

# **Stratton Business Park Local Development Order**

## **Statement of Community Consultation**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Consultation has been produced to detail the process and results of the consultation which took place for the proposed Local Development Order (LDO) for the Stratton Business Park and surrounding area in Biggleswade in August / September 2015.
- 1.2 The proposed LDO seeks to enable businesses, landowners and occupiers in the designated area to undertake more works to their premises without the need for planning permission. This is intended to encourage employment in the area, save businesses time and money, enable businesses to respond more quickly to opportunities, to encourage ongoing regeneration of the area and to provide a source of competitive advantage over other, competing, locations along the M1 corridor.
- 1.3 The proposed LDO would allow a wide range of minor works to be undertaken without planning permission, including new or replacement windows, shutters and doors, mezzanine floors, solar / PV panels, fencing, lighting and single storey buildings for ancillary uses such as cycle storage, electric car charging, smoking shelters or uses associated with plant, maintenance or the utilities supply to the building.
- 1.4 The proposed LDO would also allow extensions to existing buildings of 1200sqm of the current floor space (1500 sqm for AgriFood businesses) provided the building stayed within the existing curtilage.
- 1.5 The proposed LDO put forward conditions to ensure that local residents and others were appropriately protected. These included restrictions on building height, noise, lighting and parking.
- 1.6 A full list of the proposed measures and conditions can be found in Appendix 1 of the Stratton Business Park Local Development Order.

### **2.0 Summary of Consultation Process**

- 2.1 Prior to undertaking the consultation, three distinct groups were identified as stakeholders whose views should be sought. These were occupiers / landowners of the industrial estates, local residents and statutory consultees (for example Town Councils or the Environment Agency).

2.2 The first part of the consultation exercise took the form of a manned public exhibition which was held at the Weatherley Centre in Biggleswade on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August between 2.00pm and 8.00pm. The venue was accessible to both local businesses and nearby residents. Display boards were produced to explain what was proposed and how the proposals sat alongside the Council's other work to benefit Biggleswade. Officers from Business Investment and Planning – both Policy and Development Management - were in attendance to talk through the proposals and answer questions.



The exhibition boards at the Weatherley Centre

2.3 The exhibition was subsequently moved to Biggleswade library. All of the exhibition material, full copies of the document and questionnaires were also available online, at the reception of Priory House and at the Town Council.



The exhibition boards at Biggleswade Library

2.4 In order to promote the consultation and encourage responses, the three groups identified in paragraph 2.1 were notified in specific ways:

2.5 A letter was sent to all occupiers in the identified area. The letter informed them of the consultation, the dates and where the material could be viewed. Businesses were also invited to a special business breakfast held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September at Jordans Ryvita on the business park to specifically consult businesses on the park.



The business breakfast at Jordans Ryvita

2.6 Local residents and other neighbours were notified. This was done by a direct mailing to those immediately adjoining the identified area and in close proximity on other streets.

2.7 Statutory consultees were informed of the consultation by a mailing, in line with normal practice in both Development Management and Planning Policy.

2.8 More generally, a press release was sent to the Biggleswade Chronicle and the article appeared in the 14 August 2015 edition as well as online. Planning site notices were put up around the industrial area and posters for the consultation event were put up in various shops / public notice boards. Information about the consultation also appeared on Central Bedfordshire Council's Facebook page, Twitter feed and the Let's Talk Business news alert. A presentation to Biggleswade Town Council members was provided on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August at one of their full Council meetings.

### **3.0 Summary of Questionnaire Responses**

- 3.1 A questionnaire was produced to capture the views of people from the consultation. A copy of the questionnaire is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The questionnaire was split into four sections. Firstly, an opinion was sought on the principle of the LDO, namely allowing businesses to undertake a greater range of work without the need for planning permission, provided measures were in place to safeguard local residents and others. Secondly, an opinion was sought on the principle and specific details of the proposals around allowing minor works. Thirdly, an opinion was sought on the principle and specific details of major works around extensions and change of use. Finally, an opinion was sought on the principle and specific details of restrictions and conditions to safeguard residents and others. There was also the opportunity for respondents to submit additional comments on all four of these sections, and any other comments at the end of the questionnaire.
- 3.3 During the consultation, a total of 50 responses were received. This took the form of 42 returned questionnaires, 6 letters and two internal responses.
- 3.4 Of the questionnaire responses 31% came from residents living close to the Stratton area and 24% from local businesses. The remainder were from a mix of residents from elsewhere, landowners and others.
- 3.5 When asked about the principle of the proposed LDO, opinions were positive in the main with 72% either agreeing or strongly agreeing, and 19% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Those who provided further comments were split between agreement and seeing economic benefits, and those concerned about the potential impact on residents.
- 3.6 When asked about the principle of allowing minor works, 68% agreed or strongly agreed, while 23% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Those who made further comments raised concerns about the appearance of the site, the impact of lighting and the affect on neighbouring residents and others.
- 3.7 When asked about the principle of the LDO allowing extensions to be built without the need for planning permission, again opinions were reasonably split with 55% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the principle and 35% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Those who made further comments expressed concerns about the appearance of the site and the affect on neighbouring residents and others.

3.8 When asked about the principle of the LDO seeking to protect nearby residents and others through restrictions and conditions, the vast majority were supportive with on average 74% agreeing or strongly agreeing, but only 5% disagreeing.

3.9 As can be seen, views about the proposed LDO captured through the questionnaire were mainly positive, but with a split of opinion over the principle and the specifics of what was proposed through the consultation. Whilst a majority agreed with the principle, there was slightly stronger support for allowing minor works than for allowing extensions. However both were had a majority agreeing or strongly agreeing to the proposals. The proposals to impose conditions or restrictions were strongly supported.

#### **4.0 Summary of Written responses**

4.1 As well as the questionnaires received, 6 letters were also received during the consultation process. All these were from statutory consultees. There were also two responses from internal consultees.

4.2 Environment Agency generally supported the LDO but had some comments around the flood risk and drainage section which have since been incorporated.

4.3 Biggleswade Town Council were in support of the LDO.

4.4 Historic England raised some concerns about the scheduled monument located near to Stratton Park and its extension areas. They suggested adding in a condition around consulting the archaeological team prior to extension developments commencing to ensure the potential archaeological impacts of building extensions were considered.

4.5 North Hertfordshire District Council responded to the Council but had no specific comments.

4.6 Bedford Borough Council responded to say they had no objection to the proposal but provided no further specific comments.

4.7 Internally, the Sustainable Growth Officer responded and suggested adding in anaerobic digestion systems due to the link with the AgriFood sector.

4.8 Assets responded as the landowner of phase 4 and phase 5 but didn't provide any specific comments.

## **5.0 Response to Points Made**

5.1 The table below highlights the comments or suggestions made, and the proposed response to them. Comments have been grouped together where possible rather than addressed individually:

Comment	Response
Concerns about monitoring – that it will continue beyond the initial launch of the LDO	The council endeavours to continue to monitor the LDO to ensure it is effective and that conditions are adhered to.
Concern about overall appearance of the area/environment	It is felt that the conditions and informatives on height of building, lighting, parking will ensure that the overall appearance of the area is not compromised.
Concern about extensions of buildings and a suggestion about submitting drawings prior to development	If the guidelines and conditions for extensions are followed, they should be acceptable to the planning authority and therefore no drawing submission would be necessary
Food outlets shouldn't be allowed	Food outlets fall out of the scope of the LDO
Odour extraction – concern about inappropriate fumes and odours	Written consent is required from the environmental health team prior to the odour extraction being installed to prevent any inappropriate extraction facilities going ahead.
Concern around signage	Signage is allowed under advert regulations, the LDO is merely highlighting this so not making any additional changes
Concern around lighting and it's impact on the environment / nearby residents	There are height restrictions on lighting columns and the requirement to follow guidelines as set out in the 'Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution'.
Concerns about infrastructure – that the business park won't be able to cope with the expansion that may result from the LDO	Although there may be an increase in traffic generated by some elements of the LDO – for example extension, it is not anticipated that this will make a significant impact to overall traffic on the park. The council will continue to monitor this over time.
Some suggestions around the flooding condition and informative	These sections have been reworded to take these suggestions into account
Archaeological concerns – particularly around the Stratton Park medieval moated enclosure and manorial earthworks Scheduled	A condition has been incorporated in Part C section 8. to ensure that archaeological concerns are taking into account.

Monument to the North of Stratton Park	
A suggestion about the inclusion of anaerobic digestion systems due to the link with the AgriFood sector.	Green energy has been added to the ancillary structures list of suggested purposes.



## **5.0 Conclusion**

**5.1** As can be seen, the public consultation process for the proposed Stratton Local Development Order was undertaken comprehensively and that businesses, residents and statutory consultees all had a good opportunity to access information and take part in the consultation.

**5.2** Many of the comments received concerned the potential impact on nearby residents. It is considered that the conditions and restrictions included within the LDO provide an appropriate level of protection for nearby residents whilst enabling businesses to benefit from the improved flexibility the LDO offers.

**5.3** As a result of the consultation, it is proposed that some minor amendments are made to the draft document (see Appendix 2 for full list). These include some changes to the wording of the flooding / draining conditions and informatives, adding in green energy under ancillary structures and a condition about archaeology. On the whole, the amendments are minor amends to wording / terminology rather than material changes.



# Stratton Business Park Local Development Order

**This consultation sets out proposals to implement a Local Development Order (LDO) for the Stratton Business Park. This would enable businesses and landowners to undertake certain types of improvement to their buildings or certain forms of development without the need to secure planning permission. As a part of this, we are proposing certain restrictions and conditions to ensure protection for local residents and others.**

**We would like to hear your views on the plans and proposals contained within the Draft Local Development Order. Please review the draft document and then provide your feedback, completing this questionnaire by Monday 14th September 2015.**

1. **Are you responding as:** (please select one)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Business                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Community/ Voluntary Organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An owner of land in Central Bedfordshire            | <input type="checkbox"/> Town or Parish Council            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A resident living close to Stratton Business Park   | <input type="checkbox"/> Developer/ Agent                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A resident living elsewhere in Central Bedfordshire | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please write in below)     |

If other, please specify:

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2. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the principle of the Local Development Order, namely to allow businesses and landowners to undertake certain types of development without the need to seek planning permission, provided there are measures in place to protect local residents and others?** (please select one)

- Strongly agree   
  Agree   
  Neither agree or disagree   
  Disagree   
  Strongly disagree

3. **If you have any specific comments on the principle of a Local Development Order for the area, please provide them here.**

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## Minor Works

We are proposing to allow businesses or landowners to undertake certain types of minor works without planning permission, such as installing mezzanine floors, installing solar or PV panels, lighting installation and signage. The proposals are detailed in full in Appendix 1, section B of the consultation document and on the display boards.

4. **It is proposed that the Local Development Order permits a number of minor works to be undertaken without planning permission. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?** (please select one)

- Strongly agree   
  Agree   
  Neither agree or disagree   
  Disagree   
  Strongly disagree

5. Are there any types of minor works listed which you feel should not be allowed without planning permission, or are there some types of works which you feel should be permitted but which have not been included?

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6. Please use the space below to make any comments on the proposal to allow certain types of minor works without planning permission.

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### Major Works

We are proposing to allow businesses or landowners to extend existing buildings up to 1200sqm. For AgriFood businesses or landowners would be able to extend their existing buildings by up to 1500sqm. For full details of this, please refer to Appendix 1, Part B of the consultation document or the display boards.

7. The Local Development Order proposals seek to allow businesses and landowners to **extend** existing buildings up to a certain size without planning permission. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this? (please select one)

Strongly agree     Agree     Neither agree or disagree     Disagree     Strongly disagree

8. Do you have any comments regarding the proposal to allow businesses and landowners to **extend** existing buildings to a certain size without planning permission?

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9. The Local Development Order proposals seek to allow businesses to change use of buildings between B2 (general industrial) or B8 (storage and distribution) to B1 (business), or B1 (business) to B8 (storage and distribution) with no size limit. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this? (please select one)

Strongly agree     Agree     Neither agree or disagree     Disagree     Strongly disagree

10. If you have any other comments to make on the proposals regarding Major Works, or if you feel that different limits should apply to either proposal, please provide them below.

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## Restrictions and Conditions

To answer the following questions please refer to Appendix 1, Part C of the consultation document or the display boards, which explains the restrictions and conditions that will apply to development under a Local Development Order.

11. **The Local Development Order proposals seek to protect residents and others nearby from unwanted impacts by placing restrictions and conditions on what can be developed without Planning Permission. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the principle of this?**  
(please select one per row)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The principle of restrictions on noise levels (see page 15 in the document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The principle of height restrictions (see page 14 in the document) for buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The principle of restrictions on extraction and ventilation (see page 15 of the document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The principle of restrictions on the height of lighting columns (see page 15 of the document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. **Do you have any comments about the restrictions and conditions, or are there any other restrictions and conditions that should be included?**

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## Final comments

13. **Please use the box below to make any other comments about the proposed Local Development Order (LDO).**

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## About You

The following information will help us when considering your opinions and to make sure that we're getting the views of all members of the community. The answers will not be used to identify any individual. Please only answer the questions in the 'About You' section if you are a resident living close to Stratton Business Park, or if you are a resident living somewhere else in Central Bedfordshire.

14. **Please provide your postcode (this will only be used for classification purposes):**

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15. **Are you:** (please select one)

Male

Female

16. **What is your age?** (please select one)

Under 16 yrs

16-19 yrs

20-29 yrs

30-44 yrs

45-59 yrs

60-64 yrs

65-74 yrs

75+

**17. Do you consider yourself to be disabled? (please select one)**

Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is considered to have a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a sustained and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Yes

No

**18. To which of these groups do you consider you belong? (please select one)**

Asian or Asian British

Mixed

Black or Black British

White British

Chinese

Other Ethnic group (please write in below):

If other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your views.**

**Please return your response to:  
FREEPOST RSJS GBBZ SRZT (you do not need a stamp)  
Stratton Park LDO  
Central Bedfordshire Council  
Priory House, Monks Walk  
Chicksands, Shefford  
SG17 5TQ**

**Data Protection Act 1998**

Please note that your personal details supplied on this form will be held and/or computerised by Central Bedfordshire Council for the purpose of the Stratton Park LDO consultation. The information collected may be disclosed to officers and Members of the Council and its' partners or consultants involved in this consultation. Summarised information from the forms may be published, but no individual details will be disclosed under these circumstances. Your personal details will be safeguarded and will not be divulged to any other individuals or organisations for any other purposes. Security classification: Protected when complete

## Appendix 2 – Schedule of changes (from draft to final document).

Paragraph	Proposed change	Reason
Title page	Draft Document changed to date of adoption 6 <sup>th</sup> October	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
1.1	The phrase "...is proposing to" to be replaced with "...has adopted..."	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
1.5	The phrase "The proposed LDO..." to be replaced with "The final LDO document..."	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
1.7	The phrase "...the proposed order" to be replaced by "the order" and The phrase "The proposed LDO is intended..." to be replaced with "The LDO will..."	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
2 Overview of Stratton Park	Addition of the phrase "already allocated and"	To reflect the fact that some of the future phases are already allocated.
2 AgriFood sector	Addition of the sentence "The Ivel Valley is the eastern area of Central Bedfordshire broadly running from Stotfold in the South to Tempsford in the North and Shefford in the West."	Clarity. To define the Ivel Valley area
2 Justification	The phrase "The proposed LDO" replaced with "The LDO"	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
2 Purpose	The phrase "...this proposed LDO" to be replaced with "...this LDO"	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
3 Benefits	Removal of the word proposed from the title and the replacement of two references to "food" for "AgriFood" in bullet points 10 and 11	To be consistent with other references to the sector.
4 Provisions	Removal of the word proposed from the title	Clarity and comprehensiveness
4.1	The phrase "...proposes to grant" changed to "...grants"	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the

		document.
4.3	Under the row about 24hour access, second column, phrase “..can also potentially enjoy this condition subject to..” changed to “will need to secure”	Clarity
4.3	Under the row about signage / flags, second column, the phrase “allowed in line with current permitted development rules” has been changed to “to accord with the current advertisement regulations”.	Clarity
6.1	Phrase “It is proposed that developments..” changed to “Developments...” and replacement of the word “would” for “will”	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
10.1	“will undertake” has been replaced by “has undertaken”.	To reflect that this is a final rather than proposed draft version of the document.
10.1	Addition of the sentence “The final version of this document incorporates a number of changes made in response to this consultation, along with a number of updates and corrections.”	For clarity following the consultation.
Appendix 1 – Part A, no 9	4.3 replaced with Part B (12) of the Stratton Business Park Local Development Order.	To reference the correct section of the document.
Part B, no.1 and no. 2	Phase “the change of use of a premises from any purpose” changed to “the change of use of a building from a use..” and addition of “...of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order”	Clarity
Part B, no.3	Addition of “building within” , “...of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order” and removal of “premises to”	Clarity
Part B, no.11	Phrase “...for the purposes of” changed to “for ancillary purposes such as..”	Clarity of definition
Part B, no.11	“for green energy” added in	To respond to consultation comment around including anaerobic digestion systems.
Part B, no.11	“gross footprint of”, “measured externally” “square metres” added in. “buildings” replaced with “premises”	Clarity
Part B, no.12	Reworded to The extension of a building used for a purpose falling within Class B1 (business), B2 (general industrial) or B8 (storage or distribution) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order up to a maximum of: (i) 1200 square metres of new floor space; or (ii) 1500 square metres of new floor space in the	Clarity

	case of a building used for a purpose within the AgriFood sector.	
Part B, no.13	Reworded to “The formation, laying out or construction of a hard surface to form a service road and the maintenance or improvement of such a surface including the replacement in whole or in part of such a surface provided they do not provide direct access onto a classified road.”	Clarity
Part B, no. 14	Replacement of “can also potentially enjoy this condition subject to” with “require”	Clarity
Part B, nb	Removal of (N.B. For the purposes of Appendix 1, Part B (11), ‘building footprint’ means, in relation to a building existing on the date this LDO comes into effect, as existing on that date and, in relation to a building built after the date of adoption of this Local Development Order, as originally built. For the avoidance of doubt, ‘building footprint’ does not therefore include any extension erected under the provisions of Appendix 1, Part B (11) of the LDO, the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, as amended, or any order revoking or re-enacting those orders with or without modification	With the small alterations to wording as above, it was felt that this was no longer required.
Part C, no.1	Addition of “and (12)”	Clarity and to improve cross referencing
Part C, no. 7	<p>Rewording to “No development under the provisions of Appendix 1, Part B (12) of the LDO shall take place until a scheme detailing the design, construction and associated management and maintenance for the proposed surface water drainage system, based on sustainable principles, and foul water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>The approved drainage system shall be implemented in accordance with the approved detailed design and shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan.</p> <p>No building/dwelling shall be occupied until the developer has formally submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority that the approved scheme has been checked by them and has been correctly and fully installed as per the approved details.</p> <p>The drainage design must therefore ensure that the frequency and rate of discharge and volume of surface water run off from the new development is, wherever possible, equal to the frequency and rate of discharge and volume of surface water that would be discharged under equivalent pre-developed conditions.</p>	To reflect comments from the Environment Agency, Internal drainage board and our SuDs officer.



	<p>Reason: To ensure that the entire system will be operationally ready at all times and functions within the performance requirements; that the operation of the system is safe, environmentally acceptable, and economically efficient; that as far as possible the failure of one section of a drainage system will not adversely affect the performance of the other parts. To prevent the pollution of the underlying Principal Aquifer and the water environment.”</p>	
<p>Part B, no. 8</p>	<p>Additional condition as follows:</p> <p><b>Archaeology:</b></p> <p>No development under the provisions of Appendix 1, Part B (4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12 and 13) of the LDO shall take place until the details of the proposal have been sent to the Central Bedfordshire Council Development Control Archaeologists and they have confirmed in writing that the proposal is compliant with the requirements of paragraphs 132 to 134 of the <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> (NPPF).</p> <p>Reason: To prevent substantial harm being caused to the setting of the Stratton Park medieval moated enclosure and manorial earthworks Scheduled Monument, which under the terms of the NPPF are designated heritage assets of the highest significance.</p>	<p>To reflect comments from Historic England and the council’s archaeological officers.</p>
<p>Part D, no. 5</p>	<p>Reworded to: “When addressing flood risk and drainage matters, consideration should be given to opportunities to reduce the overall level of flood risk in the area and beyond through the layout and form of the development and the application of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). New development should be sustainable and where appropriate contribute to the creation of infrastructure and communities that are safe from flooding for their intended lifetime through the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).</p> <p>Prior to any development involving the creation of any hardstanding or impermeable surface, including the erection of ancillary structures or the extension of any existing building, it is advised that you discuss the management of surface water with the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board, the Lead Local Flood Authority, and relevant Sewerage Undertaker. Applicants may be asked to provide information to allow for an</p>	<p>To reflect comments from the Environment Agency, Internal drainage board and our SuDs officer.</p>

	<p>assessment to be made of the appropriateness of the type of surface water drainage system for a proposed site, along with details of its extent/position, function, and future management arrangements. SuDS should be proposed in accordance with the Council's sustainable Urban Drainage Guidance and should be properly designed and ensure that the maintenance and operation costs are proportionate and sustainable for the lifetime of the development.”</p>	
<p>Part D, no. 6</p>	<p>Additional informative as below following rewording of no. 5</p> <p><b>“6. Contamination and groundwater protection requirements</b></p> <p>In accordance with the Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Policy, direct discharges into groundwater of surface water run-off are not acceptable. The design, construction and future operation and maintenance of any drainage system must be in accordance with the Environment Agency’s Groundwater Protection Policy. The Environment Agency should be consulted on the design of foul and surface water drainage, to prevent the pollution of the underlying Principal Aquifer and the water environment. Further advice in respect of flood risk and the design of foul and surface water drainage is available online via the Environment Agency’s website.”</p>	<p>To reflect comments from the Environment Agency, Internal drainage board and our SuDs officer.</p>