

Item No. 6

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/16/04369/OUT
LOCATION	Land South of Barford Road, Blunham, Bedford, MK44 3NE
PROPOSAL	Outline Application: Residential development for up to 44 dwellings including specific accommodation for over 55's and open space, with all matters reserved except for access
PARISH	Blunham
WARD	Sandy
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Maudlin, Smith & Stock
CASE OFFICER	Benjamin Tracy
DATE REGISTERED	20 September 2016
EXPIRY DATE	20 December 2016
APPLICANT	MLN (Land and Properties) Ltd
AGENT	Bilfinger GVA
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	Call in by Cllr Smith <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Constitutes a 40% increase combined with adjacent development of 77 houses• Development has the potential to make existing traffic congestion worse and cause safety issues. Parish Council objection to a major application The development is a departure from the development plan.
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Approve Outline Planning Permission subject to S106 agreement and Conditions.

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. The proposal would result in the loss of grade 1 agricultural land and would have an impact on the character and appearance of the area however subject to conditions this impact is not considered to be significant or demonstrably harmful. 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 the Council's adopted Design Guidance (2014). The proposal would provide policy compliant affordable housing and the provision of three over 55's bungalows. The whole scheme would contribute to the Council's 5 year housing supply as a deliverable site within the period. Financial contributions to offset local infrastructure impacts would be sought for education and leisure facilities. In the view of the above the negative impacts of the development are not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development, and as such the development should be approved planning permission in accordance with Paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

Site Location:

The site consists of arable farmland to the South of Barford Road, Blunham. The Land has a Grade I agricultural land classification which is in use for agricultural purposes.

The site is located wholly beyond the settlement envelope of Blunham.

To the east of the site, adjoining the boundary of the site are Nos. 31 - 36 Jubilee Close, in addition Nos. 1 - 3 Jubilee Close directly overlook the site although separated by the Highway known as Jubilee Close. To the north of the site, separated by the highway known as Blunham Road are the neighbouring dwellings known as Nos. 36 - 56 Blunham Road.

To the southeast of the site are bungalows upon The Avenue with No. 40 being within close proximity to the southwestern corner of the site.

To the south and west of the site is agricultural land, which is subject to a separate application for outline planning permission with all matters reserved except access under reference CB/16/04323/OUT for the construction of 77 dwellings including specific over 55's accommodation. These parcels of land are under separate ownership and subject to individual applications that cannot be conditioned or agreed to have a joint approach under these applications. Members are advised that these applications for planning permission should be determined on their own merits in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. However any permission granted on a site would form a material consideration in the determination of the neighbouring site. When considering the relationship of each development to the settlement pattern of Blunham, it is considered logical to consider this application on its own merits first.

Further to the South of the site is a cemetery with mature landscaping.

The Application:

The application seeks outline planning permission with all matters reserved except access for the construction of up to 44 dwellings including three over 55's bungalows, open space and associated development.

Matters relating to landscaping, layout, scale and appearance are reserved.

It is drawn to the attention of members that the indicative layout of the scheme has been amended since the original consultation, and the provision of three over 55's bungalows that would be provided as an additional benefit of the development. At the time of writing the application is still undergoing additional consultation and any responses received in relation to that consultation shall be outlined within the late sheet and will need to be considered in the determination of this application.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (November 2009)

CS1	Development Strategy
CS2	Developer Contributions
CS3	Healthy and Sustainable Communities
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
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 Greenspaces

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (2014)

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.

Relevant Planning History:

None relevant to the determination of this application for planning permission.

Consultees:

Blunham Parish Council The Parish Council has issued the following consultation response:

Blunham Parish Council OBJECTS to this application for the following reasons:

- The development is unsympathetic to the rural landscape on the edge of the village, close to the Parish Conservation Area.
- The increase in traffic is a concern, on a road with acknowledged speeding issues. This is evidenced by

the developers own survey, plus one carried out by Highways recently. This is despite traffic calming being installed & a Vehicle Activated Speed Sign. The traffic count was done during school holidays so was lighter than usual.

- Blunham is a well-known rat run to the A1 in both directions. This additional traffic will have an impact on the whole village, as well as the obvious impact on Barford Rd & The Hill. The impact on Station Rd is of particular concern as well, as this road has already been identified as priority for traffic calming by Highways, & this development will make this problem even worse. The surrounding minor road network is already over capacity.
- The impact on our school is of great concern. Lack of parking at the school is already a known issue, & this development will make this situation worse. When Jubilee Close was built (36 homes), the school anticipated needing to accommodate 5/6 extra children. It actually turned out to be 18. The impact of this development will create the need for significant development at the school. The school is currently in consultation to change its status from "Lower" to "Primary" (with children leaving at age 11 rather than age 9) and for the village school to feed into Sandy rather Great Barford. Results of this consultation will not be known for a few weeks but, if approved, would indicate a larger increase in child numbers at the school. (please see further comments below under "cumulative impact").
- Safe access in & out of the development from this busy road is of great concern.
- Access for service vehicles has not been addressed in the planning application & looks to be challenging.
- Many village amenities are on the opposite side of this busy road, including the children's play area, the sports field, BMX Track, village shop/post office, fish & chip shop & village hall (where most community activities take place). There is no pedestrian crossing. It is unwise to increase the population on this side of the road.
- Heads of Terms for S106 are inadequate. There are a number of highways challenges that will need to be addressed including traffic calming on Barford Rd & Station Rd, pedestrian crossing, yellow lines, parking at the school, & parking at the sports field. The

cemetery capacity is also a concern, & a contribution would be required to find land to build an extension to the cemetery.

- 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.
- Sewerage waste is stated as being covered under reserved matters. This is a fundamental issue that should be addressed in the outline application.
- 44 homes represent overdevelopment of this site, & would not leave space for adequate parking provision. Squeezing 44 homes into this space does not leave adequate space within the site for open green spaces, to stop it having such an urban feel.
- There is insufficient local infrastructure, & in particular, public transport links are very poor. It is likely from the new Passenger Transport Strategy we will be left heavily reliant on Community Transport.
- Our recent Housing Needs Survey identified a need for only 6 small family homes.
- The Habitat Report has some significant omissions. Carrying out this survey in August, was far too late in the season for the consultant to have observed nesting. Three local “red data” birds were completely excluded for some reason, these being the Skylark, Corn Bunting & Grey Partridge. Skylark & Corn Bunting still nest in the Parish, & the impact on these species needs rigorous assessment. The reference to “passerine bird activity” is far too loose a term to be helpful. Our Parish hedges provide both nests & roosts for many species, & some may well be red data listed. The survey is of limited value having been carried out so late in the year, & we would urge Planners to insist that this survey is carried out again in the Spring, before progressing the application further.
- The semi mature trees referred to are believed to have been planted as part of our community parish tree planting scheme a few years ago, & therefore have great local landscape value.
- 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 not ranked highly.

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 resident's 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.

Such a large urban extension to the village changes its character completely.

There are limited details of Heads of Terms for S106 agreements & there would need to be considerable budget allocated to this for these applications, in light of the overwhelming impact delivering these three developments at once would have. This includes the impact on the highway, the school, the level of amenities in the village & land for a cemetery extension.

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. Blunham children are in Alban school catchment which is within Bedford Borough Council, & therefore operating a two-tier system. As there is considerable development close to Alban school, & the places are allocated on a distance basis, we are extremely concerned that Blunham children will not get a place.

There are no doubt many other infrastructure impacts which have yet to be identified such as drainage & sewerage improvements. The cost of the S106 provision to make these three developments sustainable could make them unviable.

Highway Authority

The Council's Highways Development Control Officer has issued the following consultation response:

I am also considering the impact of the similar outline application for residential development on the adjacent site reference 16/4323. Which I have to say is a shame that they were not submitted as a joint scheme that could have provided just a single point of access onto Barford Road. Nevertheless there is no reason why each site cannot be developed independent of each other and therefore I will consider each site on it's individual merits.

Looking firstly at the principle I can confirm that there is no overriding highways reason to object to residential on this site. The proposal has been the subject of pre-application discussion and I am able to confirm that the current submission accords with those discussions. The application is supported by a robust Transport Assessment detailing the traffic generation and distribution that confirms that the access and surrounding highway network has sufficient capacity to accommodate the traffic movements from the new development.

The submission includes details of the proposed estate road junction onto Barford Road that accords with current design criteria. The only omission would be the provision of a 2.0m wide footway along the whole frontage of the site linking up with the existing provision at the junction of the recent Bellway Homes residential development at Jubilee Close. I consider this link an essential requirement of the development and have included a condition to that effect.

As you will no doubt appreciate the site fronts a public highway where local concerns over the speed of traffic have resulted in the provision of traffic calming measures intended to encourage slower speeds. The application proposes to modify the existing measures where they conflict with the proposed junction arrangement as well as supplement with a pedestrian crossing. Whilst I agree that off-site works will be desirable in this case, and that for the adjacent site, it would be preferable if monies could be obtained by means of a S106 contribution of £44000 (£1000 per dwelling) to enable a comprehensive scheme to be developed rather than piecemeal.

In these circumstances the following highway conditions and advice notes are recommended should the grant of planning permission be considered.

Condition 1/. Prior to occupation of any dwelling approved as part of any reserved matters application the means of access shall be constructed in accordance with the details shown on the submitted plan

Reason: To ensure the provision of appropriate access arrangements and associated off-site highway works in the interests of highway safety.

C2/. Any subsequent reserved matters application shall include the following;

- Estate roads designed and constructed to a standard appropriate for adoption as public highway.
- The provision of a footway along the entire highway frontage of the site to link with the existing footway on the south side of Barford Road
- Vehicle parking and garaging in accordance with the councils standards applicable at the time of submission.
- Cycle parking and storage in accordance with the council's standards applicable at the time of submission.
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan detailing access arrangements for construction vehicles, routing of construction vehicles, on-site parking and loading and unloading areas.
- Materials Storage Areas.
- Wheel cleaning arrangements.

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

Advice Note 1/. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with 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 Highways Agreements Officer, Highways Contracts team, Community Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ

AN2/. The applicant is advised that if it is the intention to request Central Bedfordshire Council as Local Highway Authority, to adopt the proposed highways within the site 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 Highways Agreements Officer, Highways Contracts team,

Community Services, 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 unless otherwise agreed.

AN3/. 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.

Landscaping

The Council's Landscape Officer has issued the following consultation response:

I attended the Public Exhibition for this site and discussed informally my thoughts on the site design and landscape mitigation proposed; the design has had some amendments to help accommodate my concerns eg the amendments to the access road alignment .

The site lies at the western edge of Blunham, on the elevated plateau arising from the relatively steeply rising Ouse valley to the west. It is on the transition between the Great Ouse Valley Clay landscape and the East Marston Clay Vale. As a village, the lower stretches of Blunham are greatly influenced by the riverside character and vegetation associated of the lvel, land to the north is characterised by the market gardening land use whilst the sweeping landscape of the Ouse Valley and the views across to the Cardington Sheds dominate the setting to the west.

I do have concerns about the incremental loss of the agricultural land that forms this western edge to Blunham. Blunham is largely a linear village and the close relationship and outlook over farmland is an important aspect of landscape character.

However, the recent development of Jubilee Close has very limited landscape integration and although a small scale development does form an urban edge at the gateway to the village. Some open space is designed to soften views from Jubilee Close, although the majority of properties will lose their open outlook.

The proposed development provides greater separation from the built form to the rural landscape - which is important when considering visual impact in the views from the west and from the Sandy Country Way. The road and landscaped edge will create a more sympathetic rural edge. Tree planting will also help to mitigate development when viewed across the open land from the Cemetery.

I am disappointed that the development would lead to the loss of the semi-mature roadside trees along Barford Road. These may have been planted by the Parish to compensate for elm losses or just as enhancements. Whilst the trees would have benefited from some pruning - they are still valuable features and their maturity would help mitigate the development in views from the existing properties opposite. I also believe that trees help secure traffic calming - which is an issue at this location. I would prefer to see a design which incorporated the footway within the development rather than causing the loss of these trees and the verge. Creation of a pavement urbanises the village edge - when it could become an attractive, integral part of the scheme.

Although I have concerns about development extending onto the plateau setting and potentially impacting on the long distance views up from the river valley and land to the south, I do not object to this development as on balance it will provide a more sympathetic rural edge. However, a reduced scale of development would be more in proportion when seen in association with the growth of Jubilee Close.

Green Infrastructure

The Council's Green Infrastructure Officer has issued the following consultation response relating to the original indicative layout which has now been revised:

The proposals submitted do not take opportunities to deliver a net gain in green infrastructure, and I do not consider they would deliver the net gain required to make the proposal acceptable.

The site also appears to have been planned in isolation from the proposals for the adjacent site (CB/16/04323), with which it shares western and southern boundaries. This is disappointing, as a complementary approach to the design of green infrastructure networks would have been beneficial.

The proposals for green space are fragmented. On a development of this scale, one single green space would be preferable, as the current size and layout of the green

spaces, and their poor design would limit their potential use and benefits. The green spaces proposed are not clearly part of the public realm, especially the one proposed to the south-west of the site. They have a side aspect with adjacent homes, rather than a more positive front aspect.

The proposals for drainage also fail to deliver green infrastructure benefits. Although the Design and Access Statement identifies the possibility of swales and attenuation basins, the flood risk assessment does not take this approach forward, and the SuDS relies on geocellular storage, permeable paving, and piped conveyance. As highlighted by SuDS colleagues, this should be reconsidered. The reliance on piped and pumped systems is contrary to CBC's adopted sustainable drainage SPD, and this engineered approach fails to deliver the multifunctional benefits required by the SPD, as they do not deliver biodiversity or amenity benefits. The local context of the site includes open ditches, and their use for conveyance and attenuation would be more in keeping with the local landscape character.

In order to be considered acceptable, the applicant should reconsider the design of the open spaces, and the design of the drainage proposals, to deliver a demonstrable net gain in green infrastructure. They should consider the local requirements for sustainable drainage as set out in the SPD, and demonstrate how these are met, and consider design guidance set out in CBC's Design Guide.

Ecologist

The Council's Ecologist has issued the following consultation response:

I have read through the submitted information and note that no impacts to protected species are expected. It is unfortunate that the only existing hedgerow on site has to be removed but I accept that this can be mitigated for through additional new planting. I would like to ensure that the future landscaping scheme includes locally native species which are nectar and berry rich so bringing the maximum benefit for biodiversity. I would also like to see integral bat and bird boxes provided in the built fabric of dwellings on the south and western boundaries of the site.

Pollution Team

The Council's Pollution Team have issued the following consultation response:

The site is located adjacent to a working farm and may be impacted by noisy activities on that farm as well as

vehicular movements on and around it and the Barford Road. It will therefore be necessary to ensure as with any development that the end users are protected from industrial and traffic noise and therefore I recommend the following conditions to ensure that facade, window and room layout, glazing and ventilation requirements are adequate.

Without prejudice to any decision you shall make should you be mindful to grant permission against the recommendations of Public Protection I ask that the following conditions are inserted on any permission granted.

Development shall not begin until a scheme for protecting the proposed dwellings from noise from agricultural activities and road traffic adjacent to the proposed development has been submitted and approved by the local planning authority. None of the dwellings shall be occupied until such the scheme has been implemented in accordance with the approved details, and it shall be retained in accordance with those details thereafter.

Leisure

The Council's Leisure Officer has raised no objection to the proposed development subject to financial contributions consisting of:

- £30,000 for Blunham Rec Play Area upgrade.
- £13,955 Blunham Rec outdoor sports facilities upgrade.

Affordable Housing

The Council's Housing Officer has issued the following consultation response:

I support this application as it provides for 15 affordable homes which reflects the current affordable housing policy requirement of 35%. The supporting documentation however does not indicate the proposed tenure split of the affordable units. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) indicates the tenure requirement as being 73% rent and 27% intermediate tenure from sites meeting the affordable threshold. This would make a requirement of 11 units of affordable rent and 4 units of intermediate tenure (shared ownership) from this proposed development.

I would like to see the affordable units dispersed throughout the site and integrated with the market housing to promote community cohesion & tenure blindness. I would also expect the units to meet all nationally prescribed space 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.

MANOP	<p>The Council's MANOP team's consultation response to the original scheme has been summarised as:</p> <p>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 a proportion of houses in the scheme being suitable for older people.</p>
Environment Agency	<p>We have no objection to this application.</p> <p>Flood Risk / Surface Water Drainage Please consult the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)</p> <p>Contamination The developer should address risks to controlled waters from contamination at the site, following the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Environment Agency Guiding Principles for Land Contamination.</p> <p>Infiltration Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) The water environment is potentially vulnerable and there is an increased potential for pollution from inappropriately located and/or designed infiltration (SuDS). We consider any infiltration (SuDS) greater than 2.0 m below ground level to be a deep system and are generally not acceptable. All infiltration SuDS require a minimum of 1.2 m clearance between the base of infiltration SuDS and peak seasonal groundwater levels. All need to meet the criteria in our Groundwater Protection: Principles and Practice (GP3) position statements G1 to G13. In addition, they must not be constructed in ground affected by contamination.</p>
Lead Flood Authority - CBC SuDs Management Team	<p>The Lead Flood Authority has issued the following consultation response:</p> <p>After submission of further documentation 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, if the following planning conditions are included:</p> <p>Comments and recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceedance routes should be modelled to ensure failure will not flood existing or proposed properties. • Where permeable paving is proposed we advise the design criteria is demonstrated in accordance with the

‘CIRIA RP992 The SuDS Manual Update: Paper RP992/28 Design Assessment Checklists for Permeable/Porous Pavement’.

- CBC do not have the ability to adopt SuDS at present.
- Details of the proposed construction, phasing of works, management and future maintenance requirements of the surface water drainage scheme should be provided with the final detailed design. This should fulfil the requirements set out in the “CBC Sustainable drainage supplementary planning document” and “Surface water advice note”, Adequate access to the surface water system should be provided in the sizing and layout of the scheme, with details of the proposed arrangements for maintenance.

Recommended conditions:

- Condition: No development shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on the agreed Flood Risk Assessment (BGVABLUNHAM.10 September 2016, Soakage test report PN199 and drawing BGVABLUNHAM.10-601) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of a site specific ground investigation report (in accordance with BRE 365 standards) to determine the infiltration capacity of the underlying geology and ground water level, as well as details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion. The scheme shall include provision of attenuation and a restriction in run-off to agreed rates. The scheme shall 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.
Reason: To ensure the approved system will function to a satisfactory minimum standard of operation and maintenance and prevent the increased risk of flooding both on and off site, in accordance with para 103 NPPF.
- Condition: No building/dwelling shall be occupied until the developer has formally submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority a management and maintenance plan for the surface water drainage and that the approved surface water drainage scheme has

been checked by them, has been correctly and fully installed as per the approved details. The scheme shall 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.

Reason: 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.

Internal Drainage Board No Comment.

Anglian Water Our reports show that there are no assets owned by Anglian Water or those subject to an adoption agreement within the development site boundary.

The Foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Tempsford Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows.

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

Waste Services The Council's Waste Services Team have issued the following consultation response:

The Council's waste collection pattern for Blunham is as follows:

- a. Week 1 – 1 x 240 litre residual waste wheelie bin, 1 x 23 litre food waste caddy
- b. Week 2 – 1 x 240 litre recycling wheelie bin, 2 x reusable garden waste sacks, and 1 x 23 litre food waste caddy.

Please note that bins are chargeable for all properties and developers will be required to pay for all required bins prior to discharging the relevant condition. Our current costs for these are: £25 +VAT per 240l bin, and £5 +VAT per set of food waste bins.

We require a swept path analysis to demonstrate that our waste collection vehicles can manoeuvre safely around site, as it is unclear from the drawings if there is sufficient.

Space for a vehicle of the following dimensions should be provided:

Wherever possible, refuse collection vehicles will only use adopted highways. If the access road is to be used, it

must be to adoptable standards. Typically, until roads are adopted, bins are to be brought to the highway boundary or a pre-arranged point. If residents are required to pull their bins to the highway, a hard standing area needs to be provided for at least 1 wheelie bin and a food waste caddy, in addition to reusable garden waste bags. Our waste collection crew will move bins a maximum of 10m from a collection point to the waste collection vehicle.

Sustainable Growth and Climate Change

The Council's Sustainable Growth and Climate Change Officer has issued the following consultation response:

The proposed development should comply with the requirements of the development management policies: DM1: Renewable Energy; DM2: Sustainable Construction of New Buildings; and Core Strategy policy CS13: Climate Change.

Whilst the supporting documents acknowledge these policies they do not provide information on how the requirements of these policies will be met. I ask for the following information to be submitted at the reserved matters stage: energy and water efficiency, renewable energy contribution, climate change adaptation measures to minimise risk of overheating in dwellings and proposed ventilation strategy (please refer to the pre-application advice, ref CB/16/02615).

Should permission be granted for this development I request the following conditions to be attached to ensure that policies CS13, DM1 and DM2 requirements are met:

- 10% energy demand of the development to be delivered from renewable or low carbon sources;
- Water efficiency to achieve water standard of 110 litres per person per day;
- Development to include climate change adaptation measures to minimise risk of overheating.

Education

The Council's Education Officer has also issued the following comment:

John Donne is the lower school within Blunham. The school has a planned admission number of 24 and is unlikely to be able to manage the impact of this development without expansion.

The middle school is Alban Middle and the upper school is Sandy Upper. Alban is within Bedford Borough and schools here are currently going through a re-organisation to 2-tier. It is not yet clear how this will affect the capacity at Alban, or what the knock-on effect of the changes in Beds will be to schools in the Sandy area. At this moment in time only lower school contributions are required.

The Council's Education Officer has raised no objection to the application subject to the following financial contribution:

1. £101,393.60 lower school contribution to go towards the expansion of John Donne Lower School, to accommodate pupils from this development.

NHS

No response received at the time of writing.

CPRE

CPRE have issued the following consultation response:

This application is for 44 houses on a site outside of the Settlement Envelope of the village of Blunham, in open countryside in an area where land is graded from Grade 1 agricultural land – 'Best and Most Versatile' – Grade 3A and should be given protection from development.

Blunham is a rural village with a central Conservation Area, it sits between the River Ivel to the East and the Great Ouse to the North and West.

An adjacent site, allocated within the approved Mid Beds Local Plan and within the settlement envelope, has now been completed and has significantly expanded the village within the last 5 years. The selection criteria for sites submitted for assessment for inclusion in the Local Plan, includes consideration of the amount of development that has occurred over the previous 5 years.

A further application for 79 dwellings, CB/16/04323 Land off Barford Road, has been submitted for consideration and the cumulative impact of developments cannot be ignored when considering sites outside of the Local Plan process. CPRE are concerned that these sites will not be considered together, although assume that they will both be considered within the extant Core Strategy and Development Management Policies of CBC on building outside of the Village Envelope, with consideration of the proposed loss of good agricultural land, urbanisation of

the rural village of Blunham and in line with the principals of the NPPF. Other identified issues within the village are water pressure, surface water, sewage and drainage, traffic – speeding and parking on roadside, school parking, footways that are too narrow or absent and public transport. No archaeological survey has been submitted with this application.

CBC are in the process of developing a new Local Plan and have completed a Call for Sites and consultation on the Site Assessment Criteria to progress this. This site was not submitted and it suggests that the developers have no confidence in this site being accepted/acceptable, and are seeking to invoke Para 49 to ensure granting of planning permission. CBC have recently published for consultation (Shaping Central Bedfordshire) maps showing broad areas for possible development. Blunham is included in area D – an area for lowest – small to medium scale development.

CPRE also believes that Central Beds Council has a duty to protect such sites from development for existing policy reasons as expanded upon below. In the recent Appeal judgements referenced here, these existing Policies have been found to be in line with the intentions of the NPPF with and without a deficit in the 5 year supply of land for housing - now broadly addressed.

Within the Planning Statement, it is claimed that there is a shortfall in the 5 year land supply for Central Beds and so the Policies currently relied upon by CBC are out of date and the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development, requires that permission is granted to this site.

The SoS called in a decision for 42 houses on land in Aylesbury Bucks – ref 3137697 – 26th September 2016. This application involved a lack of 5 year land supply and a proposal for a development outside of the

Settlement Envelope in conflict with relevant Aylesbury Vale District Council's Policies. The SoS upheld the Inspector's decision.

Secretary of State concludes that the proposed development would not amount to sustainable development and that its adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified

benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. The Secretary of State therefore concludes that planning permission should not be granted.

The recent and very relevant Wrestlingworth Appeal Case APP/P0240/W/16/3150607, was dismissed as the Inspector supported CBC's refusal of Planning permission stating:

At 8 - The Council states that it can demonstrate a 4.76 year supply of housing land thus just short of its requirement, which the appellant does not dispute. In these circumstances, I find Core Strategy policy DM4 should be afforded some weight in my Decision.

At 21 – However, the Council is not significantly short in meeting its five year housing target and in light of the Hopkins Judgement referred to above I have attached some weight to this position.

Within his Judgement the Inspector found that: The proposed development would not accord with Core Strategy Policies CS14, CS16 and DM3. These state that the Council will require development to be of the highest quality by respecting local context and distinctiveness, and conserve and enhance the varied countryside character and local distinctiveness.

In this case the Inspector also refers to Policy DM4 The proposal would also not accord with Core Strategy policy DM4 (relating to Settlement Envelopes)

Likewise the earlier Henlow planning appeal decision (ref: APP/P0240/W/15/3003634) established Central Bedfordshire Council did not have a 5 year land supply and the development policies the Council used to refuse planning permission to this site were out of date. However, despite this, the Council's decision not to grant the Henlow site planning permission was upheld because the development of the site was incompatible with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on environmental grounds. Additionally, although the Council's Development Management and Core Strategy policies were out of date their content was similar in meaning to paragraph 49 and the other NPPF environmental policies.

The following quotes are taken from the Henlow planning appeal decision. They refer to the Council's Development Management and Core Strategy policies. The quotes show the similarity between these policies and the policy intent of paragraph 49 of the NPPF.

DM4 deals with developments within settlement envelopeswhere no land is available within the settlement a site adjacent to the settlement may be granted planning permission. Nonetheless, the fixed settlement envelopes would have the effect of constraining development, including housing, within these settlements.

CS 16 recognises the countryside outside of settlement as being a highly valued resource and should be protected for its own sake, safeguarding it from the increasing pressures of development.

DM14 goes on to identify that any development that has an unacceptable impact will be resisted.

Their overall objective is to protect the character and amenity of the countryside of which the appeal site forms a part.

Therefore I (the inspector) consider CS Policies DM4, DM14 and CS16 are relevant policies for the supply of housing within the meaning of Para 49 of the Framework.....

To the extent that the policies are concerned with the supply of housing, they must be regarded as out of date. However, the objectives of CS Policies DM4, DM14 and CS16 remain broadly consistent with those in the Framework which requires decision makers to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. To the extent that the policies are concerned with these matters I consider that they continue to attract due weight.

... landscape is about the relationship between people and place. It provides the setting of our day to day lives. This is a landscape in which people spend their leisure time. They experience it up close and at a distance..... (overall conclusion re environmental sustainability) on balance the adverse harm identified within the environmental role relating to character and appearance

outweighs environmental, social and economic advantages of the scheme, these adverse effects would result in considerable environmental detriment.

These quotes are very relevant in relation to the proposed site, therefore CPRE would argue there would be no environmental, social or economic benefits if this site were to be given planning permission – as expanded upon below.

CPRE Objections in Relation to Core Strategy & Development Management Policies – November 2009

Policy DM3: High Quality Development

The policy requires developments to be appropriate in scale to their setting; the proposed development is not in scale, would be destructive of the setting of Blunham and is not a natural extension to the Village.

Policy DM4: Development within and beyond settlement envelopes

The proposed site sits outside of the Village Envelope and would not be allocated for Market Housing as under policy DM4 – only Exception sites would be considered. The Planning Statement refers to a housing survey carried out in regard to the housing needs of residents of Blunham and that a need for 6 homes was identified. The developer suggests that through s106 agreements a 'link' with local people could be made for these homes. However, this type of development would form an Exception Scheme where land could be provided outside of the Village Envelope and be allocated in perpetuity for residents of Blunham or those with a close link to the village.

Policy CS8 Exception Schemes refers.

Policy DM14 Landscape and Woodland

CBC Development Strategy Policy 56 had expanded and updated those policies requiring landscapes to be conserved and enhanced. Central Bedfordshire LCA 2015 was published earlier this year. As this LCA sits outside of the Development Strategy, we believe its use when considering planning applications, is not affected by the withdrawal of the DS. LCA 4 Clay Valleys applies - Strong landscape character and visual connectivity with

the adjacent Clay Vales Landscape type and Greensand Ridge (predominantly due to the flat landform and areas of arable land use.

.... the landscapes will be conserved and enhanced in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment. Proposals that have an unacceptable impact on the landscape quality of an area will normally be refused.

CS16 Landscape and Woodland

Preserve and enhance the varied countryside character and local distinctiveness in accordance with the findings of the Mid Bedfordshire Landscape Character Assessment (now LCA 2015 applies)

DM16 Green Infrastructure

CPRE feels that the development will have significant impact on the environment and the visual view of the countryside landscape – DM16 seeks to ensure that development that adversely affects green infrastructure assets will not be permitted. Such assets include natural green spaces.

In a similar way in the Henlow Appeal Case, the Inspector found the terms of CS Policy CS16, DM4 and DM14 would be unacceptably compromised, in so far as they relate to taking account of impacts on the character and quality of landscape.

Paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework is being heavily relied upon to justify this development but the presumption is only valid for sustainable development and also relates to the lack of a 5 year supply of land for housing – which is no longer applicable in this case. CPRE believes this site is not sustainable on environmental grounds as outlined above and states the Government's core planning principals including:

☐ Taking account of the different character of different areas. And recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.....

We believe this site is not sustainable on grounds of Transport – Policy TP1A which requires developers to show how developments will reduce the need to travel and reduce reliance on cars: the proposal fails on both counts and should be refused accordingly.

The majority of working residents commute by car to work and to access other services. There is no regular bus service in this rural village for commuters. The number of car journeys made to employment, schools, GPs and major shopping centres will increase in line with the number of new homes.

CPRE believes this site is not sustainable on economic grounds. With no Community Infrastructure Levy in place, there will be no contribution being paid directly to the area to mitigate the effects of the development. Currently for economic reasons, it is the policy of CBC to use the New Homes Bonus to support the provision of front line services across Central Bedfordshire and not directly in support of areas affected by development.

CPRE believes this application should be refused as the detriments to the local area clearly outweigh any perceived benefits and it conflicts with the sustainability objectives of National Planning Policy, as illustrated in the final conclusion of the Inspector in both the Wrestlingworth and Henlow Appeal Cases as quoted above.

Other Representations:

Neighbours

50 representations received relating to Nos 25, 33, 34, 35, 38 and 40 The Avenue; Nos 2, 4, 15, 19, 31, 33, 34, 35(x3); 36(x2) Jubilee Close; Nos 20 and 50 Barford Road; Blunham house, Park Lane (x2); Nos 56, 58, 84 and 90 Station Road; Nos. 27 and 111 Grange Road; Nos. 20 and 62 High Street, Blunham; 59 High Street, Great Barford; Nos. 9 (x2) and 15 Pound Close; Nos. 1, 24a and 26 (x2) The Hill; Owls Hoot 7 The Hill; Nos 2 and 6/8 Tempsford Road; No 18 Park Lane; No.4 Wallsfield; No 11 and Station Masters Cottage, Old Station Court; Nos 1, 5 and 11 Walnut Close; and No 32 Blunham Close.

The comments and objections received have been summarised as:

- there is an opportunity to calm traffic;
 - support tree planting and green space close to road;
 - vehicle lights using the development junction will cause nuisance to No. 50 Barford Road;
 - loss of on street car parking for No. 50 Barford Road;
 - residents would no longer be able to place skip on the highway in front of No. 50 Barford Road due to the proposed junction;
 - overbearing, loss of privacy and overshadowing to No. 50 Barford Road;
8. Concerns in relation to existing vehicular speeding;

9. Affordable housing will not be for younger local residents;
10. Affordable housing on Jubilee Close did not go to villagers or people with links to the village the majority went to people from Luton or surrounding towns;
11. There is an unusually high proportion of social renting in Blunham further development would increase this percentage leading to an inappropriate and disproportionate allocation of social renting;
12. Moving to a village is a privilege not a right;
13. Large houses in the upper price bracket will encourage more burglaries;
14. Loss of grade 1 agricultural land (country not being self-sufficient with food production);
15. Village will lose its rural identity;
16. Detrimental impact on quality of life for residents of Blunham;
17. Development is too large;
18. Proposed housing too close to no.40 The Avenue;
19. Houses too great a scale on the edge of the countryside;
20. Traffic caused by existing traffic calming measures;
21. Lack of facilities such as shops, banks, post offices and libraries in the villages;
22. Lack of regular bus service;
23. Car parking concerns;
24. Concern in relation to extra air and noise pollution caused by extra traffic;
25. Noise and disturbance to existing residents from residents of the new development who do not understand village life;
26. Privacy concerns in relation to properties at The Avenue and overbearing impacts;
27. Loss of view;
28. Impact of construction noise upon elderly resident at No 40 The Avenue;
29. Extra litter and dog mess would result from new development as well as nuisance from pets;
30. Highway capacity concerns;
31. Lack of school places;
32. Lack of public transportation;
33. Lack of doctor/health facilities;
34. Flood risk;
35. Concern relating to pedestrian safety around the school;
36. No housing need;
37. Inappropriate due to location being next to a haulage company;
38. Layout of development not suitable for the location;
39. Concern relation to reduce property value on current properties neighbouring the site;
40. No provision for over 55's in relation to transport or medical care;

- 41.** Crime issues will result from social housing;
- 42.** Lack of employment opportunities in the village;
- 43.** Noise and disturbance to neighbouring dwellings during construction;
- 44.** Impact upon wildlife including: herons, bats, hedgehogs, frogs, foxes and birds of prey;
- 45.** Large development not in keeping with the village;
- 46.** Development is not sustainable in relation to transport and pedestrian movements;
- 47.** Contrary to Policy DM3 due to proximity to properties in Jubilee Close;
- 48.** Speeding and pedestrian crossing;
- 49.** Additional traffic;
- 50.** Debris upon the road would result from construction vehicles;
- 51.** Concern in relation to the removal of the hedgerow at the front of the site in relation to appearance and screening of development;
- 52.** Density of the development too high for the rural edge of countryside location of the site and the area;
- 53.** Car parking concerns upon the high street;
- 54.** No train station within Blunham;
- 55.** Highway safety concerns;
- 56.** Noise and disturbance to existing residents and will intrude on the peace and quiet on the cemetery;
- 57.** Local residents do not walk to school;
- 58.** Would spoil the unique character of our village;
- 59.** Agree with the comments and objections submitted by Blunham Parish Council;
- 60.** Loss of privacy from properties on Jubilee Close backing onto the site;
- 61.** Significant and overbearing visual impact when entering the village providing a jarring view;
- 62.** Too many houses being built in one period;
- 63.** Loss of residential amenity to houses on Jubilee Close;
- 64.** Barford Road currently serves as a short cut for commuters;
- 65.** The village plan identified no housing needs that will be supported directly by these developments;
- 66.** Blunham transport statement-FINAL 03 3.4 and 3.5 are not accurate, public transport to Bedford is only accessible by either walking a mile to Great Barford or by using one of only 6 buses a day to travel first to Sandy to catch a connection, 25 minutes is not achievable;
- 67.** Large houses would not meet the need for village children to but instead they will be priced out the village;
- 68.** Inaccurate and misleading transport statement;
- 69.** There is only one shop in the village;
- 70.** Nearest train station is Sandy;
- 71.** Narrow single track bridge at Great Barford serves traffic from four directions each with traffic lights and

the delay rapidly becomes considerable on a regular basis;

- 72.** Inadequate parking outside the school;
- 73.** No amenities for teenagers;
- 74.** A small open space can also encourage groups of young people to congregate which can cause problems;
- 75.** Impacts on secondary schools in the area;
- 76.** Loss of light to garden of No 32 Blunham Close and also loss of privacy;
- 77.** Site is not on the edge of the village as suggested this would be the other side of the farm;
- 78.** Developer has made clear attempts to prevent residents from attending consultation meetings, neglecting to inform those directly affected until days before the consultation meetings;
- 79.** Traffic measures were taken during the school holidays, not a realistic indication of usual flow;
- 80.** Great Barford is not in walkable distance and therefore the amenities cannot be included as being available for the development;
- 81.** Fail to understand why the development is being rushed through before the local plan;
- 82.** Why can't both these applications be submitted within Bedfordshire's new local plan?;
- 83.** Surely there is enough empty properties, brown sites, sites away from existing areas that could be considered before causing extra stress on current villages;
- 84.** Lack of garages on the new plan and concerns relating to car parking layout;
- 85.** Contrary to policy CS1 designates Blunham as a large village when new development will be limited to small scale allocations that reflect the size and character of the community;
- 86.** Objection to social housing as it is unfair to people who have paid a premium to live in a peaceful village;
- 87.** Design and density of dwellings should consider neighbouring application and existing neighbouring dwellings;
- 88.** Previous application for development on this site and it was rejected; and
- 89.** Concern in relation to number of pupils expected at John Donne Lower School and the contribution required to facilitate this.

Full consultation responses are available to view.

Considerations

1. Principle of Development

- 1.1 The application seeks outlined planning permission with all matters reserved accept access for the construction of up to 44 dwellings including three over 55's bungalows, the provision of open space and associated development.
- 1.2 The site is located beyond the settlement envelope of Blunham as defined by the Proposal Maps. Policy CS1 defines Blunham as a Large Village for the purposes of the Development Plan. Policy DM4 seeks to safeguard to the Open Countryside from inappropriate development. It is considered that the proposed development would be contrary to Policy DM4 of the Development Plan.
- 1.3 Applications for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) forms a material consideration.
- 1.4 At the date of this letter the Council cannot demonstrate a robust five year supply of deliverable housing Paragraph 49 of the NPPF indicates that under such circumstances the policies with respect to the supply of housing within the development plan (including Policies DM4, DM14 and CS16) are deemed to be out of date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. The presumption in favour of sustainable development as outlined by paragraph 14 of the NPPF for decision taking, means:
 90. approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
 91. where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:
 1. 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
 2. specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 1.5 However, recent case law (Crane v SOSCLG (2015) EWHC 425 (Admin, 4th May 2015) indicates that policies DM4, DM14 and CS16 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.
- 1.6 At the time of writing the Council can demonstrate a housing supply of 4.89 years, this is 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 these circumstances, Policy DM4 is afforded some weight.
- 1.7 In addition, it is considered that Policy DM4 is out of date for purposes relating to housing supply however this policy is broadly consistent with those in the framework which requires decision makers to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and as such the extent that the policies are concerned with these matters continue to attract due weight.
- 1.8 The proposed development is to be considered against the three strands of

sustainability, social, environmental and economic, to determine whether any adverse impacts of granting outline planning permission for residential development on this site would outweigh the benefits of the proposal. Other up to date local policies will also apply.

- 1.9 Whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits has been outlined within the report below.
2. **Impact upon the character and appearance of the area including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the visual impact upon the landscape including Trees and areas of tranquillity**
 - 2.1 The site lies at the western edge of Blunham, on the elevated plateau to the east of the Ouse Valley. The site is on the transition between the Great Ouse Valley Clay landscape and the East Marston Clay Vale. The site itself forms an arable field with no high quality features upon the site in respect of trees or boundary hedgerows and as such the Trees and Landscaping Officer, has raised no objection to development in that respect.
 - 2.2 The Council's Landscaping Officer has raised concerns about the incremental loss of the agricultural land that forms the western edge to Blunham. The encroachment of built development into the open countryside is a negative impact of the proposal. However the site abuts development on two sides, appearing as a logical extension to the settlement and is not considered to form an isolated site.
 - 2.3 The Landscaping Officer has acknowledged that the development at Jubilee Close has very limited landscape integration and appears as an Urban Edge at the gateway of the village and the development represents an opportunity to improve this gateway.
 - 2.4 It should be noted that public viewpoints into the site can be taken from the immediate context on approach to the village upon Barford Road and views from The Avenue . However due to the Mature Landscaping at the Cemetery to the south of the site and the west of the site by Hanger View Farm the most prominent public view of the site from the Countryside to the west is from the public footpath known as NCN12. This view is approximately 940 metres to the southwest of the site and the view is across arable fields, with the site visible between the two blocks of landscaping at the Cemetery and Hanger View Farm.
 - 2.5 There is significant concern due to the exposure of the development on two sides to open countryside and the prominence of the site at the gateway of the village. A development that does not feature a significant landscape buffer to the south and western boundaries of the site could cause harm to the character and appearance of the area including the intrinsic character and beauty of the Countryside that would weigh heavily against the scheme. However equally the development provides an opportunity to improve the existing visual transition between the settlement of Blunham and the countryside, as well as an opportunity to provide a high quality gateway to the village, in addition to the benefit of homes to meet the Council's identified housing need.
 - 2.6 Therefore it is considered that the scale of development and soft landscaping

are key to the assessment of this application in respect of impact upon the character and appearance of the area, including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

- 2.7 When considering the Character of built development within Blunham and the edge of settlement location of the site, it is considered that development should not appear prominent and should be sensitively designed to form a visual transition of development into the open countryside. The proposed development would result in a density per hectare of approximately 28 which does not constitute high density and is representative of the density levels within Blunham.
- 2.8 When considering the character and scale of development within Blunham and the edge of countryside location of the site, it is considered necessary, relevant and reasonable to impose a condition that would ensure no building within the site would be of a greater scale than two storeys in height. The scale of each individual building forms a reserved matter and as such would be subject to consideration at that stage.
- 2.9 Although this application is for outline planning permission the application includes a Landscape Strategy that includes a significant landscaping strip to the west and south of the site with a substantial landscaping buffer to the southwester corner of the site, which are beyond the curtilage of dwellings, to ensure maintenance of such features. It is considered that such landscaping buffers are in principle essential to ensuring development would not cause significant and demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the area and the intrinsic character and beauty of the Countryside. Therefore it is considered necessary, relevant and reasonable to impose a condition that would ensure any subsequent application for reserved matters would include a substantial landscape buffers for the full length of the western and southern boundaries of the site, to ensure that development upon the site would not cause significant and demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the area and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, which if not provided to an acceptable standard would be considered to outweigh the benefits of the development.
- 2.10 It should be noted that there is an existing mixed hedgerow and trees to the front of the site which forms a positive feature in the gateway of the village, providing a visual transition from the countryside to rural village settlement. Although this existing planting is a positive feature, this feature would be required to be removed as a result of the proposed development due to the conflict of requiring a safe pedestrian footpath and the realignment of a drainage ditch. It should be noted however that this feature is not protected by the Hedgerow Regulations and could be removed at any time. Landscaping is a reserved matter, and as such an acceptable landscaping scheme would be sought at that stage.
- 2.11 For the reasons outlined above, subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed development would not cause significant and demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the area, including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, in accordance with Policy CS14, CS16, DM3 and DM14 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 2.12 Matters relating to the detailed appearance, layout, landscaping and scale of the development form reserved matters. Concern has been raised in relation to the proposed developments impact upon the Conservation Area of Blunham, however when considering the Conservation Area is hundreds of metres away from the site, with limited intervisibility between the site and the Conservation Area, it is not considered that the development would affect this heritage asset.

3. Impact upon the amenity and living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings and the future occupiers of dwellings within the development

- 3.1 The layout, landscaping, scale and appearance of buildings are reserved matters and as such the detailed impacts of development upon neighbouring dwellings, in relation to loss of light, outlook, privacy or overbearing impacts cannot be assessed in detail at this stage. However it is considered that it has been demonstrated that the site is of a scale that a development up to 44 dwellings could be designed without causing harm to the amenity and living conditions of neighbouring dwellings and providing acceptable amenity and living conditions of future occupiers, in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (2014). The detail of the development will be assessed at reserved matters stage.
- 3.2 For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the proposed development could be acceptable in the context of Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. Housing Mix and Affordable Housing

- 4.1 Under Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy, 35% of all developments for four dwellings and above should be provided as Affordable Housing units. The proposal for up to 44 units or more would qualify for Affordable Housing provision and 35%. The applicant has proposed a 35% affordable provision across the development and shall form heads of terms for the legal agreement that would be required if Members resolve to grant consent. As such the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policy CS7.
- 4.2 In addition to the above affordable housing provision the development would include three over 55's bungalows, to meet local needs as an additional benefit weighing in favour of the development. It is considered to be necessary, relevant and reasonable to impose a condition to secure this accommodation as a benefit that weighs in favour of the development. The applicant has agreed to the provision of these dwellings.

5. Highway Safety and Car Parking

- 5.1 Concern is raised in relation to existing traffic through Blunham and the traffic implications of development upon the site. However the Councils Highways Development Control Officer has raised no objection to residential development on this site. The application is supported by a robust Transport Assessment detailing traffic generation and distribution that confirms that the access and surrounding highway network has sufficient capacity to accommodate the traffic movements from the new development.
- 5.2 The application indicates the provision of a pedestrian footway along the whole

frontage of the site linking up with the existing provision at the Junction at Jubilee Close. It is considered necessary, relevant and reasonable to impose a condition, to ensure the provision of a 2 metre wide footway.

- 5.3 The submission includes details of the proposed estate road junction onto Barford Road that accords with current design criteria. The application proposes to modify the existing traffic calming measures intended to encourage lower speeds where the proposed junction arrangements conflicts with those measures as well as supplement with a pedestrian crossing. Such off-site works are desirable in this case however the Highway Authority have requested a commuted sum of £44,000 (£1000 per dwelling) to be secured by S106 agreement to enable a comprehensive scheme to be development rather than piecemeal in the context of the neighbouring sites application under CB/16/04323/OUT. The applicant has agreed to this obligation.
- 5.4 When considering the low density of development is considered that a development of up to 44 dwellings within the site could comply with the Councils Parking Standards and this matter would be fully addressed through a reserved matters submission.
- 5.5 As such it is considered, subject to conditions and S106 agreement, 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.

6. Other Planning Obligations

- 6.1 Significant weight should be given to the National Planning Policy Framework, which calls for the achievement of the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. It is considered that Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy for the North is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. This states that developers are required to make appropriate contributions as necessary to offset the cost of providing new physical, social, community and environmental proposals .
- 6.2 In this case, Spending Officers were consulted and comments returned from Education and Leisure. The following contributions are requested and shall form heads of terms for the legal agreement that would be required if Members resolve to grant consent. As such, it is considered that the proposal would conform with policy CS2 of the Core Strategy for the North.
- 6.3 Education:
- 6.4 A number of concerns have been expressed about the further impact on the existing schools within the catchment area as a result of this development. The Council's Education Spending Officer has raised no objection to the application subject to the following financial contribution:
- 92.£101,393.60** towards the expansion of John Dune Lower School in Blunham to accommodate pupils from this development.
- 6.5 The middle school is Alban Middle and the upper school is Sandy Upper. Alban is within Bedford Borough and schools here are currently going through a re-organisation to 2-tier. It is not yet clear how this will affect the capacity at

Alban, or what the knock-on effect of the changes in Beds will be to schools in the Sandy area. At this moment in time only lower school contributions are required.

6.6 Leisure:

- 6.7 The Council's Leisure Officer has raised no objection to the development in relation to additional children from the development requiring outdoor sports facilities and children's play facilities, subject to the following financial contributions:

93. £30,000 for the construction of two Local Areas of Play at Blunham Recreational Ground

94. £13,955 calculated in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator for the upgrade of existing sport facilities at Blunham Recreational Ground.

6.8 NHS services:

- 6.9 A number of concerns have been expressed about the further impact on the existing health provisions within Blunham as a result of this development. The CCG was consulted as part of this application, but at the date of this report no response has been received and as such, despite local concerns raised, there is no evidence base to support the requirement for additional NHS service provisions on the basis of the number of units proposed for this development. Any response received following this report shall be included in the Late Sheet.

Build Rate Timetable

6.10

The applicant has confirmed their acceptance to agreeing a build rate timetable which would be controlled by a legal agreement. As a result, this reaffirms that the development would contribute to the councils 5 year housing supply and as such significant weight can be applied to the provision of housing towards that supply.

6.11

It is considered that these obligations are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. The developer has agreed to these obligations.

6.12

7. Biodiversity

- 7.1 The Council's Ecologist has raised no concern in relation to the impact to protected species which are not expected from this development. Furthermore the Council's Ecologist has raised no objection to the removal of the existing hedgerow on site subject to mitigation through additional new planting.

- 7.2 The Ecologist has expressed that any future landscaping scheme should include locally native species which are nectar and berry rich to bringing the maximum benefit for biodiversity and has requested a condition for the provision of integral bat and bird boxes provided in the built fabric of dwellings on the south and western boundaries of the site to provide a net gain for biodiversity, in accordance with the NPPF.

7.3 The detail of a landscaping scheme is a reserved matter and as such the detail of species of plants has been reserved for a later application. However it is considered necessary, relevant and reasonable to impose a condition for the submission of a scheme for the provision of bird and bat boxes within the site.

7.4 Subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable in this context.

8. Flood Risk and SUD's

8.1 The site is located within Flood Zone Area 1 whereby the probability of flooding is identified as being low. As such, no representation has been received from the Environment agency.

8.2 From 6th April 2015 local planning policies and decisions on planning applications relating to major development, must ensure that sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water runoff are put in place, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. A flood risk assessment and an indicative surface water drainage strategy was supplied for consideration as part of the application and 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 detailed design and provision at the reserved matters stage and details of maintenance via condition. In addition, neither the Internal Drainage Board or Anglian Water have wished to raise an objection to this application, subject to conditions of control of the provision as suggested by our SuDs officer. As such it is considered that the proposal accords with the Councils adopted SuDs guidance and the section 10 of the NPPF.

9. Green Infrastructure

9.1 The Council's Green Infrastructure Officer raised concerns in relation to the original illustrative layout for the proposed development which included fragmented green spaces throughout the site. The layout of the development is a reserved matter, however a revised illustrative layout has been submitted to address this concern. A single open green space has been provided. The amended illustrative layout includes a single larger green space in the public realm to increase the areas potential benefit/ use.

9.2 It is considered that it has been demonstrated that the development could provide accessible land for informal recreation within the site, in accordance with Policy DM16 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009). The layout of the development is a reserved matter.

10. Energy efficiency

10.1 Policy DM1 requires that developments achieve 10% or more of their own energy requirements through on-site or near site renewable or low carbon technologies unless it can be demonstrated that to do so would be impracticable or unviable. Policy DM2 requires that all proposals for new development should contribute towards sustainable building principles.

10.2 A condition would require details of energy efficiency measures.

11. Fire Hydrants

- 11.1 The Bedfordshire Fire Service has identified that new residential developments should allow for the provision of fire hydrants and appropriate access. This is a matter than could be designed into the layout at the detailed application stage and can be controlled by condition.

12. Foul Drainage

- 12.1 Anglian Water in relation to this development and the capacity of foul water drainage infrastructure has raised no objection to the proposed development. Subject to a condition that would ensure that an appropriate foul water drainage strategy is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, it is considered that the development would be acceptable within this context.

13. Noise and disturbance

- 13.1 The Council's Pollution Team has raised concerns in relation to noise and disturbance to future residence of the proposed development in relation to noise generated from vehicular movements on Barford Road and noise generated from the adjoining land to the west and south of the site as a working farm.

- 13.2 It is not considered that such levels of noise would be materially different from that experienced by dwellings upon Jubilee Close, Barford Road or The Avenue which do not feature such noise mitigation measures. No history of noise complaints from such uses have been used to evidence such a requirement upon the development. Therefore when considering the nature and frequency of such movements and activities, the location of existing neighbouring dwellings, and the lack of a history of complaints relating to noise it is not considered necessary or reasonable to impose a condition for noise mitigation measures.

- 13.3 It is considered that the development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers in the context of Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

14. Equality and Human Rights

- 14.1 Based on information submitted there are no known issues raised in the context of Human Rights/ The Equalities Act 2010 and as such there would be no relevant implications.

15. Loss of agricultural land

- 15.1 The development site would result in the loss of Grade 1 good quality agricultural land whereby paragraph 112 of the NPPF states *"Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality"*.

- 15.2 It is considered that the loss of this high quality land is a negative impact of the development that weighs against the scheme, however when considering the planning policy context of a lack of five year housing land supply, and in the context that some weight can be given the Council's position of nearing its supply, it is not considered that the loss of 1.6 Hectares of Grade 1 agricultural

land is of such significance as to warrant the refusal of planning permission individually or collectively with the other dis-benefits identified within this report that cannot be mitigated by conditions or obligations.

16. The Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 16.1 Planning law requires that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 16.2 The Council cannot currently demonstrate an ability to meet its housing need for the next five-year period. As such, Policy DM4, insofar as it prevents development outside of the Settlement Envelope, is out of date. That said, appropriate weight can be afforded to 'out of date' policies because the Council can demonstrate an ability meet a large proportion of its housing need.
- 16.3 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF. Where an ability to meet identified housing need cannot be demonstrated, the development would be sustainable if the dis-benefits of the development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 16.4 Significant weight must be given to the delivery of up to 44 homes (including affordable homes and over 55's accommodation) at the site over the next five-year period. Weight is also given in favour of development in relation to the provision of jobs during construction and the benefit of softening the existing urban edge of Blunham.
- 16.5 Subject to Conditions and planning obligations outlined it is considered that there are no harmful impacts associated with the development that individually or collectively that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development.

Recommendation:

That Outline Planning Permission be **GRANTED** subject to a S106 agreement and the following Conditions:

- 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 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 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 Any subsequent reserved matters application shall include the provision of three over 55's bungalows. Each of the bungalows hereby approved shall be occupied only by :
- a) persons aged 55 or older; or
 - b) a widow or widower of such a person or persons, or
 - c) any resident dependant or dependants of such a person or persons, or
 - d) a resident carer of such a person or persons.

Reason: In view of the need for elderly accommodation in the area and in accordance with the NPPF.

- 5 Any subsequent reserved matters application shall not include any dwellings that are more than 2 storeys in height.

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.

- 6 Any subsequent reserved matters application shall include strategic landscaping buffers beyond the curtilages of dwelling houses along the southern and western edge of the site.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area including the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside on this prominent gateway and edge of settlement site, in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009), thereby ensuring the harm caused by the development does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of development in accordance with the NPPF.

- 7 **No development shall take place until a implementation timetable for all hard and soft landscaping, in full accordance with the Landscaping details approved under Condition 2 and a ten year Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan from the date of its implementation have 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. All landscaping shall be implemented in accordance with the approved implementation timetable and shall be maintained and managed in accordance with the approved maintenance and management plan following its implementation.**

Reason: Details are required prior to the commencement of development 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 and the harm of the development would not outweigh the benefits in accordance with the NPPF.

- 8 Prior to occupation of any dwelling approved as part of any reserved matters application the means of access shall be constructed in accordance with the details shown on the submitted plan: IR.BGVABLUNHAM.21_02 Rev: B.

Reason: To ensure the provision of appropriate access arrangements and associated off-site highway works in the interests of highway safety.

- 9 **Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, no development shall commence until details of a 2 metre wide footway along the entire site frontage to form a continuous link to the junction of Jubilee Close has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include surfacing and kerbing materials. The dwelling hereby approved shall not be occupied until such time as the footway has been constructed in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: The details are required prior to commencement to safeguard the historic character and appearance of the area and in the interests of road safety and pedestrian movement, in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009).

- 10 **No development shall take place until details of the existing and final ground, ridge 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. Thereafter the site shall be developed in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: Details are required prior to the commencement of development 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).

- 11 **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: Details are required prior to the commencement of development 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.

- 12 **No development shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on the agreed Flood Risk Assessment (BGVABLUNHAM.10 Rev B and Soakage Test Report PN199) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of a site specific ground investigation report (in accordance with BRE 365 standards) to determine the infiltration capacity of the underlying geology and ground water level, as well as details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion. The scheme shall include provision of attenuation and a restriction in run-off to agreed rates. The scheme shall 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.**

Reason: Details are required prior to the commencement of development to ensure the approved system will function to a satisfactory minimum standard of operation and maintenance and prevent the increased risk of flooding both on and off site, in accordance with para 103 NPPF.

- 13 No dwelling shall be occupied until the developer has formally submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority a management and maintenance plan for the surface water drainage and that the approved surface water drainage scheme has been checked by them, has been correctly and fully installed as per the approved details. The scheme shall 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.

Reason: 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.

- 14 **No development shall take place (including ground works or site clearance) until a method statement for the creation of new wildlife features such as hibernacula and the erection of bird/bat boxes in buildings/structures and tree, hedgerow, shrub and wildflower planting/establishment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the method statement shall include the:**

- a) purpose and objectives for the proposed works;**
- b) detailed design(s) and/or working method(s) necessary to achieve stated objectives (including, where relevant, type and source of materials to be used);**
- c) extent and location of proposed works shown on appropriate scale maps and plans;**
- d) timetable for implementation, demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of construction;**
- e) persons responsible for implementing the works;**

The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter

Reason: Details are required prior to the commencement of development to ensure the development is ecologically sensitive and secures biodiversity enhancements in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 15 The details required by Condition 2 of this permission shall include a scheme of measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change and deliver sustainable and resource efficient development including opportunities to meet higher water efficiency standards and building design, layout and orientation, natural features and landscaping to maximise natural ventilation, cooling and solar gain. The scheme shall then be carried out in full in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure the development is resilient and adaptable to the impacts arising from climate change in accordance with the NPPF.

- 16 **No development shall take place until a scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the provision of fire hydrants at the development. Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings the fire hydrants serving that development shall be installed as approved. Thereafter the fire hydrants shall be retained as approved in perpetuity.**

Reason: Details are required prior to the commencement of development in order to ensure appropriate access to fire hydrants for use in the event of emergency in accordance with policy DM3 of Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy for the North and Section 7 of the NPPF.

- 17 **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: Details are required prior to the commencement of development in the interest of safeguarding the local residential amenity and highway safety, in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Section 4, 7 and 13 of the NPPF.

- 18 **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: Details are required prior to the commencement of development, in the interests of sustainability, in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies and Section 10 of the NPPF.

- 19 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.

- 20 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers BLU1608_L001, IR.BGVABLUNHAM.21_02 Rev: B (insofar as it proposes the development access arrangements only).

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 and the developer are advised that this permission is subject to a legal obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
3. The applicant is advised that if it is the intention to request Central Bedfordshire Council as Local Highway Authority, to adopt the proposed highways within the site 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 Highways Agreements Officer, Highways Contracts team, Community Services, 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 unless otherwise agreed.
4. 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.

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

The Council acted pro-actively through early engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and 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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