

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee  
**AUTHOR/S:** Head of Development Management

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3 August 2016

<b>Application Number:</b>	S/2456/15/OL
<b>Parish(es):</b>	Willingham
<b>Proposal:</b>	Outline planning permission for development of 64 dwellings, estate road, open space and associated works
<b>Site address:</b>	Land off Haden Way, Willingham
<b>Applicant(s):</b>	Manor Farm Developments & Mr R Munns
<b>Recommendation:</b>	Delegated approval (to complete section 106)
<b>Key material considerations:</b>	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
<b>Committee Site Visit:</b>	02 August 2016
<b>Departure Application:</b>	Yes
<b>Presenting Officer:</b>	David Thompson, Principal Planning Officer
<b>Application brought to Committee because:</b>	The officer recommendation of approval conflicts with the recommendation of Willingham Parish Council and would represent a departure from the Development Plan
<b>Date by which decision due:</b>	31 August 2016 (extension of time agreed)

### Executive Summary

1. The application site is located outside of the Willingham village framework, the boundary of which skirts the northern boundary of the site. Residential development is located to the north and east of the site. The site is accessed via a field gate leading from Haden Way on the western boundary. The land to the south is open countryside. There is a relatively strong tree belt along the majority of the southern boundary of the site.

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 64 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 64 units could be provided on the site, within adequately sized plots along with the required access routes, level of formal and informal open space and surface water attenuation measures. 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. There is no relevant planning history on the application site.

### **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/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 to the scale of the development site, the location and impact (on) the village resources (drainage, school etc), in a village designated as a minor rural centre. The proposal would be filling the gap between Northstowe and Willingham which the council were told by SCDC would not happen. Drainage – the land is often waterlogged as the council has discovered for themselves in the past when carrying out their own tests. Flood risk would be high in the centre of the development and is of great concern and this is indeed recognised within the proposal.

10. **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.
11. **Natural England** - no comments to make on the application.
12. **District Council Landscape Design Officer** – No objection to the proposals. The site is a low lying grassland field with native hedging on the northern boundary, with mature trees and hedgerows to the south. The site is located in the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands National Character Area and Lowland Village Farmlands at a regional level. The retention of the existing hedgerows is an important and positive element of the scheme, ensuring that the visual impact of the development would be ‘negligible.’ Standard conditions are recommended relating to the provision and maintenance of a landscaping scheme, restrictions on the timing of the removal of vegetation, boundary treatments, details of driveway construction, details of bin storage and external lighting.
13. **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 the site is considered to be within cycle and walking distance of the primary school, and the facilities and services in Willingham.  
  
The Highway Authority has indicated that a 2 metre wide footpath link to Over Road will be required to link the development to Willingham. The existing bus stops on Haden Way and Over Road will need to be upgraded to encourage occupants of the development to utilise public transport and enhance the sustainability of the development. The applicant has agreed to the principle of these requirements, which can be secured through a legal agreement with the County Council as Highway Authority.  
  
A detailed travel plan for the development will be required at the reserved matters stage.
14. **Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (Archaeology)**– no objection and confirm that, following initial investigative work by the applicant, it is unlikely that further work would be of value. Therefore, no further survey work is considered necessary and no conditions are recommended in this regard.
15. **Cambridgeshire County Council Flood & Water Team** – no objection subject to the imposition of conditions requiring compliance with the amended Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted with the planning application and details of a surface water drainage strategy (including details of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) being secured by condition.

16. **Environment Agency** - The site lies in Flood Zone 1. The Environment Agency has no objection to the scheme, highlighting the need for the LLFRA to be consulted on the contents of the drainage strategy submitted with the application.
17. **Anglian Water** - Anglian Water (AW) has commented that the existing sewerage system has available capacity to accommodate the additional demands of the development on foul water drainage infrastructure. No objections/comments with regard to surface water drainage.
18. **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.
19. **Air Quality Officer** – No objection. 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.
20. **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 64 dwellings, which consists of 38 market dwellings and 26 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 across the 26 affordable units would be:

Rented:

9 x 2 bed  
6 x 1 bed  
3 x 3 bed

Shared Ownership:

4 x 2 bed  
4 x 3 bed

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. Whilst these properties should be available to all applicants registered on homelink in South Cambridgeshire, we would

have no objection to 50% of the properties being available to applicants with a local connection to Willingham.

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.

21. **Section 106 Officer** – details of the summary of section 106 requirements are appended to this report (**Appendix 1**) and discussed in detail in paragraphs 98-100. Specific policy compliant contributions in the region of £405,863 (final figure dependent on housing mix and size of the on site equipped open space area 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).
22. **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 10 child spaces in that age bracket (the number calculated for s. 106 purposes) 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 12 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 cited above. The total costs of a project to mitigate the impact would be £273,000. 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 £9,603.20 is requested to improve the provision of library services. The County Council have calculated this figure based on 160 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 (£650).

23. **Historic England** – no objection to the proposal stating that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of the advice of the District Council conservation officer
24. **District Council Conservation Officer** – no objections raised
25. **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 £21,120 to provide an additional 10.56 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional approximately 154 anticipated population increase (nb. Different projection to the County Council figures above).
26. **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 whilst the site is grassland meadow. The Ecologist considers that it is not of high botanical value. No suitable habitat was recorded to support reptile species, no activity/evidence of badgers observed. The most significant potential impact is considered to be on nesting birds.

The hedgerows on the site boundaries are identified as providing habitat for nesting birds. 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.

Conditions are recommended at the outline stage to secure the provision of a scheme of bird and bat box provision and details of external lighting to be installed to ensure that any such lighting installed does not illuminate parts of the site that support biodiversity.

The proposed balancing pond (water attenuation measure) provides opportunities for amphibians on the site which would enhance biodiversity. Ensuring that this opportunity is maximised will depend on the design and the effective implementation of a management scheme.

27. **District Council Tree Officer** – no objections to the principle of development. Additional details of landscaping proposals will be required at the reserved matters stage.
28. **District Council Environmental Health Officer** – The Public Health Specialist has commented that the revised 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 Haden Way and the surrounding highway network and the implications of this 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 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.

29. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue** – No objection to the proposals subject to adequate provision being made within the development for fire hydrants which could be secured by a condition or through a Section 106 agreement.
30. **Highways England** – no objection

### **Representations**

31. 17 letters of objection (including representations made via the Council's website) have been received which raise the following concerns (summarised):
  - Concerns regarding surface water drainage – there is evidence of water standing on the site during wet weather.
  - Concerns about where the water will drain from the proposed attenuation pond.
  - The existing drains do not have the capacity to serve the additional surface water generated by the proposed development.
  - Properties on Station Road (eastern end of Haden Way) are at the bottom of the slope in the land eastwards of the application site and there is evidence of standing water in the gardens of those properties.
  - There have been problems with the drainage of sewage in the system which serves Station Road as a result of pressure on the storm water drainage connection in the street which is poorly maintained.
  - Concerns about how the surface water attenuation measures to be incorporated into the development will be managed and maintained.
  - The Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the planning application considers the susceptibility of the site to ground water flooding as 'low/moderate' – the reality is that the risk is 'significant.' There are concerns about the accuracy of the calculation of the amount of surface water that will be generated by the development of the greenfield site.
  - Concern about the additional traffic movements associate with the development and the impact this will have on the safety of Haden Way.
  - The development would have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the properties on Station Road. The common boundary between those properties is currently formed by hedging, a fence and a ditch. Concerns about whether these will be retained and how they will be maintained and also how the surface water attenuation system will be maintained given its proximity to the boundary of the

site and neighbouring land.

- Details of the maintenance of the ditch adjacent to Station Road are required to ensure that surface water is channelled to the mains sewer without increasing the risk to adjacent properties.
- There are a number of badger sets in the area and these must not be adversely affected by the development.
- Native hedgerow should be planted along the northern boundary of the site to preserve the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and enhance the biodiversity of the site.
- The proposals show the re-alignment of a track called 'Over Haven' – this is a private road owned in part by Willingham and Over Parish Councils respectively and is used as a right of access by the owners of areas of land adjacent to the application site.
- Haden Way is not wide enough road to accommodate heavy vehicles and the junction with Over Road is not safe. The re-construction of a round-about would be required at that junction to ensure that the road network has the capacity to deal with the additional volumes of traffic generated by the development.
- The village primary school currently does not have capacity, nor does the doctors surgery. This situation would be made worse by the approval of this scheme and the cumulative impact of this development and the additional housing on Rockmill End needs to be considered.
- Siting of a new cemetery in Willingham needs to be considered alongside the location of the sites being approved for housing development.
- The proposal would result in residential development outside of the Willingham village framework, on a greenfield site. This would be contrary to the provisions of the Local Plan which aims to preserve the character of the countryside by limiting the expansion of settlements such as Willingham. Large scale new developments should be focussed in the new settlements such as Northstowe and should not involve the significant extension of Minor Rural Centres such as Willingham.
- The land is situated at the end of an ancient local green drove which acts as a corridor linking Willingham with Longstanton as well as providing access to surrounding fields for landowners. The proposed access road and development of the site would harm the value of this area as a recreation space and an area rich in biodiversity. The development would thereby have an adverse impact on the distinctive 'Fen edge' character of the site at the edge of the built environment in Willingham.
- The proposal would result in the doubling of the population on Haden Way, which will have an adverse impact in terms of traffic congestion on the road.
- The B1050 is already congested and the proposed development would make this situation worse. Speed reduction measures would need to be put in place to ensure safe access to Over Road.
- Haden Way is a narrow congested road which cannot be widened to accommodate the additional traffic.
- Management of the public open space will be required to ensure that this does not become a 'waste land.'
- The proposal would result in noise and air pollution levels that would have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the existing properties on Haden Way

## **Site and Surroundings**

32. The application site is located on the south western edge of Willingham. The site lies outside of the existing development framework which runs along the northern boundary of the land. The site is currently agricultural land accessed via a gateway on the western boundary, connecting the site to Haden Way. The majority of the site

boundaries are demarcated by established hedgerows and trees. A number of the properties along Haden Way have common boundaries with the northern boundary of the site. The rear gardens of the properties on Station Road abut the eastern boundary of the site. Land levels slope gradually downwards in an easterly direction. Open fields lie adjacent to the south and south west of the application site.

### **Proposal**

33. 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 64 dwellings, an estate road, open space and associated works.

### **Planning Assessment**

34. 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 whether Willingham generally and this site specifically allow the proposal to meet the definition of sustainable development. 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:

35. 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.
36. 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.
37. 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".
38. 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 as not to be restricted to '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 be attached to such relevant policies.

39. 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).
40. 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 and requires development to be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. The latter test is fundamentally linked to the size and capacity of services and facilities available in existing villages. 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.
41. 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.
42. 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 against 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).
43. 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 as 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.
44. 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. Such villages are, however, amongst the larger settlements within the District. Within the context of the lack of a five year housing land supply, Officers are of the view that sites on the edges of these locations generally and Willingham specifically, can accommodate more than the indicative maximum of 30 units and still achieve the definition of sustainable development due to the level of services and facilities provided in these villages.

45. 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.
46. The proposals are assessed below against the social and economic criteria of the definition of sustainable development.
47. The environmental issues are assessed in the following sections of the report but specifically 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.
48. Whilst the substantive issues are discussed in detail in the remainder of this report, it is considered that, 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.
49. Social sustainability:
50. 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.
51. The development would provide a clear benefit in helping to meet the current housing shortfall in South Cambridgeshire through delivering up to an additional 64 residential dwellings. 40% of these units will be affordable (26 units). The affordable housing can be secured through a Section 106 Agreement.
52. Policy HG/2 of the current LDF requires the mix of market dwellings within developments to be split 40% 1 or 2 bed and approximately 25% 3 bed and the same for 4 or more bed properties. Policy H/8 of the emerging Local Plan is being given significant weight in the determination of planning applications however, due to the limited nature of the unresolved objections to the policy, in accordance with the guidance contained within paragraph 216 of the NPPF. This policy requires a minimum of 30% of each of the three size thresholds to be provided, with the remaining 10% allocated flexibly across developments.
53. This proposal would allocate the following mix to the market housing within the scheme: 40% 2 bedrooms (26), 45% 3 bedrooms (29) and 14% 4 bedrooms (9). Clearly this equates to any under provision of larger properties when assessed

against either the existing or the emerging policy on housing mix. However, the applicant has provided a supporting statement which demonstrates that Willingham has a significantly lower proportion of semi-detached properties than the South Cambridgeshire District average (38% compared to 51%) and that the proportion of detached houses is significantly higher in Willingham than the District average (56% to 42%). This data was taken from the 2011 census.

54. Whilst this data is not broken down to property sizes, this evidence appears to corroborate the supporting text of emerging policy H/8 which states that 'housing stock (in the District) has traditionally been dominated by larger detached and semi-detached houses. Whilst recent developments have helped to increase the stock of smaller properties available, the overall imbalance of larger properties remains. The 2011 census for example identifies that 75% of the housing stock' are detached or semi-detached houses and bungalows, with 18% terraced homes and 6% flats or maisonettes.'
55. The number of 4 bedroom properties in this scheme does not meet the minimum requirement as set out in local policy. However, within the context of sustainable development, it is considered that there is clear evidence of an oversupply of larger properties in Willingham, the settlement upon which this development will most greatly impact and be connected to. Paragraph 50 of the NPPF also requires planning authorities to 'plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs for different groups in the community' and to 'identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand.'
56. Whilst there is a partial conflict with the emerging Local Plan policy therefore, the evidence provided by the applicant and the guidance contained within the NPPF are considered to ensure that the proposal would still achieve the social element of sustainable development by responding to the size of properties required in the locality.
57. Officers are of the view the provision of 64 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. The scheme meets this amount through the inclusion of an equipped play area with land surrounding it (centrally positioned within the development) and through the provision of an area to the south of and surrounding the attenuation pond indicated at the eastern end of the site. Given that Willingham has an identified short fall in play space and informal open space, the fact that this amount of space can be provided at the density of development indicated is considered to be a significant social benefit of the proposals.
59. Whilst the layout is only indicative at this stage, the plans are sufficient to demonstrate that alongside the required amount of public open space the development would allow for plots that meet the minimum standards for garden sizes in this location, which the design guide suggest should be a minimum of 50 square metres for 2 bed properties and 80 square metres for larger dwellings (the 'rural' size guidance has been applied in this instance given the edge of village location of the site.)
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 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 north of the site on Over Road, with other stops within a 15 minute walk. 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 12 pupils estimated to be generated by the development of primary school age 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 £273,000. 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. 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 £9,603.20 is requested to improve the provision of library services. The County Council have calculated this figure based on 160 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 acknowledges that there may need to be an upgrade in public service facilities to accommodate the needs of the occupants of the development to ensure that the high standards of public health in locality are maintained.
68. 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 £21,120 to provide an additional 10.56 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional 154 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 submitted with the planning application, 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 64 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**

75. The proposed density of the development would be 31 dwellings per hectare. Policies HG/1 of the current LDF and H/7 of the emerging Local Plan require new residential development to achieve a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare within Minor Rural Centres and other villages within the settlement hierarchy. Policy HG/1 states that higher densities should be achieved in more sustainable locations. In this case, the density of the proposal is considered relatively high given its location on the edge of the settlement and the need to provide a sympathetic transition to the open countryside beyond. However, given the amount of open space to be provided and the position of the plots within the indicative layout, it is considered that the scheme would achieve an efficient use of land without having an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding landscape. This issue is discussed in more detail later on this report.

## **Character of the village edge and surrounding landscape**

### **Landscape Impact**

76. The applicant has submitted a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment in support of the planning application. The assessment acknowledges the characteristics of the Fen Edge Landscape Character Area and considers that the site is typical of this character area in terms of having flat topography with long distance views available from the site and an orchard character within surrounding agricultural land. The assessment considers the impact of the proposed development on these characteristics and also on the outlook from the neighbouring properties. The majority of impacts are considered to be minor/negligible, with the main impact considered to be on the views from adjacent properties in Haden Way. However, this impact is considered not to be severe due to the separation distances to be retained, is assessed later in this report.
77. The retention of the established hedgerows on the boundaries of the site is considered in the assessment to help mitigate the impact of the development by providing a sense of containment and also retaining reference to the field boundaries typical of the Fen Edge character area. The District Council Landscape Design Officer (LDO) agrees with this assessment and comments that the overall impact of the scheme is negligible, with the existing positive landscape features being retained.
78. The positioning of plots adjacent to the boundaries (in particular the western boundary at the front of the site) needs to be considered at the reserved matters stage to ensure that the mature hedgerows are fully maintained and their condition is not hindered by the development. The LDO considers that this would not affect the quantum of the development and this is therefore a matter of detail to be dealt with at the reserved matters stage. Standard conditions could be imposed at the outline stage to ensure that details of new planting and the protection of the existing landscaping on the site is satisfactory from a landscape amenity point of view.

### **Design:**

79. The Urban Design Officer initially objected to the scheme due to concerns about the extent of hardstanding resulting from the proposed shared surface and plot access arrangements in the original indicative layout, particularly in the south western corner of the development. The amended scheme has revised the location of the spine road through the development which has allowed the majority of the housing in that part of the site to front the access road, with longer rear gardens providing a consistent edge to the southern boundary of the scheme.

80. The indicative layout demonstrates that an active frontage can be achieved to Haden way on the western boundary and sufficient separation distances achieved to the properties fronting the spine road in the central part of the site. This is considered to be a positive element of the scheme which would present a continuation of the building line of the properties on Haden Way to the north west of the site. Properties would be positioned around the central area of open space ensuring that it could be fully surveyed. An amendment to the indicative layout has demonstrated that there is space to ensure that the highway would run adjacent to only two sides of this area, further enhancing its security and therefore usability.
81. The location of the open space at the eastern edge of the site provides a significant landscape 'buffer' between the edge of the built development and the boundary of the site with the adjacent open fields. This feature of the indicative scheme, the retention of a large open area where the rear gardens of plots 31 to 46 are located and the long gardens to be retained to the rear of the plots on the southern edge of the development are all factors which are considered to ensure that the density of the proposal is of a level that would allow a 'soft' edge to the development. This ensures that a suitable transition from the built environment at the extended edge to the village and the open fields beyond could be achieved, thus respecting the Fen Edge character of the locality.

#### Trees

82. The applicant has provided a topographical survey which demonstrated that the main features of arboricultural significance of the site are the trees and hedges which demarcate the site boundaries. A section of the hedgerow on the western boundary of the site would need to be removed to allow for an access of sufficient width to achieve adequate access to the development and visibility splays to maintain highway safety. The proposal would still allow for the retention of the majority of that hedgerow however. The indicative layout plan demonstrates that there is sufficient space to allow access to the frontage properties from the rear of those plots at the density of development proposed. The location of the SUDs attenuation pond and open space at the eastern end of the site and the northern and southern boundaries forming the rear gardens of plots ensures that the retention of the existing planting on the northern, eastern and western boundaries could be achieved.
83. The location and extent of the areas of public open space within the proposed development and the low density of development along sections of the central spine road ensures that opportunities for extensive new planting exist within the site at the number of units proposed. This would represent a biodiversity enhancement on the existing situation by including more planting within the main part of the site. Conditions requiring specific details of the location and species type of new planting can be added at the outline stage to ensure that these details are provided with the reserved matters application at the point when the proposed layout would be fixed.
84. 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.

#### Ecology

85. 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.

86. The hedgerows on the boundaries of the site were identified as providing habitat for nesting birds. The hedgerows bounding the site should be fully retained to ensure that the biodiversity value of the site is not reduced. The indicative layout demonstrates that the majority of the existing plating could be retained at the density of development proposed. A standard condition can be attached to the permission to control the removal of vegetation during the bird breeding season.
87. The proposed balancing pond to deal with surface water drainage would provide a biodiversity enhancement opportunity, which is considered to be a positive element of the scheme, according with paragraph 118 of the NPPF. Details of the management of this area can be included in the section 106 agreement at this outline stage, with the exact size and location of the attenuation pond to be fixed at the reserved matter stage. In addition to this, 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**

88. The County Council 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 in terms of walking distance to the services and facilities available within Willingham.
89. The Highway Authority has indicated that a 2 metre wide footpath link to Over Road will be required to link the development to Willingham. The existing bus stops on Haden Way and Over Road will need to be upgraded to ensure that occupants of the development utilise public transport and enhance the sustainability of the development. 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.
90. 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 Over Road 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, following the provision of visibility spays and radii data for the proposed vehicular entrance to the site.

### **Residential amenity**

91. 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, 12 metres from elevations with windows facing blank elevations) can be achieved to ensure no unreasonable loss of light, overbearing and overlooking of neighbouring properties.

- 92. This would require some revisions to the indicative layout, as the rear elevations of plots 34-37 and 43-46 are 23 metres apart in the proposal. It is considered that the additional 2 metres required could be easily achieved through modification of the design of the plots at the eastern end of the development which would create more space in the central part of the scheme.
- 93. It is considered a development on the density proposed could be achieved without having an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the properties to the north of the site given the height and extent of the mature hedgerow on the common boundary, which can be retained by condition and is proposed to be retained by the indicative layout.
- 94. 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**

#### Surface water drainage

- 95. The site lies in Flood Zone 1. The Lead Local Flood Authority has not raised an objection following the submission of revised information and is of the view that surface water drainage would achieve the requirement of not exceeding the existing run off rate on the site, subject to suitable conditions being included in any consent. The Environment Agency has not objected to the proposals and has not recommended any specific conditions.

#### Foul water drainage

- 96. Anglian Water has commented that the existing Over Water Recycling Centre, which would treat wastewater from the proposed scheme has the capacity to be able to accommodate the additional flows that would be generated by the development.
- 97. In terms of foul water drainage, 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**

- 98. 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 400 square metres equipped area of open space is short of the Open Space SPD requirement of 500 square metres for developments of this size. At this outline stage, it is considered that there is sufficient space on the site to accommodate further equipped space, for example at the eastern end of the development. If at the reserved matters stage it becomes apparent that a contribution for offsite provision would be a better way of securing the larger area of equipped space, this could be achieved through a variation of the Section 106 Agreement. A contribution of approximately £64,000 (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 has been only one pooled contribution 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.

99. It is considered that a contribution of £32,000 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 has been only one pooled contribution made towards this infrastructure previously, this contribution is considered to be compliant with the CIL regulations.
100. 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 approximately £405,863, although the final figure is dependent upon housing mix and the size of the equipped play area which is to be finalised at the reserved matters stage. This excludes the County Council's requirements as Highway Authority which will be secured through the recommended planning conditions.

### **Other matters**

#### **Archaeology and Heritage**

101. The site has been the subject of a detailed evaluation which has highlighted the archaeological significance of the site as it is in close proximity to sites on Over Road where evidence of Saxon, medieval and post medieval human activity has been recorded. The site is also in close proximity to the 13<sup>th</sup> century St. Mary's church and All Saint's church. Additional work has been undertaken by the applicant and the County Council Archaeologist is satisfied that no further investigation works are necessary and no conditions are required should planning permission be granted.
102. 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 conservation area, which is located in excess of 700 square metres from the site. There are no listed buildings within close proximity of the site and therefore the development of the site would not have an adverse affect on the setting of any heritage assets in this regard.
103. Neither Historic England nor the District Council Conservation Officer have raised any objections to the outline proposals.

#### **Environmental Health**

104. 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.
105. 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.

106. It is considered that further assessment of the potential noise generated by traffic and vehicle movements on the B1050 and adjacent primary routes is required and the implications of this 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.
107. 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.
108. 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.
109. The applicant will be required to complete a Waste Water 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.
110. The applicant has indicated that a minimum of 10% of the energy needs generated by the development can be secured through on site 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

111. 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.
112. 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.

113. 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.
114. 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.
115. 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**

116. 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 Rockmill End (72 units with 40% affordable which Members resolved to grant at the May 2016 meeting of the Planning Committee). 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.
117. In relation to this application, it is considered to be 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. This has included an assessment by the County Council of the cumulative impact of this development alongside the other two schemes on the capacity of the education services that would serve the occupants of the development. 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, or be dependent upon, the outcome of the other two applications.

#### **Conclusion**

118. Policies 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. In relation to the other relevant policies of the LDF 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.
119. 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.

120. 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 areas of play. 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.
121. It is considered that the illustrative masterplan sufficiently demonstrates that 64 units could be located on the site in a manner that would allow a significant landscape buffer on the eastern boundary of the site and adequate distance to the northern and southern boundaries. The illustrative layout is therefore considered to demonstrate that the density of development proposed would preserve the character of the landscape and the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. The layout at this stage is indicative only and it is considered that the detailed landscape and design comments can be addressed at the reserved matter stage as the principle of development at the quantum proposed is accepted.
122. It is considered that the issues raised in relation to environmental health, trees and ecology can be dealt with by condition.
123. Overall, it is considered that the significant contribution 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 and demonstrable harm and therefore, it is considered that the proposal achieves the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.
124. The issue of the rights of way across the site has been raised in neighbour representations. There are no designated Public Rights of Way through the site and so public access would not be affected by development of the site. Private rights of access are not a material planning consideration as they are enforced through separate legislation.

### **Recommendation**

125. 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).

126. **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 adjacent roads –

- 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) Foul water drainage scheme
  - (l) Surface water drainage scheme
  - (m) Sustainable drainage strategy
  - (n) Tree Protection measures
  - (o) Compliance with flood risk assessment
  - (p) Traffic Management Plan
  - (q) Time restriction on the removal of trees
  - (r) Detailed plans of the construction of the access
  - (s) Pedestrian visibility splays
  - (t) Ecological enhancements including bird and bat boxes
  - (u) Site waste management plan
  - (v) Restriction on the hours of power operated machinery during construction
  - (w) Phasing of construction
  - (x) Approved ecological surveys
  - (y) Compliance with ecological survey submitted
  - (z) External lighting to be agreed
    - (aa) Cycle storage
    - (bb) Housing mix within market element to be policy compliant
    - (cc) Screened storage
    - (dd) Boundary treatments
    - (ee) Waste water management plan
    - (ff) Construction environment management plan
    - (gg) Details of piled foundations
    - (hh) Fire hydrant locations
    - (ii) 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/2456/15/OL

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