

the open countryside. The site is located to the northern extent of the village and abuts the highway at Bedford Road.

The Application:

Outline planning permission is sought for the construction of up to 52 dwellings on the site. All matters are reserved aside from access. Access is proposed to be gained from Bedford Road in the form of a priority junction. The access would follow what is the 'arm' of the application site that surrounds Duck End Close.

The application has been submitted with the inclusion of indicative layout details to demonstrate how residential development would be achieved. The application has been amended since its original submission with the applicant submitting a revised landscape masterplan.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

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
- CS6 Delivery and Timing of Housing Provision
- CS7 Affordable Housing
- CS13 Climate Change
- CS14 High Quality Development
- CS16 Landscape and Woodland
- CS17 Green Infrastructure
- CS18 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- DM1 Renewable Energy
- DM2 Sustainable Construction of New Buildings
- DM3 High Quality Development
- DM4 Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes
- DM10 Housing Mix
- DM14 Landscape and Woodland
- DM15 Biodiversity
- DM16 Green Infrastructure
- DM17 Accessible Green Spaces

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.

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)

Relevant Planning History:

Application Number	MB/00/01866/OA
Description	Residential development (all matters reserved except means of access)
Decision	Refused, appeal dismissed
Decision Date	02/01/2001

Consultees:

Houghton Conquest The Parish Council objects to this application on the Parish Council following basis:

The proposed development is outside the village envelope.

Planning Statement section 5.6 states ' the entrance road will lead to a row of bungalows suitable for the elderly.' Although the plans are just indicative, the bungalows appear to be detached properties of the type that command a premium sale price and are often occupied by families and subsequently extended. Suggesting this housing provides suitable housing for an ageing village population is misleading.

In the Planning Statement section 7.37 the applicant mentions the large proposal off Chapel End Road which has now been granted, stating that their application would represent a more sustainable form of development, and quoting emerging policy 29A that when there are 2 competing proposals the 'best available planning application' should be approved. As the applicant has stated these are competing applications and the Chapel End Application has been granted. Therefore this application now appears by its own admission to be surplus to requirements.

This development is not sustainable, taking into account the strain on facilities & amenities that the village infrastructure will need to cope with once the 125 homes have been built close by off Chapel End Rd.

The only matter not reserved is access, however no consideration has been given to the traffic calming measures already approved and due to be installed in December. There is a chicane being installed directly in front of the proposed entrance, making the entrance point completely inappropriate.

The access proposal does not make any attempt to mitigate the speed of approaching traffic on what is a 60mph limit road.

There is only one proposed access point to be used for pedestrians & cyclists as well as vehicular access. This would mean that children going to the lower school, or to the village centre to pick up school buses, would have to walk this long way round to reach these locations.

No further comments as objection already submitted.

Highways

The application proposes the residential development of land at Bedford Road and to the rear of Duck End Close, Houghton Conquest. The application is in outline form with all matters except means of access reserved for subsequent approval.

It is stated in the Planning Statement that:

“Whilst this application seeks approval for access this only relates to the point of access from the main highway. The internal circulation routes are indicative at this stage.”

I have therefore reviewed the proposed application on that basis.

The development proposal was subject to a pre-application consultation and it was suggested that the proposed means of access should take the form of a mini-roundabout in order to assist reducing vehicle speeds on the approach to the village.

However the applicant's transport consultants have reviewed and revised the Council's proposed traffic calming scheme for Bedford Road which originally showed a chicane immediately adjacent to the proposed access location. Therefore it is proposed to relocate this chicane some 75m to the north-west, relocate the speed limit gateway further to the northwest and introduce a raised table adjacent to No. 72 Bedford Road to ensure continuity/regularity of the speed reducing devices within the proposed scheme.

These revisions are acceptable in principle and will be subject to detailed design and approval in due course. As the works involved can all be accommodated within the public highway and/or on land under the applicant's control, these measures can be secured by condition.

The proposed access is shown to be laid out in the form of a priority junction with 6m radii and 2.4 x 43m visibility splays available in either direction. Splays in excess of this distance can be achieved to the north-west where the

approaching speeds will be higher than 30mph.

The form of the junction can therefore be considered acceptable.

The internal access road is shown to be 5.5m in width with a 2.0m footway on the south-eastern side of the road and a 2.0m margin on the north-western side. The footway will link into the existing footway on the north-eastern side of Bedford Road.

The proposed internal access road can therefore be considered acceptable to serve the scale of development proposed.

The application is accompanied by a Transport Assessment which includes a framework for a Residential Travel Plan.

The Transport Assessment assesses the impact of the development on the local road network for the Design Year of 2020 and concludes that it will be negligible. I have reviewed the methodology contained in the Transport Assessment and would confirm that the conclusion is acceptable.

Sustainable
Drainage

Urban We consider that outline planning permission could be granted to the proposed development and the final design, sizing and maintenance of the surface water system agreed at the detailed design stage; subject to an appropriate Surface Water Drainage Strategy and finalised Maintenance and Management Plans being submitted at the detailed design stage.

We therefore recommend conditions be applied as below. Without these conditions, the proposed development on this site poses an unacceptable risk to the environment and we would object to the application.

We are pleased to see that use of overland sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) is promoted onsite and the ecological, hydraulic and amenity value advantages of these have been favoured over sub-surface storage, including the use of wetlands, ponds and detention basins, swales, permeable paving and water re-use on site. This is in keeping with national and local policies (NPPF 103, NPPG 051, CBC 'SuDS SPD' 2014). We encourage that these components be used as part of a site wide management train that maximises the provision of amenity areas and open spaces within the site. The location of SuDS conveyance paths, storage and treatment areas must be outlined spatially in the final detailed design with appropriate justification and details of

how this integrates with the wider landscape and character of the development.

Indicative BGS data shows there may be opportunities for bespoke infiltration on the site and this should be considered as the priority means of disposing from surface water. Site specific infiltration testing and ground water monitoring should be undertaken to assess this viability of infiltrating surface water to the ground, in accordance in accordance with the BRE 365 standard. Please note that infiltration systems should only be used where it can be demonstrated that they will not pose a risk to groundwater quality or surrounding infrastructure, and that these will drain down sufficiently.

We endorse the use of permeable paving as proposed to minimise runoff and provide upstream storage and treatment of surface water. Subject to infiltration testing it will need to be made clear whether water will infiltrate into the ground or stored and then transferred into the next element of the SuDS train. Full details with drawing/s should be submitted at the detailed design stage to demonstrate exactly how these areas will be located, surfaced and drained in accordance with best practice (i.e. Interpave, Ciria SuDS Manual). Opportunities to provide water re-use should also be considered in order to manage run off at source, this may integrate with permeable paving solutions.

Subject to ground investigations, we would endorse the discharge of surface water to the IDB maintained drainage ditch along Bedford Road, subject to discharge being restricted to an agreed rate with the IDB (which does not exceed the greenfield run off rate for the site), and confirmation of land ownership of all land required for drainage. Access for maintenance to all elements of the drainage system must be provided for in the final design and layout of the site and surface water outfalls should be provided and designed so that they are not liable to siltation or blockages.

The detailed design must ensure that frequency of discharge rates volumes of runoff from the new development is, wherever possible, equal to the frequency of discharge rates that would be discharged under equivalent greenfield conditions. Full calculations and methodology to demonstrate this will be required at the detail stage and must replicate what is shown on any submitted plans/drawings. This includes provision for the management of flows that exceed the design standard of the drainage system.

Further to this, it is noted in the outline proposal that the

proposed discharge rate of 4.1l/s has been calculated based on the proposed permeable area of the site. This is not representative of the pre-development greenfield run off rate, and must therefore be amended with the detailed design with storage calculated revised accordingly (see Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems, Ref: PB14308 2015).

The proposed outfall is to an IDB maintained drainage ditch however no correspondence with the IDB has been provided, this will be required with the full detailed design in order to verify the proposed discharge rate and structural integrity and functionality of the receiving drainage system, and to ensure compliance with any IDB byelaws and/or requirements for land drainage consent under the Land Drainage Act.

No details of the proposed maintenance requirements or responsible body for the proposed surface water system has been provided with the application CB/15/03706/OUT. Please note that under the Ministerial Statement (ref HCWS161), it is a requirement that clear arrangements are in place for ongoing maintenance of a surface water system over the lifetime of the development. Details of this must therefore be provided at the detailed design stage. Provision of management and maintenance details must be set out in writing in a site specific maintenance manual (relative to the nature and scale of the proposed drainage components) and will be required before the development is completed.

Ecology

Having read through the submitted information I am satisfied that the proposals would not have a detrimental effect on protected species or habitats of principal importance. The ecological assessment makes a number of recommendations which are welcomed and in addition I would add the following;

A landscaping scheme should utilise locally native species with nectar and berry rich planting. The creation of a community orchard in a public area would be welcomed.

Areas of open space and swales should be seeded with species rich wildflower seed mixes. The provision of a management plan should be conditioned to ensure ecologically appropriate mowing regimes.

5.8 of the Planning Statement acknowledges the desire to retain hedgerow which is welcomed however, 5.3 of the Design & Access Statement contains a diagram of section A-A showing a retained hedgerow within a very tall close boarded fence. This is not acceptable as it puts the hedge at risk from household dumping over the fence.

Instead a post and rail fence should be used to allow vegetation to grow through as referred to in 6.3.3 of the ecological assessment.

Looking at the illustrative masterplan I welcome the inclusion of attenuation features and the continuation of the NE-SW green corridor through the centre of the development by the ditch. Whilst it is acknowledged that the ditch needs to be crossed by the road I would question the need for a culvert and ask that a bridge is considered. This could become a feature in itself as a gateway to the next part of the development and could better support connectivity of the corridor.

In accordance with the NPPF the development aims to deliver a net gain for biodiversity but I would like to see this extended from areas within the public realm to individual households through the inclusion of integrated bird / bat boxes at a ratio of 1 box per dwelling.

Fences between gardens should ideally have cut outs or 'hedgehog holes' at the base to allow connectivity across the site.

Landscape Officer

This development of 52 homes will increase the density of Houghton Conquest village and I am concerned about the visual impact for the existing residents of this backland development.

The scanned DAS is extremely hard to read - and I would like to see the hard copies to check the detail of the landscaping proposals.

At present I consider the boundary screening to be inadequate considering the location within the Community Forest. I would also like to see more planting to safeguard the amenity of the existing properties. At present I feel the proposals do not meet the standards expected from Policy 16.

The Forest of Marston Vale request a planted approach of 30% to help meet the aims of the Forest Plan, which is supported by CBC.

A more creative rural edge, with a significantly wider planting belt would help to make the development acceptable in landscape terms. The access road would become the gateway to the village - and as such a gateway feature would be appropriate, possibly extending to include detail on the opposite side of Bedford Road.

In terms of the internal landscape, I feel that the play area is poorly sited and would also suggest that if a play area is required, this has a more natural character.

I welcome the proposals for SUDS - Houghton Conquest

has high quality hay meadows (SSSI) and it might be possible to source seed for low maintenance areas from the Houghton Conquest Meadows.

I would also like the native planting to be sourced from local provenance seeds: the Community Tree Trust raises stock from seed collected in the Vale.

In conclusion - I do not think the landscape proposals are adequate but if an increase in planting could be secured I would have no objections to this development.

The revised Indicative layout does strengthen the boundary screening, particularly for the integration of the access road.

I would prefer a broader band of planting, but withdraw my objections to the scheme.

By Condition, a detailed planting plan and specification will be required. I would like this to address points previously made by myself and the ecologist.

Green Infrastructure

The Parish Green Infrastructure Plan for Houghton Conquest identifies an aspiration to preserve this area as open space / farmland between the village and Wixams. However, much of the surrounding area is also identified as a community aspiration for the same purpose, it is not specific to this development site.

In order to retain a degree of separation between the village and Wixams, including a green buffer along the whole of the north-eastern boundary would be beneficial.

The link across the proposed development site, connecting to the planted woodland is important. Culverting the existing ditch would be contrary to CBC's approach to SuDS, which seeks to retain existing drainage features, and would limit the potential connectivity. Including a bridge where the road crosses the existing drainage feature would be preferable, and this crossing should be designed to maximise ecological connectivity, as well as aesthetically creating a green link.

The inclusion of the attenuation ponds within the green space is welcome. However, these ponds would need to be designed to be an accessible part of the green space network, so designed with safe access principles in mind, in order to enhance both amenity and ecology value.

Similarly, the proposed integration of the play area within

the green space is welcome in principle, but the exact location proposed is not ideally located for natural surveillance, being surrounded on two sides by the backs of existing properties, and next to the proposed pumping station on the third side. The design and location of the play area should be considered in terms of how it can be part of the green open spaces, yet be overlooked by residential units or paths, in order to be an attractive, safe part of the open space network.

If the need for a pumping station could be removed, this would be beneficial. CBC's Sustainable Drainage SPD includes a local requirement that seeks to avoid relying on pumped drainage solutions. The developer should therefore be required to demonstrate why this pumped solution is required. It is suggested that this is worked into conditions relating to drainage conditions suggested by Alys Bishop.

Internal Drainage Board

Housing Officer	Development	I support this application as it provides for 18 affordable homes which reflects the current affordable housing policy requirement of 35%. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) indicates a required tenure split for sites meeting the affordable threshold as being 63% affordable rent and 37% intermediate tenure. From this proposed scheme that would make a requirement of 11 affordable rent units and 7 intermediate tenure units (shared ownership). The supporting documentation indicates that 8 of the affordable units will be provided in the form of bungalows which will be suitable for the elderly or disabled. This form of unit is welcomed by the Council. Can I ask for clarification as to what standard the bungalows will be built to – Lifetime Homes/mobility standard/wheelchair accessible standard?
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I would like to see the units well dispersed throughout the site and integrated with the market housing to promote community cohesion & tenure blindness. I would also expect all units to meet all HCA Design and Quality Standards. We expect the affordable housing to be let in accordance with the Council's allocation scheme and enforced through an agreed nominations agreement with the Council.

Sustainable Officer	Growth	The development should deliver 10% of energy demand from renewable sources.
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I would encourage the developer to achieve a high energy efficiency standard first (possibly going beyond the standard prescribed by the Building Regulations) as energy efficient fabric leads to lower energy demand and

smaller renewable energy installation to satisfy the policy requirement. High energy efficiency will ensure that energy demand and carbon emissions are low throughout the life time of dwellings and not just dependant on renewable energy installation.

Energy demand can also be lower by application of the Passivhaus design principles. Dwellings should be orientated to maximise solar passive gain and avoid summer overheating. Houses with westerly and southerly facing rooms should have measures (such as overlarge eaves and canopies or solar control glazing) designed to shade them from sun and prevent solar gain and therefore risk of overheating in summer months.

Shading can also be achieved by planting of appropriate deciduous trees which would provide shade in summer and allow light and heat to penetrate dwellings in the winter months when heat gain is beneficial. Tree planting must be taken into consideration at the initial planning stage of the development to ensure that the spreading roots and canopy will not cause damage to the properties and underground services when the tree reaches maturity. I would advise a consultation with a tree officer to select the most appropriate tree species.

Solar gains can lead to overheating in summer months and therefore risk of overheating should be assessed. Risk of overheating should be assessed using projected temperatures over next 30 years rather than last 30 years to ensure dwellings resilience to future changes in temperatures.

In terms of water efficiency, the development should achieve 110 litres per person per day (allowing for 105 litres per person per day for internal use plus additional 5 litres per person per day for external use). This standard can be met through installation of water efficient fittings such as low flow taps and dual flush toilets. I would also encourage the applicant to fit each of the dwellings with a garden water butt.

The development should be designed with climate change in mind taking account of increase in rainfall and temperature. The development should therefore minimise hard standing surfaces and increase green, natural areas to allow rainwater infiltration and minimise heat island effect through evaporation and tree shading. Light colour building and landscaping materials should be prioritised over dark coloured which absorb more sun light and retain heat increasing urban heat island effect.

Planning conditions

Should the planning permission be granted I ask for the following planning conditions to be attached:

- 10% energy demand of the development to be secured from renewable sources;
- Water efficiency standard to be 110 litres per person per day.

Forest of Marston Vale

The proposed development boundary is located within the Forest of Marston Vale and therefore triggers the above Central Bedfordshire Council policy regarding the 30% woodland cover target. Delivering 30% of woodland or canopy cover could be achieved by any or a combination of the options below:

1. plant a single, discrete area of new woodland of the required size;
2. plant several areas of new woodland totalling the required size;
3. integrate extensive individual and group tree planting into the development, over and above normal landscaping requirements and sufficient to ultimately yield >30% canopy cover utilising:
 - e) street trees
 - f) substantial tree planting to public realm/open space, including creation of woodland belts and trees within landscaping schemes
 - g) planting of new hedgerows with hedgerow trees
 - h) creation of woodlands as part of sustainable drainage (e.g. wet woodlands)
 - i) creation of community orchards

NHS

Consideration has had to be made with regard to other localised developments in and around this development, which has an impact on health. Developments such as Wixams.

The following surgeries are most affected by the increase in the number of dwellings:

- Oliver Street Surgery, Ampthill which has reached its capacity at 20.99 patients per square metre.
- Houghton Close Surgery, Ampthill is currently under capacity at 16.75 patients per square metre.
- Greensand Surgery, Ampthill is deemed to be constrained at 35.40 patients per square metre.

‘Constrained’ means a practice working to over-capacity for the size of their premises and the clinical space available to provide the required services to their patients. Practice in this situation would usually need to be re-

configured, extended or in exceptional circumstances even relocated to absorb a significant number of new registrations.

Financial contribution requested.

Other Representations:

Neighbours

In all, 36 letters have been received raising the following summarised planning issues and objections:

- Plans do not show what would actually be built.
- Houghton Conquest would cease to be a village.
- Public transport links in the village are poor.
- Increase in flooding in the area.
- Roads are already congested and would be worse. Houghton Conquest will be used as a cut through to the A6 from Wixams.
- Overlooking impact to existing residential properties.
- New trees would block light to existing houses.
- Garages are shown too close to existing houses as well as parking areas creating noise and disturbance.
- Noise and disturbance resulting from the proposed play area, parking areas and the access road to adjacent existing dwellings.
- Will the speed limit sign require moving?
- Water main does not have capacity to accommodate the development.
- Houghton Conquest has had too much housing development in recent years including 125 houses at Chapel End Road and some 1500 to the north.
- Proposal does not integrate with the existing village.
- Will result in harm to wildlife in the area some of which has not been picked up in the Ecological Assessment.
- Area is known to flood and will make matters worse.
- The village does not have the services and amenities to accommodate the proposed growth.

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
6. Sustainable Development and the Planning Balance.

Considerations

1. Principle of Development

- 1.1 The site lies for the most part outside of the settlement envelope of Houghton Conquest and is therefore located in 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). Houghton Conquest is designated as a large village where Policy DM4 limits new housing development to small scale developments. 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 On 19/02/2016 an appeal was dismissed at a site in Henlow for a residential development adjacent the settlement envelope. While the decision was to dismiss the appeal, in making her decision, the Inspector concluded that the Council had “not demonstrated a five year supply of deliverable housing sites” and discounted a number of sites from the supply. Therefore the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing and in these circumstances the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 49 applies which states that the Council's Housing Policies are not up to date. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states, among other things, that where the development plan policies are out-of-date, the Council should grant planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 1.3 The site is adjacent to the Houghton Conquest Settlement Envelope. The areas south and west of the site form the edge of the existing residential development. The proposal will amount to an 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. It is acknowledged that there is a Committee resolution to approve 125 dwellings at a large edge of settlement site off Chapel End Road elsewhere in the village subject to the completion of a S106 agreement
- 1.4 Looking at Houghton Conquest as a settlement, the village and immediate area provide a number of facilities including, Lower school with early years provision, shop with post office, public house, village hall, Park/play equipment/Sports pitches/Skate park, allotments and access to a bus route. Consideration should also be given to the proximity of the village to the Wixams development and in particular the future Rail Station, local centre and employment possibilities
- 1.5 The above list shows that the village itself provides a number of facilities and nearby catchments can accommodate in areas where the village itself does not provide. It is not considered correct to conclude that Houghton Conquest is a sustainable location capable of accommodating growth on the basis of the list above. In order to be regarded as sustainable the village would need to be able to support the infrastructure needs of the existing and the projected population and this is not the case. However, at the same time, taking account of the close location of facilities and infrastructure services it is also considered that it would not be justified to argue that Houghton Conquest is so remote and short of

facilities that it would be so unsustainable that it could not accommodate growth to the extent that the impact would be demonstrably harmful.

1.6 Affordable Housing

The proposal would provide 35 % Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy CS7. Of the 18 affordable units provided, 11 would be tenured at affordable rent and 7 at shared ownership which is considered acceptable. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in this respect. The applicant has confirmed that the scheme is to provide bungalow accommodation as part of its housing mix. 8 bungalows are proposed amounting to 5% of the overall housing numbers. Of these 3 units will contribute to the affordable housing stock and the applicant is happy for the remainder being provided as over 55s accommodation.

1.7 In terms of the principle of development significant weight is given to the Council's housing land supply position. On this basis residential development in this location is considered to be acceptable in principle. It is necessary for the scheme to be regarded as sustainable development in the eyes of the NPPF which will be discussed further in this report.

2. Affect on the Character and Appearance of the Area

2.1 The development of the site would encroach into the open countryside. Currently the site is as an arable area of land with a hedgerow boundary to part. The indicative layout shows the majority of new housing in the larger parcel of the site. The development of the site will result in an impact and material change to the character of the area. However it is noted that the site is located closely to the edge of the settlement and closely to existing residential curtilages. The developed site would not sit as an isolated pocket of built form and would relate acceptably to the nature and density of the surrounding area. It is therefore considered that the impact on the character of the area, in principle, will not be substantial to the extent that permission should be refused.

2.2 Concern is raised that the development would reduce the gap that was established between Houghton Conquest and the forthcoming Wixams development. The site is within the field that provides this gap and the distance will be reduced however the main parcel for development relates more to the existing village than it would the future Wixams development. It is not considered to sprawl towards this area and by virtue of its location is considered to have a negligible impact in this respect. The scale of development can reduce the impact of the scheme, for example the aforementioned bungalows would be expected to be located at parts of the site that abut the open countryside as this would create a more appropriate transition from countryside to built form. This is a matter for detailed design stages but can be given weight as an 'in principle' factor at outline stage.

2.3 Landscape proposals will also contribute to addressing the impact and the revised landscape masterplan submitted by the applicant shows significant landscaping at the boundaries of the site which would soften the impact of the development. A detailed application would need to demonstrate that landscaping proposed aids the scheme in integrating into the character of the area and is not solely proposed as a purpose planted screen for the development as this latter scenario could have a retrograde impact on the area. The masterplan also indicates the retention of the existing boundary hedgerow that runs along part of the northern boundary of the site. In terms of principle, in the absence of detailed

information, the landscaping masterplan shows new planting and the retention of existing features could be used positively at the proposal and not harm the character of the area.

- 2.4 On the basis of the considerations above, it is considered that detailed design proposals, through reserved matters, would be able to achieve a scheme that does not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.

3. Neighbouring Amenity

- 3.1 Detailed design matters are reserved and therefore a definitive assessment of the merits of the application and impact on neighbours cannot be made. The relationship of the site to the existing settlement is such that a designed scheme is likely to have development or curtilages immediately adjacent to the existing garden areas of dwellings on Duck End Close, Bedford Road and Mill Lane. Development is likely to have a visual impact although it is noted that there is no right to a view.
- 3.2 The indicative layout shows that it would be possible in principle to develop the site for the quantum of units shown without detrimentally harming the amenity of neighbouring residents. Having said that the layout would need to be reviewed in light of the relationship created between proposed plot 52 and the existing dwelling 50a Bedford Road, the relationship between existing dwellings and the indicated open car park at the southern end of the site and consideration would need to be given to the relationship between the proposal and no's 4-9 Duck End Close.
- 3.3 Objections have been received on the grounds of impact of noise from numerous parts of the indicative layout on existing residents. The concern is acknowledged however it is not considered that the scale and nature of the proposal is one that would lend itself to increased noise impacts that would significantly harm existing amenity. It is certainly not considered to be an unneighbourly use but it is acknowledged that aspects raised would increase noise levels if submitted as a detailed proposal. Therefore it is recommended that a condition be included requiring the applicant demonstrate how noise impacts will be addressed accommodating, among other things, the access road, car parks and any proposed play area.
- 3.4 At reserved matters stage, any detailed scheme would be expected to be designed in accordance with the Council's adopted Design Guide including the recommendations that seek to ensure suitable amenity levels are provided. Therefore it is considered that a suitable level of amenity could be provided for new residents.

4. Highway Considerations

- 4.1 The access proposal takes the form of a priority junction onto Bedford Road and the extent of consideration is shown on the indicative layout to be the junction itself only. The access then runs along the arm into the site although would require a different arrangement to the one indicated in the interests of traffic calming. The Highways Officer has reviewed the proposal and raised no objection to this. The applicant was previously advised that a mini-roundabout would need to be constructed on Bedford Road to accommodate the traffic but the application details have demonstrated that a priority junction would be

appropriate. The access arrangement is therefore acceptable.

- 4.2 Since the submission of the application traffic calming works have taken place on Bedford Road. The access proposal is affected by the works that have taken place to the extent that, to be provided, the existing works would need to be moved or relocated. Any works that would be required to the highway to accommodate the access will have to be done at the applicant's own expense, through financial sums for a Traffic Regulation Order to facilitate the works. This can be secured as part of a 106 agreement should Members of the Committee resolve to grant consent.
- 4.3 In terms of parking provision the indicative layout suggests that each dwelling would have sufficient parking spaces provided through garages, driveways and/or open courtyard arrangements to comply with the standards within the Design Guide. It is expected that any detailed reserved matters application would propose Design Guide compliant parking both in terms of residents and visitor provision. It is noted that no visitor parking provision is provided for in the layout and that this scheme would be required to provide 13 spaces.

5. Other Considerations

5.1 S106 agreement matters

Spending Officers were consulted and comments returned contribution requests from Education. The following projects have been identified and shall form heads of terms for the legal agreement that would be required if Members resolve to grant consent. At the time of drafting this report amounts are not known and Members will be updated when they are.

Education:

Financial contributions will be sought for the following projects:

Early Years Contribution	£35,948.64
Lower School Contribution	£119,828.80
Middle School Contribution	£120,576.77
Upper School Contribution	£147,859.05

Leisure

Financial Contributions will be sought for the provision of new play equipment at the village recreation ground.

Highway

Financial contributions will be sought to fund a Traffic Regulation Order to carry out works to the highway regarding the traffic calming measures that would require alteration to accommodate the proposed access. The contributions would also cover an Order to relocate the 30mph speed limit signs to accommodate the access.

Timetable for delivery

In order to demonstrate that the development will contribute houses towards the Council's 5 year land supply the agreement will include a clause requiring the applicant/developer to submit a timetable for the delivery of the houses which will be agreed with the Council.

5.2 Agricultural Land

Development of the site results in a loss of agricultural land. This is an acknowledged impact and the NPPF advises that development should be directed to the areas of poorer land. The loss of land is an impact of the development and forms part of the considerations into the planning balance. In this instance there is a clear need for housing land and the benefit of housing development should be given significant weight. It is considered that the benefit of the housing outweighs the impact of the loss of this agricultural land in this instance.

5.3 Human Rights issues

Based on the information submitted there are no known issues raised in the context of Human Rights/equalities Act 2010 and as such there would be no relevant implications with this proposal.

6. Sustainable Development and the Planning Balance.

6.1 The application has been submitted with the argument that the Council is unable to demonstrate a deliverable 5 year supply of housing land. Therefore the scheme is proposed to meet an assumed housing need in the area. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF, for decision-making this means:

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted*

As such consideration has to be given to this scheme with the proviso that the Council's housing supply policies, including Core Strategy policy DM4, are not up to date. The wording of policy DM4 limiting residential development to small schemes within the settlement envelope should therefore be given little weight.

6.2 Consideration should be given to the individual merits of the scheme in light of said presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. The scheme should therefore be considered in light of these.

6.3 Environmental

The encroachment of built development beyond the settlement envelope results in a loss of open countryside which is a negative impact of the proposal. However the land abuts residential development and the site is in such a location that it cannot be regarded as being isolated. The landscape masterplan submitted with the application shows that the proposal would include planting to soften and screen the impact of the development. The impact of developing adjacent the settlement envelope is unfortunate but in light of considerations into the impact on the character of the area, it is not considered to result in significant and demonstrable harm.

6.4 Social

The provision of housing is a benefit to the scheme which should be given significant weight. As should the provision of affordable housing which is policy compliant in this application. Furthermore the applicant has confirmed that the scheme includes the provision of 8 bungalows, 3 of which are envisaged as part of the affordable housing provision and the remaining 5 being provided as accommodation for the over 55s. This is considered to be a benefit that can be attributed weight. The scheme is considered to contribute to a greater mix of housing overall.

The report has detailed that Houghton Conquest is regarded as a sustainable location and it is considered that the settlement offers services and facilities that can accommodate the growth resultant from this scheme. The development will impact on local infrastructure and as a result the applicant is required, to offset these impacts, to enter into a S106 agreement to provide financial contributions for education, highway works and to provide play equipment to be installed within the village.

6.5 Economic

The economic benefits of construction employment are noted. As mentioned above financial contributions will be secured for education projects at schools in the catchment area of the site and new play equipment to help accommodate the level of growth anticipated from this scheme which is considered to be a benefit.

- 6.6 In this case, the additional housing and the provision of the affordable housing units would be a benefit by adding to the 5 year supply which should be given significant weight and this is considered to outweigh the impacts from the development. In light of the comments made above it is considered even though the development is contrary to policy DM4 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 the individual merits of this scheme and obligations to be secured through S106 agreement are such that the proposal can be regarded as sustainable development in the eyes of the NPPF and, in accordance with a presumption in favour, should be supported.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be granted subject to the completion of a S106 agreement and the following:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the local planning authority not later than three years from the date of this permission.

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 access, layout, scale, appearance 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 Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended).

- 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 an Environmental Construction Management Plan detailing access arrangements for construction vehicles, on-site parking, loading and unloading areas, materials storage areas and wheel cleaning arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The construction of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Environmental Construction Management Plan.**

Reason: In the interest of highway safety, to ensure a satisfactory standard of construction and layout for the development and to comply with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 5 Any application for reserved matters shall include details of the existing and final ground, ridge and slab levels of the buildings. The details shall include sections through both the site and the adjoining properties and the proposal shall be developed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that an acceptable relationship results between the new development and adjacent buildings and public areas in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

- 6 **No development shall take place until details of hard and soft landscaping (including details of boundary treatments and public amenity open space, Local Equipped Areas of Play and Local Areas of Play) 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 that the appearance of the development would be acceptable in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009

- 7 **No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme and associated construction and management/maintenance plans for the site, based on the principles within the agreed 'Drainage Strategy, BE1665-3T/DS' and 'Flood Risk Assessment, BE1665-3T/FRA and a detailed and site specific assessment of the hydrogeological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved final details before the development is completed, and shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan.**

To prevent the increased risk of flooding, and ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system, in accordance with Policy 49 of Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Revise Pre-Submission Version June 2014.

- 8 **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 DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009

- 9 **No development shall take place until a foul water strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Unless otherwise agreed in writing the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any dwelling subsequently approved.**

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, and improve habitat and amenity in accordance with policy DM2 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 10 **No development shall take place until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing how renewable and low energy sources would generate 10% of the energy needs of the development and also showing water efficiency measures achieving 110 litres per person per day. The works shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: In the interests of sustainability.

- 11 No development relating to the construction of the dwellings pursuant to this permission shall take place until details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority of a scheme of noise mitigation that demonstrates how acceptable amenity levels will be maintained for existing residents as a result of the development hereby approved. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall be in place prior to the occupation of the dwelling to which each works relate.

Reason: To ensure suitable levels of amenity are provided for residents in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

- 12 **No development shall take place unless and until the following have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:**

- **A Phase 1 Desk Study incorporating a site walkover, site history, maps and all further features of industry best practice relating to potential contamination.**
- **Where shown to be necessary by the Phase 1 Desk Study, a Phase 2 Site Investigation report further documenting the ground conditions of the site with regard to potential contamination, incorporating appropriate soils and gas sampling.**
- **Where shown to be necessary by the Phase 2 Desk Study, a Phase 3 detailed scheme for remedial works and measures to be taken to mitigate any risks to human health, groundwater and the wider environment.**

Any works which form part of the Phase 3 scheme approved by the Local Planning Authority shall be completed in full before the use hereby permitted commences. The effectiveness of any scheme shall be demonstrated to the Local Planning Authority by means of a validation report (to incorporate photographs, material transport tickets and validation sampling), unless an alternative period is approved in writing by the Authority. Any such validation should include responses to any unexpected contamination discovered during works.

The British Standard for Topsoil, BS 3882:2007, specifies requirements for topsoils that are moved or traded and should be adhered to.

Applicants are reminded that, should groundwater or surface water courses be at risk of contamination during or after development, the Environment Agency should be approached for approval of measures to protect water resources separately, unless an Agency condition already forms part of this permission.

Reason: The details are required prior to commencement to protect human health and the environment in accordance with policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

- 13 **No development shall take place until details of the junction between the proposed access road and the highway including the provision of**

traffic calming features on Bedford Road have been approved by the Local Planning Authority and no building shall be occupied until the junction has been constructed in accordance with the approved details and the traffic calming features have been installed.

Reason: In order to minimise danger, obstruction and inconvenience to users of the highway and of the proposed estate road.

- 14 No dwelling shall be occupied until visibility splays have been provided on each side of the junction of the access road with the public highway. The minimum dimensions to provide the required splay lines shall be 2.4m measured along the centre line of the proposed access road from its junction with the channel of the public highway and 43m measured from the centre line of the proposed access road along the line of the channel of the public highway. The vision splays required shall be provided and defined on the site by or on behalf of the developers and be kept free of any obstruction.

Reason: To provide adequate visibility between the existing highway and the proposed access and to make the access safe and convenient for the traffic that is likely to use it.

- 15 **No development shall take place until the detailed plans and sections of the proposed access road, including gradients and method of surface water disposal have been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and no building shall be occupied until the section of road which provides access has been constructed (apart from final surfacing) in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: To ensure that the proposed roadworks are constructed to an adequate standard.

- 16 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, number 1665-PL01.

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

INFORMATIVE NOTES TO APPLICANT

1. 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.
2. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with 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 Control Group, Development Management Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.

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 Traffic Management Group Highways and Transport Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, SG17 5TQ
4. The applicant is advised that as a result of the development, new highway street lighting will be required and the applicant must contact the Development Control Group, Development Management Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ for details of the works involved, the cost of which shall be borne by the developer. No development shall commence until the works have been approved in writing and the applicant has entered into a separate legal agreement covering this point with the Highway Authority.
5. The applicant is advised that no highway surface water drainage system designed as part of a new development, will be allowed to enter any existing highway surface water drainage system without the applicant providing evidence that the existing system has sufficient capacity to account for any highway run off generated by that development. Existing highway surface water drainage systems may be improved at the developer's expense to account for extra surface water generated. Any improvements must be approved by the Development Control Group, Development Management Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
6. The applicant is advised that if it is the intention to request Central Bedfordshire 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 Control Group, Development Management Division, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ . 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.
7. All roads to be constructed within the site shall be designed in accordance with Central Bedfordshire Council's publication "Design in Central Bedfordshire A Guide to Development" and the Department for Transport's "Manual for Streets", or any amendment thereto.

Statement required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Part 5, Article 35

Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. 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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