

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

11 January 2017

AUTHOR/S: Head of Development Management

Application Number: S/1027/16/OL

Parish(es): Swavesey

Proposal: Outline planning permission for the erection of up to 99 dwellings with associated access, infrastructure and open space. All matters reserved with the exception of the means of access

Site address: Land south of Fen Drayton Road, Swavesey

Applicant(s): Bloor Homes Ltd

Recommendation: Delegated approval (to complete section 106 agreement)

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

Committee Site Visit: 10 January 2017

Departure Application: Yes

Presenting Officer: David Thompson, Principal Planning Officer

Application brought to Committee because: The officer recommendation of approval conflicts with the recommendation of Swavesey Parish Council and approval would represent a departure from the Local Plan

Date by which decision due: 11 January 2017 (Extension of time agreed)

Executive Summary

1. The key issues to be assessed in the determination of this planning application are considered to be the principle of development, the landscape impact of the proposals

and the highway safety implications of the scheme.

2. Assessment of the principle of development rests on the case as to whether the scheme is considered to be sustainable and whether any harm identified significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the scheme. Officers acknowledge that there is some landscape harm arising from the development of a field which currently marks the transition from the edge of built development within the Swavesey village framework to the Fen Edge character of the open countryside.
3. However, the proposals include a significant area of open space in the most sensitive western section of the site. In addition, a parameter plan indicating the density of development across the site indicates that the 99 units can be provided in the eastern portion of the site can be provided with lower density development on the northern and western edges of the scheme and a central core limited to 38 dwellings per hectare. This density would allow the grading of the pattern of development out towards the most sensitive edges and thereby reducing the impact on the wider landscape. This is considered to satisfy the SHLAA report which considered that development on part of the site could mitigate the landscape impact, subject to the provision of additional landscaping, which is to be provided in the western portion of the site.
4. The Local Highway Authority has objected to the proposals due to concerns regarding the safety of the pedestrian link to be provided from the north eastern corner of the development, across Fen Drayton Road. It is acknowledged that the more logical route would be to provide a pedestrian link to Gibraltar Lane but this would negatively affect the deliverability of the site. The pedestrian link would be provided at a point where the speed limit is 30 miles per hour and within close proximity of traffic calming measures to the east and west. Within this context, the extent of the harm to highway safety is considered not to outweigh the benefits of the overall scheme, including improvements to highway and public transport infrastructure.
5. All of the other relevant material planning considerations are assessed in detail in the report. 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.

Planning History

6. S/0303/16/E1 – request for screening opinion as to whether Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development – not considered to be EIA development

S/1649/81/F – Light Industrial - Refused

C/0127/73/O – (Church Lane) Residential Development, 32 Houses and 16 Bungalows – Withdrawn

C/0127/71/O – (School Lane) Residential Development – Refused

National Guidance

7. National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan Policies

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.

8. **South Cambridgeshire LDF Core Strategy DPD, 2007**
 - ST/2 Housing Provision
 - ST/6 Group Villages

9. **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
 - 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

10. **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

11. **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Submission - March 2014**
 - S/1 Vision
 - S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
 - S//3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - S/5 Provision of New Jobs and Homes
 - S/6 The Development Strategy to 2031

S/7 Development Frameworks
S/9 Minor Rural Centres
HQ/1 Design Principles
H/1 Allocations for residential development at Villages (h relates to this site)
H/7 Housing Density
H/8 Housing Mix
H/9 Affordable Housing
NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
NH/3 Protecting Agricultural Land
NH/4 Biodiversity
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

12. **Swavesey Parish Council** – object to the application for the following reasons:

Response to the original submission:

Surface water management – surface water run off is a major concern along Fen Drayton Road, with evidence of water standing in gardens of properties. Water flows across the fields and ditches into the water pipes along school lane. There is evidence of blockages within the drainage network and the Parish Council (PC) would object to any increased discharge of surface water into the School Lane system. There are concerns about the impact of this development alongside the pressure of surface water drainage from the Village College site and the impact this would have on the properties on Gibraltar Lane.

The PC also questions the location and capacity of the surface water attenuation ponds. The proposal would result in more surface water being directed through the village and additional pressure being placed on drainage capacity.

Concerns regarding the discharge rate of surface water and foul water drainage capacity are also raised. Concerns expressed regarding the highway safety impact of the scheme, in relation to the congestion on the arterial routes through the village and the difficulties associated with providing a footpath link to the main centre of the village.

The capacity of education services and health provision is also raised as a concern and there are questions about the provision of public open space and some inaccuracies within the supporting documents submitted with the application.

In relation to the revised submission, the PC maintained their objection and

highlighted the following additional concerns to those raised above:

In relation to surface water attenuation – the PC notes the amendments made to the discharge from the attenuation pond and the provision of additional storage capacity for periods when the main flood gates are shut. The attenuation pond is located close to the only pedestrian access to/from the site. The PC have questions regarding how the system will be managed and maintained and what measures can be put in place should the system fail. There is also the need to consider the cumulative impact of using the telemetry system on several sites i.e. how to prevent a rush of water into the drainage network once sluice gates re-open after a period of high levels in the Great Ouse.

The proposed pedestrian access arrangements are considered to be unsatisfactory. There is no room within the existing highway to provide a footpath link from the development. The proposal would require pedestrians walking to the village college to cross Fen Drayton Road twice. This would be a highway safety hazard and is likely to lead to people walking along the grass verge on the southern side of Fen Drayton Road, which will be dangerous.

At the November meeting of the SCDC Planning Committee, a development proposal for 70 new homes was refused on the grounds that the cumulative impact on the village would be unsustainable. This scheme for 99 would have an even more unsustainable impact in this regard.

13. **District Council Planning Policy Officer** – no objections to the principle of development as Swavesey is to be reclassified as a Minor Rural Centre in the emerging Local Plan. As such, it is considered that the quantum of development in principle does not conflict with the definition of sustainable development in the NPPF. The benefit of the additional housing should be given significant weight within the context of the lack of 5 year land supply.
14. **District Council Environmental Health Officer (EHO)** – The Public Health Specialist has commented that the Health Impact Assessment has been assessed as Grade A, which meets the required standard of the SPD Policy. The scheme is therefore acceptable in this regard.

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

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

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

15. **District Council Urban Design Officer** – the area indicated as the location for built development indicates that the up to 99 dwellings could be accommodated on that part of the site. This is likely to require flatted development as a layout comprising dwellings only would not allow sufficient garden sizes and would result in a suburban form of development. The density of development would need to be graded down from the highest density in the eastern portion, reducing progressively in a westerly direction to the lowest point on the western edge of the area to be developed. As the overall density of area to be developed on the indicative site plan is 38 dwellings per hectare, this would ensure that development would be at a significantly higher density on the eastern edge of the development.
16. **District Council Landscape Design Officer** – the indicative layout plan submitted with the application shows development extending across the depth of the majority of the site from north to south. Whilst the scheme does include a significant amount of open space in the western part of the site, the width of the developed area would need to be reduced and more substantial areas of open space woven in to the residential element of the scheme. This would avoid an isolated ‘tongue’ of development on the edge of the village, which is considered to be the result of the current illustrative layout. This is considered to be harmful to the rural Fen Edge character of the land to the west of the village framework, which is defined by the stark contrast between open agricultural fields and development within the framework. This site is an important part of that transition.
17. **Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team** – recommend refusal of the application due to safety concerns relating to the proposed pedestrian access from the north eastern corner of the site, along Fen Drayton Road. As the scheme is for up to 99 dwellings, a safe secondary means of access for pedestrians and cyclists should be provided and the proposed route is considered to be unacceptable from a highway safety perspective.

The Local Highway Authority has no objection to the proposed vehicular access, concluding that adequate visibility splays can be achieved from this access. The County Council has also confirmed that the number of trips generated by the proposed scheme (61 two way trips on the route along School lane to Middle Watch in the AM peak and 50 in the PM peak) would not exceed the capacity of the adjacent junctions.

18. **Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team** – no objection is raised but a condition should be attached to the outline planning permission requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to be completed and any agreed mitigation measures implemented prior to the commencement of development. The WSI should include the statement of significance and research objectives, the programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and a programme of post-excavation assessment.
19. **Cambridgeshire County Council Flood & Water Team** – no objection subject to the application following the submission of a revised Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The amended information confirms that the measures would attenuate a volume of surface water to accommodate a 1 in 100 annual probability level of flood risk, with zero discharge for 3 weeks of the year. Both swales and an attenuation pond would be included within the development to provide a sustainable drainage system.
20. **Environment Agency** - no objection in principle, offered recommendations and informative regarding surface water drainage, foul water drainage, potential ground

contamination, pollution prevention and conservation.

21. **Anglian Water** - No objections received, and advised –
Wastewater treatment – The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Over Water Recycling Centre, which currently does not have capacity to treat the flows from your development site. Anglian Water are obligated to accept the foul flows from your development with the benefit of planning consent and would therefore take the necessary steps to ensure that there is sufficient treatment capacity should the planning authority grant planning permission.

Foul Sewage Network – The sewage system at present has available capacity for these flows. If the developer wishes to connect to our sewage network they should serve notice under section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991. We will advise them of the most suitable point of connection.

Surface Water Disposal – The preferred method of surface water disposal would be to a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) with connection to sewer seen as the last option. Building regulations (part H) on Drainage and Waste Disposal for England includes a surface water drainage hierarchy, with infiltration on site as the preferred disposal option, followed by discharge to watercourse and then connection to a sewer. The surface water strategy/flood risk assessment submitted with the planning application relevant to Anglian Water is acceptable. We request that the agreed strategy is reflected in the planning approval.

Anglian Water recommends a condition attached to any grant of planning approval with regard to a surface water strategy.

22. **Contaminated Land Officer** – The site does not appear to be at high risk in terms of contamination, it is a large site and being redeveloped into a sensitive end uses (housing), advises that a Phase 1 Environmental Desk Study is required to determine the application, alternatively conditions should be attached to any subsequent decision requiring further investigations.

23. **Air Quality Officer** - to ensure that sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the development are not affected by the negative impact of construction work such as dust and noise, as well as ensuring that the applicant complies with the Council's low emission strategy for a development of this scale, conditions should be included that require the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan/Dust Management Plan, and an electronic vehicle charging infrastructure strategy

24. **Affordable Housing Officer** - The site is located outside of the development framework of Swavesey and should therefore be considered as an exception site for the provision of 100% affordable housing to meet the local housing need in line with Policy H/10 of the proposed 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. The developer is proposing 99 market dwellings, 40 of these would have to be affordable. The mix and tenure split for the 40 affordable dwellings should be as follows:

Affordable Rented

8 x 1 Beds
12 x 2 beds
7 x 3 beds
1 x 4 bed

Shared Ownership

6 x 2 beds

6 x 3 beds

8 properties should be allocated to those with a local connection to Swavesey and the remaining 32 should be allocated on a 50/50 split basis between applicants with a local connection to Swavesey and those with a District wide connection.

Properties should be built to DCLG technical housing standards.

Section 106 Officer – details of the summary of section 106 requirements are appended to this report. Specific policy compliant contributions and necessary mitigation measures are discussed in detail in the main body of the report.

25. **Cambridgeshire County Council Growth Team** – This proposal would result in an anticipated 30 children in the early years age bracket, 16 of which would qualify for free provision. A contribution towards an extension which provided 2 pre-school classrooms but for which there is an identified funding deficit is being sought from this scheme.

In relation to primary provision, combining this proposal and the recently refused application for up to 70 dwellings at land to the rear of 130 Middle Watch (ref. S/1605/16/OL) the anticipated population increase would result in an increase of 60 children. This scheme alone would generate 35 primary school age children. The project identified to mitigate this impact is space within the 3 classroom extension which has already been completed to the primary school, but for which a funding shortfall has been identified and the County Council.

A sum of £72,595 for early years and £261,166 for primary provision was secured towards the project as part of the Section 106 Agreement at 18 Boxworth End appeal which was allowed. A discount of £778,072 has also been applied by the Education Authority due to the fact that the scheme replaced two temporary classrooms and a further reduction has been applied to account for non CIL complaint works.

The County Council have calculated that 59% of the anticipated increase in primary school pupils would come from this scheme, 41% from the Middle Watch development (which remains relevant as the time for submission of an appeal has not yet lapsed). The contribution towards the total cost of the pre-school and primary education provision being sought from this scheme therefore is £262,143 (59% of £444,311).

In relation to secondary school provision, the anticipated number of pupils from the development is 25. In assessing the potential impact of developments within the catchment of Swavesey Village College (within which the application site falls), the County Council have assessed the cumulative impact of this proposal alongside others within the same catchment area. These schemes are the planning applications at The Ridgeway in Papworth Everard, Land at Mill Road in Over, land rear of 18 Middle Watch in Swavesey and land to the rear of 130 Middle Watch in Swavesey.

The County Council have confirmed that an extension to increase capacity at the Village College by 150 pupils has been completed, as a result of an identified shortfall in capacity in 2012. The total cost of the extension project was £3,900,000. Of this amount, a total of £3,150,000 was secured through grant funding sourced by the Village College and the County Council, leaving a shortfall of £750,000. The capacity increase resulting from this extension would allow the cumulative impact of each of these schemes to be mitigated.

A sum of £106,002 was secured from the planning permission granted on appeal for 30 dwellings on land south of this site, leaving a deficit of £643,998. Dividing £643,998 proportionately between the above listed schemes, the contribution sought from this scheme is £148,119 (23% of the contribution as 99 units equates to 23% of the housing stock proposed across these applications).

A contribution is requested to improve the provision of library services. A figure of £28.92 per the additional residents (247.5 in the Council's calculation) is based on the standard charge approach adopted by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and is considered to be CIL compliant as a specific project to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. The total contribution to address the deficit in library provision is £7,157.70.

26. **Swavesey Internal Drainage Board (IDB)**- no objection to the amended flood risk assessment on the basis that all mitigation measures and details of the surface water level controlling mechanism are secured by condition and via a legal agreement
27. **Historic England (HE)** – recognises that there would be limited intervisibility between the application site and nearby grade I and II* listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and the Swavesey conservation area. As a result, the advice of the Local Authority conservation officer should be sought but HE does not object.
28. **District Council Conservation Officer** – no objection to the amended flood risk assessment on the basis that all mitigation measures and details of the surface water level controlling mechanism are secured by condition.
29. **NHS England** - request a sum of £32,640 to provide an additional 16.32 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional 238 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.
30. **District Council Ecology** – Initially raised a holding objection due to the need for further information with regard to the potential impact of the development on Great Crested Newts. This has been removed following the submission of additional details.
31. **District Council Tree Officer** – no objection to the outline planning application. Details of the means of protecting existing trees to be retained should be secured by condition and details of new landscaping will be required at the reversed matters stage.
32. **Highways England** – no objection
33. **Sport England** – no comments to make

Representations

34. 64 letters of representation have been received in objection to the application (excluding multiple copies from the same household). These raise the following concerns (summarised):
 - Fen Drayton Road is a narrow highway, erecting the proposed number of dwellings with an access onto this road would be a highway safety hazard.
 - Existing congestion on Gibraltar Lane and other neighbouring streets would be

- made significantly worse by the amount of trips generated by the scheme.
- The scheme underestimates the level of parking provision – 150 spaces in this development is considered to be insufficient and below the capacity needed based on current households in the village.
 - The proposal will increase the risk of flooding through the development of a green field site adjacent to existing residential properties. There is already evidence of flooding within the gardens on the properties on Gibraltar Lane (east of the site).
 - There is a need for bungalows to be built in the village – this scheme proposes properties of 2 and 2.5 storeys in height only. Provision should be made for accommodation for elderly persons.
 - There is insufficient capacity at the primary school or the Village College to accommodate the additional children that would result from the occupation of the proposed development.
 - The doctor's surgery does not have capacity to accommodate the increase in the population of the village that would result from the occupation of the proposed development.
 - New development on this scale should be concentrated in the nearby new settlement of Northstowe, not on the edge of existing villages
 - There is a need for 'starter' homes in the village, not more large properties on the scale proposed.
 - The cumulative impact of development on the village needs to be considered – 30 dwellings have also recently been approved off Boxworth End which will have implications in terms of traffic movements in the village and the capacity of infrastructure.
 - The site is close to the Village College and there is a security risk associated with trespass onto the college playing fields.
 - The proposal would have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties and on the environment of the Village College through noise generated by the residents of the scheme.
 - The existing culvert at the junction between Gibraltar Lane and School Lane is smaller in capacity than the culvert downstream at the junction between Priors Avenue and School Lane. The culvert cannot cope with the volume of surface water currently draining off the land, and this would be made worse by the proposed development.
 - The proposal would represent a 10% increase in the size of the village. This scale of development would have an adverse impact on the character of Swavesey
 - Public transport is at capacity in peak times and congestion on the A14 has a severe impact on commuting times.
 - The proposed pedestrian links will involve crossing Fen Drayton Road twice to access the Village College on Gibraltar Lane – this would be a highway safety hazard.
 - The proposal would have an adverse impact on the capacity of sewage drainage infrastructure
 - The village has limited community facilities – the post office has recently closed and the level of facilities is considered insufficient to support expansion of the population on the scale proposed.
 - There is no room for a footpath along Fen Drayton Road to connect the site entrance to the existing footpath along that road to the east of the site. The result will be people walking along the grass verge which is a safety hazard.
 - Until there is a clear plan for extending the school facilities, improving sewage infrastructure etc this planning application should not be approved.
 - The proposal would have an adverse impact on surface water drainage capacity in the village and presents a flood risk. Water currently moves across the open field and developing this land will increase the amount of surface water which needs to be drained from the site.

- The site is of high biodiversity value and this would be threatened by the development of the site.
- There are more suitable sites for development in neighbouring villages e.g. Over which has three main roads into the village and better access to public transport, or Fen Drayton or Fenstanton, where there are fields which could be developed and schools with capacity to accommodate development. Willingham and Longstanton would also be more suitable locations for development.
- The density of the development is considered to be too high given the village edge location and the low density of the existing properties on Gibraltar Lane.

In addition to these objections, a representation of objection has been received from the ward Councillor (Cllr Sue Ellington) which raises the following concerns (summarised):

- This scheme is located outside of the development framework and would have a significant impact on the character of Swavesey and the capacity of services and infrastructure within the settlement.
- The village has increased in size significantly in the last two years and with this proposal, the village will have expanded by 20% in that time. This is considered to be an unsustainable level of growth.
- There are inaccuracies in the information provided by the applicant in relation to the sustainability of the location. The post office is no longer in the market square, reference is made to Over village and some bus routes are incorrectly referenced.
- The schools and health facilities do not have capacity to accommodate the additional population – pupils are already having to be allocated spaces at Fen Drayton school.
- Three storey properties should not be included as part of the scheme as this scale of development would have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area. Reference is made to the prevailing linear character of the existing village.
- Concerns relating to the capacity of the network to cope with additional surface water run off which will result from the development of this greenfield site
- Highway safety concerns due to the narrow nature of Fen Drayton Road

3 letters of representation in support of the application have been received, raising the following points (summarised):

- The village requires more houses to be able to meet demand. Existing houses that are placed on the market sell very quickly, indicating a very high level of demand.
- Housing numbers are growing in neighbouring villages, the same should happen in Swavesey

35. **Swavesey Primary School and the Village College** have made representations in relation to the application and have raised the following concerns (summarised):

Swavesey Primary School:

- The school has undergone a 24% increase in student numbers over the last 3 years and has struggled to provide space to maintain a high standard of education.
- The recent extension of the main school building has replaced temporary buildings within the grounds of the school, it has not improved capacity. Further expansion would decrease the amount of outdoor open space available to pupils

- even further.
- There are already capacity issues as pupils are having to attend schools in neighbouring villages due to limited space at Swavesey Primary School.
 - There would be significant traffic congestion either outside the Swavesey Primary School which is in the centre of the village or additional traffic generated by journeys to schools in neighbouring villages. Either of these situations would be a highway safety hazard.
 - The impact on capacity should this scheme be approved would add to the problems already resulting from the number of pupils that would be generated by the 30 units recently approved on appeal at Boxworth End and in Over

Swavesey Village College:

- The Village College will already be increasing in size by 20% in the next (sic) five years and has struggled to maintain standards.
- Expansion has already taken place and there will be a need to accommodate children who will attend school in Northstowe following a temporary period – this presents the school with a serious capacity issue.
- Were the development to go ahead, a number of the pupils would be required to attend the Village Colleges in neighbouring villages.
- There are site constraints which ensure that expansion of the school significantly beyond the existing capacity is not a viable option.

Nb. These letters have been forwarded to Cambridgeshire County Council as Education Authority and have been considered by them in their response to this application.

36. **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)** – the Council’s five year housing land supply deficit has been addressed by the submission of the draft Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan makes provision for an increase in the number of houses to be developed in the District. The scheme would significantly exceed the 30 dwelling limit on new residential development in Minor Rural Centres and should therefore be refused.

Site and Surroundings

37. The application site is currently agricultural land located on the north western edge of Swavesey. The eastern boundary of the site borders the existing village envelope boundary, which is also the rear boundary of the properties on Gibraltar Lane. To the south of the application site, land within the ownership of the applicant would separate the southern edge of the development from the grounds of Swavesey Village College. Fen Drayton Road runs parallel with the northern boundary of the site and a drainage ditch also runs parallel with that boundary. There is a recent development of affordable housing to the north. Land to the north west and west is predominantly open countryside.

Proposal

38. The applicant seeks outline planning permission for the erection of up to 99 dwellings and associated infrastructure works. The means of access is the only matter to be approved at this stage, with all other matters (landscaping, layout, scale and appearance) reserved.

Planning Assessment

39. 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, the impact of development on the character of the surrounding countryside, the sustainability of the location, the density of development and affordable housing. 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. The cumulative impact of this proposal and other developments of a size that trigger the need for contributions to infrastructure capacity to be sought also needs to be considered.

Principle of Development

Five year housing land supply:

40. The National Planning Policy Framework (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.
41. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply in the district as required by the NPPF, having a 3.7 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 2016). 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.
42. 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".
43. Further guidance as to which policies should be considered as 'relevant policies for the supply of housing' emerged from a recent Court of Appeal decision (*Richborough v Cheshire East and Suffolk Coastal DC v Hopkins Homes*). The Court defined 'relevant policies for the supply of housing' widely so not to be restricted 'merely policies in the Development Plan that provide positively for the delivery of new housing in terms of numbers and distribution or the allocation of sites,' but also to include, 'plan policies whose effect is to influence the supply of housing by restricting the locations where new housing may be developed.' Therefore all policies which have the potential to restrict or affect housing supply may be considered out of date in respect of the NPPF. However even where policies are considered 'out of date' for the purposes of NPPF paragraph 49, a decision maker is required to consider what (if any) weight should attach to such relevant policies.

44. Where a Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land, paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It says that where relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted for development unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, or where specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
45. This means that where planning permission is sought which would be contrary to the policies listed above, such applications must be determined against paragraph 14 of the NPPF, unless other national policies indicate an exception to this, Green Belt land is one such exception. Sustainable development is defined in paragraph 7 of the NPPF as having environmental, economic and social strands. When assessed these objectives, unless the harm arising from the proposal 'significantly and demonstrably' outweighs the benefits of the proposals, planning permission should be granted (in accordance with paragraph 14).
46. The site is located outside the Swavesey village framework, although adjacent to the north western boundary of the village, and in the countryside, where policy DP/7 of the LDF and Policy S/7 of the Draft Local Plan state that only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted. The erection of a residential development of up to 99 dwellings would therefore not under normal circumstances be considered acceptable in principle. However, this policy is considered out of date due to the current lack of a 5 year housing land supply as set out above.
47. It falls to the Council as decision maker to assess the weight that should be given to the existing policy. Officers consider this assessment should, in the present application, have regard to whether the policy continues to perform a material planning objective and whether it is consistent with the policies of the NPPF.
48. Development in Group Villages (the current status of Swavesey) is normally limited to schemes of up to 8 dwellings, or in exceptional cases 15, where development would make best use of a single brownfield site. 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 limited range of services to meet the needs of new residents in a sustainable manner.
49. It is proposed to elevate Swavesey from a Group Village to a Minor Rural Centre in the emerging Local Plan. Existing Core Strategy policy ST/5 normally limits development in Minor Rural Centres is normally limited to schemes of up to 30 dwellings and this threshold would be retained in the emerging Local Plan Policy S/9. This limit is considered to be a significant consideration as it emphasises that such villages are 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.
50. 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 Swavesey specifically, can, in principle, 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. Due to the extent of the evidence base behind the proposed elevation of the status of the village to a Minor Rural Centre in the emerging Local Plan, it is considered that emerging policy S/9 should be afforded significant weight in the determination of this application

51. 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.
52. The proposals are assessed below against the social and economic criteria of the definition of sustainable development.
53. The environmental issues, including impact on the open countryside, are assessed in the following sections of the report. In relation to the loss of higher grade agricultural land, policy NE/17 states that the District Council will not grant planning permission for development which would lead to the irreversible loss of grades 1, 2 or 3a. Part of this site is classified as grade 3 agricultural land.
54. The site is not allocated for development in the existing or the emerging Local Plan. However, 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. Given the extent of the housing supply deficit, it is considered that compliance with criteria b of NE/17 should be afforded more weight than the conflict with criterion a.

Social Sustainability:

55. 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.
56. The development would provide a clear benefit in helping to meet the current housing shortfall in South Cambridgeshire through delivering up to an additional 99 residential dwellings, 40% of which would be affordable (36 units). Ensuring that the housing mix in the market element of the scheme would accord with emerging policy H/8 (discussed in detail later in this report) is a matter to be dealt with at the reserved matters stage.
57. The affordable housing can be secured through a Section 106 Agreement. Officers are of the view the provision of up to 99 additional houses, including the affordable dwellings, is a social 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 Swavesey.
58. The adopted Open Space SPD requires the provision of just over 2700 metres squared of open space for a development on the scale proposed. The scheme exceed this amount by a significant margin (in excess of 8000 square metres is proposed) and would include sufficient space for the inclusion of an equipped play area with land surrounding it, as required by the SPD. Given that Swavesey 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. 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.

Impact on services and facilities:

60. Paragraph 204 of the NPPF relates to the tests that local planning authorities should apply to assess whether planning obligations should be sought to mitigate the impacts of development. In the line with the CIL regulations 2010, the contributions must:
 - necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms
 - directly related to the development
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed.
61. In applying this guidance this planning application, officers consider that the contributions sought through the section 106 agreement, in addition to the facilities required by the emerging allocation policy, should be based upon an assessment of the availability and capacity of services in Swavesey.
62. As already stated, it is considered that significant weight should be attributed to the elevated status of Swavesey as a Minor Rural Centre 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 Swavesey and the impact of the scheme on the capacity of public services.
63. Paragraph 204 of the NPPF relates to the tests that local planning authorities should apply to assess whether planning obligations should be sought to mitigate the impacts of development. In the line with the CIL regulations 2010, the contributions must:
 - necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms
 - directly related to the development
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed.
64. There are bus stops located on Middle Watch, 375 metres to the east of the site. These bus stops are accessible from School Lane but a footpath connection would be required between the western end of School Lane and the application site to achieve pedestrian connectivity to the development. The citi 5 bus service provides regular transport to and from Cambridge at commuting times and throughout the day during the week. A regular service also runs on this line on a Saturday but there is no service on a Sunday.
65. The Guide Busway is approximately 1 kilometre further north and so travel to this service on foot may reasonably be considered less likely but that provides a regular bus service to Cambridge and St. Ives 7 days a week. Given the relatively close proximity of the site to the bus service (if footpath improvements were secured) 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.
66. Cambridgeshire County Council is the Education Authority. In May 2013, the County Council identified that a 5 classroom extension (2 for pre-school and 3 for primary aged children) was required to accommodate the growing population of primary and

early years aged children in the catchment area of Swavesey Primary School. This scheme was included in the County Council's 2016-17 Capital Programme, at a total cost of £2,350,000. Funding of £306,643 from the Education Funding Agency has been secured and £404,820 of the cost of the project falls beyond the scope of CIL regulations (as this provided facilities not strictly required to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers). A discount of £778,072 has also been applied by the Education Authority due to the fact that the scheme replaced two temporary classrooms.

67. In addition, a sum of £72,595 for early years and £261,166 for primary provision was secured towards the project as part of the Section 106 Agreement at 18 Boxworth End appeal which was allowed, reducing the coverall project shortfall of the combined project to £444,311.
68. This proposal would result in an anticipated 30 children, 16 of which would qualify for free provision and the 2 pre-school classroom element of the extension described above is the project against which contributions for this element can be sought.
69. The County Council have calculated that 59% of the anticipated increase in primary school pupils would come from this scheme, 41% from the Middle Watch development (which remains relevant as it may yet be the subject of an appeal). The contribution towards the total cost of the pre-school and primary education provision being sought from this scheme therefore is £262,143 (59% of £444,311).
70. In relation to secondary school provision, the anticipated number of pupils from the development is 25. In assessing the potential impact of developments within the catchment of Swavesey Village College (within which the application site falls), the County Council have assessed the cumulative impact of this proposal alongside others within the same catchment area. These schemes are the planning applications at The Ridgeway in Papworth Everard, Land at Mill Road in Over, land rear of 18 Middle Watch in Swavesey and land to the rear of 130 Middle Watch in Swavesey.
71. The County Council have confirmed that an extension to increase capacity at the Village College by 150 pupils has been completed, as a result of an identified shortfall in capacity in 2012. The total cost of the extension project was £3,900,000. Of this amount, a total of £3,150,000 was secured through grant funding sourced by the Village College and the County Council, leaving a shortfall of £750,000. The capacity increase resulting from this extension would allow the cumulative impact of each of these schemes to be mitigated.
72. A sum of £106,002 was secured from the planning permission granted on appeal for 30 dwellings on land south of this site, leaving a deficit of £643,998. Dividing £643,998 proportionately between the above listed schemes, the contribution sought from this scheme is £148,119 (23% of the contribution as 99 units equates to 23% of the housing stock proposed across these applications).
73. A contribution is requested to improve the provision of library services. This would finance the provision of an additional mobile library route within the village and an increase in the range of materials offered by the library service, to accommodate the additional population resulting from the development. A figure of £28.92 per the additional residents (247.5 in the Council's calculation) is based on the standard charge approach adopted by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and is considered to be CIL compliant as a specific project to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. The total contribution to address the deficit in library provision is £7,157.70.

74. 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. The report identifies that Swavesey surgery is currently operating above the Royal College of General Practitioners guideline of 1 doctor per 1,800 enrolled patients.
75. 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 £32,640 to provide an additional 16.32 square metres of floorspace to accommodate the additional 238 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.
76. 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 Swavesey 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.
77. 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.
78. In addition to the primary, secondary schools and a GP surgery, Swavesey has a post office and village store, a newsagent, library access point and mobile library and a better range of shops and services than most group villages. There are sites with offices accommodating employment uses, including the Cygnus Business Park on Middlewatch.
79. Memorial Hall provides a main hall of 155 square metres and meeting rooms. There is a recreation ground which includes an equipped area of play space, a pavilion and football pitches for both junior and senior levels. The village college also offers a number of sports facilities and there are two sites of allotments in the village.
80. Cumulatively, it is considered that Swavesey 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.
81. 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:

82. The provision of up to 99 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.

83. Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would achieve the social and economic elements of the definition of sustainable development, subject to the mitigation measures quoted above, which the applicant has agreed to in principle and can be secured via a Section 106 agreement.

Density of development and affordable housing

84. The scheme would be of a lower density than required by policy HG/1 of the LDF and emerging Local Plan policy H/7 (30 dwellings per hectare) when taking the site as whole (just below 5 hectares in area). The density equates to approximately 20 dwellings per hectare. However, both policies include the caveat that a lower density may be acceptable if this can be justified in relation to the character of the surrounding locality. Given that the application site is located on the edge of the settlement, it is considered that this proposal meets the exception tests of the current and emerging policy with regard to the density of development.
85. The illustrative masterplan indicates a developed area that would exclude the western part of the site, with that area given over to public open space. As such, the density of the proposed developed area would be 38 dwellings per hectare. Given that there are landscape considerations which ensure that the developed area of the site could not increase in size to a significant extent, it is considered that this would be likely to remain the overall density of an acceptable scheme, despite the layout and scale not being fixed at this outline stage.
86. Current policy HG/1 states that 'higher net densities of at least 40 dwellings per hectare should be achieved in more sustainable locations.' However, the emerging policy states that average density should be 30 within settlements such as Swavesey, including on exception sites. The supporting text of that policy, based on the more up to date guidance within the NPPF states that 'The appropriate density of any particular location will be determined by the nature of the area and by its surroundings and by a need to use land efficiently as a finite resource.'
87. In this case, the applicant has provided a parameter plan showing how the density of development could be graded out across the developed area. The majority of the built area would be developed out at 33 dwellings per hectare with a central core developed at a density of 38 dwellings per hectare. The north western edge of the development, fronting on to Fen Drayton Road would be developed at 22 dwellings per hectare (and would be limited to 2 storeys in height). The most sensitive edge in landscape terms is considered to be the western edge, where the density would reduce to 20 dwellings per hectare.
88. This masterplan demonstrates that 21% of the scheme could be developed out at a density one third lower than the minimum target density would be considered appropriate within the built up part of the village framework. Only the central core of 27 units (27.2% of the 99 dwellings) would be more than 10% over this minimum and would remain below the 40 dwellings per hectare encouraged in more sustainable locations under policy HG/1. Overall, it is considered that the proportion of the scheme that is either below or within 10% of the minimum density required by policy HG/1 is sufficient to ensure that the density of development would not be unsustainable in this location. The landscape impact of the proposals is considered in more detail later in this report.

89. Under the provisions of policy HG/2, the market housing element of proposed schemes is required to include a minimum of 40% 1 or 2 bed properties. The detail of the housing mix proposed within the market element of the scheme (59 units) has not been specified.
90. Policy H/8 of the emerging Local Plan is less prescriptive and states that the mix of properties within developments of 10 or more dwellings should achieve at least 30% for each of the 3 categories (1 and 2 bed, 3 bed and for or more bed properties), with the 10% margin to be applied flexibly across the scheme. This policy is being given considerable weight in the determination of planning applications due to the nature of the unresolved objections, in accordance with the guidance within paragraph 216 of the NPPF.
91. As the application is outline only, a condition requiring this mix is recommended to ensure that the scheme is policy compliant and addresses the concerns expressed in the representations that only large houses will be constructed within the development.
92. In response to comments raised by residents and the Parish Council, the applicant has agreed to accept a condition that the development will bring forward a minimum of 5% of the properties as bungalows at the reserved matter stage. This will help to secure a number of smaller properties and accommodation suitable for a range of ages and needs within the final scheme, enhancing the social sustainability of the development.

Character of the village edge and surrounding landscape

Landscape Impact

93. A SHLAA assessment considered the application site and the section of land to the south which is also in the applicant's ownership. This assessment highlights the fact that the South Cambridgeshire Village Capacity Study describes Swavesey as a village lying within predominantly flat, arable countryside, with landscape planting being the only significant intervention in long distance open views on the wider approaches to the settlement. The Capacity Study highlights the contrast between this character and the more heavily landscaped village edge. The SHLAA review refers to the fact that the village college and some newer housing development is visible from wider views but highlights the fact that the existing planting softens the impact of the existing development as a contrast to the arable fields beyond.
94. In assessing the impact of the development of the whole site for an indicative number of up to 162 dwellings (based on officer's assessment of the capacity of the site), the SHLAA assessment considered that development on this site would sit higher than existing development within the framework due to the topography of the site. This would result in more prominent development than the existing village edge, which would contrast negatively with the existing approach along Rose and Crown Road and Fen Drayton Road, where the predominant character is glimpses of development beyond a landscaped edge.
95. Within this context, the SHLAA assessment concludes that 'development of this site would have a significant adverse effect on the landscape and townscape setting of Swavesey. The site is very open and rural in character and development on this site would be very large scale and harmful to the character of the village.....It would result in a large scale westwards expansion along School Lane, having a significant impact on the approach to the village.' On landscape character, the SHLAA report does state

that ‘...it may be possible to integrate a smaller scale of development with additional landscaping to create a soft edge.’

96. The applicant has submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) with the planning application. This concludes that, all of the 10 viewpoints considered are of moderate or high sensitivity in landscape terms. In relation to the view looking south east from Fen Drayton Road, the significance of visual impact is considered to be ‘moderate’ with the sensitivity is also considered to be ‘moderate.’ The same applies looking south west from Fen Drayton Road. The survey considers that there would be moderate adverse impact once the development has been built out on views looking east from Fen Drayton Road. The magnitude and significance of the landscape impact of the other viewpoints considered in the assessment are concluded to be negligible, with no impact at all from the public footpath north of Conington Road.
97. The LVIA states that the scheme has been designed to retain the majority of the structural landscaping on the edge of the site, which is identified as a key characteristic of the rural character of the Fen Edge location and a means of emphasising the transition from the edge of the built development to the east and the open agricultural fields to the west.
98. In terms of landscape character, the report concludes at 8.8 that ‘There are likely to be very limited impacts on a wider landscape (scale) as the combination of the existing and proposed vegetation and the generally flat topography results in limited locations from where the proposed development will be perceived from the wider landscape. The openness of the arable farmland to the west contrasts with the more intimate landscape at the village edge; the proposed development and its inherent landscape strategy aims to assimilate it within this edge.’
99. The District Council Landscape Officer has raised some concerns with regard to the existing indicative layout. It is considered that, whilst the scheme does include a significant amount of open space in the western part of the site, the width of the developed area would need to be reduced and more substantial areas of open space woven in to the residential element of the scheme.
100. It is considered that it may be possible to extend the frontage of the development further west along Fen Drayton Road. In that scenario, this section of the development would need to be relatively shallow (north-south) to allow a significant area of green space to the south of this. This area of open space would need to be extended eastwards into the main developed area of the site to break up the density and allow a smoother transition between the edge of the village to east and the open fields to the west.
101. An alternative approach, as outlined on the indicative densities plan, would be to concentrate the highest density of development in a central core, with a lower density to the north and south of this area, with the lowest density of development on the western edge of the scheme. This scenario would address the concern that the development would appear as a ‘block’ of buildings within the landscape by grading the density out towards the edge of the scheme. This would respond to the high density of development on the existing village edge to the north east of the site, whilst also recognising the need to provide a transition out to the open countryside beyond, which is currently provided by the long gardens to the rear of the properties on Gibraltar Lane.
102. The Sustainability Appraisal which formed the evidence base for the SHLAA exercise concluded on landscape impact that development of the wider site would have a

significant adverse impact. However, as stated above, it was concluded in the SHLAA report (in weighting up the heritage, townscape and landscape considerations) that a development on a smaller scale with additional landscaping could overcome these concerns. It is considered that the proposal has responded to the landscape impact concerns, proposing to develop significantly less than half of the of the area considered in the SHLAA with buildings and including a significant landscape buffer provided on the western edge. The number of dwellings has also been reduced from the 162 dwellings (indicative capacity) to 99.

103. In assessing the comments of the Landscape Officer and the conclusions of the SHLAA report, it is acknowledged that there would be some harm to the local landscape character, which currently provides a stark contrast between the built environment to the east of the site and the open land immediately west of the village framework boundary, which is typical of the Fen Edge Character Area. However, the extent of the harm from this proposal has been reduced by clear reference to the mitigation measures suggested in the SHLAA report, which acknowledges that the site is capable of being developed in a way that would avoid significant harm.
104. Within the context of a lack of five year housing land supply, the Inspector for the New Road, Melbourn appeal (199 dwellings and a care home) provided guidance in a case where landscape harm is identified and balancing this against the need to address the lack of housing land supply. In that case the Inspector concluded that case in relation to landscape harm that 'while the development of this site would cause very limited harm to the wider landscape, there would be a greater localised harm to the character of the village and its countryside setting, in conflict with development control policies. This carries fairly significant weight (in the planning balance).' In weighing this harm against the benefit of housing provision in that location, the Inspector concluded that '...while there would be some notable adverse impacts, they would not be sufficient to outweigh the very significant benefits of the proposal (i.e. the provision of additional housing in the District).'
105. Officers acknowledge that each site must be assessed on its own merits and that the number of houses proposed at Melbourn was greater than the 99 proposed in this scheme. However, the Inspector acknowledged that there would be 'screening' of open views from the edge of the village and a loss of views over open fields in the Melbourn case. This harm applies in a similar way to this scheme and has been commented upon by local residents and reflects the Parish Council's concern in terms of the scale of the development.
106. Whilst the number of houses proposed in this case would be smaller (and therefore the benefit less significant in terms of a contribution to the deficit in supply), the landscape impact would also be less due to the smaller scale of the development and the fact that the size of the site allows the grading of the density of the scheme and the inclusion of a significant landscape 'buffer' through the retention of a large area of open space in the western portions, which is the more sensitive area in landscape terms.
107. In light of this appeal decision and the fact that the applicant has responded to the SHLAA assessment through the indicative proposal, it is considered that, on balance, the harm to the landscape arising from this proposal would not outweigh the benefits of providing additional (including 40% affordable) on the edge of a village it is proposed to elevate to Minor Rural Centre status in the emerging Local Plan.

Trees

108. The arboricultural assessment submitted with the planning application indicates that the site is largely devoid of trees other than those on the boundary of the site, the vast majority of which could be retained and the proposed number of units accommodated on the site. It is considered that any loss of trees/hedgerow to accommodate the new vehicular access would be limited and could be compensated for through additional planting within the open space area and also as an aide to breaking up the density of the developed part of the site. Preservation of the landscape planting on all of the boundaries of the site could be secured by condition. Details of the proposed landscaping measures is a consideration for the reserved matters stage, should outline planning permission be granted.

Ecology

109. The Phase I Habitat Survey submitted with the planning application proposes mitigation and biodiversity enhancement measures to be introduced as part of the scheme. The scheme proposes the introduction of a wildflower meadow and a surface water attenuation pond which would comply with the NPPF which encourages opportunities for biodiversity enhancements to be incorporated into new development. In relation to Great Crested Newts, the Ecology Officer considers that further survey work is required to identify the location of a receptor site, details of the size and habitats to be supported of the receptor site and the amount of habitat to be lost, retained and created. This additional work has been undertaken and the holding objection removed as a result.
110. The recommended mitigation measures in relation to all protected species can be secured by condition. A habitat management plan and a biodiversity enhancement and management plan can also be secured by condition

Highway safety and parking

111. The Highway Authority has objected to the proposals on the basis that there would be safety concerns with any pedestrian crossing of Fen Drayton Road to the north of the site, due to the constrained width of the highway at that point. No other means proposed of providing a pedestrian link.
112. One option which has been explored with the applicant is the creation of a right of way from the southern edge the site, through the land owned by the applicant immediately to the south and connecting to the existing access to the field from Gibraltar Lane. Officers acknowledge that this would be the most desirable method of improving the permeability of the development and allowing safe pedestrian access along Gibraltar Lane to the Village College and beyond that to the amenities within the centre of the village.
113. The applicant has indicated that there is a covenant which precludes the use of the land to the south of the red line area for anything other than horticultural or agricultural use and for access to the rear of properties on Gibraltar Lane which back onto the field. Having taken legal advice on this issue, the Highway Authority are maintaining their objection as their view is that the creation of an access would not require hardstanding to be laid at the rear of the properties to provide the access and it would be possible to create a route with a width sufficient for adoption by the County Council as a Public Right of Way, removing the need for any private responsibility for maintenance etc.
114. The covenant states that a right of way must be maintained from Gibraltar Lane to the rear of the properties at 31, 35, 37 and 39 on that road to the rear of their properties

but that the land beyond the access strip shall only be used for 'agricultural or market gardening and horticultural purposes' and that no dwellinghouses should be erected on that land.

115. Whilst covenants are often not in themselves material planning considerations as such restrictions are enforceable under civil as opposed to planning law, this restriction would affect the deliverability of the scheme in this case.
116. Officers have sought legal advice on the extent to which the covenant would prevent the creation of a footpath through the affected land. This followed the submission of a solicitor's opinion, sought by the applicant, which supports their view that only development associated with agriculture or horticulture would meet the terms of the covenant. The advice from the Shared Services planning and property solicitors is that the restrictions within the covenant would not be overridden by a footpath connected to a residential development – because this would not represent an agricultural or horticultural use of the land or be required to facilitate such uses. The advice also indicates there is uncertainty around the ability to get indemnity insurance and be able to secure the land for development if the provision of this pedestrian route was a requirement of the planning permission, due to definite wording of the covenant in terms of the type of development that can occur on the land.
117. It is acknowledged that the current proposal would require pedestrians to cross the highway three times (twice across Fen Drayton Road) to get from the entrance to the site to Gibraltar Lane, where the Village College is located.
118. However, there are traffic calming measures in close proximity to the west, in the form of an island which requires vehicles entering the village to give way to cars heading west along Fen Drayton Road and there are speed bumps prior to a roundabout adjacent to the east. This section of Fen Drayton Road is also within the 30 mile an hour limit zone.
119. The above mentioned mitigating factors are considered to reduce the harm to highway safety although officers acknowledge that a footpath link through the land to the south, connecting directly to Gibraltar Lane, would be a more desirable option and there is some harm arising from the proposal. In determining the weight to be attributed to this harm, it is necessary to consider the enhancements to be offered as part of the proposal in terms of wider pedestrian improvements, incentives to use public transport and the upgrading of infrastructure associated with these services.
120. The applicant has submitted a Road Safety Audit relating to the proposed pedestrian crossing. The audit highlighted two issues with the original proposal. The first issue was the proximity of that access to the ditch on the northern boundary of the site. This has been resolved by moving the pedestrian crossing eastwards so that it would now sit between two gullies. The second issue was the location of the raised table junction between School Lane and Gibraltar Lane, a ramp of which was likely to interfere with a private driveway. The raised table has been extended eastwards in the revised submission to avoid this situation.
121. The applicant has indicated a willingness to provide a commuted sum for the upgrading of sections of the footpath along Middle Watch which are in a poor state of repair. This would contribute towards improved pedestrian connectivity for occupants of the development to the doctor's surgery and would also be of wider benefit to residents in the village for the same reason. Given that the route connects the development with a service that occupants of the development would use, this requirement is considered to be related to the development and necessary to make

the scheme acceptable in planning terms, as required by the CIL regulations.

122. A commuted sum is also offered to enhance the facilities at the Swavesey Guided Busway stop. This funding could contribute towards either the provision of additional secure cycle stands or measures to improve the infrastructure associated with the service e.g. a lighting scheme, or a mixture of these. Furthermore, the applicant has agreed to the funding of 6 month passes for use of the Guided Busway by residents of the development. This is considered to be a measure which would encourage occupants of the development to use alternative modes of transport and the improvements to the facilities at the Guided Busway stop would help to accommodate this. Given that the Guided Busway is within a 20 minutes walk of site, these contributions are also considered to be CIL compliant.
123. In response to the concerns regarding the proposed pedestrian access arrangements, officers have negotiated the inclusion of the above measures to improve facilities for the benefit of existing users of these facilities as well as the population of the proposed development. These works are not within a spending programme identified by the County Council as Local Highway Authority and are therefore benefits that would not be achieved without the delivery of the proposed development.
124. The objection of the Local Highway Authority to the principle of the proposed arrangement is acknowledged. However, it is the role of the Local Planning Authority to weigh this objection against all of the other material considerations. Specifically in relation to the pedestrian link issue, it is considered that the traffic calming measures that are already in place within the vicinity of the proposed crossings (30mph, bollards in the lane on the approach to the village and the roundabout at the junction with Moat Way) would reduce the level of harm to an extent that would not outweigh the benefits of the improvements package offered by the applicant to mitigate the impact of the development.
125. The Local Highway Authority has no objection to the proposed vehicular access, concluding that adequate visibility splays can be achieved from this access. The County Council has also confirmed that the number of trips generated by the proposed scheme (61 two way trips on the route along School lane to Middle Watch in the AM peak and 50 in the PM peak) would not exceed the capacity of the junctions. The traffic generated by the proposed development is also considered not to exceed the capacity of the Gibraltar Lane/ Middle Watch junction, which is an important consideration given the location of the Village College on Gibraltar Lane. Whilst the concern of local residents and the Parish Council in this regard is noted, it is considered that such a reason for refusal could not be substantiated at appeal without the support of the statutory consultee.
126. In relation to parking provision, it is considered that at the density proposed, there would be sufficient space to design plots which could make provision for 2 parking spaces per plot, thereby meeting the requirements of the LDF in this regard. This factor is considered to indicate that the proposed development would not lead to pressure for on street parking in a way that would disrupt the free passage of the adopted highway.

Residential amenity

127. 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.

128. In the highest density area at the centre of the scheme, the 38 dwellings per hectare would result in an average plot size of 200 square metres. This is considered sufficient to achieve a dwelling size significantly greater than the minimum residential space standards proposed in policy H/11 of the emerging Local Plan (85 square metres for a 3 bed house with 5 occupants) and allow sufficient space for 80 square metres of garden space (the upper limit of the standards within the adopted Design Guide) along with the required space for driveways etc to the front of the plots. Across the remainder of the developed area, the amount of space per plot would be greater (considerably so on the northern and western edges).
129. In light of the above assessment, it is considered that the indicative zonal densities plan indicates that the separation distances as prescribed in the adopted design guide (25 metres between elevations with habitable windows, 13 metres from elevations with windows facing blank elevations) could be achieved to avoid any unacceptable impact in terms of loss of light, overbearing and overlooking issues.
130. 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. The separation distance to be retained between the eastern edge of the development and the rear elevations of the properties on Gibraltar Lane is provided by the substantial depth of the rear gardens of those properties. 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 those neighbouring properties in terms of unreasonable overlooking or overshadowing. 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.

Surface water and foul water drainage

Surface water drainage

131. The site lies in Flood Zone 1. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFRA) has not raised an objection following the submission of a revised surface water drainage strategy. Officers have discussed the issue of the drainage discharge rates raised by the Parish Council with the LLFRA and Anglian Water. It is the case that a lower discharge rate of 3 litres per second was required for the affordable housing development to the north of this site, on the opposite side of Fen Drayton Road.
132. In relation to this application however, Anglian Water have confirmed that a higher discharge rate of 5 litres per second can be achieved in a way that would not have an adverse impact on drainage capacity and that the sewer in Moat Way could accommodate these rates. Officers are of the view that there is no identified harm associated with the proposed surface water strategy and as such, this would not be a reason for refusing planning permission that could be substantiated at appeal.
133. However, in recognition of the concerns expressed by local residents, officers have negotiated further improvements to the drainage strategy. The amended information confirms that the measures would attenuate a volume of surface water to accommodate a 1 in 100 annual probability level of flood risk, with zero discharge for 3 weeks of the year. Both swales and an attenuation pond would be included within the development to provide a sustainable drainage system. On the basis of this information, both the LLFRA and the IDB have withdrawn their respective objections to the application. Compliance with the flood risk assessment, including full details of

all attenuation measures (including the mechanism for monitoring surface water levels on the site) can be secured by condition at this outline stage.

134. The Environment Agency requires conditions to be included in any consent preventing surface water and contamination issues in a sensitive area. These can be included in any consent.

Waste and Foul water drainage

135. Anglian Water has confirmed that the site is within the catchment area of the Over Water Recycling Centre and that this facility does not currently have capacity to treat the wastewater flows from the development. They confirm that they are legally obliged to provide this capacity however and are responsible for meeting this requirement.
136. Officers have held a meeting with Anglian Water, in recognition of the concerns regarding the capacity of the treatment works. Anglian Water have explained that it is only at the point that there is certainty a scheme will be built i.e. outline and reserved matters planning permission has been granted that a specific project will be identified. The required works would be identified and carried out in the time between the granting of planning permission and the occupation of the development. On the applicant's indicative timescale, the development would not be fully occupied until more than 2 years after the discharge of conditions, should planning permission be granted. This would allow sufficient time for any upgrade works to be completed and as such, the current deficit in capacity would not be a reasonable ground on which to refuse planning permission.
137. In relation to foul sewage, Anglian Water have confirmed that there is currently capacity within the network to accommodate the additional flows from the development and as such has no objections to the scheme in this regard.

Section 106 contributions

138. In addition to the County Council in terms of library provision and the NHS already identified in this report, the Section 106 Officer has confirmed that the site has the capacity to achieve the 99 units proposed and also meet the required provision for formal and informal space on site. As none of the details are to be fixed at this stage, a legal agreement could make provision for an eventuality where equipped open space could be provided off site should the proposal at the reserved matters stage involved a scheme which would not meet the Open Space SPD requirement in full through on site provision.
139. A contribution of approximately £100,000 (made up of a tariff based contribution based on housing mix) is considered necessary to provide a contribution to the provision of outdoor sport play space. This would be achieved through the improvement of a field to the rear of properties on Boxworth End, secured for maintenance by the Parish Council for this use, as a result of a recent appeal decision which allowed a development of 30 dwellings. As there have been less than 5 pooled contributions made towards this infrastructure previously, this contribution is considered to be compliant with the CIL regulations. This would help to address the shortfall in formal open space provision and would be a significant social benefit of the scheme.
140. It is considered that a contribution towards the upgrading of the facilities at the Memorial 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 project was identified as part of the 2008 Swavesey Parish Plan and would address the deficit of 83 square metres of indoor community space identified in the external audit and needs assessment adopted in 2009. As there have not been 5 pooled contributions made towards this infrastructure previously, this contribution is considered to be compliant with the CIL regulations.

141. 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. The final Section 106 figure is dependent upon housing mix which is to be finalised under scale at the reserved matter stage.

Other matters

Cumulative Impact

142. Officers are aware that there are other large scale applications for residential development in Swavesey where the principle of development relies on the District Council's deficit in five year housing land supply. These are the applications listed in paragraphs relating to education provision. Each planning application has to be assessed in its own merits. Whilst officers realise that all development has the potential to contribute to a cumulative impact, the CIL regulations require that each applicant must only be responsible for mitigating the impact of that specific scheme.
143. Therefore, officers are of the view that only schemes of a size that would attract contributions to increasing education and health provision can be reasonably included in the assessment of cumulative impact. Officers have considered the cumulative impact of these schemes on the capacity of services and facilities in Swavesey and have worked with consultees to ensure that they have done the same, including in relation to education provision.
144. The County Council as Education Authority have considered the anticipated population increase if all schemes came forward (acknowledging that the 30 dwellings at Boxworth End has been granted outline approval) and have come to the conclusion that the extensions already built at the Primary School and the Village College are sufficient to meet the cumulative anticipated population increase from these schemes. The County Council have made this assessment with the knowledge that the Primary School and the Village College have also objected to that application, with the Primary School also objecting to the recently refused application at land to the rear of 130 Middle Watch (which remains relevant as an appeal could still be lodged in relation to that scheme at the time of writing this report).
145. In relation to the capacity of health services, whilst a specific scheme is not identified, the amount of space required to mitigate the population increase arising from this proposal amounts to one tenth of the space required per GP according to the NHS England guidelines. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is insufficient room to extend to the front of the surgery (due to the impact this would have on parking capacity), additional space could be created through internal modification and there is space at the rear of the site for an extension to the building.
146. Given this information, it is considered that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate a refusal of this application as part of a cumulative effect on the capacity of social infrastructure within Swavesey.
147. In relation to drainage, it is considered that the revised information submitted with this application would achieve the requirement not to result in additional surface water on

the site once the development has been constructed. This is evidenced by the removal of the LLFRA's initial objection and the lack of objection from Anglian Water to the proposed scheme. In relation to landscape impact, it is considered that this development would be sufficiently separated from the other schemes to avoid cumulative impact in this regard.

148. Following this assessment, officers are content that the sustainability credentials of this proposal have been demonstrated satisfactorily when assessed alongside the proposal at land rear of 130 Middle Watch and the other sites identified in this report and that approval of this application would not prejudice the outcome of the other applications.

Archaeology and Heritage

149. The County Council Archaeologist considers that the site is of high archaeological potential, lying south west of the Swavesey 'Castle Hill' earthworks and Swavesey Priory, both of which are designated heritage assets on the Historic Environment Record. To the south east of the Priory, there are moats and ponds which could be connected to the Priory site. The application site is close to the medieval core of the village and excavations have uncovered evidence of Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval settlement. The Archaeologist has therefore requested that further investigation works be undertaken, prior to the determination of the planning application.
150. The additional information submitted confirms that significant archaeological evidence of medieval activity is present within the vicinity of the proposed development. There is also potentially evidence of Roman settlement within the locality. The report concludes that no evidence exists of high archaeological value in a location that would be harmed as a result of the development. On that basis, no objection is raised by the County Council Archaeologist, subject to a condition being attached to the outline planning permission requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation to be completed and any agreed mitigation measures implemented prior to the commencement of development.
151. Section 66(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 states: "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses".
152. Section 72(1) of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 states: "In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".
153. Policy CH/4 states that proposals for extensions to listed buildings will be determined in accordance with legislative provisions and national policy and planning permission will not be granted for development that would adversely affect the curtilage or wider setting of a listed building. Advice on setting is also contained within the adopted Listed Buildings SPD at paragraphs 4.37-4.42. Similarly policy CH/5 echoes the statutory test set out above and is augmented by the advice in the adopted Conservation Areas SPD.
154. Historic England recognises that there would be limited intervisibility between the

application site and nearby grade I and II* listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and the Swavesey conservation area. As a result, they have not objected to the application. The District Council Conservation Officer has also raised no objections to the proposals.

155. The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application indicates that the majority of the development would be 2 storeys in height with some 2.5 storey high units to form 'landmark' buildings in certain locations across the site. The height of development would not be fixed at this stage however as this would be dealt with under 'scale' at the reserved matters stage.
156. The application site is 420 metres south west of the Swavesey conservation area and in excess of 450 metres south west of the Caste Hill earthworks Scheduled Ancient Monument. Given these separation distances and the presence of a relatively dense area of modern housing development in the intervening space, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the setting of these designated heritage assets.
157. There is a grade II listed building (Hale Windmill) located across open fields to the north west of the site but given the separation distance to be retained, it is considered that the development would not have an adverse impact on the setting of that heritage asset, subject to sensitive design of the northern edge of the proposal, which could be secured at the reserved matters stage. As such, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of any heritage assets

Environmental Health

158. The Public Health Specialist has commented that the Health Impact Assessment has been assessed as Grade A, which meets the required standard of the SPD Policy. The scheme is therefore acceptable in this regard.
159. 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.
160. Further assessment of the potential noise generated by the noise of traffic on adjacent roads (School Lane and High Street) and the impact that this may have on the residential amenity of the occupants of the dwellings will be required to ensure that adequate attenuation measures are put in place, if required. Details of any lighting to be installed will also need to be provided.
161. The site is considered to be a 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.
162. 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.

163. The applicant will be required to complete a Waste Design Toolkit at the reserved matters stage in order to show how it is intended to address the waste management infrastructure, and technical requirements within the RECAP Waste Design Management Design Guide. In addition conditions should secure the submission of a Site Waste Management Plan. Provision of domestic waste receptacles by the developer will be secured via the Section 106 agreement. The developer should ensure that the highway design allows for the use of waste collection vehicles and this is a detailed matter relating to the layout of the scheme at the reserved matters stage.
164. The applicant has committed to 10% of the energy requirements generated by the development being produced by 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.
165. It is considered that each of these issues could be dealt with through the imposition of conditions at this outline stage.

Prematurity

166. 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.
167. 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.
168. 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.
169. 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.
170. Following the assessment 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.

Conclusion

171. The Sustainability Appraisal which accompanied the SHLAA exercise on the wider site concluded that in 10 of the 46 categories, this site was considered unsustainable.

The fact that the site is not within 800 metres of Cambridge City Centre and is not previously developed land are two factors apply to the vast majority of sites coming forward on the edge of settlements within the District due to the lack of five year housing land supply and the former applies to a number of sites within village frameworks. The lack of a train station within 800 metres of the site is a situation which likewise applies to a large number of settlements within the District. The site is marginally more than 800 metres to the doctor's surgery, but the same or a greater distance applies to the entirety of the northern part of the existing village.

172. The nearest main employment centre (Bar Hill) is more than 3 kilometres from the site. However, the Cygnus Business Park and Buckingham Business Park provide sources of employment within 3 kilometres and it is considered reasonable to factor in access to the Guided busway, which is approximately 1.5 kilometres from the site. This service provides regular journeys to sources of employment in Cambridge and St. Ives. The site is within walking distance of a bus service which is hourly through the main part of the day Monday to Saturday and does allow commuting to and from Cambridge. It would be possible to connect to cycle routes via the pedestrian link to Fen Drayton Road. This includes the route along the Guided Busway route and there is a lit cycle path which runs from the southern edge of Swavesey to Buckingham Business Park.
173. The County Council as Education Authority consider that the issues relating to the capacity of the Primary School and Village College have been addressed through recently completed extension projects (completed since the publication of the SHLAA report and associated Sustainability appraisal). Whilst the concerns relating to existing situation at the schools is noted, County and District Council officers have factored in the forecasted changes in the catchment population during the build out and phased impact of different age groups in reaching this assessment, not just the immediate context.
174. The other key area of assessment considered to be unsustainable in the Appraisal was landscape impact. However, as stated previously in this report, the SHLAA report considered that a scheme smaller than 162 units could be accommodated on the site with additional landscaping provided to create a 'soft edge.' Given the extent of the open space to be provided in the western portion of site, it is considered that the proposal demonstrates that this concern has been satisfied by proposing a number of units 63 less than the site capacity, as determined by the SHLAA exercise.
175. Following this assessment and the response of statutory consultees, whilst officers recognise the concerns of local residents and the Parish Council, it is considered that the mitigation measures proposed address the areas of weakness in infrastructure capacity and landscape harm to the extent that the benefits of the proposals outweigh the disbenefits.
176. The pedestrian link would be provided at a point where the speed limit is 30 miles per hour and within close proximity of traffic calming measures to the east and west. Within this context, the extent of the harm to highway safety is considered not to outweigh the benefits of the overall scheme, including improvements to highway and public transport infrastructure.
177. Whilst the concerns relating to the pedestrian access link are acknowledged, it is considered that the traffic calming measures that are already in place within the vicinity of the proposed crossings (30mph, bollards in the lane on the approach to the village and the roundabout at the junction with Moat Way) would reduce the level of harm to an extent that would not outweigh the benefits of the improvements package

offered by the applicant to mitigate the impact of the development.

178. It is considered that the issues raised in relation to environmental health, trees and ecology can be dealt with by condition.
179. It is considered that the scheme includes positive elements which enhance social sustainability. These include:
- the positive contribution of up to 99 dwellings towards the housing land supply in the district based on the objectively assessed need for 19,500 dwellings and the method of calculation and buffer identified by the Waterbeach Inspector
 - the contribution of 40% affordable housing in the context of a significant level of district wide housing need
 - significant public open space, including equipped areas of play.
 - the package of contributions to be secured through the Section 106 agreement towards the enhancement of offsite community facilities and pedestrian links
 - potential for access to public transport, services, facilities and employment
 - employment during construction to benefit the local economy.
 - potential to result in an increase in the use of local services and facilities
180. 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, including highway safety. None of these disbenefits are considered to result in significant and demonstrable harm when balanced against the positive elements. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal achieves the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

Recommendation

181. Officers recommend that the Committee grants planning permission, subject to the following:

Section 106 agreement

182. Completion of an agreement confirming payment of the following as outlined in Appendix 1:

Draft conditions

- 183.
- (a) Outline planning permission
 - (b) Time limit for submission of reserved matters
 - (c) Time limit for implementation (within 2 years of approval of reserved matters)
 - (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 the A14 and primary routes adjacent to the site on the amenity of the occupants of the proposed development– including necessary mitigation measures
 - (i) Details of renewable energy generation (including water efficiency/conservation measures) and within the development and associated noise assessment and mitigation measures – 10% renewables and compliance.
 - (j) Scheme to detail upgrading of bus stops on Middle Watch

- (k) Scheme for provision of additional cycle stands at the Guided Busway
- (l) Details of the proposed pedestrian link from the site to the existing footpath network on Fen Drayton Road
- (m) Foul water drainage scheme
- (n) Surface water drainage scheme (including technical specification of surface water monitoring device)
- (o) Sustainable drainage strategy
- (p) Tree Protection measures including
- (q) Retention of boundary hedges
- (r) Compliance with flood risk assessment
- (s) Traffic Management Plan – including subsidised bus travel for 6 months
- (t) Time restriction on the removal of trees
- (u) Detailed plans of the construction of the accesses
- (v) Pedestrian visibility splays
- (w) Ecological enhancement and habitat management plan
- (x) Scheme of archaeological investigation
- (y) Site waste management plan
- (z) Restriction on the hours of power operated machinery during construction
 - (aa) Phasing of construction
 - (bb) Approved ecological surveys
 - (cc) Compliance with ecological survey submitted
 - (dd) External lighting to be agreed
 - (ee) Cycle storage
- (ff) Housing mix within market element to be policy compliant
- (gg) Minimum of 5% bungalows to be provided
- (hh) Boundary treatments
- (ii) Waste water management plan
- (jj) Construction environment management plan
- (kk) Details of piled foundations
- (ll) Fire hydrant locations
- (mm) Screened storage for refuse
- (nn) Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

Informatives

- 184. (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/1027/16/OL

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