

## **Item No. 12**

<b>APPLICATION NUMBER</b>	<b>CB/16/04657/OUT</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Land north east of Walnut Close, Blunham</b>
<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>Outline planning application for the residential development of 0.49 hectares of land to form 9 bungalow/chalet dwellings with associated garaging, parking and other associated works.</b>
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>Blunham</b>
<b>WARD</b>	<b>Sandy</b>
<b>WARD COUNCILLORS</b>	<b>Cllrs Maudlin, Smith &amp; Stock</b>
<b>CASE OFFICER</b>	<b>Donna Lavender</b>
<b>DATE REGISTERED</b>	<b>10 October 2016</b>
<b>EXPIRY DATE</b>	<b>05 December 2016</b>
<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>K Quince &amp; Son Limited</b>
<b>AGENT</b>	<b>hd planning</b>
<b>REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE</b>	<b>Ward Councillor (Cllr C Maudlin) call in on the following grounds:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Outside the Settlement Envelope</b></li><li>• <b>Highway Safety- parking concerns</b></li><li>• <b>Substandard access</b></li><li>• <b>Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area</b></li></ul>
<b>RECOMMENDED DECISION</b>	<b>Outline Application - Recommended for Approval, subject to a 106 agreement.</b>

### **Reason for Recommendation**

The proposal for residential development is contrary to Policy DM4 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2009, however at this time the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing supply and therefore developments should be considered in the context of Sustainable Development. The application site is adjacent to the existing settlement envelope of Blunham which is considered to be a sustainable location for planning purposes and would consist of small scale residential development directly adjacent to existing development. The proposal would have an impact on the character and appearance of the area however this impact is not considered to be demonstrably harmful. The proposal would contribute to the Council's 5 year housing supply as a deliverable site within the period. The proposal is also considered to be acceptable in terms of highway safety and neighbouring amenity and therefore accords with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009) and the Council's adopted Design Guidance (2014).

### **Site Location:**

The site is located on the north side of Walnut Close, a residential cul-de-sac, and adjacent to a development of 4 houses known as "The Barns", built as an extension to the original Close. The land comprises a field with open countryside beyond which is currently used for grazing. It has a frontage onto The Barns and adjoins the side of no. 15 Walnut Close to the west, the frontages of no's. 1-4 The Barns to the east and the side boundary of 4 The Barns to the south.

The area is residential in character although the area comprising the application site and land beyond is rural in character and is predominantly located outside of the Village Settlement Envelope.

### **The Application:**

The application is to establish the principle of residential development on the site for 9 bungalows. The application is submitted in Outline with all matters reserved except for access. An indicative plan has been supplied demonstrating how the number of units could be facilitated on the site alongside amenity, parking and landscaping.

The application is submitted with a Design and Access Statement.

The site and development has been considered in relation to the EIA Regulations (2011) as amended April 2015 and is below the threshold for the requirement of an ES.

*N.B. The indicative layout plan was revised during the life of the application to provide greater separations between the existing and proposed development, ensure that an access road could be incorporated to an adoptable standard and to provide an appropriate landscape buffer around the rear boundary of the site*

### **RELEVANT POLICIES:**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)**

Section 4: Promoting sustainable transport

Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Section 7: Requiring good design

Section 8: Promoting healthy communities

Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Section 13: Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

#### **Core Strategy and Development Management Policies - North 2009**

CS1: Development Strategy

CS2: Developer Contributions

CS3: Healthy and Sustainable Communities

CS4: Linking Communities – Accessibility and Transport

CS5: Providing Homes

CS13: Climate Change

CS14: High Quality Design

CS16: Landscape & Woodland

CS18: Biodiversity

DM1: Renewable Energy

DM2: Sustainable Construction of New Buildings

DM3 - High Quality Design

DM4 - Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes

DM14 - Landscape and Woodland

DM15: Biodiversity

#### **Development Strategy**

At the meeting of Full Council on 19 November 2015 it was resolved to withdraw the

Development Strategy. Preparation of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan has begun. A substantial volume of evidence gathered over a number of years will help support this document. These technical papers are consistent with the spirit of the NPPF and therefore will remain on our website as material considerations which may inform further development management decisions.

## **Minerals and Waste Constraints**

Minerals Safeguarding Zone

## **Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies (Jan 2014)**

MSP 11

MSP 12

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents**

1. Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)
2. Central Bedfordshire SuDs Guidance (April 2014)

## **Relevant Planning History:**

**Application Number** MB/06/02028/FULL

**Description** Detached Dwelling

**Decision** Refused

**Decision Date** 15/02/2007

## **Parish Council:**

Blunham Parish Council Blunham Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this application for (28/10/16) (*Verbatim*) - the following reasons:

- Our recent Housing Needs Survey identified a need for only 6 small family homes.
- This is prime agricultural land which should not be lost in this way.
- Drainage impacts on the main village is a concern, as pooling of water at the bottom of The Hill is already evident since Jubilee Close was built. This has not been addressed in the planning application.
- The plans include access to the neighbouring field, which has been put forward for development in the recent Call for Sites. This is of great concern, given the high level of development already applied for recently in Blunham.
- The increase in traffic on Barford Rd is a concern, on a road with acknowledged speeding issues. This is evidenced by two recent surveys. This is despite traffic calming being installed & a Vehicle Activated Speed Sign.
- 9 homes represent overdevelopment of this small site, & is very cramped.

- The visitor parking is very close to the access, & manoeuvring vehicles into these spaces safely looks challenging.
- The parking arrangements for plots 4 & 6 do not appear to provide adequate space for safe turning.
- Vehicles in Walnut Close already face logistical challenges. There are multiple parked cars on the road, & difficult turns to be negotiated. Adding this development will inevitably make this problem worse, by creating additional traffic & service vehicle visits.
- Whilst it is noted that access is intended to be addressed at reserved matters stage, it is hard to envisage how safe access will be achieved. The suggested access point is extremely tight. Access for service vehicles looks to be particularly challenging. The application refers to a wall that needs to come down that is within the applicants control. We would urge planners to satisfy themselves that this is indeed within the applicants control, & that this approach is realistically achievable. Surely access needs to be included in the outline permission, as there is little point in putting forward a site for development if it cannot be accessed.
- As CBC is now reaching its 5-year housing targets, it is not necessary to rush into permitting sites that are likely to be unsustainable. When the Parish Council carried out a detailed sustainability review of the sites put forward in Blunham for the Call for Sites, this site was ranked second from bottom (with the neighbouring field referred to in item 4 as bottom).

**Cumulative impact of three planning applications at the same time, two side by side, CB/16/04323/OUT & CB/16/04369/OUT, plus a third directly opposite, CB/16/04657/OUT , totalling 132 homes**

These three applications combined represent a 30% housing increase in one hit - this is simply not sustainable. Three developments in one go would have a significant impact on residents lives. We specifically raised these points with the two larger developers at pre-planning consultation. We would urge you to seriously consider the impact of three sites starting up simultaneously with three dangerous site access points in close proximity, plus duplication of all deliveries and subcontract labour.

Education is a particular concern, & we would ask that

Officers are rigorous in their assessment of the impact these developments will have. John Donne School anticipates it will need an additional classroom to accommodate this sudden growth, & has written to you separately on this matter.

There are no doubt many other infrastructure impacts which have yet to be identified such as drainage & sewerage improvements.

**Consultees:**

Internal Drainage Board (13/10/16) & (01/12/16) -	No Comments
CBC Housing Development Officer (20/10/16) & (29/10/16) -	Below the threshold for affordable housing provision.
CBC Pollution (31/10/16) -	No Comments
CBC Sustainable Growth Officer (31/10/16) -	The proposed development is below threshold of 10 houses and therefore the development management policies DM1 and DM2 in regard sustainability and renewable energy standards do not apply.
CBC Trees & Landscape Officer (02/11/16) -	No Objection, subject to the retention of existing boundary hedging and the imposition of a condition to secure appropriate landscape proposals within any forthcoming reserved matters application.
CBC Strategic Landscape (03/11/16) -	No Objection. A detailed, comprehensive landscaping scheme is required, which will safeguard existing trees and hedges and in addition , provides an effective screen on the northern boundary. Internal landscaping is also critical to ensure compatibility with the village setting eg deciduous hedging rather than evergreen, picket fencing rather than railings, for example. All matters which can be controlled with the imposition of a landscape condition.
CBC SuDs Engineer (04/11/16) -	No Objection, subject to the imposition of a condition to secure a detailed SuDs Strategy.
CBC Minerals & Waste Officer (04/11/16) & (02/12/16) -	The site appears to be within a Minerals Safeguarding Area. Policy MSP 11 of the adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan requires such applications to be accompanied with a Minerals Resource Assessment. There is no mention of this Local Plan, Policy or MRA within the documentation provided.

A revised Design and access was supplied during the life of the application which recognised the safeguarding area and made commitments to the use of any extracted materials during construction. The Councils Minerals and Waste Officer has raised no objection to the application, on the basis that any

extraction and re-use of materials is controlled through a Construction management plan condition.

CBC Ecologist (02/11/16) - No objection subject to the imposition of a condition to secure a net gain in biodiversity.

CBC MANOP Officer (17/11/16) - Our view is that the needs of older people should be considered as part of this proposal and, should approval be given, we would support the dwellings in the scheme being suitable for older people, by incorporating some or all of the design features mentioned above.

Campaign to Protect Rural England (27/11/16) - Concerns expressed in respect of the following (in summary):

- Loss of Grade 1 Agricultural land
- Outside of the Settlement envelope
- Cumulative impact on Blunham Services
- Unsustainable Development

CBC Highways Officer (03/11/16) - Concerns were expressed about the access arrangements and lack of appropriate footpath and turning facilities within the site. Whilst the proposal is in outline, concerns expressed that the provision of all these highways related constraints would affect the number of units.

Further to a revised plan supplied 30th November, no further concerns were expressed subject to conditions to secure detailed matters at the Reserved Matters stage and appropriate off site works.

Anglian Water (30/11/16) - No Comments

**Other Representations:**

3 The Barns (14/11/16) - Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Highway safety - in appropriate access and intensification of Walnut Close
- Unacceptable loss of Agricultural land
- Impact on the Character and appearance of the area
- Unsustainable development

2 The Barns (31/10/16) (x2) - Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Cumulative impact on Blunham (further applications received for housing in the village)
- Previous application refused and appeal dismissed
- Impact on services (sewage)
- Unsustainable Development

5 Walnut Close  
(31/10/16) -

Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Parking problems
- Construction impact
- Service of the existing road unacceptable
- Congestion creating problems for emergency vehicles
- Lack of infrastructure to support additional development
- Cumulative impact of development on village

1 Walnut Close  
(23/10/16) -

Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Traffic increase
- Inappropriate access
- Lack of infrastructure to support additional development

John Donne Lower  
School (20/10/16)-

Request for Education to be consulted as concern over the impact on school capacities.

7 The Hill (20/10/16) -

Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Increased traffic
- Light pollution
- Noise disturbance
- Cumulative impact of development on village
- Access issues for emergency vehicles

4 The Barns (10/11/16) -

Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Concern over heights in relation to the existing residential properties. Clarification of heights nearest to 4 The Barns required
- Landscaping as indicated between the development and 4 The Barns is not sufficient to mitigate impact
- Unsustainable in terms of walking to local services
- Bus Stop no longer opposite Walnut Close but further along Station Road
- Unsustainable for older persons due to doctors surgery 1.8 miles away in Great Barford
- Lack of clarification on affordable housing provision
- No information of displacement of parking for use by the Barns or Walnut Close
- Loss of gated pillars at entrance to the Barns has negative impact on the character previously established
- Concern over deliveries and increase traffic leading to unacceptable noise disturbance
- Highway safety impact - insufficient visibility
- Loss of privacy

15 Walnut Close  
(15/11/16) -

Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Loss of Grade 1 Agricultural land
- Previous application refused and appeal dismissed
- Unsuitable access for that many properties
- Lack of infrastructure to support additional development

2 Walnut Close  
(14/11/16) -

Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Access concerns - Walnut Close narrow and manoeuvrability issues
- Parking problems - especially during events
- Emergency vehicles access problems
- Previous application refused and appeal dismissed

8 Walnut Close  
(11/11/16) -

Objects for the following reasons (in summary):

- Previous application refused and appeal dismissed
- Unsuitable access for that many properties
- Lack of infrastructure to support additional development
- Highway safety issues
- Creates a precedent

### **Determining Issues:**

The main considerations of the application are;

1. **Principle**
2. **Affect on the Character and Appearance of the Area**
3. **Neighbouring Amenity**
4. **Highway Considerations**
5. **Other Considerations**

### **Considerations**

#### **1. Principle**

1.1 The site lies outside of the settlement envelope of Blunham and is therefore located on land regarded as open countryside. The adopted policies within the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 limit new housing development on unallocated sites to within settlement envelopes (Policy DM4). Blunham is designated as a large village where Policy DM4 limits new small housing development to within the settlement. On the basis of Policy DM4 a residential proposal outside of the settlement envelope would be regarded as contrary to policy. However it is necessary for the Council to consider whether material considerations outweigh the non-compliance with Policy.

1.2 At the time of writing the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land. This means that under the provisions made in paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, policies concerned with the supply of housing (including DM4, DM14, and CS16 of the North Core Strategy) must be regarded as 'out-of-date', and that permission should be granted unless the harm caused "significantly and demonstrably"



outweighs the benefits.

- 1.3 However, recent case law informs us that these policies should not be disregarded. On the contrary, 'out of date' policies remain part of the development plan, and the weight attributed to them will vary according to the circumstances, including for example, the extent of the five year supply shortfall, and the prospect of development coming forward to make up this shortfall. At the time of writing, the Council can demonstrate a supply of 4.89 years, this equivalent to 97.76% of the five year requirement. The Council is confident that there is sufficient development coming forward in the short term to make up this shortfall. In this context it is reasonable to afford Policy DM4 a level of weight proportionate to this supply when considering the planning balance.
- 1.4 The site is directly adjacent to the settlement envelope and the land in question would be considered to be a small scale development, bounded on 2 sides by existing housing and their respective curtilages. The proposal will see the encroachment of built form into the open countryside but its relationship with the existing settlement is noted and it is not regarded as an isolated site. Furthermore the northern boundary of the site would see the introduction of a landscape buffer which would appropriately demarcate the end of the built form of Blunham with the prevailing landscape. There would be some harm in developing the land, but this would be limited given the surrounding pattern of development.
- 1.5 A number of local residents have referred to a refusal of one dwellinghouse on the site under planning reference MB/06/02028/FULL. At the time of that decision, significant weight was given to the our housing policies however due to the council not having a 5 year housing supply, less weight can be attributed to this policy at this time. Furthermore, the benefits of 1 dwellinghouse with no contributions to sustainable development, would not outweigh any associated harm.
- 1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework carries a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development. There are three dimensions to sustainable development which require consideration such as economic, social and environmental roles. Paragraph 9 of the NPPF states that these roles are mutually inclusive and as such in order to achieve sustainable development all three of the dimensions should be sought simultaneously.
- 1.7 Economic  
The NPPF makes it clear that planning policies should aim to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping and other activities, therefore planning decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movements are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes maximised. It is acknowledged that the construction of 9 dwellings would support a limited level of employment, with associated benefits to the local economy, within the local area on a temporary basis during the construction period which could be expected to last no longer than one year. Blunham provides some employment opportunities including public house, village store, a school and takeaway. Furthermore Blunham is in close proximity to Sandy which constitutes a Major Service Area which has access to a range of facilities and services which would provide local

employment opportunities. On the basis of this the village is considered to be a sustainable location.

1.8 Social

The provision of housing is a benefit of the scheme which should be given some weight however on the basis that the development would be small scale, it would not constitute a significant contribution to our 5 year housing supply and therefore is not given moderate weight. Blunham is classified as a Large Village under Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy for the North with access to a variety of community facilities which is iterated in the above paragraph. The village is served by a bus service which stops in Station Road. The settlement offers services and facilities that can help to accommodate the growth resultant from this scheme. Nearby services are considered to be accessible for new residents. The development will have no adverse impact on the local infrastructure which would require any offset by way of a S106 agreement and financial contributions. On the basis of this the village is considered to be a sustainable location.

1.9 Environmental

The NPPF states that opportunities should be taken to protect and enhance the natural environment and to improve biodiversity. The Councils Ecologist is satisfied that the proposal would allow for retention and enhancement of more boundary habitat features and can secure additional biodiversity gain by condition. Concerns have been expressed by many, that the development site would result in the loss of Grade 1 best & most versatile agricultural land whereby paragraph 112 of the NPPF recommends that Local authorities consider the long term implication of the loss of good quality agricultural land in the interest of sustainable growth. The site is not used in this capacity at present and the land is too small for modern farming methods. Notwithstanding this however, the proposal would not constitute significant development or loss of agricultural land. In addition, the site is considered to fall within a Minerals Safeguarding Area, however whilst concerns were expressed in this regard by the Councils Minerals and Waste Officer, the proposal constitutes small scale development of the land and access would still be retained for land beyond the site in any event that this land were to be extracted. Furthermore a commitment has been made by the applicant to reuse any extracted materials during construction which the Councils Minerals and Waste Officer has recommended by controlled by condition. Furthermore the encroachment of built development beyond the settlement envelope results in a loss of open countryside which is a negative impact of the proposal. The site abuts built form on two sides and is not considered to be an isolated site. Furthermore the site would be demarcated by an appropriate landscape buffer without wider impact on the prevailing flat topography landscaping directly adjacent to site which constitutes agricultural land. The impact of developing this site adjacent the settlement envelope is therefore not considered to result in significant and demonstrable harm.

1.10 As such it is considered that the proposal would represent an appropriate scale of development bound by existing development and that given alongside the presumption in favour of Sustainable Development outweighs any identified visual harm to the character of the area given that landscape proposals would allow for the provision of a landscape buffer along the edges of the site. The proposal therefore would accord with the Section 1 and 6 of

the NPPF.

**2. Affect on the Character and Appearance of the Area**

- 2.1 Local Plan Policy DM3 & CS14 states that proposals should take full account of the need for, or opportunities to enhance or reinforce the character and local distinctiveness of the area; and that the size, scale, density, massing, orientation, materials and overall appearance of the development should complement and harmonise with the local surroundings, particularly in terms of adjoining buildings and spaces and longer views.
- 2.2 The site has existing built form on two sides and the northern side of the site overlooks an area of agricultural land. As part of this current proposal it is suggested that the eastern boundary will be improved through the planting of a 3 metre wide buffer of additional tree and landscaping which will continue the full length of the boundary and would provide a suitable buffer and distinction from the built form and prevailing landscape.
- 2.3 The proposed development would result in a density per hectare of approximately 23 which doesn't constitute high density and is representative of the density levels within Blunham.
- 2.4 Whilst the layout is indicative, consideration appears to have been given to the building lines established by adjacent dwellinghouses and the footprints proposed are fairly representative of other properties of a similar occupation within the area. The revised plan indicates that the scale of dwellings will be bungalows along the rear (north) boundary of the site and the southern boundary of the site closest to existing dwellings and 1.5 storey along the eastern boundary. This is also considered acceptable as a reflection of the character of the area and would furthermore provide an appropriate transition between the built form and the prevailing countryside beyond due to the reduction of the height near the most exposed boundary. This parameter can also be secured by condition to ensure an appropriate maximum scale is achieved.
- 2.5 Whilst concerns have been expressed by local residents about the loss of a parcel of open space and views into the open countryside, the access points would provide a focused vantage points into the open countryside which could be reinforced at the detailed application stage. The Councils Strategic Landscape Officer has raised no objection to the proposal subject to a detailed landscape scheme with any forthcoming reserved matters application. Furthermore the land itself is inaccessible by the general public and therefore for the most part not used in a recreational capacity other than the current owner of the site.
- 2.6 As such, the indicative layout suggests that a development of 9 units on the site could be comfortably accommodated and that a scheme can be designed that would reinforce and be sensitive to the character of the area. All matters pertaining to scale, layout and design however would be addressed by way of a Reserved Matters application. As such it is considered that the proposal would conform with policies CS14 & DM3 of the Core Strategy for the North of Central Bedfordshire, the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and Section 7 of the NPPF.

### **3. Neighbouring Amenity**

#### **3.1 Existing Residents**

On the basis of the revised indicative site layout plan, dwellings have been sited to ensure that there is a separation in excess of 12 metres side to back between the existing and proposed dwellinghouses which is in excess of the 10 metres side to back separations recommended within the Councils adopted design guidance. Careful consideration has been given to the scale of dwellings on plots 1-3 whereby they are indicated to be of a single storey nature only and this parameter can be secured by condition. As such, it is concluded that on the basis of these distances and the proposed heights of the units closest to existing residential properties, the proposed development would unlikely rise to an unacceptable loss of privacy to existing residents in terms of mutual overlooking, despite concerns being expressed. Furthermore this matter could be addressed through obscurely glazing windows in any forthcoming reserved matters application.

3.2 Furthermore, given the length of the garden spaces of adjacent dwellinghouses, the development would unlikely result in the harmful overshadowing of the garden spaces. In any event this would be controlled as part of any reserved matters application.

3.3 Concerns were expressed by the Parish Council about the implication of the proposed visitor parking as indicated on the plan, positioned adjacent to 15 Walnut Close and noise implications as a result. The indicative plan has since been revised which demonstrates that there would be a 4 metre gap between the proposed parking and the closest residential property and therefore unlikely to give rise to an unacceptable level of noise disturbance to existing occupiers. Furthermore the layout is indicative only and this matter would be addressed during the reserved matters stage.

3.4 Additional concerns have been expressed in respect of light pollution on existing residents as a result of this development. Lighting is a detailed matter that would normally be addressed at the reserved matters stage and as such can be controlled by condition.

#### **3.5 Future Residents**

The indicative layout demonstrates that 9 dwellinghouses could be sited such that there would be no resultant impact on future occupiers in terms of loss of light/overshadowing nor privacy concerns.

3.6 The indicative layout demonstrates that an adequate level of external amenity could be provided for future occupiers in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and internal amenity standards would be a matter that would be addressed at the Reserved Matters stage. However on the basis of the footprints proposed, it is concluded that suitable internal space standards could be achieved.

3.7 Concerns were also expressed by local residents about the need and requirements for elderly housing provision within Blunham. The Councils MANOP Officer was consulted as part of this application and has suggested that there is an identified need for elderly accommodation however, the applicant has updated the indicative plans to suggest that small scale bungalow accommodation could be facilitated within the scheme to provide opportunities

for elderly provision which will be considered in the detailed application. Due to the small scale nature of the development however the Council cannot insist on this obligation being fulfilled however the applicant is committed to provide opportunities for elderly accommodation.

- 3.8 Whilst bin storage and collection points and cycle storage facilities have not been identified on the indicative plan, the Councils waste officer is satisfied that there is sufficient spaces within the site to accommodate such facilities and as such is satisfied that this could be secured by condition as part of a planning permission. Therefore the proposal in this regard, would conform with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy for the North of Central Bedfordshire, the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and section 7 of the NPPF.

#### **4. Highway Considerations**

##### **4.1 Access**

Concerns were expressed by the Councils Highways Officer that the proposed access as demonstrated on the indicative layout was proposed to be substandard and no consideration had been given to how a footway and turning area could be incorporated in the site with the number of units proposed. As such, a revised plan was supplied during the life of the application which revised the access to meet adoptable standards with a further commitment to any appropriate off site highway works under a highways agreement where seen to be required in order to improve visibility around the entrance to the site. Furthermore, the footway was incorporated into the layout alongside an appropriate turning head and the gated entrance to Walnut Close removed to create better accessibility, therefore the Councils Highways Officer is satisfied that the proposed development would not be prejudicial to the highway safety in terms of accessibility and has raised no objection subject to the imposition of conditions to control its provision.

- 4.2 Concerns have been expressed about the retention of an access point to the field beyond the application site by the parish council and residents alike. However the access is proposed to be retained for the maintenance of the land beyond which is also within the applicants ownership. Whilst concerns have been expressed about the potential future use of the field beyond, the application can only be determined on the basis of the information supplied herein and cannot pre-determine potential future proposals. No concerns were expressed about the incorporation of this access by the Councils Highways Officer.

- 4.3 Additional concerns were expressed about the intensification of traffic on Barford Road, however the Councils Highways Officer has not raised any concerns in this regard due to the existing traffic calming measures already in place on Barford Road to address this concern.

##### **4.4 Parking**

On the basis of the indicative layout, it would appear that two off road parking spaces are proposed for smaller units which are likely to be 2/3 bedroom units and 3 spaces for larger units which are likely to be 3/4 bedroom units. Visitor spaces are converged near the entrance of the site and a separate allocation has been set aside for the existing development of "The Barns" and there is an over provision of visitor spaces that could serve Walnut Close. This provision would be consistent with the Councils Parking Standards and this matter would be fully

addressed through a reserved matters submission. Furthermore this over provision of parking and the improvements to the access will improve future access within Walnut Close for emergency vehicles.

- 4.5 As such it is considered that the proposal would not be prejudicial to highway safety and would conform with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy for the North of Central Bedfordshire, the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and section 4 of the NPPF in this respect.

## **5. Other Considerations**

### **Biodiversity**

The NPPF calls for development to deliver a net gain for biodiversity and therefore the Councils Ecologist has not raised any objection to the granting of this permission subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the provision of a biodiversity method statement which will include details of ecological enhancements and how they will be incorporated into the development proposal. Therefore the proposal is considered to accord with policies CS18 & DM15 of the Core Strategy for the North and Section 11 of the NPPF

### **Construction impact**

Objections have been raised on these grounds however it is given little weight as a material consideration given that it is a temporary impact and one that is apparent on any grant of planning permission.

### **Cumulative Impact**

Whilst concerns have been expressed by the Parish and local residents alike in respect of the cumulative impact on Blunham due to the number of residential development proposals recently, planning applications can only be determined on the basis of their individual merits and therefore this is not a material consideration.

### **Financial Contributions**

Current advice contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) sets out the Government's position that tariff-style planning obligations and affordable housing provision should not be sought for certain small developments (10 dwellings or less or 1,000 square metres of gross floorspace).

Concerns have been expressed by the Parish Council in terms of the capacities at the existing schools within the village. The Councils Education Officer was consulted as part of this application however raised no objection to this proposal, on the basis that it would be unreasonable given the advice contained within the NPPG to request contributions from this development towards school provision.

### **Services**

Whilst concerns have been expressed by local residents and the Parish alike about the impact of the dwellinghouses on the existing water and sewage connections, neither the Internal Drainage Board nor Anglian Water have raised any objections or concerns in this regard.

### **Flood Risk & SuDs**

The site is located within Flood Zone Area 1 whereby the probability of flooding is identified as being low. From 6<sup>th</sup> April 2015 local planning policies and decisions on planning applications relating to major development (developments

of 10 dwellings or more; or equivalent non-residential or mixed development [as defined in Article 2(1) of the Town and County Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015], must ensure that sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water runoff are put in place, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. The Councils SuDs Officer is satisfied that an appropriate Sustainable Drainage System could be implemented on site so as limit any flooding potential and as such has not wish to raise any objection to this proposal subject to the imposition of conditions to control its provision at the reserved matters stage. As such it is considered that the proposal accords with the Councils adopted SuDs guidance and the section 10 of the NPPF.

### **Human Rights issues**

The proposal raises no Human Rights issues.

### **Equality Act 2010**

The proposal raises no issues under the Equality Act.

### **Recommendation:**

That Outline Planning Permission be **Recommended for Approval** subject to the following:

### **RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

- 1 Application for the approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority within three years from the date of this permission. The development shall begin not later than two years from the final approval of the reserved matters or, if approved on different dates, the final approval of the last such matter to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 Details of the layout, scale, appearance (including materials) and landscaping, including boundary treatments (hereinafter called "the reserved matters") shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before any development begins and the development shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: To comply with Part 3 Article 6 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 2015.

- 3 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: To comply with Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 4 **No development shall take place until details of the existing and final ground and slab levels of the buildings hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include sections through both the site and the adjoining properties, the location of which shall first be agreed in**

**writing with the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the site shall be developed in full accordance with the approved details.**

**Reason: To ensure that an acceptable relationship results between the new development and adjacent buildings and public areas.  
(Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy for the North & Section 7, NPPF)**

- 5 The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a detailed surface water drainage design has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority.**

**The design shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.**

**The scheme to be submitted shall include:**

- Plans and calculations showing sufficient disposal, storage and conveyance of surface water.**
- Details of who the surface water drainage will be managed by and how it will be maintained**

**Reason: To ensure the approved system will function to a satisfactory minimum standard of operation and prevent the increased risk of flooding both on and off site for the lifetime of the development in accordance with para 103 NPPF; and to ensure that the implementation and long term operation of a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) is in line with what has been approved, in accordance with Written statement - HCWS161, in accordance with section 10 of the NPPF.**

- 6 No development shall take place until a Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan for a period of ten years from the date of its delivery in accordance with Condition 7 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the management body, who will be responsible for delivering the approved landscape maintenance and management plan. The landscaping shall be maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan following its delivery in accordance with Condition 7.**

**Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the site would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM14 of the Core Strategy and Sections 10 & 11 of the NPPF.**

- 7 No development shall take place until details of hard and soft landscaping (which shall include the 3 metre landscape buffer along the edge of the site), together with a timetable for its implementation have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out as approved and in accordance with the approved timetable.**



**Reason: To ensure an acceptable standard of landscaping.  
(Policy DM14 of the Core Strategy for the North and Sections 7 & 11,  
NPPF)**

- 8 The reserved matters proposals shall not include any dwellings that are more than 1 storey in height along the rear (northern) boundary of the site and directly adjacent to existing residential properties along the southern boundary of the site.

Reason: In order to provide an appropriate form of development in the interests of visual and residential amenity in accordance with policies CS14 and DM4 of Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy for the North and Section 7 of the NPPF).

- 9 The details required by Condition 2 of this permission shall include a detailed waste audit scheme for the residential units in that area. The waste audit scheme shall include details of refuse storage and recycling facilities. The scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that development is adequately provided with waste and recycling facilities in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy for the North & Section 7 of the NPPF)

- 10 Prior to occupation, the details of the proposed street lighting in terms of design & specification, siting and luminance shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To ensure the acceptable design and appearance of the development and in the interest of future occupiers amenity.  
(Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Section 7 of the NPPF)

- 11 **No development shall take place until an Construction Management/Method Plan and Statement with respect to the construction phase of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development works shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved Construction Management/Method Statement/Plan. The details shall include, amongst other things, access arrangements for construction vehicles; compounds, including storage of plant and materials; details of wheel washing facilities; loading and unloading areas; method of materials extraction and re-use.**

**Reason: In the interest of safeguarding the local residential amenity  
(Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Section 4, 7 and 13 of the NPPF)**

- 12 Any subsequent reserved matters application shall include the following:
- A pedestrian footway measuring 2.0 m across the entire frontage of the site in accordance with details to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority
  - Vehicle parking in accordance with the Councils standards applicable at

the time of submission

- Cycle parking and storage in accordance with the Councils standards applicable at the time of submission
- Swept Path Analysis demonstrating that a refuse vehicle can appropriately turn within the site and exit onto the main highway in a forward motion.

Reason: To ensure that the development of the site is completed to provide adequate and appropriate highway arrangements at all times. (Section 4 of the NPPF)

- 13 **No development shall take place at the site before a scheme for biodiversity enhancement at the site and a timetable for its delivery has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out as approved and in accordance with the approved timetable.**

**Reason: To ensure that biodiversity is properly protected and enhanced at the site in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).**

- 14 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers D5685-01 (Site Location Plan) & D5685-07B (for access only).

Reason: To identify the approved plan/s and to avoid doubt.

## **INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT**

1. In accordance with Article 35 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the reason for any condition above relates to the Policies as referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Core Strategy for North Central Bedfordshire.
2. This permission relates only to that required under the Town & Country Planning Acts and does not include any consent or approval under any other enactment or under the Building Regulations. Any other consent or approval which is necessary must be obtained from the appropriate authority.
3. The applicant is advised that the requirements of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 will apply to any works undertaken within the limits of the existing public highway. Further details can be obtained from the Central Bedfordshire Council's Highway Help Desk, P.O.Box 1395, Bedford, MK42 5AN.

The applicant is advised that if it is the intention to request the Central Bedfordshire County Council as Local Highway Authority, to adopt the proposed highways as maintainable at the public expense then details of the specification, layout and alignment, width and levels of the said highways

together with all the necessary highway and drainage arrangements, including run off calculations shall be submitted to the Development Planning and Control Group, Central Bedfordshire Council's Highway Help Desk, P.O.Box 1395, Bedford, MK42 5AN. No development shall commence until the details have been approved in writing and an Agreement made under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 is in place.

The applicant is advised that in order to comply with the above Condition of this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Central Bedfordshire Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. Further details can be obtained from the Development Planning and Control Group, P.O.Box 1395, Bedford, MK42 5AN,

All roads to be constructed within the site shall be designed in accordance with Central Bedfordshire Council's publication "Design in central Bedfordshire (Design Supplement 10 – Movement, Street and Places" and the Department of the Environment/Department of Transport's "Manual for Street", or any amendment thereto.

- 4. This permission is subject to a Legal Obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

**Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 6, Article 35**

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. The Council has therefore acted pro-actively to secure a sustainable form of development in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

**DECISION**

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