issue, subject to suitable conditions being included in any consent.

105. The Environment Agency requires conditions to be included in any consent preventing surface water and contamination issues in a sensitive area. These can be included in any consent.
106. Foul water drainage
107. Anglian Water has commented that the existing Over Water Recycling Centre, which would treat wastewater from the proposed development, does not currently have capacity to treat the flows from the development. In their response, they have confirmed that they are legally obliged to undertake the works required to treat the additional flows.
108. In terms of foul water. Anglian Water has confirmed that there is capacity within the sewage network to cope with the additional demands placed on the existing infrastructure.

Section 106 contributions

109. In addition to the requirements of the County Council as Education Authority and the NHS already identified in this report, the Section 106 Officer has confirmed that the 500 square metres equipped area of open space to be provided is compliant with the Open Space SPD for developments of this size. A contribution of approximately £70,000 (made up of a tariff based contribution based on housing mix) is considered necessary to provide a contribution to the upgrading and extending of the sports pavilion at the recreation ground. As there have been no pooled contributions made towards this infrastructure previously, this contribution is considered to be compliant with the CIL regulations. The on site informal public open space provision is considered to be sufficient to ensure that no offsite requirement should be sought.
110. It is considered that a contribution of £35,000 towards the extension of the Ploughman Hall would allow the scheme to comply with current and emerging local policies which require the impact of development on the capacity of community indoor facilities to be mitigated. This extension would facilitate the creation of an additional meeting room for community use. As there have been no pooled contributions made towards this infrastructure previously, this contribution is considered to be compliant with the CIL regulations.
111. Household Waste Receptacles charged at £72.50 per dwelling and a monitoring fee of £1,500 (flat fee), along with all of the other requirements to be secured through the section 106 detailed in this section and previously in the report lead to a total of £455,181.44, although the final figure is dependent upon housing mix which is to be finalised under scale at the reserved matter stage. This excludes the County Council's requirements as Highway Authority and the contribution required by the Internal Drainage Board, which will be secured via agreements to be secured through the recommended planning conditions.

Other matters

112. Archaeology and Heritage
113. The site has been the subject of a detailed evaluation which has highlighted the archaeological significance of the site as there is evidence of Roman settlement in the area. Additional work has been undertaken by the applicant and the County Council Archaeologist is satisfied that, subject to a condition requiring a remediation strategy to be agreed, the impact of development on the site can be mitigated in this regard.

Such a condition can be imposed at this outline stage.

114. The SHLAA assessment of the site considered that the setting of the Willingham conservation area (the boundary of which is approximately 150 metres south west of the site) would not be adversely affected by the development of the site, subject to the careful design of the scheme. The same assessment was made regarding the setting of listed buildings. Whilst there are a number of grade II listed structures within the conservation area, the closest is 190 metres south west of the site.
115. Historic England included in their consultation comments a suggested condition limiting the built form to 2 storeys in height, with specific reference to the Belsar Hill Scheduled Ancient Monument, located to the east of the site. The revised masterplan has reduced the height of the row of 3 townhouses shown adjacent to the flattened development to 2 storeys.
116. It is considered that significant views of the Belsar Hill Ancient Monument would not be detrimentally obscured by the 2 storey height of the scheme as a whole. The reduction in the density through the site in an easterly direction and the location of the allotments are considered to be significant factors in mitigating the impact of the development on the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument to an acceptable degree. It is considered unnecessary to impose a condition that the height of development should be restricted to 2 storeys at the reserved outline stage as the scale of development is a reserved matter.
117. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 requires decision-makers to pay “special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.” It is considered that the amended indicative layout would not have any adverse affect on the setting of the grade II listed buildings located at the eastern end of the conservation area, which are located in excess of 150 square metres from the site. Given that there is existing residential development on the western side of site, it is considered that development of a maximum of 72 units as shown on the indicative layout on the site would not have an adverse impact on the setting of the conservation area.
118. The District Council conservation officer has raised no objections to the outline proposals.

Environmental Health

119. The Public Health Specialist has commented that the Health Impact Assessment has been assessed as Grade B, which meets the required standard of the SPD Policy. The scheme is therefore acceptable in this regard.
120. There is no objection to the proposal in respect of air quality. However, to ensure that sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the development are not affected by the negative impact of construction work such as dust and noise, as well as ensuring that the applicant complies with the Council’s low emission strategy for a development of this scale, conditions should be included that require the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan/Dust Management Plan, and an electronic vehicle charging infrastructure strategy.
121. It is considered that further assessment of the potential noise generated by traffic and vehicle movements on Rockmill End is required and the implications in terms of sound insulation measures which may need to be incorporated into the buildings that would

front onto the highway. This assessment can be secured by condition at the outline stage. An assessment of the impact of artificial lighting resulting from the development can also be secured by condition in order to ensure that the strength of such light does not have any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties or the surrounding area.

122. The site is considered to be a low risk in relation to land contamination and as such it is considered that a scheme of investigation into any potential harm and suitable remediation can be secured by condition at this outline stage, to ensure that the detailed layout does not result in any adverse impact in this regard, acknowledging the sensitive end use proposed for the site.
123. Noise, vibration and dust minimisation plans will be required to ensure that the construction phase of the scheme would not have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. These details shall be secured by condition, along with a restriction on the hours during which power operated machinery should be used during the construction phase of the development and details of the phasing of the development.
124. The applicant will be required to complete a Waste Design Toolkit at the reserved matters stage in order to show how it is intended to address the waste management infrastructure, and technical requirements within the RECAP Waste Design Management Design Guide. In addition conditions should secure the submission of a Site Waste Management Plan. Provision of domestic waste receptacles by the developer will be secured via the Section 106 agreement. The developer should ensure that the highway design allows for the use of waste collection vehicles and this is a detailed matter relating to the layout of the scheme at the reserved matters stage.
125. The applicant has indicated that a minimum of 10% of the energy needs generated by the development can be secured through renewable sources. A condition will be required to ensure that the noise impact of any plant or equipment for any renewable energy provision such as air source heat pumps is fully assessed and any impact mitigated.

Prematurity

126. As outlined above in light of the appeal decisions at Waterbeach regarding the 5 year land supply this application needs to be considered against policies in the NPPF. However Members also need to address the issue of whether the approval of development on this site would be premature in respect of the consideration of the Submission Local Plan.
127. The Planning Practice Guidance states that the NPPF explains how weight may be given to policies in emerging plans. It states that in the context of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify refusal of planning permission, other than where it is clear that the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, taking the NPPF policies and any other material considerations into account.
128. The PPG indicates that such circumstances are likely to be limited to situations where both the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant planning permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location of phasing of new development that are central to an emerging local plan; and the emerging plan is at an

advance stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

129. Where permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the PPG states that a Local Planning Authority will need to clearly indicate how the grant of permission would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.
130. Following the assessment in throughout this report, it is considered that the harm arising from the proposal would be less than substantial when conducting the balancing act of weighing the benefits against the harm caused by the scheme.

Cumulative Impact

131. Officers are aware that there are two other large scale applications for residential development in Willingham where the principle of development relies on the District Council's deficit in five year housing land supply. These are: residential development on land to the rear of 1b Over Road (26 units including 10 affordable) and land off Haden Way (64 units with 40% affordable). These developments alongside the proposal being considered in this application would have a cumulative impact on the level and capacity of services and facilities in Willingham.
132. However, officers are satisfied that the emerging allocation of a large part of the application site can be given significant weight in the determination of this application due to the limited number and nature of the objections offered during the Local Plan consultation. This status does not apply to the other two sites. In addition, the other two applications are not at as an advanced stage in the assessment process with issues remaining to be resolved. It is also clear what the mitigation measures are, along with the associated costs of offsetting the impacts of this development on the capacity of the services and facilities in Willingham. As such, officers are content that the sustainability credentials of this proposal have been demonstrated satisfactorily and that approval of this application would not prejudice the outcome of the other two applications.

Conclusion

133. Policy ST/5 and DP/7 of the LDF are considered to carry some weight in the determination of this application. Despite being considered out of date, the purpose of these policies is to restrict the number of residential units permitted in Minor Rural Centres as secondary to Rural Centres in the hierarchy of settlements. This remains a valid purpose in assessing the overall impact of the proposal. Policies HG/1, HG/2 and HG/3 are all housing policies which are considered to carry some weight in the decision making process as these relate to the density of development, housing mix and affordable housing, all of which contribute to sustainable development. Some weight is also being attached to the emerging policies in this regard. This assessment of weight is considered in light of the fact that the majority of the site has been assessed as a sustainable location for the proposed development through the SHLAA process, with the impact of the additional development proposed considered not to be harmful in social or environmental sustainability terms. In relation to the other relevant policies of the LDF as quoted in this report are considered to be consistent with the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF and therefore have been given some weight in the assessment of this application.
134. A large proportion of the application site is proposed to be allocated for housing development in the emerging Local Plan under policy H/1(g). It is the case that the proposed development exceeds both the site area and the indicative number of units that are proposed in the emerging allocation and therefore the question regarding the

principle of development relies largely on whether or not the scheme meets the definition of sustainable development as defined in the NPPF.

135. Nevertheless, the emerging allocation status of a large part of the site is clearly a material consideration in the assessment of the planning application as it is considered that significant weight should be attributed to this policy in the decision making process due to the limited nature and number of the objections that have been received to the emerging policy throughout the Local Plan consultation process. In light of the Council's inability to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, the emerging policy and the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF are considered to carry more weight than policy ST/5 or policy DP/7 which would restrict development to below the 72 units proposed.
136. Willingham is classified as a Minor Rural Centre and is considered to have a good range of services and facilities as outlined in the main body of this report. The site is located close to existing bus services and the developer has agreed to a package of enhancements including the upgrading of nearby bus shelters and the footpath connecting the site to local facilities. It is considered that the deficit in capacity at the primary school and the doctor's surgery can be adequately addressed through extensions to these facilities which can be secured via the section 106 Agreement. The fact that bus services exist close to the site which would allow commuting to and from Cambridge is both a social and an environmental benefit of the scheme.
137. In addition to the ability to mitigate the harm in relation to the capacity of services and facilities, it is considered that the scheme includes positive elements which enhance social sustainability. These include the provision of 40% affordable housing within the development and public open space, including equipped open space. The package of contributions to be secured through the Section 106 towards the enhancement of offsite community facilities would be a wider benefit of the proposals, further enhancing the social sustainability of the scheme.
138. It is considered that the illustrative masterplan is sufficient to demonstrate that 72 units could be located on the site in a manner that would allow a significant landscape buffer to be retained on the eastern edge of the site and allow a transition from higher density in the western portion of the site, which is viewed within the context of the existing residential development on the western side of Rockmill End, through to a lower density of development in the eastern part of the site. The layout at this stage is indicative only and it is considered that the landscape and urban design comments can be addressed at the reserved matter stage as the principal of development at the quantum proposed is accepted.
139. It is considered that the issues raised in relation to environmental health, trees and ecology can be dealt with by condition.
140. Overall, it is considered that the significant contribution that the proposal would make to the deficit in the Council's five year housing land supply and the social benefits that would result from the development outweigh the potential landscape and environmental disbenefits. None of these disbenefits are considered to result in significant

t and demonstrable harm and therefore, it is considered that the proposal achieves the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

Recommendation

141. Officers recommend that the Committee grants planning permission, subject to conditions based on the following and grant delegated powers to officers to complete the section 106 agreement (covering issues outlined in this report).

Draft conditions

- (a) Outline planning permission
- (b) Time limit for submission of reserved matters
- (c) Time limit for implementation – within 5 years
- (d) Approved plans
- (e) Landscaping details
- (f) Contaminated land assessment
- (g) Dust, noise, vibration mitigation strategy
- (h) Noise assessment relating to impact of road traffic on properties fronting Rockmill End – including necessary mitigation measures
- (i) Details of renewable energy generation within the development and associated noise assessment and mitigation measures – 10% renewables and compliance.
- (j) Scheme to detail upgrading of highway facilities including public footpath and bus shelters
- (k) Scheme for the provision of contributions towards the increased capacity requirements of drainage network controlled by Old West IDB
- (l) Foul water drainage scheme
- (m) Surface water drainage scheme
- (n) Sustainable drainage strategy
- (o) Tree Protection measures
- (p) Compliance with flood risk assessment
- (q) Traffic Management Plan
- (r) Time restriction on the removal of trees
- (s) Detailed plans of the construction of the accesses
- (t) Pedestrian visibility splays
- (u) Ecological enhancements including bird and bat boxes
- (v) Scheme of archaeological investigation
- (w) Site waste management plan
- (x) Restriction on the hours of power operated machinery during construction
- (y) Phasing of construction
- (z) Approved ecological surveys
- (aa) Compliance with ecological survey submitted
- (bb) External lighting to be agreed
- (cc) Cycle storage
- (dd) Housing mix within market element to be policy compliant
- (ee) Screened storage
- (ff) Boundary treatments
- (gg) Waste water management plan
- (hh) Construction environment management plan
- (ii) Details of piled foundations
- (jj) Fire hydrant locations
- (kk) Cycle storage

Informatives

- (a) Environmental health informatives
- (b) Exclusion of indicative plans from approval

Background Papers:

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD 2007
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission 2014
- Planning File Reference: S/2833/15/OL

Report Author:

David Thompson
Telephone Number:

Principal Planning Officer
01954 713250