



## **22/02528/OUT – Darwin Green Phases Two and Three Development Site, Cambridge Road, Impington**

### **Application details**

**Report to:** Joint Development Control Committee

**Lead Officer:** Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

**Ward/parish:** Girton, Histon & Impington

**Proposal:** Outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for means of access) for up to 1,000 residential dwellings, secondary school, primary school, community facilities, retail uses, open space and landscaped areas, associated engineering, demolition and infrastructure works

**Applicant:** Barratt David Wilson Homes and The North West Cambridge Consortium of Landowners

**Presenting officer:** Guy Wilson

**Reason presented to committee:** The application has been appealed against non-determination and can no longer be determined by the local planning authority. The local planning authority now needs to determine its position in respect of the appeal.

**Member site visit date:** N/A

## Key issues:

1. Principle of development
2. Design, scale, layout and landscaping
3. Housing provision
4. Employment provision and community facilities
5. Open space and sports provision
6. Water resources, management and flood risk
7. Biodiversity and trees
8. Carbon reduction and sustainable design
9. Transport and access
10. Heritage assets
11. Amenity and environmental health
12. Utilities
13. Third party representations
14. Other matters

## Recommendation:

Members agree that the Council's response to the planning appeal for non-determination is that the application should be **REFUSED** in accordance with the recommendation as set out in Section 27 of this report below.

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**Table 2 Appendices**

**1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The report relates to the outline planning application (the Application) for the site which is located within the administrative boundaries of South Cambridgeshire District Council (the Council). The Application falls within land to the North West of Cambridge, between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road and is also known as Darwin Green 2.
- 1.2 The submitted proposals seek permission for up to 1,000 residential dwellings, secondary school, primary school, community facilities, retail uses, open space and landscaped areas, associated engineering, demolition and infrastructure works. All matters are reserved, except means of access.
- 1.3 The Site is allocated in the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 under Policy SS/2 for a sustainable housing-led urban extension of

Cambridge of approximately 1000 dwellings with associated open space provision and community facilities. The Local Plan revised the Cambridge Green Belt to provide the northern boundary of this development. The Green Belt continues to ensure separation from Girton and Histon & Impington villages.

- 1.4 The site and adjoining land will provide the infrastructure needed to deliver and serve the urban extension identified under Policy SS/2 as a whole. The Local Plan considers the notional capacity of 1,000 dwellings a robust estimate of capacity for the purposes of plan making.
- 1.5 The application has been appealed against non-determination and can no longer be determined by the local planning authority. The local planning authority now needs to determine its position in respect of the appeal. The officers' recommendation, as set out in this report, is that, had the appeal against non-determination not been made, the application should be refused for the reason set out below. Members will need to decide whether to accept the officers' recommendation and to agree the reason for refusal, which would then form the basis of the Council's position in the appeal and will be set out in a Statement of Case to be drafted by officers.
- 1.6 The development proposals are considered to generally align with the development plan policy framework and the objectives of creating a sustainable community which will enhance the special character of the area, as guided by Policy SS2 of the Local Plan.
- 1.7 The benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals have been carefully evaluated and assessed against the development plan for the area and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 1.8 **Social Objectives:** Significant positive weight is attached to the social benefits arising from the development proposals. In terms of housing need, the development will deliver up to 1000 new homes, which will help to maintain the Greater Cambridge five-year housing land supply and deliver affordable homes. The proposals include 40% affordable housing (400 units) which accords fully with development plan policies which require a minimum of 40% affordable homes for this size of development.
- 1.9 Policy objectives of delivering the social objectives of sustainable development will be further met by the application proposals, in the form of a new primary and secondary school and on-site community facilities.

- 1.10 The scheme also provides formal play provision, open space and public realm including the delivery of a country park. This is considered to deliver the objective for new development with a clear sense of place. This further weighs in support of the proposals.
- 1.11 The site allocation policy SS/2 requires, under Paragraph 10, the development to be highly accessible and permeable through the provision of a network of strong internal and external cycle and pedestrian links to neighbouring parts of the urban and rural areas. The application provides one pedestrian and cycle link to the village of Girton through Thornton Close to the southwestern boundary of the site, with the potential for a second link to Thornton Way. No access is to be provided through Wellbrook Way, the more direct route into Girton, as this requires access through land in third-party ownership which is not considered deliverable by Cambridgeshire County Council. Overall, however, a good level of accessibility and linkages to existing development and the surrounding area is considered to be provided by the application proposals, with limited conflict with Policy SS/2 (10).
- 1.12 **Economic Objectives:** In terms of economic benefits, national planning policy places a clear emphasis on the importance of economic growth and delivering economic benefits as a key component of sustainable development. The application will generate significant positive economic impacts during the construction and operational phases of the development. The proposals will create construction jobs and employment, through businesses, shops and services within the development. Significant positive weight is afforded to these benefits.
- 1.13 **Environmental Objectives:** The proposed development will contribute to an improvement in habitat quality and biodiversity net gain (BNG), with an uplift of 19% proposed. This is dependent on the same broad habitat types, areas and conditions shown on the outline landscape masterplan being delivered through phased reserved matters.
- 1.14 Provision is also made to ensure prudent use of natural resources at the Site and measures to minimise waste and pollution. Mitigation and adaptation to climate change will be facilitated through the proposed Site wide sustainability strategy, fulfilling policy objectives of demonstrating excellence in sustainable development. Significant weight is attached to these benefits.
- 1.15 The proposed development will place demands on the potable water supply giving rise to potential harm to waterbodies, noting that the Draft Regional Water Resource Plan (RWRMP) for Eastern England has

identified an issue of water scarcity in the whole of the Eastern Region. Cambridge Water's Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) continues to focus on water conservation/saving strategies to address growing need.

- 1.16 Policy CC/4 of the Local Plan requires 'low' water use development designed to limit personal consumption of water to 110 litres per person/day. The development proposals provide water efficiency measures of 110 litres per person/day which would comply with Policy CC/4. However, Policy CC/4 was based on the evidence that was available at the time of the preparation of the Local Plan. Since that time, the Environment Agency (EA) has considered the impact of changes to abstraction licences in Greater Cambridgeshire, underpinned by evidence that groundwater abstractions are causing a risk of deterioration of some water bodies. The EA has advised that some of the growth included in Local Plans based on Cambridge Water Company's (CWC) Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP19) is unsustainable.
- 1.17 Policy CC/7 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 also requires all development proposals to demonstrate that, inter alia, the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed.
- 1.18 The EA has objected to CWC's draft WRMP24 which was published in February 2023. A revised draft WRMP24 was published on 29 September 2023 in response to the representations received. This document is currently being considered by the EA, who will provide advice to DEFRA, following which time the government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Areas (DEFRA) will determine if the final plan can be adopted by CWC. The EA has indicated that there remains an unacceptable level of risk of environmental deterioration from the combined level of abstraction CWC forecasts it needs for existing and new customers (which would include this development proposal) up to 2032.
- 1.19 The revised draft WRMP24 indicates that, at current growth assumptions, the demand for water between the years 2030 – 2032 will create the greatest risk to water bodies. The Council's Housing Trajectory anticipates that delivery of this site will take place between 2026/27 and 2033/34.
- 1.20 The EA is a statutory consultee for developments that are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Officers have had regard to their advice on the EIA and Environmental Statement (ES), noting that in correspondence dated 09 August 2023, they have maintained an objection to the proposed development. This is on the basis that the

application has not demonstrated that the water to the development can be supplied sustainably, or that the risks to water resources including chalk aquifers are negligible or can be mitigated. The EA has been requested to consider this application further in the light of the 29 September 2023 revised draft WRM24, but comments have yet to be received at the time of writing this report.

- 1.21 As noted above, during the course of this application, there have been changes to the evidence base in respect of water resources, and the EA is updating its position in light of successive drafts of the WRMP24. Given that the Appellant has appealed against non-determination, as noted above, the LPA no longer has jurisdiction to determine this planning application. Had the Appellant not appealed against non-determination, it may have been possible for the LPA and the Applicant to work together to overcome the LPA's objection in the light of the changing position in the evidence base, the draft WRMP and the position of the EA.
- 1.22 As matters stand, the advice provided by the EA on 09 August 2023 is noted, and further advice is awaited. At the time of writing this report, officers consider that it has not been demonstrated that the mitigation that is currently proposed is adequate to address potential impacts on water bodies. As a result, the application would be in direct conflict with Policy CC/7 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) which requires all development proposals to demonstrate that, *inter alia*, the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed and opportunities taken for improvements to water quality.
- 1.23 Officers are of the view that in order to avoid harm to the water environment as required by Policy CC/7, further mitigation is required which goes above and beyond the requirements of Policy CC/4. Officers note the position adopted by the LPA in respect of proposals by Brookgate Ltd at Land North of Cambridge North Station, where the Appellant proposed an 'enhanced package' of mitigation measures which was, in the judgement of the LPA, sufficient to overcome the LPA's objection (although the EA maintained its objection and the appeal has yet to be determined).
- 1.24 As noted above, the LPA has sought the views of the EA in respect of this application in the light of the most recent iteration of the draft WRMP. Notwithstanding that this application is now subject to a planning appeal, the LPA will continue to liaise with the Appellant and the EA with a view to considering whether enhanced mitigation measures could overcome the LPA's objection.

- 1.25 Overall, and notwithstanding the proposed development largely accords with Policy SS/2, officers consider that the conflict with Policy CC/7 is of such significance that the proposed development is contrary to the Development Plan taken as a whole.
- 1.26 In the planning balance, officers consider that, in this case, the proposed development will bring significant social, economic and environmental benefits that accord with the three dimensions of sustainable development. However, the risk of harm to the water environment to which the proposed development would give rise, in the absence of mitigation which can effectively seek to manage the water resources issue that this development presents in the light of the objection from the EA, is considered by officers to attract significant weight in the planning balance. This harm is considered to outweigh the other environmental, social and economic benefits which the scheme would deliver.
- 1.27 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, the views of statutory consultees, including the EA, as well as all other material planning considerations, officers recommend that, based upon the information before the Council, the Joint Development Control Committee (JDCC) agree the officers' recommendation, that had the appeal against non-determination not been made, the Council would have refused the application for the reason set out in Section 27 below.

## **2. Site description and context**

- 2.1 The wider Darwin Green development is an urban extension of Cambridge, which is divided into separate phases across two administrative boundaries and is located south of the A14 trunk road, giving access from the north via the Histon Roundabout (Junction 32).
- 2.2 Darwin Green 1 (DG1) is part of the City of Cambridge and is allocated in the adopted Cambridge Local Plan (October 2018) under Policy 20 (Land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road Area of Major Change) for up to 1,593 dwellings with associated community, educational, open space and retail uses.
- 2.3 Darwin Green 2 & 3 (DG2/3) is located entirely in South Cambridgeshire and is allocated in the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018) under Policy SS/2 (Land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road). The site lies to the south of the A14 and is bounded to the east by Cambridge Road/Histon Road, and to the west by Girton



village. Its southern boundary is to DG1. The total area of the site is approximately 79 hectares.

- 2.4 The southern boundary of the site is formed by an existing Public Right of Way (PROW Footpath 99/10) and cycle link, beyond which lies the Darwin Green Phase 1 development site. To the west of the site lies existing residential properties along Thornton Close, Thornton Way and Wellbrook Way, the Abbeyfield Retirement home, and the Wellbrook Park business park.
- 2.5 The site currently comprises open agricultural land with existing overhead utilities with associated vertical structures and a utilities compound to the eastern boundary, as well as an existing telecommunications mast located to the southwest of the Site.
- 2.6 The existing land use is associated with large scale crop experiments operated by the National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB). There are a small number of existing buildings, and structures within the site. To the south-west is the NIAB Agricultural Research Facility and to the north-west lies Impington Farm. Two residential properties exist to the northern boundary of the site, Woodhouse Farm and Orchard Close.
- 2.7 Existing vehicular access to the site is via Histon Road/Cambridge Road. The access currently takes the form of a priority T junction and serves as the primary construction route for the Darwin Green Phase 1 (DG1) development site. The junction will eventually be upgraded to a new signalised junction as part of the highway infrastructure works approved under the DG1 scheme. Access within the site is limited to existing farm tracks. In addition to the PROW along the southern boundary of the site, running from Huntingdon Road to Histon Road along Whitehouse Lane, a further PROW (Footpath 99/13) from Thornton Way intersects Footpath 99/10 at the northern end of Whitehouse Lane.
- 2.8 The topography of the site is categorised by minor gradients with levels falling in a south to north direction. There is a level change of approximately 6.3 metres across the site with the high point towards the fringes of the existing residential area of Girton along the western boundary. The land gently falls away to the north-east towards a low point of 11.80m AOD, located towards the north of Impington Farm.
- 2.9 Three watercourses within the site have been granted award drain status (these are drains for which the Council is responsible for maintenance). All ordinary watercourses on site are relatively linear and steep sided. Four culverts are present beneath the A14 which convey flow from the site

to the north, where the channels eventually converge to form the Public Drain.

- 2.10 Part of the site falls within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area (sand and gravel) in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) 2021.
- 2.11 Two areas of woodland around the existing buildings to the north-east of the site are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).
- 2.12 There are no Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments or Conservation Areas within or close to the Site. There are no other environmental designations, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), County and City Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves or Ancient Woodlands within the site. The site is in Flood Zone 1 where there is a low risk of fluvial flooding.

### **3. The proposal**

- 3.1 The proposals are submitted as an outline planning application (all matters reserved except for means of access) for up to 1,000 residential dwellings, secondary school, primary school, community facilities, retail uses, open space and landscaped areas, associated engineering, demolition and infrastructure works.
- 3.2 The application was submitted to the Council on 23 May 2022. A schedule of subsequent formal amendments submitted is set out in para.3.8 below.
- 3.3 The proposals have been discussed with the Councils' officers as part of detailed pre-application work which was undertaken between early 2020 and April 2022. This included a Quality Panel Briefing, the minutes of which can be found in **Appendix 2**.
- 3.4 Prior to the submission of the application, a pre-application developer presentation was made to the JDCC on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Following submission of the application, a post submission officer update was presented to Members of JDCC on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022.
- 3.5 The application seeks outline planning permission for the following development, with all matters reserved (except for the means of access). The three proposed access points would stem from the existing access serving Darwin Green 1, off Cambridge Road/Histon Road.

3.6 As an outline planning application, a series of Parameter Plans (PPs) are submitted for Approval (**Appendix 4**), which will set out the framework for what the future detailed development proposals should include. An Illustrative Masterplan has also been prepared (**Appendix 5**) which is underpinned by the PPs which are submitted with the Application, relating to the following:

- Demolition Parameter Plan
- Land Use Parameter Plan
- Movement and Access Parameter Plan
- Landscape Framework Parameter Plan
- Building Heights Parameter Plan
- Urban Design Parameter Plan

### **Amended Plans and Additional Information**

3.7 A number of amendments and additional information have been submitted since the validation of the planning application. These are set out in the table below:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment/Additional Detail</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>	Updated Flood Risk Assessment
<b>25<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b>	Updated Parameter Plans Cut and Fill Drawings Updated Drainage Strategy Updated Highways Plans Transport Technical Note Updated Landscape, Open Space and Countryside Enhancement Strategy Environment Statement: Statement of Conformity
<b>11<sup>th</sup> October 2022</b>	Highways Technical Note Highway Drawings for Thornton Close, DG1 and DG2 Eastern Access for Road Safety Audit
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023</b>	Road Safety Audit (approved) drawings
<b>13<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	Open Space Framework Note
<b>7<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b>	Environment Statement: Water Resources Addendum
<b>14<sup>th</sup> July 2023</b>	Western Pedestrian and Cycle Links Note

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## Application Documentation

- 3.8 A list of submitted documents is included in **Appendix 3**, this includes the amended drawings submitted with the amendment pack (as set out above).

## Pre-application engagement

- 3.9 The proposals were subject to lengthy pre-application discussions with officers of the shared planning service. The pre-application process has resolved a number of issues including block structures, building heights and separation distances, retaining an appropriate level of usable amenity space in areas where swales are proposed; drainage modelling; cycling provision and management of open space and community facilities.
- 3.10 Between the commencement of pre-application discussion and the submission of the application there have been two Design Quality Panel Assessments, the first in November 2019 and then subsequently in February 2022. A number of specific recommendations were made. The full minutes are attached as **Appendix 2**. Key issues and recommendations of the November 2019 meeting are tabulated below, together with the officer response.

	<b>ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE QUALITY PANEL</b>	<b>OFFICER RESONSE</b>
1.	The Panel emphasised that it is important to foster interaction and avoid conflict in the design.	The proposed layout is supported. The details of how to manage potential conflict between uses and the function of spaces is considered appropriate to address through the Design Code development and through reserved matters design.
2.	The low number of visitor parking spaces was noted and it was recognised that there is a tension between providing sufficient parking spaces, to avoid nuisance parking, whilst at	The Local Plan does not set out a standard calculation for visitor car parking numbers. The proposed visitor car parking provision of 1 space per 10 units has been tailored to specifically reflect the extensive sustainable transport

	<p>the same time not encouraging driving through providing excessive parking for park users.</p>	<p>opportunities and proposals. These proposals include 'smart' measures and innovative solutions such as car clubs, shared car parking and the provision of electric vehicle charging points. Officers are supportive of this approach.</p>
3.	<p>The Panel asked how the country park would be managed.</p>	<p>Officers have engaged with the applicants in relation to the management of the Country Park. The cascade mechanism that has been negotiated with the applicants is set out in para.15.7. The management arrangements, have been discussed and agreed with the LPA and other parties as required as part of the drafting of the Section 106 Heads of Terms.</p>
4.	<p>A community building is proposed which the Panel suggested could include a crèche.</p>	<p>The use of the Community Building has been considered at length as part of the negotiations with the applicant. In particular, there has been a consideration of the need for it to be a multi-use building with the NHS also utilising some of the floor space for health services. There has also been some consideration of nursery/creche facilities either within the community building or in an alternative location to be determined at a later date. At this stage though, officers are satisfied with the flexibility of this building.</p>
5.	<p>The Panel characterised the development as being a 'quiet' place that people generally come to (or from) rather than pass through (cyclists excepted). Therefore, some of the highway designs could be relaxed to focus on providing places of greater character and</p>	<p>Officers will be considering the interaction between streets, open spaces and homes as part of the Design Code process to follow, should the Outline Planning Application be approved. The illustrative landscape masterplan affords the level of</p>

	it was mooted that 'home zones' could be considered.	flexibility needed to achieve different character areas within the development.
6.	The development layout is unconventional, in a generally pleasing way, but overly complicated in places. The Panel suggested that pedestrians and cyclists might not always act as the road hierarchy suggests they might. The five or six street types could be simplified to perhaps just three types.	As this is an outline application with all matters reserved except for access, any detailed layouts that have been discussed with the applicants and shared with the Design Quality Panel are indicative and serve to show how the site would accommodate the proposed housing and accompanying infrastructure. It is acknowledged that these matters will need to be considered and carefully developed within future detailed design proposals.
7.	The Panel questioned how the boundary treatment with the A14 will be constructed as it was advised that there is insufficient spoil on site for the proposed bund. The Panel recommended that the applicant consider the detrimental environmental impact of moving soil for the bund.	Proposals for the treatment along the A14 have been guided by acoustic modelling. The Applicant has provided three separate bunds to provide the acoustic and visual mitigation required. This has been considered to be acceptable by the Council's Environmental Health Officers as noted under the consultation responses.
8.	The Panel emphasised the role of a design code in embedding quality throughout the development, and managing important issues such as boundary fences, walls and sheds for cycle or bin storage, was discussed	Officers are committed to the Design Code process which will be a requirement to be secured as part of the outline planning permission.
9.	The Panel suggested the treatment of water on the site should be reconsidered and in	The Applicant has indicated an adequate and sustainable water supply can be provided for the Darwin Green Phases 2

	the context of climate change be used to keep the soil moist for the plants and trees on site. Water gardens and sinuous features would utilise water resources better. It was suggested that the applicant look at the university site, adjacent to DG1 at Eddington to understand how they recycle water.	and 3 scheme. The applicant indicates that site-specific and/or off-site measures will ensure that the risks posed by the development can be mitigated or removed. The applicant concludes that there is no causal link between abstraction required for the Darwin 2 & 3 scheme and harm to local groundwater and surface water bodies. The EA does not share these views or that the risks are negligible or can be mitigated.
10.	Future proofing was raised and the panel urged consideration of an all-electric site.	The development is proposed to be gas free, with PV panels and heat pumps used.
10.	The Panel highlighted the potential for over-heating as a challenge in residential development and the need for adaptation given extreme weather conditions.	Should outline planning permission be granted, the reserved matters applications to follow, in addition to the Design Code process, will help to ensure that single aspect accommodation is minimised to prevent the potential for overheating
11.	The community building might benefit from a location nearer the schools, the allotments and the country park that could also support a café.	The location of the community building is relatively central and provides easy access to the country park.

**Table 3: Officer response to Issues and Recommendations of the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel**

## **4. Environmental Impact Assessment**

### **Environmental Statement**

- 4.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping request was received on 26 November 2012, in relation to the potential development of 1,100 homes, education uses and other associated infrastructure at

Darwin Green 2 & 3 (S2483/12/E1). An updated EIA scoping opinion was submitted on 15 August 2019 for a development of the same scale (S/2852/19/E2).

- 4.2 In response to the 2019 scoping opinion the Council confirmed its view that the development represents Schedule 2 development as described in the EIA Regulations (as amended), being an urban development project which exceeds the relevant thresholds. The Council also confirmed that given the characteristics of the development and its potential impacts the proposed development represents EIA development, and that an Environmental Statement would be required.

### **Scope of the Environmental Statement (ES)**

- 4.3 The Council's response to scoping request S/2852/19/E2 concluded that the Scoping Report provided a generally sound basis for the ES, however some sections would require further expansion or clarification, and that some additional topics should be included.
- 4.4 The development as submitted as part of this application is of a commensurate scale and type as that considered as part of the scoping report, and the ES as submitted was prepared in accordance with the formal Scoping Opinions issued.

### **Methodology for the ES**

- 4.5 The ES considers the likely significant effects of the proposed development during its construction and once it is complete and operational. The ES assesses the maximum quantum, physical extent and development principles defined for the proposal, as set out in the submitted parameter plans, together with the detailed access drawings, which are put forward for approval.

### **Topics covered by the ES**

- 4.6 The ES Main Report (Volume 1) sets out the following chapters and submission:
1. Introduction
  2. Methodology and Scope
  3. Site and Context
  4. Consideration of Alternatives
  5. Proposed Development
  6. Planning Policy
  7. Air Quality



8. Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
9. Ecology
10. Flood Risk and Drainage
11. Human Health
12. Land Contamination
13. Landscape and Visual
14. Noise and Vibration
15. Socio-Economics
16. Transport
17. Commentary Level Topics (Agricultural Land and Climate Change)
18. Cumulative Effects
19. Summary of Effects

4.7 The ES is organised into 3 volumes: Main Report (Volume 1); Technical Appendices (Volume 2); and Non-Technical Summary (Volume 3). As the ES is a detailed technical and wide-ranging report, in to assist consideration of the application, it is supported by the non-technical summary.

#### **Update to the ES**

4.8 In July 2023 a Water Resources Addendum to the ES was submitted (Darwin Green Phases 2 and 3 Water Resources Addendum Chapter 17.0 Commentary Level Topics). This was submitted in response to the EA's formal objection to the application dated 16 February 2023.

4.9 Amended application information was also submitted in August 2022, including an ES Statement of Conformity, setting out that the amendments to the application have no implications for predicted effects or proposed mitigation as set out in the ES.

## **5. Relevant site history**

5.1 The table below details the relevant planning history for the application site.

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
S/2852/19/E2	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping opinion for Land at Darwin Green 2-3	Scoping opinion issued 26 September 2019

07/0003/OUT	Mixed use development comprising up to 1593 dwellings, primary school, community facilities, retail units (use classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5) and associated infrastructure including vehicular, pedestrian and cycleway accesses, open space and drainage works.	Granted permission December 2013 subject to conditions and S106 Agreement
S/0001/07/F	Formation of Vehicular Pedestrian and Cycleway Access Road from Histon Road to serve the Urban Extension of the City between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road Cambridge together with Drainage and Landscaping Works.	Granted permission 18 December 2013
S/0001/07/NMA1	Non-material amendment to permission S/0001/07/F to amend the location of the attenuation pond in the Flood Risk Assessment approved in condition 6 so that it accords with the proposed location in application S/1355/17/FL.	Granted permission 29 June 2022
21/04880/PRIOR	Demolition of detached farmhouse	Granted prior approval 21 December 2021
S/1355/17/FL	Construction of a drainage pond (relocation of drainage pond permitted under reference S/0001/07/F) to support Darwin Green One site wide strategic drainage including revised access and landscaping details   Land Immediately West of The Electricity Pylon and Foul Pump Station Histon Road Impington	Granted permission 29 June 2022

**Table 4:** Relevant Site history

## 6. Policy

- 6.1 Relevant legislation and planning policies are included as **Appendix 1**.

## 7. Consultations

### Consultation Responses

#### National Highways

- 7.1 **No objection.** The impact of the additional traffic on the A14 would be accommodated by recent improvements. Conditions sought requiring the submission of a Construction and Environmental Management Plan and Travel Plan.

#### County Highways

- 7.2 **No objection.** Comments. The County Highway Authority has expressed concerns (as part of the initial consultation response) that the submitted plans showed only two of the proposed five access points and lacked sufficient detail to permit in depth comments. Junction and layout amendments were therefore requested.
- 7.3 Appropriate cycle way provision and adherence to LTN120 was also advised. The County Highway Authority required that robust movement models also considering street parking be considered given the site sits outside Local Authority parking controls.
- 7.4 The potential links to Girton through Wellbrook Way and Thornton Close links were sought. It was also made clear that the Highway Authority will not seek to adopt the proposed Green Lanes or Mews Streets.
- 7.5 In response to the matters above, a road safety audit was undertaken eventually issued 21 December 2022. The road safety audit addressed all the technical junction details requested by the County Highway Officers.
- 7.6 Although the Highway Authority do not raise any objection to the lack of a connection to Girton through Wellbrook Way, they identify this as a missed opportunity. A pre-commencement condition requiring a traffic management plan has been imposed.

## County Transport Team

- 7.7 **No objection.** Recommends conditions relating to a Travel Plan; a scheme of enhancements to link footway and cycleway on the B1049 to the north of the A14 Histon Interchange to Cambridge Road; and delivery of the link from the development to Thornton Close.
- 7.8 The Transport Team proposed that offsite highways works are dealt with via a suitably worded condition or inclusion in a Section 106 Agreement which allows a Stage 1 / 2 Audit to be undertaken post-planning stage. A contribution is ought to provide an extension of the bus service proposed to Darwin Green 1.

## County Growth and Development Team

- 7.9 **No objection.** A number of planning obligations are sought to mitigate the impact of the development.
- 7.10 There is a need for the secondary school, and the location has been agreed in principle for some time. The size of the school sites match the totals under Darwin Green 1. The school playing fields should be attached to the school provision and not managed as part of the country park. The timing of delivery of the schools will need to be agreed.
- 7.11 The primary school should include purpose-built pre-school provision, and towards SEND provision. Contributions are sought towards children's services. It is recommended a separate plot for a nursery to come forward on a commercial basis is provided within the development. No post-16 provision is sought.
- 7.12 A proportional contribution to the fit-out of the library at Darwin Green 1 is sought. Contributions are sought towards community development, and health initiatives.

## Shared Waste Service

- 7.13 **No objection.** Details of refuse routes will need to be considered at the reserved matters stage. A bin bank should be provided on site, and temporary cardboard collection points during the initial occupation phase.
- 7.14 Contributions will be required towards the provision of waste receptacles and refuse vehicles.

## SCDC Communities Team

- 7.15 Initial comments sought amendments/further information regarding population figures, governance of the country park, lack of facilities for the country park, Community Access Agreement for outdoor sports for the community and school, and community access to secondary school indoor facilities.
- 7.16 Comments. It is vital that connections to the wider network are installed to the north and west. Contributions are sought for swimming pools, burial space and faith space generally and contributions for a small grants scheme, open space maintenance and community development contribution for the site specifically. Temporary community facilities should be provided.

## Lead Local Flood Authority

- 7.17 **No objection.** Conditions sought for construction water management, detailed surface water strategy for each reserved matters, temporary storage and management of water, and maintenance details of surface water drainage systems. Informatives regarding watercourse consents and pollution control is also sought.

## Environment Agency

- 7.18 **Objection** following initial response received 06 June 2022 raising no objections to the proposal. The formal objection was issued on 16th February 2022, for reasons relating to the impact of the development on additional demand for potable water use, increase abstraction and risk deterioration to waterbodies in the Greater Cambridge area. Advises that the planning application does not demonstrate that the potential impact on water resources and Water Framework Directive objectives has been assessed and appropriate mitigation considered.
- 7.19 Subsequent comments received August 2023 received in relation to the ES addendum submitted in July 2023. Advised the additional information does not demonstrate that the Darwin Green development can be supplied sustainably, or that the risks are negligible or can be mitigated. Until the output from CWC's growth scenario modelling and the subsequent cumulative risk assessment from GCP, we cannot agree that the growth in CWC's supply area can be supplied sustainably, without posing an unacceptable risk of deterioration to the water environment.

## Anglian Water

- 7.20 **No objection.** Comments. A sewage pumping station is with 15 metres of the site. Any housing located within 15 metres of the asset could be affected by noise, odour or disruption from maintenance work. The site layout should avoid potentially sensitive uses within 15 metres of this asset.
- 7.21 The Foul Water drainage treatment catchment does not currently have capacity for the increase in flows, however necessary steps to increase capacity would be undertaken if consent is granted.
- 7.22 The sewerage system does have capacity for the increase in flows. Informatives sought describing necessary steps for the developer to undertake.
- 7.23 The proposal does not intend to use Anglian Water surface water drainage assets, and therefore Anglian Water has no comment on the suitability of surface water management.

## GCSP Urban Design

- 7.24 **No objection.** Recommends conditions relating to design code and design code compliance.

## County Archaeology

- 7.25 **No objection.** Comments. The level of significance of the archaeological remains within the Site is not sufficient to prevent development or to necessitate design measures which retain the heritage assets. Archaeological excavation will be needed in some areas and mitigation for the remaining archaeological assets within the Country Park area will require further consideration following detailed design. A programme of historic building recording will be appropriate to mitigate the loss of the built heritage assets, which should be secured through a specific condition. Recommends archaeology condition and a historic building recording condition.

## SCDC Housing Officer

- 7.26 **No objection.** Comments. This application is aiming to provide up to 1,000 residential units, with 40% affordable housing, this is policy compliant. The tenure mix and clustering of affordable provision to be secured by s106 agreement. It is noted that all affordable units will meet or exceed nationally described space standards. Prior to the reserved matters submission the following must be addressed:

- The indicative housing mix is based on outdated information
- Self and custom build plots to be agreed with housing
- The identified need for wheelchair accessible housing in South Cambs.
- Maximising bed spaces per property.
- The rent for affordable rent housing to reflect the 'City fringe sites'.

### **GCSP Sustainability Officer**

7.27 **No objection.** Comments (response dated 24 June 2023). The proposed scheme is supported in sustainable construction terms. The Sustainability, Energy and Water Statement makes a series of commitments with further detail to be provided at the reserved matters stage. All plots to have electric vehicle charging. All dwellings will be subject to the new Part O overheating assessment. Water efficiency of no more than 110 litres/person/day for all dwellings, with 2 BREEAM Wat01 credits for the non-residential development. Recommend at least 3 credits should be aimed for. The integration of green infrastructure across the site will help to mitigate the effects of the urban heat island effect. Targeting at least 95% diversion of construction waste from landfill. Excavation transport and soil management will need to be considered for carbon impacts. The new community building to the BREEAM excellent rating is welcomed. Notes that the density and mix of uses on the site would present a challenge to delivering a technically and commercially viable district heating system.

7.28 Conditions sought for: A Sustainability, Energy and Water Statement; a design and completion BREEAM report; a detailed waste management plan to be submitted with each reserved matters application; sustainable show homes.

### **GCSP Landscape Officer**

7.29 **No objection.** Comments. Recommends conditions for: Youth and Play Strategy; Strategic and Detailed Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan; Landscape Strategy and Groundworks condition.

### **GCSO Ecology Officer**

7.30 **No objection.** Comments. Support survey and agree with assessed habitat baseline and demonstration of biodiversity net gain of approximately 19% across the site. Support the proposed Skylark mitigation strategy. Details of habitat, establishment and ongoing management specification will need to be secured. The principles

proposed within the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan are supported. The approach to badger setts across the site is supported.

- 7.31 Recommends conditions relating to: A site wide Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) (including bird and bat boxes); Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and Construction Ecological Management (CEMP) Plan; badger licence and bat work licence prior to works.

### **GCSP Tree Officer**

- 7.32 **No objection.** Comments. The submitted documents Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Preliminary Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan are sufficient and should be approved.

### **NHS**

- 7.33 **No objection.** Seeks requirements for a self-contained primary care space within the Community building.

### **UK Health Security Agency**

- 7.34 No comment. We do not comment on this type of planning application unless there are specific chemical & environmental hazard concerns which have the potential to impact on the health of local communities.

### **Sport England**

- 7.35 **No objection.** Conditions sought for assessment of ground conditions and a scheme of improvement if required; artificial grass approval; and community use scheme.

### **SCDC Environmental Health**

- 7.36 **No objection.** Comments. The proximity of the site to the A14 is noted. The submitted noise study shows satisfactory noise levels can be obtained across the site with careful consideration of mitigation, layout and orientation of sensitive rooms. The parameter plans indicate the residential area will be set back from the A14.
- 7.37 Recommends the following conditions:
- Submission of a Low Emission Strategy for electric vehicle charging points, and submission of emission ratings for gas boilers and combined heat and power systems.



- Site wide Demolition and Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- Noise impact assessment and mitigation condition to be applied to each reserved matters.
- A condition requiring an assessment and mitigation scheme for any reserved matters parcels that contain non-residential uses.
- A condition restricting the hours for collections and deliveries at non-residential premises.
- A condition requiring details of ventilation, extraction and filtration of odours, dust or fumes for any reserved matters parcels that contain non-residential uses.
- A residential road traffic noise insulation scheme informative.
- Operational noise impact informative and noise attenuation scheme informative.
- Artificial lighting condition requiring a lighting scheme at reserved matters stage.
- Condition requiring adherence to mitigation measures set out in the Environmental Statement.
- General contaminated land informative
- Air source heat pump noise informative

7.38 The submitted investigation and risk assessment of the site has identified localised areas of elevated contaminant concentrations (PAH and asbestos presence) and a single instance of elevated pesticides (DDT and DDE) within a topsoil sample. Additional investigation is recommended in the soils beneath the former farmyards, as well as topsoil screening for DDT and breakdown products. Mitigation is likely to be simple and can be addressed through the use of standard planning condition.

### **Cambridgeshire Constabulary Police Architectural Liaison Officer**

7.39 **No objection.** Comments. The area is of medium risk to crime vulnerability. It appears some measures have already been considered, and further specific comments will be provided at the reserved matters stage when more context is known.

### **Parish Council**

7.40 Histon and Impington Parish Council and Girton Parish Council have not provided any comments.

## Cambridgeshire Quality Panel Meeting of November 2019

7.41 A copy of the Panel's full report can be found in Appendix 2.

### 8. Third Party Representations

8.1 6 representations have been received from the following addresses:

19 St Albans Road Cambridge  
64 Wellbrook Way Girton  
39 Cranesbill Close Orchard Park  
62 South Road Impington  
14 Cavesson Court  
21 Primrose Lane Impington

8.2 The representations can be read in full on the Council's website, however a summary is provided below:

8.3 Those in objection have raised the following issues:

- The proposal should connect to Histon and Impington via the existing bridge over the A14 to encourage active travel.
- The files are not structured to enable non-experts to interpret.
- The north road junction of Darwin Green to Histon/Cambridge Road is not designed well for cyclists.

8.4 Those providing a neutral comment have given the following reasons:

- The proposal should provide connections between the site, Girton, Histon and Impington, providing residents access to community facilities. Active transport links should be provided to allow everyone to move between these adjacent areas easily and safely. The farm bridge over the A14 should be provided as one route. All potential active travel connections should be secured to be delivered before first occupation.
- The proposal would add pressure to the Histon Road / King's Hedges junction and the Histon / A14 junction which are currently congested during peak times. Other roads such as Milton Road have better access to the A14.
- Grey water processing should be provided.
- A commitment to BREEAM excellence for public buildings and schools should be provided.

## Cambridge Past, Present & Future

- 8.5 **Object.** The location of the country park adjacent to the A14 will be compromised by traffic noise, and the tree planting is likely to take 30 years before mitigating. The impact is likely to be higher around “Impington Wood” as no bund is proposed. The area of “Darwin Meadows” should incorporate views from surrounding properties for natural surveillance. The 4-storey housing along the two main routes should be softened by planting.
- 8.6 The proposal has a low standard of sustainability. Grey water collection and treatment should be incorporated. There is no commitment to BREEAM excellent for public buildings which is local government policy.
- 8.7 Active travel connections and public transport have not been maximised. There should be a commitment to opening up new active travel routes, in particular across the A14 to Girton, Histon and Impington. There should also be a commitment to a public transport service to Cambridge North Station.

## Camcycle

- 8.8 **Object.** The proposals fail to provide sufficient permeability across all residential areas onto the cycle network. In addition, there is no separate cycle provision on secondary roads.
- 8.9 There are poor connections to Girton, Orchard Park, Cambridge North Station and employment areas within the Science Park, Business Park and St Johns Innovation Park. This shows a failure to respond to changing travel patterns in the area.
- 8.10 Although the proposed eastern access junction provides legal priority for pedestrian and cycles, the design should manage vehicular speeds more effectively through horizontal and vertical design controls.
- 8.11 The Transport Strategy does not correct the mistakes made in Darwin Green Phase 1 and no revisions have been made to reflect the modal share for cycling which may now be double what is projected.

## 9. Member Representations

- 9.1 No representations have been received from individual District or County Councillors.

9.2 The proposals have been considered by the **Cambridge County Council Environment and Green Investment Committee**. The application was supported in principle and comments were made on the following:

- Members stressed the importance of health care provision being delivered, both GP and dental surgeries. Clarification was sought on when health provision will be delivered at Darwin Green.
- The County Council Members sought further clarity on the model that would be used to generate revenue to maintain that park.
- The County Councillors highlighted the work undertaken by Think Communities in the adjacent Orchard Park development to generate income from sports pitches and community centres to pay for other facilities and suggested models such as this should be considered at Darwin Green.
- The Country Park is located in the Air Quality Management Area and it is suggested that landscaping and tree planting for the country park should be designed to mitigate the air quality and noise impacts from traffic on the A14.
- Access to sports facilities and ensuring school grounds are not in country park.

## 10. Planning Assessment

10.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the key issues are:

- Principle of development
- Design, scale, layout and landscaping
- Housing provision
- Employment provision and community facilities
- Open space and sports provision
- Water resources, management and flood risk
- Biodiversity and trees
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Transport and access
- Heritage assets
- Amenity and environmental health
- Utilities
- Third party representations
- Other matters

- Planning obligations
- Planning balance
- Recommendation

## **11. Principle of Development**

- 11.1 Policy S/3 of the Local Plan 2018 sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and that the Local Planning Authority will seek approve wherever possible development which accords with the Local Plan that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 11.2 This approach supported by Policies S/5 and S/6, which amongst other things, set out that development will meet the objectively assessed needs of the district over the plan period, including the delivery of 19,500 new homes and 22,000 additional jobs, with the development hierarchy setting out a preference that development is located at the edge of Cambridge, having regard to the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 11.3 Local Plan Policy SS/2 allocates land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road for part of a sustainable housing-led urban extension to Cambridge, separated from Girton, Histon, and Impington by the Green Belt
- 11.4 The site is not within the Histon & Impington Plan area, and the Girton Neighbourhood Plan is at an early stage of preparation and is not considered to carry any weight at this stage.
- 11.5 The proposed application will deliver up to 1,000 dwellings, a primary and secondary school, and local centre. The proposed developable area accords with the Local Plan allocation under Policy SS/2, with the remainder of the site proposed to form a country park.
- 11.6 Policy SS/2 is subject to a number of requirements, including:
- Provision of approximately 1,000 dwellings, including affordable housing a wide mix of homes to meet different needs.
  - Submission of a Spatial Masterplan setting out design principles for the site, and integration with the wider North West Cambridge development.
  - Submission of a Landscape Strategy including retaining important landscape features and an appropriate edge treatment to the Green Belt setting of Cambridge.

- Submission of a Countryside Enhancement Strategy to maintain and enhance landscape features, ecological interests, and public access to the retained Green Belt between Huntingdon Road, Cambridge Road, and the A14.
- Provision of an appropriate level of community services and facilities.

11.7 A Spatial Masterplan has been submitted as part of the application (referred to as the Illustrative Masterplan). A Landscape, Open Space and Countryside Enhancement Strategy has been submitted to fulfil the requirement of a Landscape Strategy and a Countryside Enhancement Strategy.

11.8 Policy S/S2 also includes a number of requirements in relation to transport, access, landscape, water management, noise, and air quality. Compliance with these requirements is discussed in the relevant sections below.

### **Green Belt**

11.9 National Policy sets out that inappropriate development in green belts should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Whilst most forms of development are considered inappropriate, exceptions include buildings for outdoor sport and recreation, and allotments, as well as engineering operations, changes of use, and local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location.

11.10 Development proposed within the retained Green Belt comprises the demolition of existing buildings, engineering operations including the creation of bunds and ponds, provision of a country park and sports and recreation facilities. All of these uses are considered to represent appropriate development within the Green Belt as defined by National Policy, and as such are considered acceptable in principle.

### **Agricultural Land**

11.11 Local Plan Policy NH/3 sets out that planning permission will not be granted for development which will lead to an irreversible loss of agricultural land within Grades 1-3a unless and is either allocated for development, or sustainability considerations and the need or the development are sufficient to override the need to protect the agricultural value of the land.

- 11.12 The site is currently in agricultural use, and an assessment of the agricultural land classification of the site has been submitted as part of the Environmental Statement (ES Appendices 17.1 and 17.2). This assesses that 14% of the site is Grade 2, 35% is grade 3a, 40% grade 3b, and 11% non-agricultural. On this basis 47% of the site is classed as 'best and most versatile' land (Grades 1-3a).
- 11.13 Policy NH/3 recognises that there are certain circumstances when the loss of agricultural land is acceptable, including where land is allocated for development. Officers are therefore satisfied that the Application does not cause conflict with policy NH/3: the level of growth planned for the Greater Cambridge area to 2031 and beyond means that some development on agricultural land will be inevitable, as part of the development of allocated sites. On this basis, there is considered to be no conflict with Policy NH/3.
- 11.14 Land within the retained Green Belt is not specifically shown as allocated for development on the Policies Map, however Policy SS/2 and the supporting text clearly set out that this area is intended to be used for the purposes of recreation, and to provide a noise bund and water management features as part of the site allocation. On this basis it is considered the loss of agricultural land within the retained Green Belt does not conflict with Policy NH/3.

### **Minerals**

- 11.15 Part of the site falls within a designated Minerals Safeguarding Area (sand and gravel) in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) 2021.
- 11.16 Policy 5 of the MWLP 2021 sets out that the Mineral Planning Authority must be consulted on development within Safeguarding Areas other than in a number of circumstances, including where development is consistent with an allocation in the Development Plan for the area. As the site is allocated with the Local Plan, development is not considered to conflict with Policy 5.

### **Conclusion on Principle of Development**

- 11.17 On the basis of the above, and subject to compliance with the specific requirements of Local Plan Policy SS/2 as discussed in the sections below, the principle of the development is considered to be in accordance with the Local Plan Policies S3, S/5, S/6, SS/2 and NH/3, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2022.

- 11.18 In order to secure the timely delivery of the development should the application be approved, a series of standard conditions would need to be secured in relation to the timing of submission and commencement of applications reserved matters, requiring all applications to be submitted within a period of 8 years from the date of approval. To ensure clarity over the terms of the permission, and to support the comprehensive and coordinated development of the site, conditions are identified in relation to approved plans, the quantum of uses, and phasing of the development.

## **12. Design, Scale, Layout and Landscaping**

- 12.1 Policy HQ/1 'Design Principles' provides a comprehensive list of criteria by which development proposals must adhere to, requiring that all new development must be of high-quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to its local and wider context.
- 12.2 Policy SS/2 requires submission of a spatial masterplan setting out how the site will integrate effectively into the wider North-West Cambridge area, as well as setting out the principles of good design for the site.
- 12.3 Policies NH/2, NH/6 and NH/8 are relevant to the landscape and visual impacts of a proposal. Together they seek to permit development only where it respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape, Green Belt, and its National Character Area.
- 12.4 The NPPF provides advice on achieving well-designed places and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

### **Design, Layout, and Scale**

- 12.5 The proposal is accompanied by an Illustrative Masterplan and Landscape Masterplan, as well as a Design and Access Statement and series of parameter plans which would form approved drawings. These are:
- Demolition Parameter Plan
  - Land Use Parameter Plan
  - Movement and Access Parameter Plan
  - Landscape Framework Parameter Plan
  - Building Heights Parameter Plan



- Urban Design Parameter Plan

12.6 The proposals have been developed with input from a range of stakeholders, including consultations with local residents, and have evolved through pre-application discussions.

### **Land Use**

12.7 As set out above, the developable area of the site has been framed by the removal of land from the Green Belt as part of the Local Plan 2018. Within the developable area, policy SS/2 supports the provision of approximately 1,000 dwellings, alongside a range of services to meet the day-to-day needs of the development, including schools, local shopping, and community facilities, and outdoor sports.

12.8 The Land Use parameter plan reflects the aspirations for the site as set out in policy SS/2, with the majority of the developable area indicated for residential use. An education campus with space for a primary and secondary school is proposed in the south west, adjacent to land indicated for outdoor sports. An area for mixed use-development, potentially comprising community, retail, residential uses, is indicated towards the centre of the site. A series of green corridors connect the residential development parcels, and schools, to the proposed country park within the retained Green Belt.

12.9 The mix and distribution of land uses is considered appropriate and to reflect the requirements of policy SS/2.

### **Movement and Access**

12.10 National and local planning policies seek to prioritise sustainable travel methods. This is reflected in policy SS/2 which sets out that it will be a highly accessible and permeable site supported by strong network of pedestrian and cycle links as well as high-quality public transport, and that vehicular access should be through Darwin Green 1 and from Cambridge Road.

12.11 The Movement and Access Parameter plan sets out how the development will link into the approved vehicular access point from Cambridge Road in the East, with a primary road linking into Darwin Green 1, providing a loop through the wider site. The bus service proposed for the wider Darwin Green site is proposed to use the primary road, ensuring access to bus services from close to residences. Details of the locations of bus stops etc. will be considered at the reserved matters stage.

- 12.12 Bi-directional cycle lanes will run alongside the primary street, and link into the approved orbital cycle route within Darwin Green 1. The primary cycle routes will then link into shared-use pedestrian and cycle paths within the country park. The block structure and general site layout will facilitate ease of movement through the site for pedestrians and cyclists, with cyclists able to use either off-road or low-traffic routes throughout.
- 12.13 The parameter plan indicated four potential connections to the north and west for pedestrians and cyclists. These are via the agricultural bridge over the A14, to Wellbrook Way, Thornton Way, and Thornton Close (where it connects to public footpath 135/5).
- 12.14 As discussed in the transport section below, it is proposed that a pedestrian and cycle connection will be provided to Thornton Way and a pedestrian connection Thornton close, with the developer providing these connections up to the site boundary. With both of these connections there is some uncertainty over the extent of the public highway and whether these connections will cross unregistered third-party land. As such a planning obligation is proposed to fund delivery of these connections by the County Council, using their statutory powers.
- 12.15 Wellbrook Way is unadopted, and a connection would require delivery of a connection through land in third-part ownership. Following discussions with the County Council, it is considered that given the uncertainty over where this connection is deliverable, it is not reasonable to impose a planning obligation or condition to require its delivery.
- 12.16 In relation to the agricultural bridge over the A14, this connects to a series of private farm tracks between Girton and Impington. Delivery of this route would require delivery of an extensive new active travel route, which is not identified as a strategic route in the Local Plan, or by the County Council, etc. Given there are alternative suitable routes for pedestrians and cyclists to access Girton and Histon and Impington, it is not considered reasonable to require an onward connection over the A14 bridge.
- 12.17 The parameter plan however does not preclude the future delivery of connections over the A14 bridge or via Wellbrook Way, and the detail of pedestrian and cycle routes through the country park will be considered further at the reserved matters stage.
- 12.18 Notwithstanding that the Wellbrook Way and A14 bridge connections are unlikely to be deliverable, it is considered the proposed access arrangements and site layout will ensure the site is permeable and well-

connected with high-quality active travel and public transport routes through the development itself and into the surrounding area. Overall, officers consider that a good level of accessibility and linkages to existing development is provided by the application proposals. This would, however, be a limited conflict with part 10 of policy SS/2 which seeks to secure strong linkages.

### **Building Heights**

- 12.19 The parameter plans specify the maximum proposed building heights, expressed as height above ground level. As the site is proposed to be regraded, the parameter plan specifies the maximum ground level within the boundary of each development parcel, expressed as metres Above Ordinance Datum.
- 12.20 The parameter plans show that building heights for residential parcels are proposed to vary across the site, with taller buildings fronting onto key routes, namely the primary street and green corridors, and stepping down within development plots. The maximum height proposed is up to 4 storeys, or 16m to the ridge/parapet, stepping down to 3 storeys (13m) fronting the country park and secondary routes, and up to 2.5 storeys (11.5m) within some development parcels. For the education uses, a maximum height of 16m is proposed, representing 3-storeys based on typical non-residential storey heights.
- 12.21 These heights are similar to those approved on Darwin Green, where for the majority of the site, heights of up to 4 storeys (15.5m) were permitted, stepping down to 3 storeys (12.8m) then 2 storeys (9.7m) close to the existing residences to the south and east. Ground levels within Darwin Green 1 vary from around 10m AOD at the lowest point in the north east to 22.5m AOD in the south west of the site.
- 12.22 The Environment Statement includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (chapter 13) which assesses the impact of the development, based on the maximum building heights indicated on the parameter plans. This represents a worst-case scenario given that building heights will vary within development parcels. The ES concludes that the site has capacity to accommodate the development in landscape and visual terms, with potential to mitigate the visual impact of the development through the country park, green corridors, and the detailed design of the individual development parcels themselves.

- 12.23 Officers consider the proposed maximum building heights to be acceptable, with the scale of individual development parcels to be considered further at the reserved matters stage.

### **Urban Design**

- 12.24 The Urban Design parameter plan outlines some of the key design parameters for the site, to guide the future development of the design code and individual development parcels. This is supported by further detail in the Design and Access Statement, which sets out how the site design has developed through the pre-application process and how the site-wide principles translate into the illustrative detailed design set out in the Masterplan.
- 12.25 The parameter plan identifies key frontages within the development, including frontages onto the country park, primary road, and green corridors, with a brief overview of what is expected for each frontage, namely responding to the particular characteristics of each context. It also identifies other important frontages along secondary routes. The parameter plan also identifies locations of townscape significance where particular attention will need to be given to the design of building, as well as identifying important views, key linkages, and indicating the potential network of tertiary streets.
- 12.26 The details in the Urban Design parameter plan reflect principles of good urban design, which will help to facilitate delivery of a development which will respond to its context and be legible and well-connected. The design principles illustrated in the plan will be developed further through the design code and the detailed design of each development parcel.

### **Landscape Framework**

- 12.27 The Landscape Framework Parameter Plan identifies the high-level landscape typologies and their extents, namely the country park, orchards/allotments, sports pitches, key public spaces, and informal open space including green corridors. The parameter plan also indicates the proposed locations for play spaces. The plan is supported by a Landscape, Open Space, and Countryside Enhancement Strategy and a Site-Wide Landscape management Strategy.
- 12.28 Green corridors will provide an opportunity for landscape works, with smaller parklets and opportunities for planting within streets also proposed across the development. Within the country park, landscape features are proposed to be retained where possible, including area protected by Tree

Preservation Orders. A number of landscape works are proposed within the country park including construction of ponds and bunds, and diversion of a drainage ditch.

- 12.29 The proposal will provide a wide range of multi-functional and inter-connected landscape areas across the site. These are designed to meet the needs of all ages, and will include robust and functional spaces in high-traffic area such as around the primary street network and community building, whilst the country park will provide spaces for a range of leisure activities and uses.
- 12.30 As detailed in the water management section below, regrading of the site is necessary in order to establish a primarily gravity-based drainage system, which will primarily affect the developable part of the site.
- 12.31 The Landscape Officer has commented that there are a number of areas which will require further attention at the detailed design stage, for example resolving level changes to between the site and Darwin Green 1. Subject to identifying planning conditions relating to hard and soft landscaping, landscape strategy, and groundworks no objection is raised. Details of the ongoing management and maintenance of landscape areas and open space are also proposed to be secured through the s106 agreement. Subject to detail submitted at the reserved matters and discharge of conditions stage, it is considered the proposals have the potential to provide a high-quality and distinctive place which relates well to its urban-edge location.

### **Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 12.32 A landscape and visual impact assessment has been undertaken and is included within the ES, at chapter 13. This assesses the impacts of the development from a number of locations including Girton Road Bridge, Cambridge Road, and local footpaths. The LVIA assesses that, inevitably for a development of this scale, there will be adverse effects experienced in close proximity to the site, due to the change from agricultural land to an extension of the city. This however will be viewed within the context of the existing and developing urban edge to the city, and balanced by the provision of a new country park, tree planting, and other landscape works. The country park, including proposed tree planting and bunds, and containment by existing road infrastructure will largely limit the landscape and visual impact of the development on wider views, and mitigate the impact of the development on the Green Belt. The detail of proposed landscape mitigation can be considered further at the reserved matters stage.

## **Cambridgeshire Quality Panel**

- 12.33 The proposals were presents to the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel in November 2019, and again in March 2022. A summary of their key comments, and responses from officers is set out in Table 3.

## **Conclusion on Design**

- 12.34 The Council's Urban Design Officer has commented, following clarification provided by amendments to the application, that they have no objection to the proposals subject to conditions relating to a Design Code. As all matters are reserved other than access to the site, the quality of the development will depend on details secured through the design coding process and subsequent reserved matters, however the parameter plans are considered to represent a sound basis for the design of the site.
- 12.35 Overall, the proposed development is considered to have potential to represent a well-designed and sustainable new neighbourhood, that would relate well to its context and be appropriately landscaped. Conditions have been identified relating to a design code, hard and soft landscaping, landscape strategy, and groundworks which would ensure compliance with the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) policies HQ/1, SS/2, NH/2, NH/6, NH/8, and SC/9, and the NPPF.

## **13. Housing Provision**

### **Density**

- 13.1 Policy H/8 requires a net housing density of 40 dwellings per hectare (dph) in new settlements and urban extensions. The policy states that density may vary where justified by the character of the locality, the scale of the development, or other local circumstances.
- 13.2 The delivery of 1,000 homes across the site, in accordance with the submitted Masterplan would a achieve a net density of approximately 38.7 dph, which accords with Policy H/8. This is based on the developable area of the site, excluding areas designated for non-residential uses. The site is intended to form a long-term edge of Cambridge, bounded by the Green Belt and transport infrastructure. The proposed average density is considered appropriate, providing sufficient density to sustain services

within the site whilst also allowing lower-density development to the northern and western edges, sympathetic to neighbouring villages and the surrounding countryside. On this basis the proposed density of the site is considered acceptable.

## Mix

- 13.3 Policy H/9 'Housing Mix' requires a wide choice, type and mix of housing to be provided to meet the needs of different groups in the community. For market housing development of 10 or more homes, H/9 provides targets as set out in the table below. H/9 states the mix of affordable homes is to be set by local housing needs evidence. This is supported by Policy SS/2 which sets that the development should include a good mix of house types, sizes and tenures (including affordable housing) attractive to, and the meeting the needs of, all ages and sectors of society including those with disabilities.

<b>Policy Requirement (Market)</b> (Includes 10% allowance for flexibility)	<b>Latest Affordable Housing Needs (Housing Strategy Team)</b>	<b>Market</b>	<b>Affordable</b>
30% 1 or 2-bedroom homes	35% 1-bed flats	11% 1-bed	45% 1-bed flat
	18% 2-bed flats	19% 2-bed	15% 2-bed flat
	17% 2-bed houses		15% 2-bed house
30% 3-bedroom homes	25%	40%	20%
30% 4-bedroom homes	5%	30%	5%

### Table 5 Housing mix

- 13.4 The market housing mix generally accords with the requirements of Policy H/9. The Housing Strategy Team have commented that the indicative affordable housing mix is outdated and should be updated to provide a higher proportion of 2 and 3 bed units in order to meet local needs.
- 13.5 Officers note that the proposed affordable housing mix is indicative at this stage, and the latest mix is proposed to be referenced within the s106 agreement, alongside a condition. The final affordable and market

housing mix for each development parcel will need to be reviewed and confirmed at the reserved matters stage.

- 13.6 Policy H/9 also requires 5% of homes in a development to be built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings M4(2) standard, with the supporting text setting out that provision of some wheelchair accessible affordable housing will be expected, where there is an identifiable need. It is noted the government intends to require all new housing to be built to M4(2), unless it is impractical or unachievable to do so, for example for flats-over-garages, however this has yet to be incorporated into Building Regulations.
- 13.7 Policy H/9 requires that on developments of 20 dwellings or more, plots will be made available to self and custom builders. The Council has a duty under the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) to grant enough permissions to meet demand in the area. The Strategic Housing Team have suggested approximately 5% of dwellings should be offered as self-build or custom-build in order to meet demand, in line with the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023, with the details to be agreed through the s106 agreement, and subsequent reserved matters applications.
- 13.8 In relation to accessible housing, the appellant is proposing that the requirement for 5% of homes to be M4(2) compliant to be secured by condition. The Housing Needs of Specific Groups – Addendum for Greater Cambridge August 2021, which is part of the emerging Local Plan evidence base suggests between 4.7% and 6.4% of new homes need to be wheelchair accessible. Whilst a substantial proportion of this will be addressed through specialist housing for older people, there remains an outstanding need for wheelchair housing. Following discussion with the Housing Strategy officer and the appellant, conditions are identified to secure homes to M4(2), and 5% affordable housing to M4(3).

### **Affordable and specialist housing**

- 13.9 Local Plan Policy H/10 requires 40% affordable homes on development sites of 11 dwellings or more except where it can be demonstrated unviable in light of changing market conditions, individual site circumstances and development costs.
- 13.10 Policy H/10 sets out that the affordable housing tenure mix should be agreed at the time of the permission, in accordance with local circumstances, and that affordable housing should be in small groups or clusters distributed throughout the site.



- 13.11 The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023 sets out that in South Cambridgeshire 70% of the affordable should be social housing for rent, and 30% intermediate.
- 13.12 The appellant is proposing 40% affordable housing, compliant with Policy H/10. Of the affordable housing, 70% is proposed to be social housing for rent, and 30% intermediate, again in line with local guidance. Subject to details being secured through the s106 agreement, this is supported.
- 13.13 In relation to the clustering of affordable housing, this is primarily a matter to be determined through reserved matters applications. The Design and Access Statement and Illustrative Masterplan set out how block typologies are proposed to vary across the site, with a mix of housing types and sizes within blocks. This approach is considered to facilitate the inclusion of smaller clusters of affordable housing across the site and is supported.

### **Conclusion on Housing Provision**

- 13.14 Officers, in consultation with the Council's Housing Team, are satisfied that the quantum, form, and proposed distribution of market and affordable housing within the site is appropriate, subject to details secured through the s106 agreement, and the inclusion of a condition on housing mix. Further details are proposed to be secured in the s106 to support the delivery of self-build and custom housing, alongside conditions securing accessible housing. On this basis the proposals accord with Policies H/8, H/9, H/10 and SS/2 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019-2023.

## **14. Employment Provision and Community Facilities**

- 14.1 Local Plan Policy SC/4 sets out that all housing development should include or contribute to the provision of community services and facilities to meet the needs of the development. Policy SC/6 specifies that housing developments should deliver new community facilities on site where possible, and where this is not possible should contribute to provision off-site based on 111sqm of floorspace per 1,000 residents.
- 14.2 Policy SS/2 requires the development to provide an appropriate level and type of services, facilities and infrastructure to meet the day-to-day needs of the development, either on-site or elsewhere within North West Cambridge. This is to include a secondary school primary school, as well as local shopping and community facilities.

### **Education Provision**

- 14.3 As part of the application, an education campus is identified, including 2.5ha for the secondary school, 1.3ha for a primary school, and a combined 5ha of sports and play space within the County Park.
- 14.4 The primary and secondary school sites are expected to be provided as serviced sites, with financial contributions to their delivery secured through the s106 agreement. It is expected the County Council will then manage the design and delivery of the new school buildings. The primary school is intended to include provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 14.5 Alongside the primary and secondary school, the County Council have requested contributions towards the Children and Family Centre on Darwin Green 1, and the library service at Darwin Green 1. These are proposed to be secured through the s106, alongside details of the delivery of the primary and secondary school. The County Council have no objection subject to agreement of details in relation to education provision being secured through the s106 agreement.

#### **Retail and community space**

- 14.6 As well as the education campus, a local centre is proposed as part of the application. This would include space for a 400sqm community centre, as well as 200sqm of retail floorspace.
- 14.7 Whilst the proposed retail provision is modest, the Local Plan retail hierarchy in Policy E/21 does not identify the site as a preferred site for retail, and there are number of local centres nearby including a Darwin Green 1 and Orchard Park. On this basis the proposed level of retail provision is considered appropriate given the context.
- 14.8 The NHS have requested spaced within the Community Building to provide a number of health services, with a hall, and two consultation rooms requested, which would be secured through the s106.
- 14.9 The Council's community team have also requested a contribution to support the delivery of faith space within the community building or in the vicinity of the site, which would be secured through the s106 agreement. A contribution to off-site delivery of burial space would also be secured through the s106 agreement.
- 14.10 A temporary community facility is also proposed, which is anticipated to be delivered alongside the sales centre early on in the development, to

serve residents until the permanent facility is delivered later on. This is proposed to be secured as part of the s106 agreement.

- 14.11 Details of the delivery of the community facilities and retail space will be secured through the s106 agreement, alongside obligations to support community development.
- 14.12 Overall, the provision of employment, community, and educational facilities is considered acceptable, subject to the detail of delivery of these facilities being secured within the s106 agreement, in conformity with Local Plan Policies SS/2, SC/4, and SC/6.

## **15. Open Space and Sports Provision**

- 15.1 Local Plan Policy SS/2 requires submission of a Countryside Enhancement Strategy for the retained Green Belt land, to protect the existing landscape and features of interest, and provide new landscape, ecological, and public access enhancements. Policy NH/8 sets out that where development is permitted within or adjacent to the Green Belt, planting and landscape works should ensure the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.
- 15.2 Policy SC/7 sets out that new developments should deliver outdoor play space, sports provision, informal open space, allotments, and community orchards. Policy SC/4 sets out that new developments should include provision for sports facilities to meet the needs of the development.

### **Country Park and informal open space**

- 15.3 The majority of the retained Green Belt within the site is proposed to be used as a Country Park, extending to approximately 36 hectares (excluding outdoor sports facilities and allotments). This is proposed to include a mix of landscapes incorporating water management, ecology features, noise attenuation bunds, buffer planting and public access routes.
- 15.4 The submitted Landscape, Open Space, and Countryside Strategy, sets out that the majority of existing landscape features are proposed to be retained, including watercourses, trees, and hedgerows.
- 15.5 Alongside the country park, a series of green corridors are proposed which will link both Darwin Green 2 and 3, as well as Darwin Green 1 to the country park. These will be multi-functional spaces acting as

movement corridors, water management, as well as providing a biodiversity network through the site.

- 15.6 1.36ha of allotments and community orchard are proposed on the western side of the country park, next to the proposed sports pitches, exceeding the policy requirement of approximately 0.9ha. Details of the allotments, to ensure they are of an adequate standard, can be secured through a through a condition.
- 15.7 Details of management and maintenance of the country park and other open space are proposed to be secured through the s106 agreement. This has been subject of extensive discussion, to seek arrangements which will ensure the country park is maintained to a high standard and is financially sustainable, seeking to avoid or at least minimise the need for an estate service charge for residents. This is partly due to the country park being intended to serve as an asset for the wider area and not just the residents of Darwin Green. A cascade mechanism is proposed, with preference given to the City Council Streets and Open Spaces team to take on management of the park, funded by a suitable endowment from the developer to ensure it is maintained in the long-term.
- 15.8 Connectivity through the country park to the surrounding area is discussed in the transport section below.
- 15.9 The proposed provision of informal open space is significantly in excess of the local plan requirement for a development of this size (approximately 1ha), and will provide a range of landscape elements, retaining the majority of existing landscape and ecological features, and as such is supported. As set out in the design section above, it is considered the proposals will also provide a well-defined boundary to the Green Belt.

### **Sports Provision**

- 15.10 A range of outdoor sports pitches are proposed as part of the development, to the west of the education campus. This area is proposed to extend to 6.81ha and expected include grass pitches, a 3G pitch, tennis court, Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs), and running track, with details to be agreed at the reserved matters stage.
- 15.11 Whilst the sports pitches are proposed to be associated with the primary and secondary school, a community access agreement is proposed to be secured through the s106 agreement to ensure public access to the sports fields. A condition is proposed to ensure the sports pitches are constructed to an adequate standard.

- 15.12 No indoor sports facilities are proposed within the site. There is an established need for swimming pool provision within the area, and a financial contribution to off-site provision is proposed to be secured through the s106 agreement.

### **Youth and Play**

- 15.13 0.93ha of formal children's play space is proposed throughout the development, with 23 Local Areas of Play (LAP), 4 Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP), and 1 Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP). 0.81ha of informal play space is proposed across the site, including a bike track and skate park, as well as informal features integrated into the landscape. The overall level of play provision is in line with the requirements of Policy SC/7.
- 15.14 The play spaces are proposed as a network across the development, with LAPs mainly located along green corridors and within development parcels where they will be easily accessible for residents, LEAPs around the interface of the development with the country park, with one also proposed by the school campus, and the NEAP and teenage play facilities proposed within the country park.
- 15.15 The indicative locations of play spaces are shown on the Landscape Framework Parameter Plan, identified to be secured under a condition, with details of the plays spaces themselves to be provided at the reserved matters stage. The delivery of the play spaces, to ensure they are made available to residents through occupation, is proposed to be secured through the s106 agreement.
- 15.16 Overall, the level of open space provision is significantly in excess of the minimum requirements set out in the Local Plan, with the provision of sports pitches, play space, and allotments/orchards all in accordance with the requirements of the Local Plan. It is considered the country park, sports pitches, and play facilities within the Green Belt are appropriate for their location and will not result in a significant loss of openness or otherwise harm the retained Green Belt. On this basis, subject to appropriate conditions, and details of amount, delivery and ongoing management and maintenance of open space to be secured through the s106, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with Local Plan policies SS/2, NH/8, SC/4, and SC/7.

## **16. Water management and flood risk**

- 16.1 Policy CC/9 of the Local Plan requires developments to minimise the risk of flooding. Policy CC/8 requires developments to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site.
- 16.2 Policy CC/4 requires new development to be water efficient, designed to a water efficiency standard equivalent to 110 litres of water per person per day for residential development, and to achieve a minimum of 2 BREEAM water credits if practicable. Policy CC/7 requires all developments to protect and enhance water quality, including demonstrating there is an adequate supply of water, that the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed, as well as providing sewerage and land drainage systems to serve the development.
- 16.3 These policies are supplemented by the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD, and paragraphs 159-169 of the NPPF.

### **Flood Risk**

- 16.4 The site is in Flood Zone 1 where there is a low risk of fluvial flooding. There are a series of drains and other ordinary watercourses within the site. Environment Agency mapping shows the majority of the site is at low risk of surface water flooding, however parts of the site are also indicated to be at high risk of surface water flooding, particularly along watercourses and in the north east of the site. The submitted flood risk assessment identifies the risk of flooding from other sources as low, other than a low-to-moderate risk of groundwater flooding and a moderate risk of flooding due to the potential of blockages of artificial drainage systems. This relates to potential blockages of culverts under the A14 where surface water flows exit the site.
- 16.5 As the site is allocated for development in the Local Plan 2018 it is not considered necessary to apply the Sequential Test. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment sets out how analysis of the site has identified ponding and surface water flow routes through the site. In order to achieve a gravity-fed drainage system, as recommended by national and local guidance, it is proposed to raise the ground levels within the site, typically by up to 2m. This would direct surface water flows into attenuation basins from where water can be discharged into nearby watercourses as a controlled rate. A balance has been sought between seeking to provide a gravity-based system, whilst limiting the need to raise ground levels within the site. In order to limit the required level changes to 2m, part of the site

will require a pumped system to convey water from the developable area to attenuation ponds. Pump failure modelling has been undertaken, which shows that water would be directed away from the development.

- 16.6 As a consequence of the ground raising, the development would be safe from flooding in a 1-in-100-year storm event including a 40% climate change allowance. As such the proposals to raise ground levels are considered to mitigate the risk of surface water flooding, and are also considered to mitigate the risk of flooding from other sources including groundwater. This strategy is not considered likely to increase the risk of flooding outside of the site.
- 16.7 The Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) has advised, following review of updated information submitted in August 2022, that they have no objection to the proposals, subject to conditions relating to the management of surface water during construction, details of surface water drainage for each reserved matters parcel, details of the temporary storage of water on each parcel, and details of the long-term maintenance and management of the drainage system.

### **Surface Water Drainage Strategy**

- 16.8 The application is accompanied by a Drainage Strategy which details how surface water and foul flows from the development are proposed to be managed. This sets out that due to high groundwater levels and the site's underlying geology, infiltration is not considered feasible, and as such it is proposed to discharge surface water flows into existing watercourses.
- 16.9 The drainage strategy has been designed to manage flows, based on an assumed impermeable area of 60% for residential areas, and 85% for the schools, with a 10% buffer for urban creep. On-site attenuation is proposed to accommodate 1-in-100-year storm events, with a 40% climate change allowance. SuDS features are proposed to be incorporated into the development to attenuate water at source where possible, with water then conveyed by swales within the green corridors to attenuation basins located within the country park. These basins will then discharge into existing watercourses, at an attenuated rate no greater than the greenfield rate.
- 16.10 The LLFA have raised no objection to the application on the grounds of surface water drainage, subject to planning conditions. Anglian Water have also advised they have no comments on the surface water drainage strategy proposed.

## **Foul Water Drainage Strategy**

- 16.11 In relation to foul water, the application proposes to discharge foul flows via gravity into the existing foul sewer network serving Darwin Green 1, with flows heading east to a pumping station delivered as part of Darwin Green 1, which has capacity to accept flows from the site.
- 16.12 An existing foul sewer which crosses the site and serves existing development on Thornton Close. It is proposed to upgrade and divert this sewer through the new road network for Darwin Green 2 & 3, with the upgraded sewer connecting with the network delivered through Darwin Green 1.
- 16.13 Anglian Water has advised that the sewerage pipe network has sufficient capacity to accommodate flows from the development. They have advised that flows are ultimately directed to Uttons Drove Water Recycling Centre. Whilst officers note that this water recycling centre currently does not have capacity to accept flows from the development, Anglian Water is obligated to accept flow from the development and will take the necessary steps to ensure there is sufficient treatment capacity in the event planning permission is granted.

## **Water Resources**

- 16.14 The EA has classified the Cambridge Water operating area as an area of serious water stress. The current level of water abstraction from the chalk aquifer is considered by the EA to be unsustainable for the Greater Cambridge area, with potential to cause further environmental damage. There is therefore potential for the application proposals to harm waterbodies from potable water demand.
- 16.15 The proposed development will place demands on the potable water supply giving rise to potential harm to waterbodies, noting that the draft RWRMP for Eastern England has identified an issue of water scarcity in the whole of the Eastern Region. CWC's WRMP continues to focus on water conservation/saving strategies to address growing need.
- 16.16 Policy CC/4 of the Local Plan requires 'low' water use development designed to limit personal consumption of water to 110 litres per person/day. The development proposals provide water efficiency measures of 110 litres per person/day which would comply with Policy CC/4. However, Policy CC/4 was based on the evidence that was available at the time of the preparation of the Local Plan. Since that time, the EA has considered the impact of changes to abstraction licences in



Greater Cambridgeshire, underpinned by evidence that groundwater abstractions are causing a risk of deterioration of some water bodies. The EA has advised that some of the growth included in Local Plans based on CWC's WRMP19 is unsustainable.

- 16.17 Policy CC/7 of the Local Plan also requires all development proposals to demonstrate that, inter alia, the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed.
- 16.18 The EA has objected to CWC's draft WRMP24 which was published in February 2023. A revised draft WRMP24 was published on 29 September 2023 in response to the representations received. The revised draft WRMP24 document is currently being considered by the EA, who will provide advice to DEFRA, following which time DEFRA will determine if the final plan can be adopted by CWC. The EA has indicated that there remains an unacceptable level of risk of environmental deterioration from the combined level of abstraction CWC forecasts it needs for existing and new customers (which would include this development proposal) up to 2032.
- 16.19 The revised draft WRMP indicates that, at current growth assumptions, the demand for water between the years 2030 – 2032 will create the greatest risk to water bodies. The Council's Housing Trajectory anticipates that delivery of the Darwin Green 2/3 site will take place between 2026/27 and 2033/34.
- 16.20 The EA is a statutory consultee for developments that are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Officers have had regard to their advice on the EIA and Environmental Statement, noting that in correspondence dated 09 August 2023, they have maintained an objection to the proposed development. This is on the basis that the application has not demonstrated that the water to the development can be supplied sustainably, or that the risks to water resources including chalk aquifers are negligible or can be mitigated. The EA has been requested to consider this application further in the light of the 29 September 2023 revised draft WRMP24, but comments have yet to be received at the time of writing this report.
- 16.21 Officers note that the EIA Scoping Opinion issued by the Council dates back to September 2019 (Appendix 2.2 of this ES) and as such did not identify a requirement to address the development's potable water demand. impact. Since that time there has been a growing awareness and understanding of the water stress issue facing the Greater Cambridge area.

- 16.22 The application as originally submitted included a section on water use within Appendix 17.3 of the ES, setting out a design intent to achieve a Local Plan policy compliant 110 litres per person per day, through the installation of low-flow and efficient appliances, and to achieve BREEAM excellent for non-residential development with 2 BREEAM Wat01 credits.
- 16.23 The Council's Principal Sustainability Officer, in their formal consultation response, acknowledges that the water targets meet current policy requirements but recommends this be improved as part of the detailed design due to the water stress facing the area. Officers are of the view that in order to avoid harm to the water environment as required by Policy CC/7, further mitigation is required which goes above and beyond the requirements of Policy CC/4.
- 16.24 The EA objection in February 2023 prompted a technical review of Water Resources by the Applicant. This was undertaken through the **Water Resources Addendum to Darwin Green Phase 2 & 3 Environment Statement: Chapter 17.0 Commentary Level Topics** which was submitted in July 2023.
- 16.25 The Applicant has indicated that the Water Resources Addendum has been prepared to demonstrate that an adequate and sustainable water supply can be provided for the Darwin Green Phases 2 and 3 scheme. The Addendum further advises that site-specific and/or off-site measures will ensure that the risks posed by the development can be mitigated or removed, in order for the EA to lift its objection to the scheme.
- 16.26 The EA has considered the Applicant's Water Resources Addendum to the ES. The EA does not agree with the report's conclusions that it has been demonstrated the Darwin Green 2/3 development can be supplied sustainably, or that the risks are negligible or can be mitigated.
- 16.27 The EA maintains that it cannot agree that the growth in CWC's supply area can be supplied sustainably, without posing an unacceptable risk of deterioration to the water environment. This position is underpinned by the EA's assessment of CWC's draft WRMP24 (February 2023), which concluded that there are significant risks with the proposed options (supply and demand) and as a result, the dWRMP did not demonstrate that growth could be supplied without an unacceptable risk of deterioration to the water environment.
- 16.28 The EA has criticised the Applicant's Water Resources Addendum indicating that it places significant emphasis on the content of CWC's

dWRMP. According to the EA's response of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023, there is too much emphasis on the statements that CWC is resilient to a 1 in 500 drought rather than focusing on the existing and immediate short term combined issue of increasing demand and abstraction. The EA has no confidence that assumed reductions will be delivered due to CWC's past performance in delivering its WRMP19 demand reductions.

- 16.29 As noted above, during the course of this application, there have been changes to the evidence base in respect of water resources, and the EA is updating its position in light of successive drafts of the WRMP24. Given that the Appellant has appealed against non-determination, as noted above, the LPA no longer has jurisdiction to determine this planning application. Had the Appellant not appealed against non-determination, it may have been possible for the LPA and the Applicant to work together to overcome the LPA's objection in the light of the changing position in the evidence base, the draft WRMP and the position of the EA.
- 16.30 As matters stand, the advice provided by the EA on 09 August 2023 is noted, and further advice is awaited. At the time of writing this report, officers consider that it has not been demonstrated that the mitigation that is currently proposed is adequate to address potential impacts on water bodies. As a result, the application would be in direct conflict with Policy CC/7 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) which requires all development proposals to demonstrate that, *inter alia*, the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed, and opportunities taken for improvements to water quality.
- 16.31 Officers are of the view that in order to avoid harm to the water environment as required by Policy CC/7, further mitigation is required which goes above and beyond the requirements of Policy CC/4. Officers note the position adopted by the LPA in respect of proposals by Brookgate Ltd at Land North of Cambridge Station, where the Appellant proposed an 'enhanced package' of mitigation measures which was, in the judgement of the LPA, sufficient to overcome the LPA's objection (although the EA maintained its objection and the appeal has yet to be determined).
- 16.32 As noted above, the LPA has sought the views of the EA in respect of this application in the light of the most recent iteration of the draft WRMP. Notwithstanding that this application is now subject to a planning appeal, the LPA will continue to liaise with the Appellant and the EA with a view to considering whether enhanced mitigation measures could overcome the LPA's objection.

## **Conclusion on flood risk and water resources**

- 16.33 The proposed flood risk assessment and drainage strategy have been reviewed by the Lead Local Flood Authority and Anglian Water who have no objection subject to conditions and informatives. The proposed flood risk mitigation works and drainage strategy are also considered acceptable, subject to conditions, are in accordance with Local Plan 2018 Policies CC/7, CC/8, and CC/9 and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 16.34 Regarding water resources, there is potential for the development proposals to materially contribute to harm to waterbodies as a consequence of potable water demand and over-abstraction. Until such time as it has been demonstrated that the mitigation that is proposed is adequate to address potential impacts on water bodies, the development is in conflict with Policy CC/7 of the Local Plan, which requires all development proposals to demonstrate that, *inter alia*, the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed, and opportunities taken for improvements to water quality.

## **17. Biodiversity and Trees**

- 17.1 Policies NH/2, NH/4, NH/5, NH/6 and HQ/1 seek to preserve, protect and enhance biodiversity, trees and hedges, and other sites and features of biodiversity and geological importance. Policy NH/4 sets out that development should ensure a measurable net gain in biodiversity.
- 17.2 The Environment Act requires all development to achieve a 10% biodiversity Net Gain, however this will only apply to applications submitted from early 2024.

### **Biodiversity**

- 17.3 The application is accompanied by Ecological Impact Assessment as part of the ES, supported by a number of ecological surveys. These have found the site supports a number of breeding birds, as well as low levels of bat activity, including some trees and existing buildings with bat roost suitability. A badger survey has identified subsidiary and outlier badger setts within the site.
- 17.4 The appellant has proposed to compensate for the loss of ground nesting bird habitat through provision of nesting plots off-site, with 16 plots to be provided and maintained for a 25-year period in compensation for the loss

of 8 areas on site. To compensate for the loss of bat roosting areas, bat boxes are proposed in proximity to any buildings being demolished, alongside bat boxes to be provided in new buildings. The country park will be designed to include area of foraging value. Badger setts are proposed to be retained and protected, with public access restricted to areas of retained woodland, with the county park also designed to provide habitats suitable for badgers.

- 17.5 A BNG Assessment matrix has been submitted which indicates the development has the potential to deliver a 19.16% net gain in habitat units, and a 25.02% net gain in linear units across the site. This net gain is dependent on details to be secured at the reserved matters stage.
- 17.6 The Ecology Officer has commented that they are content with the ecological survey efforts and are supportive of the proposed route to deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain. They are also supportive of the principles of the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.
- 17.7 With regards to ground nesting birds, the Ecology Officer is content with the proposed mitigation strategy, which can be secured through a s106 agreement. They are also content with the strategy to retain badger setts and to compensate for the loss of bat roosts, subject to relevant planning conditions.
- 17.8 On the advice of the Ecology Officer, additional conditions can also be secured to ensure a site-wide Ecological Design Strategy, Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, and Construction Ecological Management Plan, details of Bird and Bat Box provision, and Protected Species Licensing. A further condition is identified to ensure compliance with the Ecological Design Strategy etc. for each reserved matters parcel. Together with the Section 106 obligation in relation to ground nesting birds, these would make the proposals acceptable in relation to biodiversity, in accordance with Local Plan policies SS/2, HQ/1, and NH/4.

### **Trees**

- 17.9 The site at present has limited tree cover, with trees primarily located around the site boundary, alongside some groups of trees/ small woodland areas towards the north east and north of the site. Two groups of trees/ woodland areas on the eastern side of the site are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). There are a number of hedgerows along field boundaries within the site. A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Implications Assessment were submitted as part of the application.

- 17.10 A number of poor-quality trees are recommended for removal by the appellants arboriculturist, regardless of the development proposals. A number of additional trees are proposed for removal as part of the masterplan, including some category B1 and B2 trees and hedges. Whilst some trees within the group TPOs are proposed to be removed, the submitted arboricultural information indicates this will not harm the integrity of these groups and provides an opportunity to provide high quality replacement planting. The loss of trees within the site is proposed to be compensated by replacement and significant amounts of additional tree planting within the country park, as well as across the rest of the site.
- 17.11 The Council's Tree Officer has advised that they are content with this approach. A condition can be secured to ensure details of Tree Protection measures should approval be forthcoming. On this basis, the proposal would accord with policies NH/2, NH/4, HQ/1 of the Local Plan.

## **18. Carbon reduction and sustainable design**

- 18.1 The Councils' Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020) sets out a framework for proposals to demonstrate they have been designed to minimise their carbon footprint, energy and water consumption and to ensure they are capable of responding to climate change as required by policy CC/1.
- 18.2 Policy CC/3 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy', requires that proposals for new dwellings and new non-residential buildings of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more will be required to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% through the use of on-site renewable energy and low carbon technologies. For growth areas such as Darwin Green 2, site wide renewable and low carbon energy solutions that maximise on-site generation from these sources will be sought.
- 18.3 Policy CC/4 'Water Efficiency' requires that all new residential developments must achieve as a minimum water efficiency to 110 litres per person per day and for non-residential buildings to achieve a BREEAM efficiency standard equivalence of 2 credits. Paragraphs 152 – 158 of the NPPF are relevant.
- 18.4 Policy CC/5 'Sustainable Show Homes' requires that, on developments where a show home is being provided, a sustainable show home must be provided.

- 18.5 Policy CC/6 'Construction Methods' includes a requirement that development which would generate construction waste must carefully manage materials to minimise waste and maximise the reuse or recycling of materials.
- 18.6 The application is supported by a Sustainability, Energy and Water Statement (ES Appendix 17.3), which includes a completed Checklist for Applications in South Cambridgeshire from the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. The Statement provides an outline sustainability strategy, to be incorporated into future detailed designs.
- 18.7 The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Sustainability Officer who raises no objection to the proposal subject to conditions relating to carbon reduction technologies, water efficiency, waste management and the construction of a sustainable show home. The consultation response also explains that the feasibility of alternative site-wide energy solutions has been suitably explored.
- 18.8 The appellant has suitably addressed the issue of carbon reduction and sustainable design. Subject to conditions that would secure implementation of the proposed strategy through subsequent detailed applications, the proposal is compliant with Local Plan policies CC/1, CC/3 and CC/4 and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2020.

## **19. Transport and Access**

- 19.1 Local Plan Policy TI/2 sets out that development must be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and promote sustainable travel appropriate to its location. It goes on to set out that development likely to increase travel demands should only be permitted where the site has, or will attain, sufficient integration and accessibility by walking, cycling, and public transport. Policy SS/2 requires the development to be highly accessible and permeable to all its residents, including through high quality public transport infrastructure and a strong network of internal and external pedestrian and cycle links.

### **Pedestrian and cycle access**

- 19.2 Within the site, dedicated pedestrian and cycle routes are proposed to follow the route of the main loop road, with a series of pedestrian paths and shared routes providing connectivity through the green corridors,

development parcels and country park, ensuring the development will have a high level of permeability and there will be a variety of route options for residents.

- 19.3 The proposal will also adjoin a green corridor within the Darwin Green 1 development, following the route of footpath 135/5, providing onward access towards Eddington and Arbury. Pedestrian and cycle access is proposed to Cambridge Road, using the access points for the primary street and orbital cycle route consented as part of Darwin Green 1.
- 19.4 As set out in the design section above, the parameter plans indicate a series of potential future access points to the western side of the country park, via Thornton Close, Thornton Way, and Wellbrook Way as well as using the farm bridge over the A14.
- 19.5 As these connections would be reliant on land in third part ownership, the appellant is unable and unwilling to commit to delivering the onward connections itself. The Thornton Way and Thornton Close connections are however anticipated to be delivered, with conditions requiring connections to be provided up to the site boundary, and the s106 securing delivery of connections to the public highway at Thornton Way and public footpath at Thornton Close. As set out above it is not considered that connections to Wellbrook Way or over the A14 bridge are deliverable at this stage.

### **Vehicular access and traffic impact**

- 19.6 The development is proposed to be accessed via the Spine Road approved as part of Darwin Green 1, connecting to the B1049 Cambridge Road in the east, and connecting to Huntingdon Road via the street network within Darwin Green 1. The Huntingdon Road and Cambridge Road junctions have been designed to accommodate traffic from the whole of Darwin Green. The appellant is seeking approval of junction details for connections to streets already approved as part of Darwin Green 1.
- 19.7 A hierarchy of streets is proposed within the development, with primary, secondary, tertiary and shared surface streets. The detailed design of these streets will be considered further through the Design Code and reserved matters stages, however they are proposed to be designed to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement, and to have a low design speed of no more than 20mph to ensure they are a safe and pleasant environment for all users.



- 19.8 The bus service proposed for Darwin Green 1 is proposed to be extended to the site, with at least one centrally located bus stop ensuring all residents are within 400m of a bus stop.
- 19.9 An interim residential Travel Plan has been provided which includes a range of measures to support sustainable travel choices, beyond on-site infrastructure. This includes personal travel planning, car club provision, and cycle training. The Travel Plan seeks to sustain a 5% reduction in individual car use against a baseline of 39% of trips, going beyond the requirements of Policy SS/2.
- 19.10 Traffic modelling has been undertaken of the impact of the development on traffic conditions, considered cumulatively with other planned development in the area. This has assessed that the development will result in a marginal increase in traffic at some junctions, but all nearby junctions will remain operating within capacity.
- 19.11 The Transport Assessment and Environmental Statement conclude that once built, proposed sustainable transport measures in the form of provision of a new bus route and walking and cycling infrastructure improvements, and travel plan measures, will result in a modal shift away from private car use, resulting in an overall neutral impact on traffic flows. During construction there is predicted to be a minor adverse impact, primarily from construction vehicles, however this can be mitigated, primarily through the management of construction traffic.
- 19.12 Updated junction details, as well as the outcome of a road safety audit, and responses to queries from consultees were submitted in August 2022 and March 2023.
- 19.13 Following review of updated information, the Local Highways Authority have agreed with the proposed junction designs, and the Transport Assessment Team have confirmed they have no objection to the proposals subject to conditions in relation to improvements pedestrian and cycle links to the B1049 Cambridge Road, a travel plan, and implementation of the Thornton Close Cycle Link, and s106 obligations in relation to bus service provision. The Local Highways Authority has also requested a condition relating to construction traffic management.
- 19.14 National Highways have been consulted have no objection subject to conditions relating to construction traffic management. A travel plan for the site is proposed to be secured through the s106 agreement, which is

intended to essentially build on the travel plan for the adjoining Darwin Green 1 site given the interconnectivity between the two sites.

### **Cycle parking**

- 19.15 Policies HQ/1 and TI/3 set out that car and cycle parking provision should be provided through a design-led approach in accordance with the indicative standards set out in Figure 11 of the Local Plan. Cycle parking should be provided to at least the minimum standards. TI/3 requires 1 cycle space per bedroom for dwellings and also includes requirements for non-residential uses.
- 19.16 Secure and convenient cycle parking is proposed to be provided on plot for houses and within secure communal facilities for apartments and the non-residential uses on site. Details of cycle parking will be secured through the Design Code and reserved matters stages. A condition is identified to ensure details of cycle parking, in accordance with the Local Plan, are provided at the reserved matters stage. The condition is proposed to include reference to the need to include provision of visitor cycle parking, and parking for non-standard cycles.

### **Car parking**

- 19.17 TI/3 allows a maximum of 2 spaces per dwelling – with 1 space to be allocated within the curtilage. The policy also sets parking standards for non-residential uses. The supporting text to the policy advises that the Council will encourage innovative solutions such as shared parking areas, for example where there are a mix of day and night uses, car clubs and provision of electric charging points and that a developer must provide clear justification for the level and type of parking proposed and will need to demonstrate they have addressed highway safety issues.
- 19.18 A parking ratio of 1.5 spaces per dwelling is proposed, below the maximum standard set out in policy TI/3, reflecting the sustainable transport options available to the site. Visitor parking and car club spaces are also proposed.
- 19.19 Details of parking typologies will be considered further through the Design Code process and reserved matters stage. A condition requiring details of parking to be submitted at the reserved matters stage is proposed.
- 19.20 In relation to electric vehicle charging, the appellant's Low Emission Strategy sets out that electric vehicle charging points are proposed for all private and allocated residential parking spaces, with 1 charging point for

every 10 communal parking spaces, a level of provision which reflects Building Regulations. As set out in relation to air quality below, the Environmental Health team have recommended a condition to secure details of electric vehicle charging.

### **Conclusion on Transport and Access.**

- 19.21 The proposals are considered to support a strong network of pedestrian and cycle connections, and the proposed bus route will supplement existing services in the vicinity. These measures, supported by a travel plan and other improvements, will aid in reducing private car use and promoting sustainable modes of transport, as well as ensuring the site is highly accessible.
- 19.22 A number of conditions are proposed in relation to improvements to cycle links, a travel plan, construction traffic management, cycle and car parking. Planning obligations are also proposed in relation to the travel plan, bus service improvements, and pedestrian and cycle connectivity. Subject to this, the proposals are considered to generally be in accordance with policies SS/2, HQ/1, TI2, and TI/3 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

## **20. Heritage assets**

- 20.1 Policy NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) requires development affecting heritage assets to sustain or enhance the character and distinctiveness of those assets.
- 20.2 There are no Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments or Conservation Areas within or close to the site. However, the site is located in a landscape of high archaeological significance to the City of Cambridge. Known archaeological sites and extensive fieldwork in advance of previous developments in this landscape have revealed an intensively settled and managed landscape throughout the later prehistoric and Roman periods.
- 20.3 The site has been subject to an archaeological desk-based assessment (ES Appendix 8.3). The evaluation has identified non designated heritage assets of archaeological interest including four concentrations of Middle to Late Iron Age activity; a late Iron Age enclosure interpreted as a livestock management feature; an area of dispersed Iron Age and Roman activity; field systems and associated agricultural features of Roman date. Extant and built heritage assets include an area of medieval ridge and furrow and the post medieval Impington and Woodhouse Farms. These heritage

assets are described in the Environmental Statement Appendix 8.3, with an assessment of significance, description of impacts and proposals for mitigation.

- 20.4 The County Council's Archaeological Officer considers that the level of significance of the archaeological remains within the site is not sufficient to prevent development or to necessitate design measures which retain the heritage assets. Mitigation for the remaining archaeological assets within the Country Park area will require further consideration following detailed design, in accordance with paragraph 8.112 of the Environment Statement. A programme of archaeological work and historic building recording to mitigate the loss of the built heritage assets can be secured by way of planning conditions should approval be forthcoming.
- 20.5 Officers agree the archaeological and built heritage impact of the development represents less than substantial harm. Further work at the detailed design stage, including preservation in-situ and retention of some existing buildings can also be considered, which would mitigate the impact of the proposals. The development will provide substantial public benefits, including the provision of housing, education facilities, and other uses. These benefits are considered to outweigh the likely impact on heritage assets, and as such the proposals are considered acceptable in accordance with National Policy.

## **21. Amenity and Environmental Health**

- 21.1 Policy HQ/1 (n), sets out that proposals must protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding uses from development that is overlooking, overbearing or results in a loss of daylight or development which would create unacceptable impacts such as noise, vibration, odour, emissions and dust.
- 21.2 The impacts of the proposed development on prospective residential amenity associated with impacts from lighting, noise and disturbance associated with the use of the site has been assessed as part of the updated Environment Statement.

### **Neighbouring properties**

- 21.3 Policy SS/2 of the SCLP support the development of Darwin Green 2&3 subject to acceptable mitigation of environmental and health impacts (including noise) from the A14. These policies recognize that careful consideration of new residential use needs to be undertaken as part of the

planning application process, to ensure that the new residences have an acceptable level of amenity.

- 21.4 Noise is most likely to be produced by road traffic sources and so the current appropriate guidance documents to be used are ProPG: Planning & Noise Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise. New Residential Development (dated May 2017) and BS8233 2014. Both provide acceptable noise limits within internal rooms and external amenity areas and guidance in the document has been considered.

### **Construction Phase**

- 21.5 The methodology for the noise assessment presented in the Darwin Green Phases 2 and 3, BDW Homes Cambridgeshire and the North West Cambridge Consortium of Landowners, Environmental Statement Vol 1, Main Report, Chapter 14.0, Noise and Vibration and associated Appendices (dated May 2022) prepared by MEC, Technical Development Consultants for Bidwells has been agreed with SCDC Environmental Health Officers.

- 21.6 Construction noise will be generated both within the Site and on local roads as additional vehicles will be travelling to and from the Site. An indicative construction noise assessment has been carried out using typical plant, fixed distances and worst-case assumptions. The impact of the existing noise environment associated with the A14 traffic has been fully assessed and reported in the ES.

- 21.7 The ES concludes that some residual but temporary construction noise effects are to be expected for dwellings close to parts of the boundary of the application site but mainly only during the initial earthmoving/concreting phases when plant is close to the site boundary. Thereafter, the effects of routine 'house building' works would be minor adverse. No adverse vibration effects are expected during the construction works and all impacts are considered to be negligible.

- 21.8 Conditions are recommended for a site wide site—wide Demolition and Construction Management Plan, and development parcel specific plans.

### **Noise Impacts – Operational Phase**

- 21.9 Operational noise generated by the application will come from a number of sources, including long term local traffic noise associated with the development, and operational noise arising from the proposed uses.

- 21.10 An evaluation of noise impacts on residential amenity is provided in the noise study in support of an outline planning application sets out “key development areas” across the site in the parameter plans. Based on the maximum noise exposure levels recorded on site, that part of the site immediately adjacent to the A14 during the day, and Cambridge Road during both the day and night, falls within the category of medium risk. That part of the Site immediately adjacent to the A14 during the night time increases to a high risk. It should be noted the Initial Site Noise Risk Assessment represents noise levels immediately adjacent to the roads. In the case of the A14, a substantial buffer zone is proposed by virtue of the proposed country park, and the subsequent developable site noise level reduces substantially, with the vast majority of the proposed development falling with the category of low risk.
- 21.11 As a result, although it may not be possible to specifically conclude exact mitigation or enhancement measures required at the present time, these would relate specifically to the building/site layouts proposed within the later detailed designs. These matters would have to be considered further as part of the reserved matters should the application be approved.
- 21.12 Other noise sources will also contribute to impacts experienced at proposed residential premises e.g. from the mixed use and sports/leisure facility areas. The noise levels measured during baseline monitoring suggest that satisfactory noise levels can be obtained across the site, however careful consideration of the mitigation, layout, orientation of sensitive rooms etc. will need to be taken, in relation to residential premises through the site.

#### **Operational Phase Noise Impacts – Non-residential Use Classes**

- 21.13 The ES indicates the schools will not be adversely affected by noise at the locations proposed and noise mitigation could be added that would allow satisfactory classroom noise levels to be maintained. However, this would be a detailed design consideration.
- 21.14 Whilst detailed design information with regards to the layout and composition of the proposed development (with regard to non-residential mixed-use classes) is not available at outline stage, particular consideration will need to be given towards the prevention of nuisance that may be caused by incompatible land uses, such as commercial and residential properties being in close proximity.

- 21.15 The detailed strategies for mitigating noise impacts during the later phases of the development will be secured through planning conditions and reserved matters applications should the application be approved.

### **Odour**

- 21.16 It is not considered that any of the proposed uses is likely to result in significant odours or other nuisance from emissions, however as the proposed schools and mixed-use area could include commercial kitchens close to residential development, the Environmental Health team have recommended a condition to ensure adequate extraction and ventilation.

### **Light Pollution**

- 21.17 Lighting levels during the construction phase will be determined by health and safety requirements, but the effects will be transitory in nature. However, post completion lighting levels from external lighting e.g. highway, security, public area lighting, should safeguard against any negative impact of residential amenities.
- 21.18 Whilst Chapter 13.0 of the ES covers topics associated with lighting, this is often a detailed design issue. A relevant condition could be secured to ensure appropriate mitigation measures.

### **Future Occupants**

- 21.19 The Council is keen to ensure new housing (both affordable and market) is 'future proofed' through design, so that they can be easily adaptable to enable people to live independently in their own homes as they age.
- 21.20 Policy H/12 of the SCLP requires internal space standards for new residential developments. Policy H/12 of the Local Plan states that new dwellings will be permitted where their gross internal floor areas meet or exceed the Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) or successor document. Policy H/9 of the SCLP requires 5% of both affordable and private new homes (split evenly between the two tenures) to be built to the M4 (2) standard (accessible and adaptable dwelling standard) or any successor document.
- 21.21 Whilst this level of detail is not normally expected at an outline planning application stage, the Applicants have confirmed an intention that all housing will be of sustainable standards i.e. complying with housing quality Indicators (HQI) scores for unit size, layout and noise, and nationally described space standards will be achieved. Relevant planning

conditions could be applied to ensure the Local Plan policy requirements in respect of housing internal space standards are achieved, should the application be approved.

### **Contamination**

- 21.22 The ES includes an assessment of land contamination (Chapter 12). This is supported by a phase 1 desk-based geo-environmental assessment and phase 2 intrusive investigation report. This finds that contaminants which present a potential risk to human health and the environment are present within parts of the site, including asbestos, hydrocarbons, and pesticides within the southern farmyard. The reports identify further investigation and remediation will be required.
- 21.23 Based on the submitted information, the Council's Environmental Health team have recommended conditions are applied relating to remediation method statement, and unexpected contamination.

### **Air Quality**

- 21.24 The site is not within an Air Quality Management Area, however there is potential for development to contribute to poor air quality, particularly in relation to the regional road network. Heating and cooking appliances are intended to be all-electric, reducing the risk of the proposed dwellings contributing to poor air quality. Air quality has been assessed through the ES (Chapter 7) which is accompanied by a low emissions strategy (ES Appendix 7.2). The ES assesses that air pollution levels are expected to be below air quality objective levels.
- 21.25 The Council's Environmental Health team have reviewed the proposals and confirm they have no objection to the proposals subject to conditions to secure the low emissions strategy, and low-emission gas appliances in the event any are required.

### **Conclusion amenity and environmental health**

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



## **22. Utilities**

- 22.1 Policy TI/8 of the SCLP states that planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there is or will be sufficient infrastructure capacity to support and meet all the requirements arising from new development. Policy TI/10 of the SCLP states new development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of infrastructure suitable to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services across the district.
- 22.2 The application is supported by a Pre-Development Utilities Appraisal prepared by Utility Consult Ltd which identifies the existing utility infrastructure that may constrain development within the Site and identifies a strategy for delivering the necessary utility infrastructure to the site.

### **Electricity**

- 22.3 UK Power Networks (UKPN) asset records show existing high and low voltage networks crossing the proposed development site from both DG1 and Cambridge Road, these feed into a pad mount substation by Woodhouse Farm & a pole mounted transformer near Impington Farm. These networks will need to be diverted through the proposed development and the existing dwellings disconnected if they are demolished. The low voltage network from these substations appears at points to feed a low voltage network along the A14, therefore it is anticipated that one or both these substations will need to be maintained within the Country Park.
- 22.4 The Applicant indicates a pre-development enquiry has been submitted to UKPN who have provided a budget point of connection and cost to provide sufficient electricity capacity to the proposed development, based on between 6-7kVA (kilo-volt-amperes) per plot. This is based on the assumption of generic Air Source Heat Pumps being utilised. With the addition of future load allowance for the schools and community building the total estimated Distribution Network Operator (DNO) loading is 8.3mVA. It is advised that UKPN can provide this capacity from upgrading the local Histon Primary Substation and installing 2 new 11kV High Voltage networks to the proposed development site (noted as approximately 2km).
- 22.5 The development would also lend itself to the use of independent DNO adoption of the proposed electricity network, as has been undertaken across DG1. The revised kVA loading per dwelling drops to an average of

around 3.2kVA for each dwelling, this factors in both Air Source Heat Pump and on plot 7kW (32amp) EV Charging. Taking into account the proposed school loads and some additional allowances for potential off plot EV Charging estimates a total site loading of just over 5.5mVA. This is within the capacity offered by UKPN for the proposed development.

### **Potable Water**

- 22.6 Policies SS/4: Cambridge Northern Fringe East, S/3: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development, CC/1: Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change, CC/4: Water Efficiency and CC/7: Water Quality are relevant in the consideration of water resources for the site.
- 22.7 CWC has a legal duty to ensure that it can supply sufficient potable water for development needs and is required to prepare a WRMP which accounts for growth and water demand at least every five years. In providing this water, CWC must ensure that they refrain from harm to the environment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (“Habitat Regs”).
- 22.8 CWC published its draft WRMP on 24 February 2023. This sets out CW’s long term WRMP for the 25 years between 2025 and 2050 and describes how CW will continue to meet the demand for water in the Cambridge region. A statement of response was issued on 25 August 2023, with a revised WRMP-24 published on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- 22.9 The EA raised an objection to the application in February 2023. They identify a risk of ecological deterioration to a number of water bodies in the area, and that abstraction licence caps proposed in response will result in less water being available than assumed under the WRMP-19, making some of the growth included in local plans unsustainable.
- 22.10 In response to the EA’s objection, a Water Resources Addendum to the Environmental Statement was submitted in July 2023, with the intention of demonstrating that an adequate and sustainable water supply can be provided. The Addendum advises that site-specific and/or off-site measures will ensure that the risks posed by the development can be mitigated or removed, in order for the EA to lift its objection to the scheme.
- 22.11 Officers note that the Water Resources Addendum does not propose any additional measures to reduce water demand beyond the 110 litres per person a day water efficiency commitment. It assesses that the

development will have a negligible/ neutral impact on water supply and groundwater levels within the Cambridge Water area.

22.12 The Applicant asserts that the application accords with the requirements of Policy CC/7 of the SCLP which stipulates that “*supplies to serve the whole development must be demonstrated, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision of the necessary infrastructure, in order to protect and enhance water quality.*” The Applicant’s Water Resources Addendum indicates that there is an agreement in place with CWC confirming that there is sufficient water to supply the development through a connection to a network that was built under agreement for Darwin Green Phase 1.

22.13 Officers acknowledge that criterion (a) of Policy CC/7 requires it to be demonstrated that there are adequate water supply systems to serve a development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision. However, criterion (b) also requires that the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed and the Council’s position on this is set out in the Water Management and Flood Risk Section above.

### **Gas**

22.14 The existing gas network is owned and operated by Cadent Gas. Cadent Gas asset records shows an existing 8” Steel Intermediate Pressure Gas main crossing from Cambridge Road heading towards Woodhouse Farm, before crossing the A14.

22.15 The location of the existing main is shown to be within the proposed Country Park and therefore it is assumed that this main will be treated as a constraint for both development & landscaping purposes. The Appellant advises that given the upcoming standards changes in regard to the use of mains gas it is not anticipated that mains gas will be utilised within the proposed development.

### **Digital Infrastructure**

22.16 The NPPF encourages planning decisions to support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology and full fibre broadband connections. Policy TI/10 of the SCLP requires the provision for high-capacity broadband (such as ducting for cables) to be designed and installed as an integral part of development.

- 22.17 An inspection of Openreach asset records shows existing Openreach network is shown to feed from Cambridge Road towards Woodhouse Farm. A further connection is shown from Cambridge Road to Impington Farm. Asset Records show existing Openreach & UKPN Electricity networks feed into two existing telecommunications masts along the western boundary. As this area is shown to remain as open space it is assumed that these networks and masts will be able to remain in-situ unaffected by the proposed development.
- 22.18 It is anticipated that a connection point will be made to part of this network. Openreach are currently providing Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) to all development of more than 20 properties therefore it is anticipated that this site will qualify for a full fibre network. A compliance condition can be applied to ensure all dwellings will have access to broadband on occupation.

### **Summary – Utilities**

- 22.19 On the basis of the above evaluation the development proposals are considered in accordance with policies T/8 and T/10 of the SCLP and the NPPF with regard to gas, electricity and digital infrastructure.
- 22.20 With regard to potable water, officers acknowledge that criterion (a) of Policy CC/7 requires it to be demonstrated that there are adequate water supply systems to serve a development, or an agreement with the relevant service provider to ensure the provision. However, criterion (b) also requires that the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed. The position on this is set out in Section and the Council's position on this is set out above.

## **23. Response to third party representations**

- 23.1 The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding sections are considered in the table below:

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Officer Response</b>
The files are full of typographical errors and there is no useful structure to enable a non-expert to interpret them.	As a major planning application, accompanied by an Environmental Statement, there is necessarily a significant amount of information submitted to allow for a full

	<p>assessment of the proposals. The application submission included a Non-Technical Summary of the ES, as well as a documents such as the Design and Access Statement and Planning Statement which provide an overview of the proposals.</p>
<p>The developer has a poor track record of renegeing on promises</p>	<p>The planning application has to be considered on its own merits, bearing in mind that the planning permission relates to the land and not any specific developer. Planning conditions and a section 106 agreement will be imposed on any approval to ensure the benefits of the development are delivered.</p>
<p>The A14 bridge should be provided</p>	<p>See design section above. There is currently no onward connection over the A14 bridge, as land to the north is private farmland. This route has not been identified as a strategic active travel route in the Local Plan or by the County Council/ GCP etc. Girton Road/ Cambridge Road and Cambridge Road/ Bridge Road are considered to provide suitable walking and cycling routes to Girton and Histon and Impington respectively.</p>
<p>Concerns about impact on A14 junction.</p>	<p>See transport section above. The County Council and National Highways have reviewed the Transport Assessment submitted as part of the application, and subject to sustainable transport measures including a Travel Plan, cycling and walking infrastructure,</p>

	and bus improvement, have no objection to the proposals.
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## **24. Other Matters**

### **Fire Safety**

- 24.1 Details of fire safety are primarily covered by Building Regulations, however as details such fire tender access, and provision of hydrants etc. are relevant to the detailed site design, these will need to be considered further at the reserved matters stage. A condition is identified which would require details of fire hydrants to be submitted for approval.

### **Safety and Security**

- 24.2 The Police Architectural Liaison Team note that based on their date the site is at medium risk to the vulnerability of crime.
- 24.3 It is not considered that any specific measures need to be incorporated at the outline stage. Safety and security measures such as adequate lighting and overlooking of public spaces can be considered through the Design Code and at the reserved matters stage.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

- 24.4 Under the Equality Act 2010, all public authorities, including Local Planning Authorities, must have due regard in exercising its functions for the Public Sector Equality Duty under s149 of that Act.
- 24.5 The development will contribute to the delivery of a range of types of housing to meet the needs of different groups of people across north west Cambridge. The need for the development to response to the range of needs of people with disabilities has also been considered in the design and assessment of the scheme.

## **25. Planning obligations (S106)**

- 25.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 have introduced the requirement for all local authorities to make an assessment of any planning obligation in relation to three tests. If the planning obligation does not pass the tests, then it is unlawful. The tests are that the planning obligation must be:

- a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- b) directly related to the development; and
- c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

25.2 The appellant has indicated their willingness to enter into a S106 planning obligation in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Local Plan and the NPPF.

25.3 Policy TI/8 'Infrastructure and New Developments' states that Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that have made suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms. The nature, scale and phasing of any planning obligations and/or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions sought will be related to the form of the development and its potential impact upon the surrounding area.

### **Heads of terms**

25.4 The Heads of Terms (HoT's) as identified are to be secured within the S106, which would apply in the event the appeal is allowed and permission granted and are set out in the summary table in **Appendix 6**.

25.5 The planning obligations are necessary, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably in scale and kind to the development and therefore the required planning obligation(s) passes the tests set by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and are in accordance with Policy TI/8 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018).

## **26. Planning balance**

26.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

26.2 The development proposals are considered to generally align with the development plan policy framework and the objectives of creating a sustainable community which will enhance the special character of the area, as guided by Policy SS2 of the Local Plan, with the exception of Policy SS/2 (10) so far as pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is concerned.

26.3 However, overall and notwithstanding that the proposed development largely accords with Policy SS/2, officers consider that the conflict with

Policy CC/7 is of such significance that the proposed development is contract to the Development Plan taken as a whole.

- 26.4 The benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals have been carefully evaluated and assessed against the development plan for the area and the objectives of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### **Summary of harm**

- 26.5 The application provides one pedestrian and cycle link to Girton through Thornton Close to the southwestern boundary of the site. No access is to be provided through Wellbrook Way, the more direct route into Girton. This is considered to be a disbenefit of the proposal, given that the allocation policy (Policy SS/2) requires the provision of a network of strong internal and external cycle and pedestrian links to neighbouring parts of the urban and rural areas. Moderate weight is attached to this.
- 26.6 There is potential for the application proposals to harm waterbodies from potable water demand, and it has not been demonstrated that the water to the development can be supplied sustainably, or that the risks to water resources are negligible or can be effectively mitigated. Significant weight is attached to this harm.

### **Summary of benefits**

- 26.7 Significant positive weight is attached to the social benefits arising from the development proposals. In terms of housing need, the development will deliver a significant number of new homes, which will help to maintain the Greater Cambridge five-year housing land supply and deliver affordable homes. The proposals include 40% affordable housing (400 units) which accords fully with development plan policies which require a minimum of 40% affordable homes for this size of development.
- 26.8 Policy objectives of delivering the social objectives of sustainable development will be further met by the application proposals, in the form of a new primary and secondary school and on-site community facilities.
- 26.9 The scheme also provides formal play provision, open space and public realm including the delivery of a country park. This is considered to deliver the objective for new development with a clear sense of place. This further weighs in support of the proposals.



- 26.10 In terms of economic benefits, national planning policy places a clear emphasis on the importance of economic growth and delivering economic benefits as a key component of sustainable development. The application will generate significant positive economic impacts during the construction and operational phases of the development. The proposals will create construction jobs and employment, through businesses, shops and services within the development. Significant positive weight is afforded to these benefits.
- 26.11 In terms of environmental impacts, the proposed development will contribute to an improvement in habitat quality and biodiversity net gain (BNG), with an uplift of 19% proposed. This is dependent on the same broad habitat types, areas and conditions shown on the outline landscape masterplan being delivered through phased reserved matters.
- 26.12 Provision is also made to ensure prudent use of natural resources at the Site and measures to minimise waste and pollution. Mitigation and adaptation to climate change will be facilitated through the proposed Site wide sustainability strategy, fulfilling policy objectives of demonstrating excellence in sustainable development. Significant weight is attached to these benefits.
- 26.13 Officers have considered the benefits and dis-benefits of the development proposals. The significant weight attached to the potential harm to waterbodies from potable water demand, in the absence of effective mitigation to seek to manage the water resources issue that this development presents is considered to outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

### **Conclusion**

- 26.14 In the planning balance, officers consider that, in this case, the proposed development will bring significant social, economic and environmental benefits that accord with the three dimensions of sustainable development. However, the risk of harm to the water environment to which the proposed development would give rise, in the absence of mitigation which can effectively seek to manage the water resources issue that this development presents, in the light of the objection from the EA, is considered by officers to attract significant weight in the planning balance. This harm is considered to outweigh the other environmental, social and economic benefits which the scheme would deliver.

26.15 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, the views of statutory consultees, including the EA, as well as all other material planning considerations, officers recommend that, based upon the information before the Council, the JDCC agree the officers' recommendation, that had the appeal against non-determination not been made, the Council would have refused the application for the reason set out below.

## **27. Recommendation**

27.1 A. That, had the appeal against non-determination not been made, the Council would have REFUSED planning application 22/02528/OUT for the following reason:

The application has failed to demonstrate that the water to the development site can be supplied sustainably and would not cause harm to the environment by reason of impact on ground water bodies including chalk aquifers. In the absence of adequate mitigation measures and site wide water efficiency measures, the development is considered to be unacceptable. The proposals are therefore contrary to Policy CC/7 Water Quality of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 which requires all development proposals to demonstrate that the quality of ground, surface or water bodies will not be harmed. It also conflicts with Paragraphs 174, 175, 179, and 180 of the NPPF which seeks to ensure new development proposals help or improve local environmental conditions including in relation to water and should protect biodiversity and ecological networks.

B. Members delegate authority to officers to negotiate, settle and complete a s106 agreement and to agree the wording of any planning conditions which would be applied in the event the appeal is allowed, in general accordance with the draft Heads of Terms and list of draft conditions included at Appendix 6 and 7.

### **Background papers:**

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

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



## 28. Appendices

### Appendix 1 Legislation and Planning Policy Context

#### Legislation

##### EIA Directives and Regulations – EIA Regulations

1. European Union legislation with regard to environmental assessment and the planning regime remains unchanged despite the UK leaving the European Union on 31 January 2020. The Government passed secondary legislation in October 2018 to ensure the continued operation of the EIA regime.

##### Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

2. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for the LPA is the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

##### Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)

3. The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the CIL Regulations) generally set out regulations relating to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Part 11 refers specifically to planning obligations (including those in Section 106 Agreements) and is relevant to the consideration of these applications and will influence the final content of Section 106 Agreement, in the event that planning permission is granted.
4. CIL Regulation 122 imposes limitations on the use of planning obligations. It states (where there is no CIL charging regime), a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is:
  - (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - (b) directly related to the development, and
  - (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

##### Equalities Act 2010

5. The applications have been assessed against the relevant sections of the Equalities Act 2010. It is not considered that the Applications discriminates against people with protected characteristics (age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) specified in this Act.
6. Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

7. Environment Act 2021
8. ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

### **National Planning Policy and Guidance**

9. The following national policies and guidance are referred to in this report:
  - National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)
  - National Planning Practice Guidance
  - National Design Guide 2019
  - Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design
  - Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)
  - Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)

### **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018)**

10. For the purposes of the s38(6) of the 2004 Act, the Development Plan is the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018), and the County Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2036 (July 2021).

11. The relevant policies in the Local Plan include:

- S/1 – Vision
- S/2 – Objectives of the Local Plan
- S/3 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- S/4 – Cambridge Green Belt
- S/5 – Provision of New Jobs and Homes
- S/6 – The Development Strategy to 2031
- SS/2 – Land Between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road
- CC/1 – Mitigation and Adaption to Climate Change
- CC/3 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments
- CC/4 – Water Efficiency
- CC/5 – Sustainable Show Homes
- CC/6 – Construction Methods
- CC/7 – Water Quality
- CC/8 – Sustainable Drainage Systems
- CC/9 – Managing Flood Risk
- HQ/1 – Design Principles
- HQ/2 – Public Art and New Development
- NH/2 – Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
- NH/3 – Protecting Agricultural Land
- NH/4 – Biodiversity
- NH/5 – Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance
- NH/6 – Green Infrastructure
- NH/8 – Mitigating the Impact of Development in & adjoining the Green Belt
- NH/10 – Facilities for Recreation in the Green Belt
- NH/14 – Heritage Assets
- H/8 – Housing Density
- H/9 – Housing Mix

H/10 – Affordable Housing  
H/12 – Residential Space Standards  
H/21 – Gypsy and Traveller Provision at New Communities  
E/22 – Applications for New Retail Development  
SC/2 – Health Impact Assessment  
SC/4 – Meeting Community Needs  
SC/6 – Indoor Community Facilities  
SC/7 – Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space & New Developments  
SC/9 – Lighting Proposals  
SC/10 – Noise Pollution  
SC/11 – Contaminated Land  
SC/12 – Air Quality  
SC/14 – Odour and Other Fugitive Emissions to Air  
TI/2 – Planning for Sustainable Travel  
TI/3 – Parking Provision  
TI/8 – Infrastructure and New Developments  
TI/9 – Education facilities  
TI/10 – Broadband

12. The relevant policies in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021 are:

Policy 5: Minerals Safeguarding Areas

### **Neighbourhood plan**

13. The majority of the site is within Histon and Impington Parish however the site is excluded from the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan Area.

14. Part of the proposed country park is within the Girton Parish, which was designated as a neighbourhood planning area on 6 July 2023. The neighbourhood plan is at an early stage of preparation.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

15. The following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are relevant:

Greater Cambridge Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022  
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020  
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016

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

Health Impact Assessment SPD – Adopted March 2011  
Development affecting Conservation Areas SPD – Adopted 2009

Landscape in New Developments SPD – Adopted March 2010  
Affordable Housing SPD – Adopted March 2010  
District Design Guide SPD – Adopted March 2010  
Open Space in New Developments SPD – Adopted January 2009  
Public Art SPD – Adopted January 2009  
Trees and Development Sites SPD – Adopted January 2009

## **Other guidance**

17. Other relevant guidance includes:

Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2019 – 2023  
Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001).  
Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste  
Cambridgeshire Design Guide for Streets and Public Realm (2007)  
Cycle Parking Guide for New Residential Developments (2010)