

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

5 October 2016

AUTHOR/S: Head of Development Management

Application Number: S/3181/15/FL

Parish(es): Great Abington

Proposal: Erection of 20 Dwellings, Associated Access and Landscaping

Site address: Land to the North of Pampisford Road, Great Abington

Applicant(s): Hill Residential and Mr B.C. and Mrs R. Moore

Recommendation: Delegated Approval

Key material considerations: Housing Land Supply
Principle of Development
Proposed Allocation
Character and Appearance of the Area
Density
Housing Mix
Affordable Housing
Developer Contributions
Design Considerations
Trees and Landscaping
Biodiversity
Highway Safety and Sustainable Travel
Flood Risk
Neighbour Amenity
Heritage Assets

Committee Site Visit: No

Departure Application: Yes

Presenting Officer: Karen Pell-Coggins, Principal Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: The Local Member has requested the application to be considered by the Planning Committee.

Date by which decision due: 31 October 2016 (extension of time agreed)

Executive Summary

1. This proposal, as amended, seeks permission for a residential development outside the Great Abington village framework and in the countryside. This development would

not normally be considered acceptable in principle as a result of its location. However, the district does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply and therefore the adopted LDF policies in relation to the supply of housing are not up to date for the purposes of the NPPF. However, the Local Planning Authority must still determine the weight to be applied to the policies even when out of date. In this case, considerable weight can be attached to these policies as they perform a material planning objective.

2. The NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and where relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted for development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when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.
3. In light of the lack of five-year housing land supply and having regard to recent local appeal decisions, the rural settlement policies are considered to continue to have significant weight in the determination of planning applications adjacent to or within close proximity to village frameworks. This will help ensure that development proposals outside and in close proximity to village frameworks have due regard to the availability of an appropriate level of services, facilities, employment and sustainable transport options. For Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, subject to all other relevant material considerations, it is considered that there is a case to be made that conflict with those policies should not be given significant weight, under the circumstances of a lack of five-year housing supply. Subject to other material considerations, this would mean in principle that the Council may grant permission for development in and adjacent to our larger villages. This is in the context of paragraph 14 of the NPPF and the test that permission should be granted unless there would be evidence of significant harm. This is consistent with local appeal decisions in this category of village since the lack of five-year supply.
4. However, for Group Villages and Infill Villages, conflict with the housing land supply policies should be given significant weight unless there are exceptional circumstances that would justify a departure. In this case, the allocation of the site in the emerging Local Plan and the level of services, facilities, employment and sustainable transport options in the village are considered to represent such a circumstance and therefore limited weight can be attached to the policies in relation to the supply of housing.
5. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are some adverse impacts from the development that cannot be fully mitigated namely the visual harm to the rural character and appearance of the area, these impacts are limited and not adverse to the extent that they are considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits that consist of a contribution of 20 dwellings towards the required housing land supply including 8 affordable dwellings, a location with good transport links and a range of services, provision of open space, developer contributions towards community facilities and the creation of jobs during the construction period that would benefit the local economy. Given the above balance, the application is recommended for approval.

Site and Surroundings

6. The site is located outside of the Great Abington village framework and in the countryside. It measures 1.1 hectares in area and currently forms a meadow at the south western edge of the village. There is a high hedge and trees on the eastern boundary of the site adjacent the High Street that is subject to a Tree Preservation Order. A post and rail fence and sporadic landscaping form the southern boundary

adjacent to Pampisford Road. The western boundary is open. Part of the northern boundary adjacent to No. 110 High Street comprises a hedge and part is open. No. 108 High Street is a listed building. The site lies within flood zone 1 (low risk). A public footpath runs from Pampisford Road to the High Street to the west of the site.

Proposal

7. The proposal seeks the erection of 20 dwellings. 8 of the dwellings would be affordable in nature. The mix would consist of 2 x one bedroom flats, 2 x two bedroom houses, 3 x two bedroom bungalows and 1 x three bedroom house. The remaining 12 dwellings would be available for sale on the open market. The mix would consist of 3 x two bedroom houses, 4 x three bedroom houses, 3 x four bedroom houses and 2 x five bedroom houses. The layout would comprise houses fronting the High Street and Pampisford Road. The main access would be off Pampisford Road and comprise a shared surface. A footpath link would be provided along the High Street, along Pampisford Road and through the site from the High Street. The dwellings would be two-storey in scale and have a maximum height of 9.8 metres. The designs would incorporate gables and dormer windows. The materials of construction would be red bricks/render and horizontal boarding for the walls and pantiles for the roofs. Two parking spaces would be provided for the majority of the dwellings. The hedge and trees along the High Street would be removed. A replacement landscape buffer would be provided along the High Street and a new landscape buffer would be provided along the northern, southern and western boundaries. A public open space would be provided on the site.

Planning History

8. S/1465/87/O – One Dwelling – Appeal Dismissed
S/1464/87/O – One Dwelling – Appeal Dismissed
S/1463/87/O – One Dwelling – Appeal Dismissed

National Guidance

9. National Planning Policy Framework
Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan Policies

10. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy DPD 2007**
ST/2 Housing Provision
ST/6 Group Villages
11. **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 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/4 Landscape Character Areas
CH/2 Archaeological Sites
CH/4 Development Within the Setting of a Listed Building

NE/6 Biodiversity
NE/11 Flood Risk
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

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

Open Space in New Developments SPD - Adopted January 2009
Biodiversity SPD - Adopted July 2009
Trees & Development Sites SPD - Adopted January 2009
Landscape in New Developments SPD - Adopted March 2010
Listed Buildings SPD- Adopted July 2009
Affordable Housing SPD - Adopted March 2010
District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010

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

S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/5 Provision of New Jobs and Homes
S/7 Development Frameworks
S/10 Group Villages
HQ/1 Design Principles
H/1j Allocation for Residential Development at Villages
H/7 Housing Density
H/8 Housing Mix
H/9 Affordable Housing
NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
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/6 Indoor Community Facilities
SC/7 Outdoor Playspace, Informal Open Space, and New Developments
SC/8 Open Space Standards
TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
TI/3 Parking Provision
TI/8 Infrastructure and New Developments

Consultation

14. **Great Abington Parish Council** – Recommends approval, as amended, and comments that consideration should be given to the neighbours on the High Street while carrying out the building works. The Council would also like a greater variation in building materials within the site and access to enable the hedge owned by No. 110 High Street to be maintained. No concerns about the flood report.
15. **Affordable Housing Officer** – Comments that if the application is to be determined in relation to the lack of a 5 year housing land supply rather than an exceptions site, 40% affordable housing is required. The development of 8 affordable units would meet Policy HG/3. There are 1700 applicants on the housing register and 22 with a local connection to Great Abington. The highest demand in the district is for one and two bedroom accommodation. Supports the revised mix of 2 x one bedroom flats, 2 x

two bedroom houses, 3 x two bedroom bungalows and 1 x three bedroom house. The tenure split should be 70% rented and 30% shared ownership and therefore it is expected that 6 of the properties to be available for rent and 2 for shared ownership. The properties should be built in accordance with the DCLG Technical Housing standards and HCA design standards. A registered provider should be appointed to take forward the affordable housing. Whilst the properties should be open to applicants registered on home link who have a connection to South Cambs. However, priority should be given to those applicants with a local connection to Great Abington, because similar schemes in South Cambs. have been given approval on this basis.

16. **Urban Design Officer** – Comments, as amended, that the layout has been revised to address some of the previous comments and is much improved on previous versions. However, concerns are still raised to the treatment along the High Street and the harm that this will cause to the character of the area. The amount of car parking and hardstanding needs to be reduced as the character of the street is houses behind front gardens. The retention of any mature trees and the hedgerow would be welcomed. The fanned arrangement of the public open space is not ideal. Plots 11 and 13 are too close together and would not meet the separation distances of 12 metres between backs of houses and blank walls as set out in the Design Guide.
17. **Trees and Landscapes Officer** – Has no objections.
18. **Landscape Design Officer** – Comments that the amended scheme is an improvement on the previous scheme mainly due to the removal of the link road to the north and the additional planting along the Pampisford Road frontage. However, there are still a number of points that need addressing as there are still concerns that the development would be out of character and not integrate well to the landscape at the edge of the village. Particular concerns relate to the amount of hardstanding along the High Street, the loss of the existing hedge and trees along the High Street and lack of replacement planting, the location of the perimeter planting in private gardens, the layout with awkward spaces and the location of the public open space. This will result in the proposals appearing suburban on a site that retains a semi-rural landscape character.
19. **Ecology Officer** – Comments, as amended, that the ecology report submitted with the application has not identified any significant biodiversity constraint to development. Although much of the hedgerow will be removed, this is not assessed to be species rich. No objections subject to conditions in relation to the removal of vegetation in the bird breeding season, a planting buffer of native species not in private ownership, a scheme of ecological enhancement, (including bird and bat boxes and retention of meadow under landscape belt) and protection for badgers during construction.
20. **Conservation Officer** – Comments as amended that the development would not impact upon the setting of heritage assets near the site. The dwellings along the High Street reflect the general character of linear development along the High Street but the development retains the dwellings outside the built form on the western side of the High Street that remains unaltered and undeveloped as paddocks.
21. **Environmental Health Officer** – Has no objection in principle subject to conditions in relation to the hours of construction work and construction related deliveries, method statement for piling foundations, measures to minimise the spread of air borne dust, a construction programme, a noise insulation scheme for the residential building envelope and traffic noise, electric vehicle charging points, details of external lighting and a noise impact assessment for renewable energy plant or equipment if an air

source heat pump or wind turbine.

22. **Contaminated Land Officer** – Comments that that site is grassland that has remained undeveloped from 1800 to the present day. The submitted report has not identified any levels of contaminants of concern deemed to represent an unacceptable risk to future site users or the environment. Suggests an informative in relation to any contamination found on site.
23. **Section 106 Officer** – Comments that any planning obligations need to be compliant with the CIL regulations. To comply with Policy DP/4 and SF/10 of the LDF to mitigate the demand from the development, contributions are requested in towards outdoor sport off-site, formal children's playspace off-site, community facilities off-site, waste receptacles and monitoring. The contributions are tariff based upon the housing mix. The informal children's playspace and informal public open space would be provided on site.
24. **Local Highways Authority** – Comments that the plans do not match in terms of the access details but the access is acceptable shown on drawing number PL 101 Revision B, maintenance strips of 500mm on either side of the access should be shown on the plans, vehicular visibility splays need to be shown on the plans for Plots 12 to 18 as these are shared accesses, the visitor parking needs to be outside the maintenance strip if the access is adopted by the Local Highways Authority and the refuse swept path analysis is acceptable.
25. **Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team** – Comments that the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. Has no objections in principle but requires a condition in relation to an archaeological investigation of the site.
26. **Cambridgeshire County Council Growth Team** – Comments that there is sufficient capacity at Great Abington Primary School for early years and primary education places and sufficient space at Linton Village College for secondary education places. There is also sufficient capacity at Linton Library. The pooling limit has been reached in relation to a proposal for Thriplow HRC in relation to strategic waste. Therefore, no contributions are requested.
27. **Cambridgeshire County Council Flood and Water Team** – Comments that the minimum requirements of the NPPF has been met as it has been demonstrated that surface water can be dealt with on site by using permeable paving, soakaways, cellular crates and there will be a reduction in the run-off rate. In addition, the volume of run-off will be no greater than the existing. Requires a condition for a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site based upon the Flood Risk Assessment together with details of the long term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system.
28. **Environment Agency** – Has no objections in principle subject to informatives.
29. **Anglian Water** – Comments that the foul sewerage network has the available capacity for the flows and it would be within the catchment of the Linton Recycling Centre waste treatment plant that will have the available capacity for the flows.
30. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** – Requests a condition in relation to the provision of fire hydrants.
31. **Development Officer** – The Health Impact Assessment is acceptable in relation to the Council's SPD.

32. **Huntingdonshire District Council Sustainability Team** – Comments on the revised statement are awaited.

33. **NHS England** – No reply (out of time).

Representations

34. **Local Member** - Supports the application and makes the following comments: -

“I am aware that officers wanted to see the following to be incorporated into the revised scheme:

- The hedge along the High Street retained where possible subject to accesses off the High Street;
- Improvements to the landscape buffer
- A design solution in keeping with the area
- Houses should front the High Street;
- Access moved away from Pampisford Road to the High Street;
- Landscape buffer along the countryside enhanced further
- Removal of access provision to rear land.
-

I would make the following observations:

i) Officers have noted that the hedge along the High Street has now been removed and the replacement buffer along the High Street is of poor quality and there is insufficient space for native hedge and tree planting.

In the view of many locals the existing hedge along the High Street is itself of poor quality and the revised plans show a landscape buffer with appropriate accesses for those houses that now front the High Street. The houses in the proposed development that do now front the High Street are buffered in such a way as to present a coherent view along the High Street with the existing houses directly opposite.

ii) Officers have described the new layout as ‘not considered to be in keeping with the area. Houses should front onto Pampisford Road with gardens to the rear and not to the side.

There are about 18 to 20 existing dwellings on Pampisford Road in the vicinity of this proposed development. Some have gardens to the front and rear, some to the front and at least two properties are set at right angles to Pampisford Road. There are other examples within Great Abington of houses set at right angles to a road.

The site layout as originally proposed was criticised by a number of local residents because those houses immediately next to the High Street had their backs facing the High Street. This was the reason why Great Abington Parish Council originally did not support the plans. However, the revised plans turned these houses round to face the High Street, and as far as I am aware there have been no other local criticisms of the layout in broad terms.

iii) Officers consider that the access to the development should ‘be moved away from Pampisford Road to the High Street’.

However, this would mean removing a considerable portion of the existing hedge on the High Street as the High Street is narrow at this point and the hedge is right on the

edge of the road so a significant part of the hedge would have to be removed in order to provide appropriate visibility splays. In addition, as stated above, there are already 18 to 20 dwellings accessing directly onto Pampisford Road, a road that has a 30 mph limit and numerous speed cushions to slow traffic.

iv) Landscape buffer along the countryside enhanced further

I would suggest that this is subject to further discussion with the applicant.

v) Removal of access provision to rear land.

This is one reason where I do have sympathy with the officers' view, and I know that many local residents are concerned that if this application were to be approved it would thereby allow easy access to the land beyond and therefore the possibility of this larger piece of adjoining land eventually being built on. It must be borne in mind that the three areas of land identified and consulted upon locally were to meet the specific local need as expressed through a housing needs survey, and any attempt to build on this adjoining land would not be in accord with local views regarding the overall scale of development within the village.

However, there is an argument in favour of the road layout in the revised application in that it allows refuse /recyclables collection lorries to enter and turn safely within the site.

Whilst I do have some concerns about the road layout, I do not feel that these are sufficient to object to or refuse this application. Having made these comments and in view of the large measure of local support for this application as it now stands, I request that, if officers are minded to refuse this application, it goes to the SCDC Planning Committee for determination."

35. **Local Residents** - 8 letters of representation have been received that raise the following issues: -

- i) Outside village framework and in countryside.
- ii) Scale of development
- iii) Landscape impact.
- iv) The affordable houses on High Street do not compliment existing housing stock on the High Street- lack of character.
- v) Insufficient parking for affordable houses and visitor parking not in the right location that could lead to on-street parking.
- vi) Loss of mature trees along the High Street in good condition.
- vii) New hedge should be managed.
- viii) No consideration given to previous proposals for 12 dwellings to mirror the High Street and blend in with the existing development in the vicinity.
- ix) Unacceptably high density/ overdevelopment.
- x) Noise and disturbance from affordable houses.
- xi) New footpath welcomed.
- xii) Increase in traffic and more accesses on to High Street that may affect bus route.
- xiii) Loss of rural character.
- xiv) Drainage needs to be within the site and not on neighbouring land and flood protection measures.
- xv) Noise and disturbance during construction.
- xvi) Loss of agricultural land.
- xvii) Greenfield site and potential brownfield site available.
- xviii) Junction on to busy and fast moving traffic on Pampisford Road.
- xix) Loss of views from public footpath.

- xx) Cumulative impact of developments in village- can the local roads take the traffic and can the school accommodate more pupils.
- xxi) Affordable housing should be for people in the village.
- xxii) Affordable housing is not integrated into the development.
- xxiii) Covenant on land.

Planning Assessment

- 36. The key issues to consider in the determination of this application relate to housing land supply, the principle of the development in the countryside, housing density, housing mix, affordable housing, developer contributions and the impacts of the development upon the character and appearance of the area, heritage assets, flood risk, highway safety, neighbour amenity, biodiversity, trees and landscaping.

Housing Land Supply

- 37. 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.
- 38. 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 the 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.
- 39. 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 as so not to be restricted 'merely to 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 the Court of Appeal has confirmed that 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.
- 40. In the case of this application, policies which must be considered as potentially influencing the supply of housing land include ST/2 and ST/6 of the adopted Core Strategy and adopted policies DP/1, DP/7, HG/1, HG/2, NE/4, NE/6 and NE/17 of the adopted Development Control Policies. Policies S/7, S/10, H/1, H/7, H/8, NH/2, NH/3 and NH/4 of the draft Local Plan are also material considerations and considered to be relevant (draft) policies for the supply of housing.
- 41. 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 (which includes land designated as Green Belt in adopted plans for instance).

42. Whilst paragraph 2 of Policy ST/6 of the adopted Core Strategy permits residential development within the village framework and the site is located outside the framework, given that the site adjoins the village framework, the site is related to the village geographically and on its dependency on its services and facilities. ST/6 also forms part of a suite of policies, which operate to direct new development to settlements which have an appropriate level of services to meet the requirements of new residents. As such, it is considered that ST/6 which reflects the relatively limited level of services at group villages to serve residential developments is material to development both within the framework and development which is proposed as a residential extension to that framework, as proposed here.
43. It falls to the Council as decision maker to assess the weight that should be given to the existing policies. The Council considers this assessment should, in the present application, have regard to whether the policies continue to perform a material planning objective and whether it is consistent with the policies of the NPPF.
44. In light of the lack of five-year housing land supply and having regard to recent local appeal decisions, the rural settlement policies are considered to continue to have significant weight in the determination of planning applications adjacent to or within close proximity to village frameworks. This will help ensure that development proposals outside and in close proximity to village frameworks have due regard to the availability of an appropriate level of services, facilities, employment and sustainable transport options.
45. For Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, subject to all other relevant material considerations, it is considered that there is a case to be made that conflict with those policies should not be given significant weight, under the circumstances of a lack of five-year housing supply. Subject to other material considerations, this would mean in principle that the Council may grant permission for development in and adjacent to our larger villages. This is in the context of paragraph 14 of the NPPF and the test that permission should be granted unless there would be evidence of significant harm. This is consistent with local appeal decisions in this category of village since the lack of five-year supply.
46. However, for Group Villages and Infill Villages, conflict with the housing land supply policies should be given significant weight unless there are exceptional circumstances that would justify a departure.

Principle of Development

47. The site is located outside the of any village framework and in the countryside where Policy DP/7 of the LDF and Policy S/7 of the emerging Local Plan states that only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted due to the need to protect the countryside from encroachment and incremental growth in unsustainable locations. The erection of a residential development of 20 dwellings would therefore not under normal circumstances be considered unacceptable in principle. Considerable weight can be attached to this policy given that it performs a material planning objective.

48. Great Abington is identified as a Group Village under Policy ST/6 of the LDF and Policy S/10 of the emerging Local Plan where up to 8 dwellings are considered acceptable in principle on land within village frameworks due to the scale of the village and the limited level of services and facilities within the settlement. The erection of 20 dwellings outside the village framework is not therefore normally supported in principle. Considerable weight can be attached to this policy given that it performs a material planning objective.
49. Part of the site is allocated for residential development under Policy H/1 of the emerging Local Plan. The policy states that the site will be developed in accordance with relevant Local Plan policy requirements, and the development requirements identified. The number of homes granted planning permission on the site may be higher or lower than the indicative capacity and should be determined through a design-led approach. All sites will need to make appropriate financial contribution to any necessary additional infrastructure requirements, including towards additional capacity in local schools. Policy H/1j specifically references 0.55 hectares of land at on an L shape plot of land along the High Street and Pampisford Road frontage for the erection of 12 dwellings with the following requirements: -
- i) Retention of boundary trees and hedges except as required to provide for access.
 - ii) Creation of a 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.
 - iii) This is a Parish Council led proposal which has been included in the Local Plan because it has demonstrated local support. Developments should seek to fulfil the aspirations of the Parish Council for the site.
50. This proposal has undergone consultation in the village by the Parish Council and is supported by local residents. It was agreed for inclusion in the submission Local Plan at the 11 February 2014 meeting of the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder, and by Full Council on 13 March 2014. It was under public consultation from December 2015 to January 2016.
51. 8 representations were submitted in support of this policy on the following grounds: -
- i) Strong support in village (75%) and would provide more affordable homes.
 - ii) Need for existing village residents to downsize.
 - iii) Need more for young families to stay in village or move back to village.
 - iv) Cyclepath, footway and land for horse riders needed along Pampisford Road.
 - v) Proposals are well considered and proportionate.
 - vi) Infrastructure/ treatment upgrades are to foul drainage required and no capacity for surface drainage within network.
 - vii) need to maintain character of village, adequate provision of open space, concerns about traffic, consider cycleways and public transport, improve provision for pedestrians, school oversubscribed, improve access to healthcare.
52. 5 representations were submitted that object to this policy on the following grounds: -
- i) Any proposals should not include road building/widening and should include investment in sustainable transport
 - ii) Concern over approach of including specific proposals by Parish Council's in the local plan as it can support sites outside frameworks on a rural exception site basis.
 - iii) Policy is not justified to specifically identify the allocations being led by the Parish Council as other sites have been disregarded.
 - iv) Questions the inconsistent approach to the allocation of sites in Group and Infill villages when other sites at a similar level were not considered.
 - v) Allowing three sites at a late stage is a narrow and inflexible approach towards allowing organic growth in the village over the plan period.

vi) The inclusion of more sustainable villages are not included.

53. Given that the above objections do not relate to the allocation of the site itself and relate more to the inclusion of other site, it is considered that this policy can be given some weight in the determination of the application given that it is a locally led development. However, it should be noted that the site area exceeds the allocation.

Sustainable Development

54. The NPPF states that there are 3 dimensions to sustainable development- economic, social and environmental. The aspects are considered in the assessment of highlighted issues below.

Economic

55. The provision of 20 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.

Social

Provision of Housing

56. The development would provide a benefit in helping to meet the current housing shortfall in South Cambridgeshire through delivering 20 dwellings. There are no known constraints to the delivery of the development on the site within the next 5 years and the applicants have stated that the site is available now and subject to securing the necessary consent, development could commence in late 2016 with completion by late 2017. This could be a condition of any consent.

Services and Facilities

57. Whilst it is acknowledged that Great Abington falls within the one of the lower tiers in the hierarchy for the categorisation of villages across the district, the development of 20 dwellings is not considered to be unacceptable in relation to the size of the village or the level of services and facilities in the village. The village has approximately 350 dwellings and an additional 20 dwellings is not considered excessive in terms of an increase in the scale of the village. The dwellings on the site would have easy access by walking and cycling to facilities within the village such as the primary school, shop, church, village hall, recreation ground and a bus service that runs every 30 minutes. They would also have easy access by walking and cycling to the nearby employment site of Granta Park just outside the village but very close to the site. Residents would not therefore have to rely upon the private car to access the majority of their everyday needs. Given the above, the site is not considered to be unsustainable to the extent that would warrant refusal of the application on these grounds.

Housing Density

58. The site measures 1.1 hectares in area. The erection of 20 dwellings would equate to a density of 18 dwellings per hectare. Whilst this density would not comply with the requirement under Policy HG/1 of the LDF of at least 30 dwellings per hectare, it is considered acceptable in this case given the sensitive nature of the site in the countryside.

Affordable Housing

59. Policy HG/3 of the LDF states that proposals for housing developments will only be permitted if they provide an agreed mix of affordable housing to meet local needs. The amount of affordable housing sought will be 40% or more of the dwellings for which planning permission may be given on all sites of two or more dwellings. Policy H/9 of the emerging Local Plan states that the amount of affordable housing sought will be 40% or more of the dwellings for which planning permission may be given on all sites of three or more dwellings.
60. The proposal would provide 8 affordable dwellings (40%) and comply with Policy HG/3 of the LDF and H/9 of the emerging Local Plan.

Housing Mix

61. Policy HG/2 of the LDF states that in developments of more than 10 dwellings a mix of units will be sought providing a range of accommodation, including one and two bed dwellings, having regard to economic viability, the local context of the site and the need to secure a balanced community.
62. Policy H/8 of the emerging Local Plan states that a wide choice, type and mix of housing will be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community including families with children, older people and people with disabilities. The market homes in developments of 10 or more homes will consist of:
 - a. At least 30% 1 or 2 bedroom homes;
 - b. At least 30% 3 bedroom homes;
 - c. At least 30% 4 or more bedroom homes;
 - d. With a 10% flexibility allowance that can be added to any of the above categories taking account of local circumstances.
63. The erection of 3 x two bedroom dwellings (25%), 4 x three bedroom dwellings (33%) and 5 x four/five bedroom dwellings (42%) would comply with Policy HG/2 of the LDF and Policy H/8 of the emerging Local Plan given the need identified by the Parish Council.

Developer Contributions

64. Development plan policies state that planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements towards the provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.
65. Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations states that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development of the obligation is: -
 - i) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - ii) Directly related to the development; and,
 - iii) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
66. The Recreation Study 2013 identified a surplus of 1.51 hectares of sports space and a deficit of 1.03 hectares of children's play space. The audit highlights a number of improvements including sports pitches, upgrade to play equipment and changing facilities.
67. The Community Facilities Audit 2009 states that Great Abington is served by the Abington institute that is a well maintained, good quality recently updated facility that

is well equipped with community café and functions as a hub for community sports facilities.

68. The scheme is required to provide 751 square metres of sports space, 177 square metres of formal children's playspace, 177 square metres of informal children's play space and 188 square metres of informal open space through on-site provision or an off-site contribution.
69. The provision of 230 square metres in area of informal children's playspace and informal public open space on the site would not require any off-site contributions. However, contributions are required if maintenance is not carried out by a management company and is adopted by the Parish Council.
70. The Parish Council has requested a contribution of £21,923.70 towards outdoors sports for improving and enlarging the hard court area on the recreation ground and making it into a multi-use games area.
71. The Parish Council has requested a contribution of £32,215.72 towards formal children's playspace for updating and improving the children's play area on the recreation ground.
72. The Parish Council has requested a contribution of £9,953.40 towards community facilities for the continued improvement of facilities at the village institute including replacement flooring, storage and a boiler.
73. A contribution of £1405 is required towards waste receptacles and £500 towards monitoring.
74. Cambridgeshire County Council has not requested any contributions towards early years, primary education, secondary education, libraries and life long learning or strategic waste.
75. Please see Appendix 1 for the Heads of terms for the planning obligation. It is considered that all of the requested contributions to date meet the CIL tests. The applicant has agreed to these contributions.

Environmental

Character and Appearance of Area

76. The proposal would result in encroachment into the countryside outside the existing built-up development within the village framework. The introduction of 20 dwellings of significant scale on a currently open and undeveloped area of meadow land with a strong rural character that provides a typical landscape setting to the village and provides separation between the village and Granta Park would result in a visually intrusive development with a suburban character. However, this is not considered to adversely affect the character and appearance of the countryside and the landscape setting of the village as the encroachment is limited and some separation would remain. The development would also only be visible from close public viewpoints and would not affect the wider landscape and countryside from long distance views.

Design Considerations

77. The overall layout of the site is now considered to be satisfactory. Whilst an access from the High Street would be preferable as it would be better connected with the

village, the shared access from Pampisford Road is a significant improvement to the previous over engineered access and is more in keeping with the character and appearance of the area.

78. Although Plots 1, 2 and 4 would have their rear gardens adjacent to Pampisford Road that would result in a weaker frontage, additional landscaping has reduced the visual impact of the development to an acceptable compromise.
79. The dwellings fronting the High Street are welcomed and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. However, the substantial mass of hardstanding to the front of the dwellings for turning and parking and inappropriate landscaping would result in hard suburban features within the street scene. The proposal would lead to some harm the rural character and appearance of the area and not therefore accord with Policy DP/2 of the LDF.
80. The two-storey scale and traditional form, design and materials of the dwellings are considered to reflect the character and appearance of the area. A condition would be attached to any consent in relation to materials to address the Parish Council's concerns in relation to the variety currently put forward.
81. The provision, amount and central location of a public open space within the development is supported. The fanned arrangement of dwellings to the north would allow surveillance of the space.

Trees and Landscaping

82. The site comprises a number of trees and a hedge along the High Street frontage. The trees are of low quality but provide a landscape buffer at the entrance to the village that contributes to the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would result in the loss of these important trees and hedge that provide a rural setting to the village and be contrary to Policy HG/6 of the LDF.
83. The loss of the trees and hedge are only considered acceptable if the replacement soft landscaping is of equal quality. The proposed landscape buffer along the High Street would not allow adequate space for native tree planting to integrate the development into its setting. This would result in a suburban development at the entrance to the village. The proposal would therefore lead to some harm the rural character and appearance of the area and not therefore accord with Policy DP/2 of the LDF.
84. A condition would be attached to any consent in relation to boundary treatment to ensure that the landscaping buffer is not under private ownership.

Biodiversity

85. The removal of the trees and hedgerow would result in the loss of important features for wildlife. Important ecological features should be preserved in order to maintain biodiversity on the site. The replacement landscaping would not offer the same quality of habitat. However, limited weight can be attached to this policy as the increase in the amount of landscaping across the whole site would provide additional habitats. The proposal would not therefore be contrary to Policy NE/6 of the LDF.

Heritage Assets

86. No. 108 High Street is a grade II listed building. The proposal is not considered to

damage the setting of the listed building given the distance and relationship of the development on the site with this property.

87. The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. The development is not considered to result in the loss of any significant features of archaeological interest providing a condition is attached to any consent to secure an archaeological evaluation of the site to preserve any important remains.

Highway Safety

88. The High Street is the main road through the village from the A1307 and Little Abington at its northern end to Pampisford Road at its southern end. It is a fairly narrow road with a speed limit of 30 miles per hour. Pampisford Road connects the A505 and Granta Park to the west to the A1307 at Hildersham to the east. It is a wider road with traffic calming and a speed limit of 30 miles per hour.
89. The proposal would result in an increase in traffic in the area. The erection of 20 dwellings would lead to approximately 125 two-way vehicle movements in the area during a 12 hour period. This includes 21 movements during the am peak period and 15 movements during the pm peak period. This increase in traffic is not considered to have a significant impact upon the capacity and functioning of the public highway.
90. The main access from Pampisford Road would be a shared surface and measure 6 metres in width. Vehicular visibility splays measuring 2.4 metres from the edge of the carriageway x 43 metres along the edge of the carriageway in both directions would be provided. This would accord with Local Highway Authority standards.
91. The main accesses from the High Street serving 5 dwellings would measure 5.0 metres in width. Vehicular visibility splays measuring 2.4 metres from the edge of the carriageway x 43 metres along the edge of the carriageway to the north and 32.4 metres to the south would be provided. This would accord with Local Highway Authority standards. Revised drawings have been received on the 20 September, 2016 showing additional information regarding the access and footway widths which are now subject to additional consultation with the local highway authority.
92. The secondary accesses from Pampisford Road and the High Street serving individual dwellings would measure 3.6 metres in width. Pedestrian visibility splays would measure 2.0 metres x 2.0 metres on both sides of the accesses. These would accord with Local Highway Authority standards and be subject to a condition of any consent.
93. A new 1.8 metre wide footway would be provided along the High Street and Pampisford Road to connect to the existing public footpath on Pampisford Road. This is accepted and would need to be agreed as part of the Section 106. A footway link from the High Street to the development would also be provided and is supported.
94. A total of 48 vehicle parking spaces would be provided for the development. The Council's parking standards under Policy TR/2 of the LDF require an average of 1.5 vehicle parking spaces per dwelling and a maximum of two vehicle parking spaces per dwelling in unsustainable locations for three plus bedroom dwellings. The proposal is considered to result in an overprovision of vehicle parking on the site as there are a number of larger properties that have four vehicle parking spaces. This would encourage the occupiers to travel by unsustainable modes of transport. However, it would not result in significant harm as it is only slight above the maximum levels.

95. At least one cycle parking space could be provided for each dwelling that would be in accordance with the Council's standards. This would be a condition of any consent.
96. A condition would be attached to any consent to secure a traffic management plan during construction.

Flood Risk

97. The site is situated in flood zone 1 (low risk). It has been demonstrated through the submitted Flood Risk Assessment that surface water can be dealt with on site by using permeable paving, soakaways and cellular crates and that there will be a reduction in run-off rate. In addition, the volume of run-off would be no greater than existing. This would comply with Policy NE/11 of the LDF and the proposal is not therefore considered to increase the risk of flooding to the site and surrounding area. A condition would be attached to any consent to agree the detailed design of the surface water drainage scheme and its maintenance.

Neighbour Amenity

98. No.110 High Street has a garage with hardstanding and garden beyond to the north of the site. The development is not considered to adversely affect the amenities of the neighbour through being unduly overbearing in mass, through a loss of light, or through a loss of privacy given that the main habitable room windows to the dwelling and private garden area are a significant distance off the boundary.
99. The affordable dwellings are not considered to result in noise levels above those of private dwellings that would adversely affect the amenities of neighbours in the High Street.
100. A condition would be attached to any consent to control the hours of use of power operated machinery, noisy works and construction related deliveries.
101. The comments of the Urban Design Officer in relation to Plots 11 and 13 are noted. However, the relationship between these properties is considered to be satisfactory given that the view from the closest window on Plot 13 at a distance of 11.5 metres from Plot 11 would be to towards the front of the dwelling or the lowest part of the dwelling.
102. The relationship between Plots 3 and 20 is now acceptable as there would be a distance of 15 metres from the rear windows in Plot 3 to the wall of Plot 20.

Other Matters

103. The site is located on grade 2 (very good) agricultural land. The development would result in the permanent loss of this agricultural land contrary to policy NE/17. However, this policy does not apply where land is allocated for development in the LDF or sustainability considerations and the need for the development are sufficient to override the need to protect the agricultural use of the land. In this case, this is considered satisfactory given the absence of up-to-date policies for the supply of housing in the district and the allocation for development in the emerging Local Plan. Therefore, limited weight can be attached to this policy.
104. The development is acceptable in relation to foul drainage and contamination.

Balance

105. In considering this application, the following relevant adopted Core Strategy and Development Control policies are to be regarded as out of date while there is no five year housing land supply:

Core Strategy

ST/2 Housing Provision

ST/6 Group Villages

Development Control Policies

DP/1 Sustainable Development

DP/7 Development Frameworks

HG/1 Housing Density

HG/2 Housing Mix

NE/4 Landscape Character Areas

NE/6 Biodiversity

NE/17 Protecting High Quality Agricultural Land

106. 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.
107. In the case of this application in a Group Village, the allocation of the site in the emerging Local Plan and the level of services, facilities, employment and sustainable transport options in the village is considered to represent an exceptional circumstance and therefore limited weight can be attached to the policies in relation to the supply of housing.
108. This report therefore sets out following adverse impacts of the development: -
i) Some harm to the character and appearance of the area from inadequate landscape buffer along the High Street and mass of hardstanding.
109. These adverse impacts must be weighed against the following benefits of the development: -
i) The contribution of 20 dwellings towards the housing land supply in the district based on the objectively assessed 19,500 dwellings target set out in the SHMA and the method of calculation and buffer identified by the Inspector.
ii) Developer contributions towards public open space and community facilities in the village.
iii) Suitable and sustainable location for this scale of residential development given the position of the site in relation to access to public transport, services and facilities and local employment.
iv) Employment during construction to benefit the local economy.
v) Greater use of local services and facilities to contribute to the local economy.
110. Whilst it is acknowledged that the policies for the determination of housing in the LDF are out-of-date, the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits offered by this application. The proposals would therefore constitute sustainable development.

Conclusion

111. Having regard to applicable national and local planning policies, and having taken all

relevant material considerations into account, it is considered that planning permission should not be granted in this instance.

Recommendation

112. It is recommended that the Planning Committee grants officers delegated powers to approve the application subject to the following: -

Conditions

- a) Time Limit
- b) Approved Plans
- c) Materials
- d) Boundary Treatment
- e) Hard and Soft Landscaping
- f) Landscaping Implementation
- g) Ecological Enhancement
- h) Badger Protection fencing during construction
- i) Removal of Vegetation
- j) Surface Water Drainage
- k) Contamination Not Previously Found
- l) Archaeological Investigation
- m) Fire Hydrants
- n) Visibility Splays
- o) Traffic Management Plan
- p) Retention of Parking and Turning
- q) Cycle Parking
- r) Removal of Permitted Development Rights – Part 1, Classes A, B and E and Part 2, Class A (Within 5 metres of Public Highway)
- s) Windows (Fixed Shut and Obscure Glazed)
- t) Construction Phase- Noise/Vibration and Dust
- u) Plant and Equipment for Renewable Energy Provision
- v) External Lighting
- w) Footpath link

Section 106

- a) Affordable Housing
- b) Open Space
- c) Community Facilities
- d) Waste Receptacles
- e) Monitoring
- f) Management and Maintenance of Surface Water Drainage System

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 References: S/3181/15/FL

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