

Item No. 9

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/18/03781/FULL
LOCATION	32 Shefford Road, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LN
PROPOSAL	Demolition of No. 32 Shefford Road and existing nursery buildings, and the construction of 60 No. dwellings, new vehicle access, site-wide highways works, and provision of associated landscaping and amenity space (including SuDS).
PARISH	Meppershall
WARD	Shefford
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllrs Liddiard & Brown
CASE OFFICER	Nicola Darcy
DATE REGISTERED	09 October 2018
EXPIRY DATE	08 January 2019
APPLICANT	Inland Homes PLC
AGENT	Planning Potential Ltd.
REASON FOR COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE	1. Departure from Development Plan 2. Major development with Parish Council Objection
RECOMMENDED DECISION	Full Application - For approval subject to a S.106 Agreement

Summary of recommendation:

The proposed residential development on the site represents a departure to the Development Plan. The site is considered to be a sustainable location for development with appropriate levels of access to the settlements services and amenities. The development will result in change to the countryside setting but any such harm would be mitigated through landscape design. Matters relating to highway safety and capacity are acceptable and can be mitigated through condition. A range of other material considerations including neighbour amenity, ecology and flood risk are neutral whilst positive weight can be given to the provision of housing and a policy compliant level of affordable housing.

Site Location:

The site lies to the south east of Shefford Road, adjoining the highway at no.32 Shefford Road, a detached dwelling which is to be demolished as part of the application proposals, to provide access into the site. The site measures 3 hectares and is a generally rectangular plot of arable land, previously in use as a nursery.

There are two dilapidated greenhouses along the northern boundary of the site in addition to the detached two-storey dwelling fronting Shefford Road. The site has a slight west to east gradient, with the existing two-storey dwelling the highest point on site. The topographical survey details a 7m drop from west to east.

There are no statutory or locally listed buildings on or within close proximity to the site. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. Meppershall Conservation Area lies to the south of the village, encompassing Manor House and its curtilage, St Mary's Church Road and residential dwellings along Church Road and Shillington Road.

The site is bounded to the south east by Hoo Road, a single-track lane which provides access to the farmland to the north, which degrades into a gravel bridleway. The rear gardens of residential dwellings border the site to the north west and south west.

The application site sits adjacent to the defined Settlement Envelope Boundary of Meppershall to the north and west, adjoining existing residential properties, and within the open countryside.

The Application:

Full Planning Permission is sought for the demolition of the existing dwelling at no. 32 Shefford Road and existing nursery buildings, and the construction of 60 no. dwellings with a density of 30 dwellings per hectare, a new vehicle access, site-wide highways works, and the provision of associated landscaping and amenity space (including SuDS).

The following reports, drawings and documents are submitted as part of the application:

- Cover Letter;
- Application Drawings;
- Design and Access Statement;
- CGI / Visuals;
- Surface Water Drainage Strategy;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Transport Assessment;
- Travel Plan;
- Topographical Survey;
- Statement of Community Involvement;
- Noise Statement;
- Tree Report;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement;
- Soft Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan;
- Soft Landscape Specification;
- Landscaping Plans; and
- Sustainability Assessment.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2018)

Core Strategy and Development Management Policies - North 2009

CS1 - Development Strategy

CS2 - Developer Contributions

CS7: Affordable Housing
CS14 - High Quality Design
CS15 - Heritage
CS16: Landscape & Woodland
CS17: Green Infrastructure
CS18: Biodiversity & Geological Conservation
DM1: Renewable Energy
DM2: Sustainable Construction of New Buildings
DM3 - High Quality Design
DM4 - Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes
DM5: Important Open Spaces within Settlement Envelopes
DM13 - Heritage in Development
DM14 - Landscape and Woodland
DM15 - Biodiversity
DM17: Accessible Green Spaces

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan - Emerging

The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan has reached submission stage and was submitted to the Secretary of State on 30 April 2018.

The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 48) stipulates that from the day of publication, decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The apportionment of this weight is subject to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan;
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies;
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework.

Reference should be made to the Central Bedfordshire Submission Local Plan which should be given limited weight having regard to the above. The following policies are relevant to the consideration of this application:

SP2: Sustainable Development
SP5: Preventing Coalescence/Important Countryside Gaps
H1: Housing Mix
H2: Housing Standards
T2: Highway Safety & Design
T3: Parking
EE2: Biodiversity
CC5: Sustainable Drainage
HQ1: High Quality Development

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Other Documents

Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (March 2014)

Relevant Planning History:

Application:	Planning	Number:	CB/18/03346/PAPC
Validated:	31/08/2018	Type:	Pre-Application - Charging Fee
Status:	Decided	Date:	15/10/2018
Summary:			
Description:	Pre-Application Non-Householder Advice: Residential development of 62 dwellings.		
Application:	Planning	Number:	CB/18/03077/PAPC
Validated:	13/08/2018	Type:	Pre-Application - Charging Fee
Status:	Decided	Date:	28/09/2018
Summary:			
Description:	Pre-Application Advice Non-Householder: Development of the site for housing (62 units), including access, landscaping and drainage.		
Application:	Planning	Number:	CB/18/01151/PAPC
Validated:	27/03/2018	Type:	Pre-Application - Charging Fee
Status:	Decided	Date:	08/06/2018
Summary:			
Description:	Pre-Application Non-Householder Advice: Residential development of 64 dwellings.		

Consultees:

Parish Council

MPC would like to record the possible faults in the assumption that this application will “go ahead” and these include the following:

1. Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has recently submitted its Local Plan 2035 for approval by an Inspector. The inspection process examines all areas of the submitted Local Plan 2035 and when representations from all stakeholders both for and against the Local Plan are in hand, the Inspector will then decide if the submitted Local Plan and the various policies within it can be approved.

The site described in this application was put forward by the land owner in the Local Plan 2035 “call for sites” and forms part the basis of draft Policy SA4. MPC considers that the granting of full approval for this application, CB/18/03781/FULL, should not be assumed in advance of the Inspector’s decision concerning the submitted Local Plan as a whole. MPC contests that this full application is in fact premature and other factors must be included in a thorough and up to date assessment now, or at the appropriate time when the Local Plan has been approved or modified, rather than relying on the preliminary assessment included as part of draft Policy SA4.

MPC has been advised that government Planning Practice Guidance para 14 states that an application can be refused as premature if:

a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development central to an emerging Local

Plan or neighbourhood planning; and

b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

2. Since the assessment of this historical call for sites, a Judicial Review has overturned CBC's refusal of planning application CB/17/03887/OUT Stocken House, 59 Shefford Road, Meppershall, Shefford, SG17 5LL (outline permission except for access for 145 homes) and the application is now granted with conditions. 59 Shefford Road was included in the call for sites exercise and assessed as unsuitable to carry forward into draft Policy SA4 and not included in the draft Local Plan.

3. The fact that Meppershall will now contribute 145 properties to the housing targets in the submitted Local Plan adds to the unsustainability of another 60 properties on the opposite side of Shefford Road in this application.

It must also be queried whether this site would have passed the initial assessment for the submitted Local Plan if it had been known at the time that 145 houses were to be built nearly opposite. CBC announced that it has a robust 5 Year Forward Land Supply of 5.82 years, as at 1 July 2018. CBC has no need for additional development land at this time and should wait until the Inspector has determined the validity of the submitted Local Plan 2035 and Policy SA4 and substantial sites properly assessed then.

4. The development proposed under this application is substantial and its cumulative effect on local services, including schooling, transport and highways over and above the effect of application CB/17/03887/OUT 59 Shefford Road would be so significant that to grant permission would deepen the harm to the community caused by the approval of application CB/17/03887/OUT 59 Shefford Road.

5. The entrances to the two sites 32 and 59 Shefford Road are less than 150 metres apart on opposite sides of the single carriageway of Shefford Road and will create an unsustainable highways challenge in Shefford Road, which is the main artery in this linear village. The site entrance is also impacted by the newly completed development opposite, approved under CB/17/02143/FULL on land adjacent to 23 Shefford Road, with six semi-detached chalet style dwellings.

6. Draft Policy SA4 page 10 http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/exam-5aa-annex-26-site-assessments-stage-b_tcm3-30795.pdf shows that the assessment is that the developable area on this site, based on the density of the settlement hierarchy, has a capacity of 47. This FULL application requests 60 houses. Therefore, this site should be unacceptable to CBC.

On balance it is MPC's view that the Application should be

Highways

refused at this time on the grounds of prematurity until it can be properly assessed when the Local Plan is approved.

The road layout shows a 4.8m wide carriageway with 2m wide footways only on the western side though it is shown on the Site Access Drawing. This does not comply with the 2014 Design Guide in that footways or service margins of 2m are required on both sides and around turning heads.

As there are several roads that contain more than five dwellings, they should be provided with 2m wide footways/service margins and turning heads. Only private drives for plots 25 to 28 and 29 to 31 are deemed to be private drives. However, a turning head is required elsewhere and where a fire tender would not comply with Approved Document B i.e. within 45m of the nearest highway to the furthest room in a dwelling, namely private drive serving plots 29 to 31. The RCV tracking plan will need to be to scale which is not currently the case.

In relation to car parking triple tandem parking is not permitted but unallocated residential has been provided for plots 16 to 22 has been provided. Visitor parking should be evenly dispersed through the development with inset parking bays, visitor spaces in private areas would not count. Disability spaces for corresponding dwellings have been provided as per the guidance. Access to cycle parking needs to be provided to the covered/secure cycle parking including where garages are provided. Garages to have 6m parking space directly in front of the door.

There are a number of highway issues that need to be addressed, different plans have different features where as they should be showing the same. A number of roads need to be widened to include footways or service margins at 2m on both sides and around turning head areas, including the need for a turning head in the vicinity of plot 24. If a flush shared surface is proposed throughout the development, that would be acceptable but changes to different materials would not be. It is felt that a meeting would be ideal to look at the issues that have been raised.

Amended plans have been submitted, the revised Highway comments will be reported on the Late Sheet.

Pollution

Initial comments stated that the submitted noise assessment did not assess noise from the commercial building with HGV parking in the yard area that is located at 36b Shefford Road and is immediately adjacent to plot 6 of the proposed development or the noise impact of the new site entrance road on the existing dwellings immediately adjacent to 32 Shefford Road.

Archaeology

The initial objection overcome by the submission of a Noise Assessment, recommends condition regarding potential contamination.

The proposed development site lies adjacent to the historic core of the settlement of Meppershall (HER 17105) and under the terms of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) this is a heritage asset with archaeological interest. However, the archaeological potential of this area is currently considered to be low. Consequently, if planning consent is granted for the development proposals outlined in this application, there will be no archaeological constraint.

SUDS
Landscape

No objection subject to recommendations and conditions Development layout not acceptable in terms of orientation of proposed development onto landscape boundaries to wider open rural landscape to north-east - this advice was provided as Pre App stage.

Exposed development edge to north eastern site boundary is not acceptable - interface with wider rural landscape must be mitigated effectively and appropriately to integrate and screen future development via strategic planting and this must be incorporated within the public realm, with proposed development orientated on to this edge in a positive arrangement and strategic landscape mitigation not forming back garden boundaries.

The inclusion of landscape buffers and on site garden trees to integrate development with existing residential edges is a positive measure as is the proposed landscape / GI link through development to Hoo Lane and wider PROW network.

Revision of development layout and appropriate integration of landscape mitigation in relation to north-east site boundary is required.

Amended plans have been submitted, the revised Landscape comments will be reported on the Late Sheet.

Sustainability Officer

The applicants' approach to achieving requirements of policies CS13, DM1, DM2 and emerging policy CC1 proposed in the Energy and Sustainability Statement (September 2018) is welcomed and supported. To ensure that the outlined measures are incorporated into the development and policy requirements are achieved, it is requested that following evidence is provided prior to commencement of construction work:

Part L 2013 compliance sheets (as designed) showing a minimum 10% improvement over and above the Building Regulations;

Part G water calculator sheets for each dwelling design showing achievement of the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day;

Evidence that dwellings are not at risk of overheating.

It is also requested that a Post-construction Validation Report is submitted. This report is to include as-built evidence.

GI Officer

The link provided through the site to Hoo Lane is welcomed and will meet with the wider RoW network. However, the planting could be stronger to provide a clear, connected corridor. This can be achieved by the use of shrubs and trees in the public realm. The green space to the East of the site should include more planting and not just be an area of short cut grass with limited GI value. Again, a varied planting proposal for the site should be provided.

The use of trees in private gardens to help integrate the development with the neighbouring residential developments is positive.

Ecology

Having read the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) it is apparent that number 32 Shefford Rd contains a maternity bat roost and consequently the applicant will need to apply for a European Protected Species licence from Natural England to allow lawful destruction of the roost.

Mitigation measures for this loss and ecological enhancements in addition are detailed in the report, however as the NPPF now expects development to deliver net gains the number of additional bat and bird boxes is poor and more would be expected. To ensure site clearance and construction is undertaken in an ecologically sensitive manner conditions are advised.

Local Plans

Thank you for consulting the Local Plans team. As of 1st November 2018, the council can demonstrate a 5.84-year supply of housing. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development should not be engaged. This site has already come forward as part of the Call for Sites process of the Draft Local Plan. The site was successful and allocated under HAS39. Whilst there was some issues highlighted in the call for sites process, including access, education, ecology and landscape, mitigation measure were identified to address these. The site during the Call for Sites process came forward with 47 dwellings to be built. However, the planning application has come forward for 60 dwellings. As long as the site can still provide a sustainable development and does not impede any mitigation measures identified through our assessment of the site.

As the Local Plan is awaiting examination, full weight

cannot be given to its policies but increasing consideration and weight should be given to the Local Plan as it approaches examination and adoption. As the Local Plan is not yet adopted, the degree of weight applied is for the case officer to determine.

MANOP (Meeting the Accommodation Needs of Older People Team)

The requirement for new housing development to meet the needs of older people is set out in Policy H3 of the Local Plan 2015-2035.

Although a number of the units proposed are stated on the accommodation schedule to meet Category 2 of Part M of the Building Regulations examination of the plans of those units have led to the conclusion that despite this most do not meet the standard for accommodation suitable for older people. This is primarily because these dwellings (whilst potentially adaptable) are not liveable on a single floor. As submitted, the two (2) ground floor apartments and the three (3) wheelchair standard dwellings are of a design and layout suitable for older people. The proposed development therefore does not meet the above policy requirement of eight (8) units.

Fire and Rescue Service

Request that 8 units of mainstream housing should be provided for older people.

IDB

Need one hydrant at least every 180 metres – with no property further than 90 metres from the nearest hydrant.

Environment Agency
Housing Development Officer

No development should take place within 9 metres of the bank top without the board's consent. No objection.

No objection

In the current format, Strategic Housing are unable to offer support to the application and object on the non-compliance of affordable housing provision. The supporting Planning Statement indicates the application for 60 dwellings provides for 32% affordable housing equating to the provision of 19 affordable units which is contrary to current affordable housing policy. We would expect to see 35% affordable housing equating to 21 affordable housing units from the development.

Conservation Officer

No objections

Other Representations:

Neighbours

58 Objections on the following grounds:

- Noise from neighbouring kennels
- Possible contaminated land
- Impact on protected species
- Access poor visibility
- Traffic congestion
- No public transport access
- Impact upon amenity of existing residents

CPRE

- Demolition of 32 Shefford Rd
 - Overdevelopment of Meppershall
 - Greater burden upon schools and GP's
 - Surface water flood risk
 - layout should be redesigned behind 45 and 47 Orchard Close
 - loss of sense of community
 - Proposed junction dangerous
- Objection on the following grounds:
- application is premature
 - land is considered as Grade 2, best and most versatile
 - housing allocation in Meppershall has already been exceeded by other permitted sites
 - Unsustainable site in Environmental terms
 - Site not suitable on economical grounds due to insufficient contributions
 - Site not sustainable on grounds of transport

Determining Issues:

The main considerations of the application are;

1. Principle of Development
2. Sustainable Development
3. Highway impact and access
4. Character and Appearance
5. Neighbour amenity impact
6. Other considerations
7. Planning Balance
8. Conclusion

Considerations

1. Principle of Development

- 1.1 The site is located to the east of Meppershall, between Hoo Road and Shefford Road. The site is located to the east of the Settlement Envelope, which adjoins the boundary of the site on the northern and western boundaries. The site is currently a horticultural nursery, and therefore an agricultural use.
- 1.2 Policy CS1 classifies settlements by virtue of their scale, services and facilities. Further, the thrust of Policy DM4 is to apply weight in favour of development within Settlement Envelopes and restrict development divorced from the settlements identified within Policy CS1. This policy position is largely echoed by Policy SP7 within the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.3 Policy DM4 restricts new housing development on land outside of the settlement envelope and, on this basis, the majority of the application site is regarded as contrary to that policy.
- 1.4 The Council is able to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land in excess of the 5 year requirement. Therefore, the Council's policies concerned

with the supply of housing are not considered to be out of date and paragraph 11 of the NPPF is not therefore engaged. However, proposals should still be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development – the over-arching principle of the NPPF - that is the determining consideration in this application.

- 1.5 As indicated above, the Local Plan is afforded limited weight only at the present time, given its stage of preparation. The Local Plan sets out a clear direction of travel for the allocation of various sites within the administrative boundary of the Council.
- 1.6 The emerging Local Plan proposes to allocate the site for residential development under Policy HA1: Small and Medium Allocations (Site Ref: NLP237). The site assessment states that the number of houses the site could accommodate is 54 dwellings with no significant landscape, heritage or access constraints.
- 1.7 The Parish Council are critical that planning permission should not be approved until the Local Plan has been examined. As noted above, given the stage of preparation, the emerging Local Plan is currently only awarded limited weight – the development should therefore be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the planning balancing exercise of weighing positive aspects of the development against negative impacts. In respect of any concern in respect of prematurity, the NPPF sets out that a refusal of planning permission that an application is premature is unlikely to be justified other than where it is clear that the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, taking the policies in the Framework and any other material considerations into account. The NPPF goes on to explain that two such circumstances are likely, but not exclusively, to be limited to situations where both the development proposal is so substantial that the grant of permission would undermines the plan making process or phasing of new development and, the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but not yet formally part of the Development Plan.
- 1.8 The development is for 60 dwellings and, in the context of the overall strategy for Central Bedfordshire, is not significant and will not therefore prejudice the Local Plan process. A refusal of planning permission on prematurity grounds is not therefore justified.

2. Sustainable Development

- 2.1 Although it is acknowledged that the development is, for the most part, contrary to policy DM4 it is also considered that the individual merits of this site and its relationship to the existing settlement (as explained in more detail below) are such that the loss of open countryside in this instance is not considered to result in a significantly harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- 2.2 Weight can also be given to the benefit of the site providing housing and the provision of affordable housing. The NPPF requires Local Authorities to significantly boost the supply of housing and the evidence base which

supports the emerging Local Plan sets out a clear need for affordable units. Significant weight can therefore be given to the provision of housing and affordable housing.

- 2.3 Considerations of other material considerations relating to the objectives of sustainable development are discussed further in the report.

3. Highway impact and access

- 3.1 The plans submitted show that there will be appropriate levels of access between the site and existing highway infrastructure to encourage pedestrian and cycle access to the village's amenities.
- 3.2 To the south of the site the plans submitted show that the site will maintain a pedestrian link into Hoo Lane.
- 3.3 Having regard to the advice from the Highways Officer, the proposed layout has been amended and further advice with regard to the acceptability of the revisions is awaited from the Highways Officer (which will be reported on the Late Sheet). There will inevitably be increased traffic movements associated with the development however, no objections are raised by the Highway Officer in relation to capacity of existing highway infrastructure and the development does not represent a severe impact in NPPF terms.

4. Character and Appearance

- 4.1 The proposed development, comprising 60 dwellings will inevitably and fundamentally alter the character of the site.
- 4.2 The site is located on the north-eastern edge of Meppershall to the south-east of Shefford Road. Meppershall is a large village with a scattered settlement pattern and Shefford Road / High Street is at its core.
- 4.3 The site is an arable field with a detached two storey house facing Shefford Road on its most north-western edge, and the majority of the site is outside the settlement boundary of Meppershall.
- 4.4 The site is bordered by Hoo Road and a Bridleway on its southern edge; this boundary is currently open and there are open views into the site. There is a nursery and another building on its north-eastern edge due to the previous land uses.
- 4.5 Residential development in Meppershall borders the site to the north-west and south-west, and open countryside to the north-east and south-east.
- 4.6 There is a relatively strong public rights of way network in the local area. No public footpaths currently cross the private land containing the site, although Bridleway BW14 is adjacent to the site's south-eastern boundary (on Hoo Road).
- 4.7 The visual effects and possible indirect landscape effects on the of this path has been investigated in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

(LVIA.) As well as users of public rights of way, the effects on recreational users of the Old Meadow Park to the south, residential receptors and road users in the detailed study area has been investigated in the LVIA.

- 4.8 The site lies within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 8D: Upper Gravenhurst - Meppershall Clay Hills which is bordered by Area 4C Upper Ivel Clay Valley.
- 4.9 Meppershall is elevated and there is intervisibility with the surrounding landscape. There are close and medium range views of the village from all directions although vegetation and landform often intervenes in views. New development currently being built out on the villages south-western edge is seen clearly against the skyline in views from the south-west.
- 4.10 The Landscape Officer comments
The Landscape Officer has raised concerns that there would be an exposed development edge to the north eastern site boundary which is not acceptable - and that the interface with wider rural landscape must be mitigated effectively and appropriately to integrate and screen future development via strategic planting within the public realm.
- 4.11 The Landscape Officer acknowledges the inclusion of landscape buffers and on site garden trees to integrate development with existing residential edges is a positive measure as is the proposed landscape / GI link through development to Hoo Lane and wider PROW network.
- 4.12 The application has now been amended to include more landscaping along the north eastern site boundary. It is considered that additional landscaping could be required by condition. Members will be updated on any further comments made by the Landscape Officer in respect of the amended plans.

5. Neighbour amenity impact

- 5.1 Several objections have been received by neighbouring occupiers, however, the relationships between the proposed dwellings and the existing dwellings on all boundary edges are considered to be acceptable with all measurements significantly exceeding 21m back to back distances as recommended by the Council's Design Guide. As such, there would be no harmful impact upon neighbouring amenity.
- 5.2 In relation to the impact of construction and construction vehicles on neighbouring properties in terms of noise and general disturbance. Development of this scale and given the relationship with existing dwellings will inevitably result in a degree of impact on existing residents. However, subject to the imposition of a planning condition requiring detailed construction management plans, is such that such harm will not be significant or to such an extent as to warrant the refusal of the application.

6. Other considerations

- 6.1 S106 and financial contributions
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. Emerging policy in the Local Plan sets out a similar requirement.

6.2 At the time of writing; the Agent acting for the developer has yet to confirm formal agreement to all of the requests from Spending Officers – Members will be updated at the Committee meeting of any comments received. Spending Officers have so far required and suggested the following:

6.3 **Education Contributions**

Early Years	£58,589.37
Lower	£195,297.90
Middle	£196,516.94
Upper	£240,981.81
Total	£691,386.03

Libraries: £12,600

Outdoor Sport: £27,187 is required for the Parish Council's project for the provision of new outdoor gym equipment at Meppershall Rec Gnd. A suggested contribution by the developer is welcomed.

2. Children's Play: £75k towards a new play area and equipment behind the village hall.

3. Allotments: £11,500 is required to improve security fencing, irrigation system and eco toilet at Meppershall Allotments. A suggested contribution by the developer is welcomed.

6.4 Affordable Housing

On receipt of the application, the proposal for Affordable Housing was 32%, the developer has since offered the policy compliant 35% which has overcome the Housing Development Officer's concerns. The tenure split will be determined in the detailed S.106 Agreement.

6.5 The application prioritises the delivery of family housing, in accordance with the 2017 Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This application proposes a mix of one and two -bed flats; and two, three and four -bed houses. The Housing Development Officer has made no objection to the proposed mix.

6.6 Meeting the Accommodation Needs of Older People (MANOP)

The MANOP team have identified that 5 units proposed are of a design and layout suitable for older people, but to be 'policy compliant', 8 should be provided. As the relevant policy, H3, is within the emerging Local Plan, only limited weight can be applied. 35% affordable housing has been agreed to, the affordable housing taken together with the 5 units offered under Category 2 of

Part M of the Building Regulations are considered to be a significant benefit to the scheme.

6.7 Flood Risk and sewerage

The site is within flood zone 1 – a low area of fluvial flood risk. The Flood Risk Team recommend the inclusion of a planning condition requiring a detailed strategy to deal with surface water drainage. The plans submitted show space for green infrastructure and a basin is indicated for sustainable drainage features which will slow the movement of water within the site whilst providing biodiversity and water cleaning benefits.

6.8 Some representations including the Town Council raise objection in relation to sewerage – objections to the planning application from Anglian Water have not been received and this detailed matter will be the subject of separate agreement with that consultee.

6.9 Ecology

The Application Site currently comprises a residential property, former agricultural field and former nursery buildings. The development proposals will see the demolition of the buildings and loss of the former agricultural field. Phase 2 bat surveys have confirmed that the existing residential dwelling supports a maternity roost of common pipistrelle bat with a maximum count of 24 individuals. The common pipistrelle maternity roost is of medium conservation status.

6.10 As the proposals will result in the destruction of the bat roosts, an European Protected Species licence from Natural England will be required prior to the demolition of the building. An outline of the mitigation strategy, which will be detailed further within the EPS licence application, the Agent's report provided demonstrates that the proposed development is capable of achieving a licence.

6.11 The proposed mitigation scheme provides details of the required supervision; timing of works to avoid the times of year when bats are most vulnerable to disturbance (i.e. outside of the maternity and hibernation seasons); and compensatory roosting provision in the form of integrated bat tubes, suitable to support a maternity colony of crevice dwelling species.

6.12 Measures to mitigate for impacts have been set out along with recommendations for enhancement of the Application Site's ecological value. Having regard to National Planning Practice Guidance, from a planning perspective, consideration is required to be given as to whether the Habitat derogation tests will be satisfied as part of that process which are:-1) the activity is for a certain purpose, for example it's in the public interest 2) there is no satisfactory alternative that will cause less harm to the species 3) the activity doesn't harm the long-term conservation status of the species. The Council also has a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 to have regard, in the exercise of its function, the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

6.13 No objections to the development proposal are raised by the Council's Ecologist and it is advised that the applicant will need to apply for a European

Protected Species licence from Natural England to allow lawful destruction of the bat roost. Mitigation measures for this loss and ecological enhancements in addition are detailed in the report, however as the NPPF now expects development to deliver net gains the number of additional bat and bird boxes is poor and more would be expected. To ensure site clearance and construction is undertaken in an ecologically sensitive manner, conditions are recommended. Additionally, whilst the Ecological Impact Assessment does detail some enhancements; it would be helpful to have this clearly set out in a strategy to ensure the proposal is able to deliver a net gain for biodiversity, this can also form a condition.

6.14 Vehicle charging

The Agent's Design and Access Statement states that vehicle charging points will be implemented as demand grows, however a planning condition is recommended requiring information in relation to this matter.

6.15 Impact on future residents - noise

The supporting Noise Assessment demonstrates that existing noise levels pose no constraint to the proposed residential uses and substantive mitigation measures will not be required. Similarly, noise egress from the Dog Kennels, situated approximately 200m from the site, will not require any further mitigation, having been considered as part of the noise assessment. On this basis, thermal double glazing will be more than sufficient to comply with the day and night-time internal noise criteria.

6.16 In line with Policy DM3 and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guidance, the proposals respect the amenity of surrounding properties, with substantial green buffering used along the more sensitive southern boundary. The scheme also ensures that separation distances between properties are appropriate, while the orientation of units ensures that the layout does not give rise to overlooking concerns. It is therefore considered that the proposals will have no materially significant harmful effect upon the privacy of neighbours or future occupiers.

6.17 Best most versatile land

The NPPF sets out that local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of BMV agricultural land. Furthermore it is stated that where the development of significant agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality in preference to that of higher quality. Having regard to the Natural England agricultural land classification the site is classified as grade 2, whilst there will clearly be a loss of agricultural land the loss will not be significant.

6.18 Contamination

Part of the application site incorporates existing agricultural use – and it is therefore necessary and reasonable for investigatory work and necessary mitigation to be required through a planning condition. Any subsequent remediation of contamination would be a benefit to the environment and human health.

7. Planning Balance

- 7.1 Paragraphs 7-10 of the NPPF set out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development – there are three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) which are mutually dependent and should be sought simultaneously through the planning system. Consideration of the development in relation to these dimensions therefore forms part of the balance of considerations of this application:-
- 7.2 Economic
The NPPF makes it clear that planning policies should aim to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping and other activities, therefore planning decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movements are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes maximised. It is acknowledged that the construction of 60 houses would support a limited level of employment, with associated benefits to the local economy, within the local area on a temporary basis during the construction period.
- 7.3 It is also acknowledged that new residents are likely to support existing local services. The future Council Tax payments that would be spent in the area are considered as benefits. Cumulatively these make positive contributions to fulfilling the economic roles.
- 7.4 The site is in close proximity to Shefford which constitute a Minor Service Area which has access to a range of facilities and services which would provide local employment opportunities, although these are not within walking distance of the site and therefore there would be a dependency on public and private transportation. However on the basis of all the considerations above, the development is considered to meet this strand of Sustainable Development.
- 7.5 Social
In order to demonstrate a package of benefits, the agent has put forward affordable housing in line with the policy requirement of 35%, the provision of 60 houses with a proportion of affordable housing is given weight. The provision of affordable housing is noted as a benefit to the scheme, as is the provision of open spaces/play. The agreement of the tenure split is a matter to be reported to committee at the Committee Meeting.
- 7.6 The site is regarded as a sustainable location and it is considered that the settlement offers services and facilities that can accommodate the growth resultant from this scheme.
- 7.7 The development will impact on local infrastructure and as a result, development of a scale as proposed here, is required to offset these impacts, by entering into a S106 agreement to provide financial contributions to mitigate these impacts. The details are discussed above.
- 7.8 Environmental
The site does provide environmental benefits through the provision green infrastructure and informal open space.
- 7.9 The NPPF states that opportunities should be taken to protect and enhance the natural environment and to improve biodiversity. The Councils Ecologist is

satisfied that the proposal could secure additional biodiversity gain through effective detailed design and has suggested a condition to secure this.

- 7.10 The principles of good urban design encourages permeability, access and the NPPF does encourage developments to be designed such that reliance on private vehicles are reduced and use of sustainable modes of transport are encouraged. The planning application as currently proposed would create adequate and appropriate opportunities to access the amenities, services and facilities in Meppershall by walking and cycling by use of the access to Hoo Lane to the south of the site which leads to further outdoor recreation opportunities. Furthermore, there is an agreement by the applicant to enter into a S.106 agreement to provide a financial contribution which will fund outdoor sports equipment alongside the pitch on the recreation ground.
- 7.11 The development site is considered to be sustainably located with appropriate access arrangements. Therefore, it is considered that the scheme can be considered acceptable.
- 7.12 Human Rights and Equality Act issues:
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.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 The majority of the development proposal represents a conflict with policy DM4 of the Development Plan. The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and this sets out that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and there is a need to boost the supply of housing. For the reasons outlined above the development is considered to be sustainable and no significant harm to material considerations is identified.
- 8.2 Some harm to the countryside setting is acknowledged. Other environmental matters including ecology, flood risk, contamination and noise impact are either neutral, positive or are able to be mitigated by condition.
- 8.3 In the overall balance of considerations, the material considerations weighing in favour of the application, are considered to outweigh the conflict with the Development Plan and harm identified.

Recommendation:

That Planning Permission be APPROVED subject to the signing of a S106 agreement and the following planning conditions:

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS / REASONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 **No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Traffic Management Plan, associated with the development of the site, has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority which will include information on:**

(A) Loading and unloading of plant and materials used in the development

(B) Storage of plant and materials used in the development

(C) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding / scaffolding affecting the highway if required.

(D) Wheel washing facilities

(E) Footpath/footway/cycleway or road closures needed during the development period

(F) Traffic management needed during the development period.

(G) Times, routes and means of access and egress for construction traffic and delivery vehicles (including the import of materials and the removal of waste from the site) during the development of the site.

The approved Construction Management Plan associated with the development of the site shall be adhered to throughout the development process.

Reason: In the interests of safety, protecting the amenity of local land uses, neighbouring residents and highway safety. This condition is pre-commencement as it requires consideration of the impact on the highway network and highway safety prior to any development taking place.

- 3 Prior to commencement of any above ground building works, details of electrical wiring to accommodate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra low emission vehicles for dwellings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the development protects and exploits opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of people in accordance with section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the landscaping scheme shown on plan ref: Landscape Masterplan, INL21723-10 Rev. C and associated Landscape Maintenance Plan. The scheme shall be implemented by the end of the full planting season immediately following the completion and first use of any separate part of the development (a full planting season means the period from October to March). The trees, shrubs and grass shall subsequently be maintained in accordance with the approved landscape

maintenance scheme and any which die or are destroyed during this period shall be replaced during the next planting season.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable standard of landscaping.
(Sections 12 & 15, NPPF)

- 5 **No development shall take place until a site specific Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan must demonstrate the adoption and use of the best practicable means to reduce the effects of noise, vibration, dust and site lighting. The plan should include, but not be limited to:**
- **Procedures for maintaining good public relations including complaint management, public consultation and liaison**
 - **Arrangements for liaison with the Councils Pollution Team**
 - **All works and ancillary operations which are audible at the site boundary, or at such other place as may be agreed with the Local Planning Authority, shall be carried out only between the following hours: 08 00 Hours and 18 00 Hours on Mondays to Fridays and 08 00 and 13 00 Hours on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays and Bank Holidays.**
 - **Deliveries to and removal of plant, equipment, machinery and waste from the site must only take place within the permitted hours detailed above.**
 - **Mitigation measures as defined in BS 5528: Parts 1 and 2 : 2009 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites shall be used to minimise noise disturbance from construction works.**
 - **Procedures for emergency deviation of the agreed working hours.**
 - **Central Bedfordshire Council encourages all contractors to be 'Considerate Contractors when working in the district by being aware of the needs of neighbours and the environment.**
 - **Control measures for dust and other air-borne pollutants. This must also take into account the need to protect any local resident who may have a particular susceptibility to air-borne pollutants.**
 - **Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes.**

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of surrounding occupiers during the construction of the development.

- 6 **No development shall commence until a detailed surface water drainage scheme, to manage surface water run off from the development for up to and including the 1 in 100 year event (+40%CC), and a maintenance and management plan for the scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The discharge rate from the development will be limited to the equivalent 1 in 1 year rate, or an appropriate rate as agreed by the Bedford Group of Internal Drainage Boards. The final detailed design shall be based on the agreed drainage Strategy (Ref: WHS1629, October 2018) and DEFRA's Non-statutory technical standards for**

sustainable drainage systems (March, 2018), and shall be implemented and maintained as approved. Maintenance will ensure the system functions as designed for the lifetime of the development. Any variation to the connections and controls indicated on the approved drawing which may be necessary at the time of construction would require the resubmission of those details to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

The applicant should address the points; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 detailed in Informative number 2 when submitting details to discharge the condition:

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 163 and 165 of the NPPF and its supporting technical guidance.

- 7 No building/dwelling shall be occupied until the developer has formally submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority a finalised 'Maintenance and Management Plan' for the entire surface water drainage system, inclusive of any adoption arrangements and/or private ownership or responsibilities, and that the approved surface water drainage scheme has been correctly and fully installed as per the final approved details.

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.

- 8 **No development shall take place (including any demolition, ground works, site clearance) until a method statement for based on advice detailed in the September 2018 Ecological Impact Assessment 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;**
 - f) initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant);**
 - g) disposal of any wastes arising from works.**

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

**Reason: To enable proper consideration of the impact of the development on the contribution of nature conservation.
(Section 15, NPPF)**

- 9 **No development shall take place (including ground works or site clearance) until an Ecological Enhancement Strategy (EES) for the creation of new wildlife features such as hibernacula, the erection of bird/bat and bee 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 shall be informed by the September 2018 EclA of the site and 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;**
 - f) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.**

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

**Reason: To enable proper consideration of the impact of the development on the contribution of nature conservation.
(Section 15, NPPF)**

- 10 **No development approved by this permission shall take place until the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:**

A Phase 1 Desk Study report prepared by a suitably qualified person adhering to BS 10175 and CLR 11 documenting the ground and material conditions of the site with regard to potential contamination.

Reason: To protect human health and the environment in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009).

- 11 **No occupation of any permitted building shall take place until the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:**

Where shown to be necessary by the Phase 1 Desk Study, a Phase 2 Site Investigation adhering to BS 10175 and CLR 11, incorporating all appropriate sampling, prepared by a suitably qualified person.

Where shown to be necessary by the Phase 2 Site Investigation a detailed Phase 3 Remediation Scheme (RS) prepared by a suitably qualified person, with measures to be taken to mitigate any risks to human health, groundwater and the wider environment, along with a Phase 4 validation

report prepared by a suitably qualified person to confirm the effectiveness of the RS.

Any such remediation/validation should include responses to any unexpected contamination discovered during works.

Reason: To protect human health and the environment in accordance with Policy DM3 of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009).

- 12 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers 1783_P_01 Rev. A, 1783_P_02 Rev. A, 1783_P_03 Rev. A, 18001 - 01 Rev. A, House Type 4EB 1400W - 18001 - 20, House Type 4EB 1400W - 18001 - 21, House Type 4EB 1400W - 18001 - 34, House Type 4EB 1400W - 18001 - 35, 1 & 2b Apartments - 18001 - 31 Rev. A, INL21723-03 Rev. A - Tree Protection Plan, INL21723-08 Rev. A - Landscape Concept Plan, INL21723-09 Rev. B - Landscape Strategy Plan, INL21723-10 Rev. C - Landscape Masterplan, INL21723-10 Rev. C - Landscape Masterplan, INL21723 11 Rev. A - Landscape Proposals Sheet 1 of 4, INL21723 11 Rev. A - Landscape Proposals Sheet 2 of 4, INL21723 11 Rev. A - Landscape Proposals Sheet 3 of 4, INL21723 11 Rev. A - Landscape Proposals Sheet 4 of 4, INL21723 12 Rev. B - Hard Landscape Proposals Sheet 1 of 4, INL21723 12 Rev. B - Hard Landscape Proposals Sheet 2 of 4, INL21723 12 Rev. B - Hard Landscape Proposals Sheet 3 of 4, INL21723 12 Rev. B - Hard Landscape Proposals Sheet 4 of 4, INL21723 20 Rev. B - Feature Entrance Detail, INL21723 21 Rev. B - Pocket Park Detail, INL21723 22 Rev. B - Open Space Detail, INL21723 23 Rev. A - Housing Court Detail.

Reason: To identify the approved plans 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 Drainage Officer advises that the final design and maintenance arrangements for the surface water system to be agreed by condition should include details in line with the following recommendations:
 - We would suggest making the ground level obviously higher between the pond and the existing property (installing a bund maybe) to ensure the property occupiers do not “feel more threatened by flooding.” This, in case of exceedance, would direct water on the

natural path with no threat of flow towards the property.

- The road could be drained via filter strip and swale/rill to the pond.
- Existing, ditches will need to be part of the continued maintenance and management plan to ensure the discharge can be conveyed from site.
- There are no calculations to verify storage requirement.
- A full drainage drawing is required, this should show; pipe numbers, inverts, control features, storage etc.
- Where the use of permeable surfacing is proposed, this should be designed in accordance with the 'CIRIA RP992 The SuDS Manual Update: Paper RP992/28: Design Assessment Checklists for Permeable/Porous Pavement'.
- Parking areas would benefit from permeable paving, this would prevent the direct discharge of polluted water to the storage.
- The final detailed design including proposed standards of operation, construction, structural integrity and ongoing maintenance must be compliant with the 'Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems' (March 2015, Ref: PB14308), 'Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Drainage Guidance' (Adopted April 2014, Updated May 2015), and recognised best practise including the Ciria SuDS Manual (2016, C753).
- To ensure future homeowners and subsequent homeowners will be aware of any maintenance requirements / responsibilities for surface water drainage, including ditches; further measures should be proposed by the applicant and may include, for example, information provided to the first purchaser of the property and also designation/registration of the SuDS so that it appears as a Land Charge for the property and as such is identified to subsequent purchasers of the property. Any methods involving designation or registering a Land Charge are to be agreed with the LPA.

Land drainage Consent under the Land Drainage Act 1991 must be secured to discharge surface water to the existing watercourse/ditch, and details of this provided with the full detailed design. An easement should be provided on the developable side of the watercourse to allow for access for maintenance, this should be 9m but may depend on the maintenance requirements considered appropriate.

3. The British Standard for Topsoil, BS 3882:2007, specifies requirements for topsoils that are moved or traded and should be adhered to. The British Standard for Subsoil, BS 8601 Specification for subsoil and requirements for use, should also be adhered to.

4. There is a duty to assess for Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) during development and measures undertaken during removal and disposal should protect site workers and future users, while meeting the requirements of the HSE.

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