

Item No. 5

APPLICATION NUMBER	CB/18/02458/OUT
LOCATION	Land to the east of Baden Powell Way, Biggleswade
PROPOSAL	Outline planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings and development of up to 1,500 dwellings (Use Class C3), up to 2ha of commercial development (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1 a, b, c, B2 ,B8), up to 5ha of primary school development (Use Class D1) and up to 4ha of other leisure and community development (Use Classes D1 and D2), up to 60ha of open space including, play space, allotments and a country park, infrastructure including site access, internal roads, car parking, footpaths, cycleways, drainage and utilities.
PARISH	Biggleswade
WARD	Biggleswade North
WARD CONCILLORS	Cllr Mrs Lawrence and Cllr Watkins
CASE OFFICERS	Nik Smith and Thomas Mead
DATE REGISTERED	10th July 2018
EXPIRY DATE	09th October 2018
APPLICANT	UK Regeneration Ltd
AGENT	N/A
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE	Cllr Woodward requested that the application be determined by Committee for the following reason: ‘over development no services’. In addition, the development constitutes a Departure from the Development Plan and is Major development.

RECOMMENDED DECISION

It is recommended that:

Development Management Committee supports the outline planning application subject to withdrawal of the Highways England holding objection, the conditions set out at Appendix 1 and the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement securing the obligations described in this report and thereafter authorises the Assistant Director – Development Infrastructure in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Executive Member for Regeneration and Business and relevant Ward Members to grant outline planning permission providing that no new material changes to the planning application arise as a result of the measures proposed to mitigate the impacts of the development on the strategic highways network.

1.0 Summary of Recommendation

- 1.1 Whilst the development would conflict with Policy DM4 because the site falls outside of a Settlement Envelope, within the Open Countryside, the site has been allocated for this scale and type of development in the emerging Local Plan and would result in a substantial contribution towards local housing delivery, including in the immediate five-year period, which would help to bolster the Council's housing land supply. These constitute material planning considerations that should be found to outweigh that policy conflict.
- 1.2 The detailed design of the development would be managed through a Design Code. A [Development Brief](#) for the site has been endorsed for development management purposes. That, when taken together with documents submitted as part of the planning application, like the Design and Access Statement and with recommended planning conditions, provide sufficient comfort that the Design Coding process and subsequent reserved matters submissions will result in a high quality of development at the site.
- 1.3 Impacts on existing local infrastructure would be mitigated through planning obligations, secured through a s106 agreement.
- 1.4 It is recommended that Development Management Committee supports the outline planning application subject to withdrawal of the Highways England holding objection, the conditions set out at Appendix 1 and the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement securing the obligations described in this report and delegates authority to determine the outline planning application to the Assistant Director – Development Infrastructure in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Executive Member for Regeneration and Business and relevant Ward Members providing that no new material changes to the planning application arise as a result of the measures proposed to mitigate the impacts of the development on the strategic highways network.

2.0 Site Location

- 2.1 The site has an area of around 106.5ha and is located immediately to the east of the development known as King's Reach, which is to the north and east of the main body of the Settlement of Biggleswade. The site is outside of a designated Settlement Envelope, within the Open Countryside.
- 2.2 Biggleswade is defined by the Core Strategy as a Major Service Centre, which means it is amongst the most sustainable locations for new development in Central Bedfordshire. Biggleswade is served by a number of schools, a train station with connections to London and the A1 road. The town centre provides a range of shops and services for local people. The site is approximately 3km from the town centre. There is a local bus service that currently links Kings Reach to the town and the train station.
- 2.3 The site is currently used for agriculture, with West Sunderland Farm at around the centre of it. It contains brooks and a reservoir and a number of public rights of way, which provide connections to the wider green infrastructure network, including Biggleswade Common, to the north west and

the Biggleswade Green Wheel. There are a series of electricity pylons that pass northwest to southeast through the western side of the site.

- 2.4 West Sunderland Farm Cottages and Sunderland Hall Farm are immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. Sutton is further to north and Dunton and Eyeworth are to the east and southeast.
- 2.5 Parts of the site are designated as falling within Environment Agency Flood Zones, including Zones 2 and 3.

3.0 The Planning Application

3.1 Outline planning permission is sought with all matters reserved for subsequent approval except for access. The proposed development comprises:

- Up to 1,500 dwellings;
- Up to 2ha of commercial development (in use classes A1 (retail), A2 (professional services), A3 (food and drink), A4 (drinking establishments), A5 (hot food takeaway), B1 (business), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution));
- Up to 5ha of primary school development;
- Up to 4ha of leisure and community development (Use classes D1 and D2); and
- Up to 60ha of open space.

3.2 The application was originally submitted as a 'Hybrid', with full planning permission sought for part of the site, and outline consent sought for the remainder. This was amended part way through the application process, and the necessary re-consultation carried out.

3.3 The planning application is supported by parameter plans, for which approval is sought. These relate to:

- Demolition at the site
- The site access;
- Development parcels;
- Circulation;
- Land-use; and
- Landscape.

The Development Brief

- 3.4 In November 2018 Development Management Committee endorsed a [Development Brief](#) relating to this development for development management purposes.
- 3.5 The Development Brief was designed to interpret the requirements of relevant planning policy and guidance and demonstrate, in broad terms, how they would be achieved by a development at this site.
- 3.6 The Development Brief constitutes a material consideration in the assessment of this, and subsequent applications for permission at this site.

Environmental Statement

- 3.7 Owing to the nature of the proposal development, an Environmental Statement under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017 was submitted. Before determining the application, the Council must consider the environmental information contained in the Environmental Statement (ES), including further information submitted, as well as representations from consultees about the environmental effects of the development.
- 3.8 The ES assesses likely environmental impacts from the development including its construction and operation, including cumulative impacts from other ongoing developments. The ES identifies the existing (baseline) environmental conditions, and the likely environmental impacts (including magnitude, duration, and significance) and identifies measures to mitigate any adverse impacts. A summary of potential positive and negative residual effects remaining after mitigation measures is also given.
- 3.9 The ES itself does not necessarily consider compliance with planning policies and so planning permission does not have to be granted or refused based on its findings, but these are material considerations. Where significant adverse effects are found, consideration will need to be given to mitigation proposed and then ultimately to whether any remaining impact (significant or otherwise) warrants refusal or if such harm is outweighed by other benefits.
- 3.10 The ES contains chapters that consider the following impacts:
 - Socio-economics
 - Landscape and visual
 - Biodiversity
 - Flood risk and drainage
 - Transport and access
 - Noise and vibration
 - Air Quality

- Lighting
- Archaeology and cultural heritage

3.11 Further information supplementing the ES was submitted by the applicant pursuant to Regulation 25 of the EIA Regulations 2017.

3.12 Officers are satisfied that the ES (taken together with the further information received pursuant to Regulation 25) has adequately considered the potential environmental impacts of the development.

4.0 Planning Policy and guidance

4.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policies of the Development Plan, and other planning policy and guidance that could constitute material considerations are set out below:

The Development Plan

4.2 The Development Plan comprises the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2009, the Site Allocations Document and the Proposals Maps. Those policies of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies that are relevant to the determination of this application are set out below:

CS1	Development Strategy
CS2	Developer Contributions
CS3	Healthy and Sustainable Communities
CS4	Linking Communities - Accessibility and Transport
CS5	Providing Homes
CS6	Delivery and Timing of Housing Provision
CS7	Affordable Housing
CS9	Providing jobs
CS13	Climate Change
CS14	High Quality Development
CS15	Heritage
CS16	Landscape and Woodland
CS17	Green Infrastructure
CS18	Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
DM1	Renewable Energy
DM2	Sustainable Construction of New Buildings
DM3	High Quality Development
DM4	Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes
DM9	Providing a Range of Transport
DM10	Housing Mix
DM13	Heritage in Development
DM14	Landscape and Woodland
DM15	Biodiversity
DM16	Green Infrastructure

Other relevant planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It is a material consideration in planning decisions. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2035

- 4.4 The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan was submitted to government on the 30th April 2018 and will now be subject to an independent examination by a Planning Inspector. The hearings part of the examination of the Plan is expected to commence in Spring 2019.

- 4.5 Paragraph 48 of the Framework sets out that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a. The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- b. The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c. The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).

- 4.6 The Local Plan policies that are relevant to the determination of this application are set out below:

SP1	Growth Strategy
SP2	National Planning Policy Framework – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SP3	Generic Requirements for Strategic Sites
SA4	East of Biggleswade
SP5	Preventing Coalescence and Important Countryside Gaps
SP6	Settlement Hierarchy
SP7	Development Within Settlement Envelopes
H1	Housing Mix
H2	Housing Standards
H3	Housing for Older People
H4	Affordable Housing
H6	Starter Homes
H7	Self and Custom Build Housing
R1	Ensuring Town Centre Vitality
T1	Mitigation of Transport Impacts on the Network

T2	Highways Safety and Design
T3	Parking
T4	Public Transport Interchanges
EE1	Green Infrastructure
EE2	Enhancing Biodiversity
RR3	Nature Conservation
EE4	Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
EE5	Landscape Character and Value
EE6	Tranquillity
EE11	The River and Waterway Network
EE12	Public Rights of Way
EE13	Outdoor Sport, Leisure and Open Space
CC1	Climate Change and Sustainability
CC3	Flood Risk Management
CC4	Development Close to Watercourses
CC5	Sustainable Drainage
CC6	Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure
CC7	Water Quality
CC8	Pollution and Land Instability
HQ1	High Quality Development
HQ2	Planning Obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy
HQ3	Provision for Social and Community Infrastructure
HQ4	Indoor Sport and Leisure Facilities
HQ5	Broadband and Telecommunications Infrastructure
HQ7	Public Art
HQ9	Larger Sites
HQ11	Modern Methods of Construction
HE1	Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
HE3	Built Heritage
DC5	Agricultural Land

Guidance documents

- 4.7 The following guidance and background documents are relevant to the determination of this application:
- National Planning Practice Guidance
 - Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2014
 - Sustainable Drainage Guidance SPD 2014
 - The Leisure Strategy 2014
 - Central Bedfordshire Landscape Character Assessment 2015
 - Land East of Biggleswade Development Brief 2018

5.0 Planning History at the Site

5.1 There is no relevant planning history at the site.

6.0 Responses from Consultees

6.1 Internal and external consultees were written to when the application was submitted and when amended plans and documents were received.

6.2 The Local Planning Authority has carried out its consultation obligations in line with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).

6.3 The responses received as set out below (paraphrased where appropriate and excluding recommended conditions, which are at Appendix 1 where found to meet the relevant tests):

Biggleswade Town Council

6.4 The Town Council has no objection to this outline planning application.

Sutton Parish Council

6.5 Sutton Parish Council is against development on this prime agricultural land which should be maintained for farming. In addition, we would like to make the following comments:

- We are not in favour of having communal car parks and, being out of sight, encourages theft and vandalism which is increasing in this area.
- High-storey apartments are totally out of character for a rural setting as is the idea of having beach hut style houses.
- The plans make no provision for affordable housing or accommodation for the elderly.
- There is no provision for health, schools and transport.
- Where will the costs of maintaining the proposed park areas and football pitches fall?

Environment Agency

6.6 We are able to remove our objection. The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted with this application has identified that part of the site, marked as a residential development parcel, is within Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain). This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Sequential Test and ordinarily we would be minded to maintain our objection. However, we are aware that the consultants have undertaken additional modelling, that we are confident will ensure that no built development will occur in Flood Zone 3. This area also only forms a small part of the site and given that the application is for Outline permission, we have no objections as long as:

- The masterplan is taken as being indicative only
- A detailed FRA is carried out to identify the exact areas at risk.
- A sequential approach is taken in the detailed design so that no residential development is located within the floodplain
- Appropriate mitigation measures are put in place prior to development
- Overall flood risk reduction is achieved through the development

6.7 Our comments assume that the current masterplan is indicative only. Following the detailed assessment of the flood risk onsite, the current layout may fail to meet the requirements of the draft Local Plan Policy SA4 i.e. “The development will be designed to ensure that uses and developments within the site that are vulnerable to flood risk are located beyond areas of flood zones 2 and 3”.

6.8 Mitigation measures proposed by the applicant may allow for areas currently in the functional floodplain to be developed by adjusting its extent onsite. However, it has not yet been fully demonstrated that this is feasible. Therefore, if the mitigation measures prove unfeasible, the residential areas currently within the identified floodplain, will be have to be relocated onsite, or removed from the proposals.

6.9 If your Authority consider that this is not practical, or that the current permission will fix the layout to the current masterplan, then we will wish to be re-consulted.

6.10 The proposed development will only meet the requirements of NPPF policy to ensure the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall, if the following planning condition is included.

Highways England

6.11 Holding objection.

Historic England

6.12 No comment.

Natural England

6.13 No response received.

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue

6.14 Although this should normally be dealt with at Building Regulations consultation stage, I would like to draw the developer’s attention to the requirements of Building Regulations “Approved Document B (Fire Safety)

Volume 1 - Dwelling houses” or “Volume 2 - Buildings other than dwelling houses” as appropriate, particularly ‘B5 - Access and Facilities for the Fire Service’, to ensure compliance is met.

- 6.15 In addition to the formal guidance or requirements, I would add that where possible consideration is given to access for the hydrants, so they are positioned on pathways/pedestrian areas, close to but not within vehicle standing areas where they are likely to be obstructed by parked cars /lorries (e.g. in an area designated for parking or loading as part of the development).

Internal Drainage Board

- 6.16 It is noted that the Flood Risk Assessment submitted has been accepted by the Environment Agency on the basis of several conditions being applied which are acceptable to the Board. In addition to these the Board must make clear that as the mitigations proposed are to be carried out on a watercourse under the statutory control of the Board, these works will be subject to the applicant entering into a legal agreement with the Board. Without this legal agreement being in place, no development, including ground levelling should be permitted. Without it, the outline masterplan layout will not be achievable.

Anglian Water

- 6.17 No response received.

Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

- 6.18 Acknowledging that discussions with the developer have concluded that the land option is unable to be agreed at this point in time but that the site does need to make a proportionate and meaningful contribution towards the delivery of local healthcare, this has been discussed with both Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedfordshire CCG senior management. It can now be confirmed this position is acceptable.
- 6.19 This acceptance is based on agreement of the full contribution requested in the Infrastructure Development Plan and again on 27 September, calculated on the health impact of an additional 3,900 patient requirements this site will generate.
- 6.20 The anticipated build programme for the hub at the hospital site is as follows:
- Construction due to commence June 2020
 - Expected completion by November 2021
- 6.21 Ideally the contribution will be secured in advance of construction and definitely received in totality before November 2021.
- 6.22 In terms of justification of proportionality of the site impact; the health impact of this site was carefully considered when commenting on the Local Plan; hence the Local Plan health requirement calculations for all strategic sites were sent to the Council in 2017 with £3,667,500 identified against

development of SA4. That figure formed part of the IDP which was made public to enable interested parties for all strategic sites sufficient time to factor the health infrastructure figures into their viability calculations.

- 6.23 In more detail - Primary Care is currently commissioned by NHS England which has a co-commissioning relationship with Bedfordshire CCG. The primary care calculation is based on a formula adopted across the NHS Midlands and East (Central Midlands) team to provide consistency for all the 25 local authorities it works with and as part of the single operating model of best practice it has developed. It has been consistently accepted and supported by Inspectors at Appeals and also by the Secretary of State, when ministerial decisions are required for particularly sensitive sites.
- 6.24 Acute services are commissioned by Bedfordshire CCG from a number of acute trust providers; including Lister, Bedford, and Luton and Dunstable hospitals to ensure all patients across the geographical spread have timely access to acute care based on need, rather than postcode. Biggleswade residents already use these three hospitals as will SA4 residents.
- 6.25 Acute service contributions are calculated by activity type and recorded attendance data. These secondary care activity type attendance numbers reflect a lower proportion of the population than the 90% first accessing healthcare via GP provided primary care services.
- 6.26 Activity type attendance data is broken down into: Non-elective admissions excluding maternity; Maternity admissions; Elective admissions; Day Care admissions; diagnostic services and procedures; A & E attendances; Outpatients first attenders; Outpatients follow up attenders.
- 6.27 This approach then determines the proportionate growth of specific development sites from which additional space requirements are determined by infrastructure type – Wards; Theatres; A & E space; Outpatients Suite/consulting rooms; MRI CT Ultrasound and X Ray etc. The acute services build costs per infrastructure type are considerably more expensive than for primary care, due to their complexity and highly sophisticated technical requirements. Note the complex acute calculations used for the IDP and this planning application were based on 2014 build cost figures and the CCG is currently reviewing those infrastructure costs.
- 6.28 Community and Mental Health services are also commissioned by Bedfordshire CCG.
- 6.29 A similar calculation using the same attendance methodology for Community health services provision establishes an infrastructure cost per dwelling of £114.10.
- 6.30 A final secondary healthcare consideration relates to mental health services and here the attendance methodology establishes an infrastructure cost per dwelling of £130.40. The mental health costs per dwelling reflect differing infrastructure types such as in-patient wards as well as community based mental health provision.

- 6.31 I trust this explanation of the complex calculations for health delivery provides the proportionality rationale for the health requests for development sites in general and in particular the impact of this site's additional 3,900 patients on local health provision.

Network Rail

- 6.32 No objection subject to funding being secured for upgrades to Lindsells's Crossing.

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)

- 6.33 CPRE Bedfordshire strongly objects to the above application for the following reasons:
- 6.34 The Application is premature Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has recently submitted its Local Plan 2035 to the Government (DHCLG) under Regulation 19 for approval by an Inspector at an "Inspection in Public". This democratic process is intended to examine all areas of the submitted Local Plan 2035 and to hearing public, representations from all stakeholders both for and against it.
- 6.35 Having heard all representations, the Inspector will then decide if the Local Plan and the various Policies within it can be approved.
- 6.36 Many stakeholders including residents of Biggleswade, have made representations at the pre-submission stage to CBC voicing their serious concerns about the Local Plan generally and specifically the proposals for the development of 1,500 homes to the East of Biggleswade –Policy SA4. These comments have been passed to the Inspector for consideration.
- 6.37 Stakeholders will make their concerns known again at the "Inspection in Public". The site described in this Application was put forward by the Applicant in the Local Plan 2035 "call for sites" and forms the basis of Policy SA4. It seems to us therefore, that by submitting this Planning Application prior to the determination by the Inspector of the validity of Policy SA4, and the Local Plan 2035 itself that the Applicant is trying to subvert the democratic process.
- 6.38 It is CPRE Bedfordshire's view that the Application should be refused on the grounds of prematurity. Para 14 PPG – reasons for refusing an application on the ground of prematurity include:
- 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.

- 6.39 CBC has demonstrated that it has a robust 5 Year Forward Land Supply. In fact, as at 1 July 2018 it has a Forward Land Supply of 5.82 years. Therefore, CBC has no need for additional development land at this time and can wait until the Inspector has determined the validity of the submitted Local Plan 2035 and Policy SA4.
- 6.40 Biggleswade Town Council has started the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan as described in the Localism Act. The Neighbourhood Plan will enable local residents to decide, amongst other things and against the background of housing targets set by CBC's approved Local Plan 2035, which land should be developed and what type and design of dwellings and other Development they would like to see in their area. Biggleswade Town Council should therefore be allowed to complete their Neighbourhood Plan before either they, or CBC consider this major Planning Application which will have a considerable impact on their area and which their Neighbourhood Plan may not approve of.
- 6.41 The Applicant should have provided more detail of the proposals contained in the Outline section of the Application. CPRE Bedfordshire does not believe that it is appropriate for a Planning Application of this type to be handled as a Hybrid Application with such minimal "Outline" information when it represents the development of a single large village and associated infrastructure on a very substantial area of land. The entire site being 106.5 ha (270 acres)-equivalent to 152 football pitches. This lack of detail is particularly problematic with this Application since the various elements (Full and Outline) of the site-dwellings, community facilities, schools, minor and major highways infrastructure, water/sewage systems, open green spaces etc. etc. will be very interdependent one upon the other.
- 6.42 With regard to the "Outline" part of the Planning Application: The Applicant has given nothing but very rough details of the plans for 1,260 dwellings and 2 ha of Commercial Development. The same is true for the Primary School and the 4 ha for Leisure and Community Development. The Applicant states that a total of up to up to 60ha will be allocated to Open Space, Allotments, a Country Park, Infrastructure including Roads, Footpaths, Cycle Ways, Utilities etc without being specific about how much land will be allocated to each of these areas. 60 ha sounds like a lot of land but it may not seem so generous when it is allocated to each of the areas specified above by the Applicant.
- 6.43 It is accepted that, at an early stage of planning, it is not always possible to include comprehensive details. However, CPRE Bedfordshire believe that more detailed Outline plans, particularly regarding land use, should have been incorporated by the Applicant. For a strategic site of this nature which is effectively an urban extension to the town of Biggleswade and which will impact on surrounding villages, we consider this to be unacceptable.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC)

- 6.44 Whilst neither supporting or opposing this planning application, BRCC has the following comments which we ask to be considered by both CBC and the promoter of the development:

Local Infrastructure

- 6.45 Biggleswade has expanded rapidly over the last 10 years, with a significant burden placed on local infrastructure; especially roads, parking and the railway station. A development of the scale proposed – and the anticipated additional settlements east of the town – will place an even greater burden on infrastructure. Additionally, there are a number of amenities that many communities of a similar population have which Biggleswade does not – including leisure facilities, country parks, etc.
- 6.46 We would ask that a long term, strategic approach is taken to infrastructure provision and management, to ensure that Biggleswade can genuinely thrive, rather than simply ‘cope’, with the large scale and long-term population increases proposed. Planning decisions made at this time should ensure that any development – both proposed now and anticipated in the future – help to solve, rather than exacerbate the town’s infrastructure issues.
- 6.47 We welcome the applicant’s ‘town centre first’ approach and would encourage maximum connectivity, especially for non-motorised and community transport access. The location of the proposed development poses challenges for residents to access Biggleswade – in particular the Town Centre, Railway and Bus Stations and also to the Retail Park. BRCC’s Community Transport Team would be willing to discuss the potential provision of a community transport scheme.

Green Infrastructure

- 6.48 We welcome the emphasis on green infrastructure – access routes and green spaces - and would seek a role in working with the applicant to inform the detail of the GI provision.
- 6.49 As a lead partner in the Biggleswade Green Wheel we would want to see:
- links from the development site to the existing GW created
 - appropriate mitigation where roads into the development site cross the route of the current BGW
 - the creation of a mini-green wheel, for the new settlement
- 6.50 The current non-vehicular route proposal is not considered to be adequately planned (with bridleway and pedestrian routes running parallel to each other; and path status’ not providing appropriate connectivity). BRCC and the BGW Development Group would welcome the opportunity to inform a Rights of Way strategy for the development, the production of which we believe should be a planning condition, should consent be granted.
- 6.51 We believe that the greenspaces and habitats proposed have the potential to be both rich in biodiversity and great landscape/ amenity value. It is noted that watercourses and the management of surface water is a significant issue for this development; and can play a significant role in landscape/ amenity and

biodiversity enhancement. BRCC hosts the Upper & Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership, with partners including EA and the IDB; and are particularly interested in water quality/ quantity and biodiversity. BRCC was pleased to be invited to visit the site with the applicant to discuss wildlife issues and would welcome further opportunities for our Ecologist to inform habitat creation as part of a detailed GI plan for the area.

Community Building

- 6.52 BRCC's Community Buildings Advisor has looked at the plans for the proposed community building. We would like to know how the applicant has arrived at the size and spec of the facility; as normally we would expect some local engagement and consultation to be undertaken. It seems to us that the proposed facility is too small for the population it will be servicing (presumably the full 1,500 dwellings of the settlement). Community buildings often suffer through lack of appropriate parking and we would ask that this is addressed. BRCC's Community Buildings Advisory service has worked with a number of communities / new community buildings in recent years; ensuring that what is provided is desired, appropriate and has correct management arrangement in place. We would be keen to discuss the provision of this service with the applicant.

Social Infrastructure

- 6.53 Should consent be granted for this application, BRCC would seek to work with CBC and the applicant to ensure that a true community, rather than just a settlement, is created. In addition to the built and green infrastructure, social infrastructure (communications, groups, information and support) is essential in creating a thriving community. BRCC leads many initiatives – Good Neighbour Schemes, Community Agents, Health Walk groups and conservation volunteering groups (including the Friends of Biggleswade Green Wheel) – and we would seek to work with the applicant to have a presence on the ground, promoting these and other initiatives as the settlement begins to be occupied.

CBC Landscape Officer

- 6.54 The revised parameter plans and DAS provide a broadly acceptable context for the proposed development. There is some concern regarding the proposal for 5 storey development, particularly where this would be close to the boundary of the site, as within Parcel F, with the potential for visual intrusion as seen from the countryside and rights of way to the south.
- 6.55 The Landscape Strategy provides a framework for the strategic landscape infrastructure required - some points to be considered in the detailed design codes are given below. The Strategy indicates that an integrated approach to landscape provision and will provide extensive areas of naturalistic parkland which will accord with the CBC Landscape Character Assessment's requirements for the area. The character of the Upper Ivel Valley should pervade through the development - this ambition will be realised through the creation of features such as the West Brook Linear park and the extension of

the Biggleswade Common landscape. The sympathetic design of suds with ponds, swales, the establishment of meadow grassland and wetland tree planting will be fundamental to creating the desired sense of place. The more formal approach promoted within civic areas and the sports facilities have the potential to create a range of quality open spaces.

Design Codes

- 6.56 The detailed design will need to be governed through agreed design guidance to ensure that the development secures the vision expressed in the DAS. These guides will need to specify the scale and character of the landscape infrastructure.
- 6.57 The internal landscape associated with residential areas will be fundamental to local identity and the planting palette should aim to reinforce the Ivel Valley/Dunton Vale setting, with extensive use of native (including varieties of) trees and shrubs as well as appropriate ornamental species to provide variation and disease/ climate change resilience such as Liriodendron, Liquidamber, and could include conifers such as swamp cypress and metasequoia. The landscape strategy indicates there will be space for establishing larger tree species, most importantly along the Main Avenue streets, which is welcomed.
- 6.58 Design aspects where enhanced landscape provision would be beneficial:
- The pylon corridor is clearly strongly linear, although the visual impact is reduced in the south, where the pylons edge the large open space and sports pitch provision. The pylon corridor is planned to form an ecological corridor between parcels A and C. It would be helpful to strengthen the "east-west " green corridors within the residential parcel, to create larger nodal points to counter the regularity of the corridor. Car parking provision would need to be interspersed with planting to minimise this urban element. shrub planting of dogwoods, willow, hazel could be used to integrate the pylons and respond to the scrub habitat on the Common.
 - Green links - the east -west landscape framework should be enhanced, using ecologically beneficial hedges, if space is not available for more trees. In addition, the use of climbers, particularly to soften brick elevations, green fences (climbers integrated with suitable fencing) or pleached trees could be used to create visual and ecological connectivity.
 - North Brook Parkland - care will need to be taken to maintain an over-riding naturalistic approach. The design of the play facilities and allotments will need to respect the rural character envisaged.
 - The design of the Suds should have a greater integrating role: the CBC Design Guide promotes the use of surface Suds, including rain gardens. Key buildings should also include treatments such as green walls and roofs which will assist with drainage but also help to mitigate views from higher ground.

- 6.59 The provision of 60 ha. of open space across the Masterplan is welcomed. Biggleswade has had a long tradition of horticulture and market gardening and within this development there is scope to include a more traditional area of amenity parkland with planted beds to reflect this which would provide alternative experiences to the extensive naturalistic landscape. The proposal for new orchards accords with landscape and ecological aspirations and is welcomed.
- 6.60 Following further design input, a detailed landscape specification will be required. A Landscape and Ecology Management Plan will also be required.

CBC Highways Officer

- 6.61 No objection subject to planning conditions being imposed.

CBC Strategic Transport Officer

- 6.62 No objection subject to planning conditions and legal obligations secured through a s106 agreement.

CBC Rights of Way Officer

- 6.63 The additional footways highlighted in the Public Rights of Way Supplementary Supporting Note are a welcome addition to the broader rights of way. These should be made Definitive Rights of Way routes to ensure their longevity.
- 6.64 CBC Rights of Way would want to see the extension of western PRow to run along the river and connect through to the track and sports pitches, as part of a condition for planning consent. (as highlighted in the Public Rights of Way Supplementary Supporting Note).
- 6.65 Although the bridleway D to G remains it also appears to be a main access route into the development. (main primary road). The bridleway will need to be separated from the road creating a 3m wide track with 0.5m margins (total 4 m wide). Post and Rail fencing should separate the road from the bridleway. Ideally it should be set away from roads for safety reasons.
- 6.66 The footpath A to C appears to run through green space which is advantageous. The footpath should be 2.5m wide with a quarter metre margin either side. Planings should be used for the surface and dusted. CBC hold the required specification.
- 6.67 The new footway proposed (dashed red line) will be essential to link the new dedicated bridleway (dashed blue line) with footpath A to C, its surface to be the same as footpath A to C.
- 6.68 When considering RoW, developers are asked to ensure their proposal meets "CBC's Public Rights of Way Standards and Guidance Development." This can be found on the CBC Internet in the RoW section or I can send a copy in a PDF format if required.

- 6.69 The Public Rights of Way Supplementary Supporting Note cannot be used as a substitute for the need for a full set of detailed proposals, (details highlighted below). The submission of the below should be a condition to planning approval.

CBC Ecology Officer

- 6.70 Updated information is welcomed and generally the inclusion of Green Infrastructure across the site in conjunction with buffers to ecologically sensitive areas should ensure that net gains for biodiversity can be secured as part of the proposal.
- 6.71 Buffering and enhancement of Biggleswade Common CWS is welcomed, as is the planning in of Wildlife 'zones' into GI/open space and the inclusion of orchards.
- 6.72 Strong green linkages are apparent north/south, but east/west links are weak. This disrupts connectivity and takes away an opportunity for an excellent GI feature across the site. The corridor needs to be more than street trees in pavements but connected with low level planting and SUDS.
- 6.73 6.17 of the DAS identifies a 'pylon nature park' but the illustrative masterplan shows extensive car parking under the pylons which is unimaginative and sterile. This is referred to in 9.4.8 of the ES Addendum and the contradiction needs to be clarified as claiming car parking will result in semi-natural habitat is nonsense.
- 6.74 Reference to biodiversity net gain is welcomed, supporting enhancement aspirations across the site. However more could be done to demonstrate enhancement opportunities in built structures such as the inclusion of green roofs and swift boxes on higher built elevations. An Ecological Enhancement Strategy is referred to 9.4 and 9.5 of Appendix D1 but this will be needed in greater detail as individual parcels come forward.
- 6.75 Concern over habitat severance at the entry to the site from Baden Powell Way, this north/south corridor has been used by badgers and the cumulative impacts on them from Kings Reach has pushed them to the east of BPW and now they will face the risk of crossing the road here, badger tunnel required under this main road with fencing. Reference is made to such tunnels in the CEMP but it is not clear where these would be located.
- 6.76 A CEMP has been provided which does address ecological risks and adherence to this would be expected.
- 6.77 Given the potential length of time to complete the build of the project advance works are proposed to ensure landscaping has the opportunity to mature and mitigate impacts elsewhere on site whilst individual parcels come forward. A LEMP would be required by condition to ensure sensitive development of these features and appropriate ongoing land management.

CBC SUDS Officer

- 6.78 We consider that outline planning permission could be granted to the proposed development and the final design and maintenance arrangements for the surface water system agreed at the detailed design stage, if the following recommendations and planning conditions are secured.
- We will require full drainage drawings showing all connections, control features, storage, inverts etc. and how it communicates with the development wide scheme, for each phase.
 - We will require methods of proposed phasing of development but would expect all required drainage to be operational before plot build.
 - We expect the Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Board to manage the work required on the watercourses, this would include agreeing capacities and flow rates. The IDB would also agree discharge rates on our behalf.
 - Detailed site investigation results (including any site-specific soakage tests and ground water monitoring shown in accordance with BRE 365) will need to be provided with the detailed design. This could be per phase or strategic, either way if it is used for that phase drainage it will need assessing.
 - 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'.
 - 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.
 - Land drainage Consent under the Land Drainage Act 1991 must be secured to discharge surface water to an 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.

- Agreement for the sewerage undertaker is required to discharge in to a public system. The agreement and rate (l/s) must be included in relevant correspondence.

CBC Archaeology Officer

- 6.79 The amendments relevant to archaeology are an addendum to the Environment Statement (ES) chapter on archaeology and cultural heritage and additional geophysical survey information.
- 6.80 In their initial comments on this application (04/09/2018) the Archaeology Team identified the proposed development site's archaeological potential and the need for additional information on the site's archaeology acquired through an archaeological field evaluation comprising a geophysical survey of the whole site and a programme of trial trenching in line with the requirements of paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Team's comments on the request for a scoping opinion (CB/18/00509/SCO).
- 6.81 Following the Archaeology Team's initial comments on this application further geophysical survey of the site was commissioned covering those parts of the proposed development site which had not been included in the partially survey of the site submitted with the ES. It is noted in the addendum to the ES (8.3.2) that crop cover has inhibited the geophysical survey and at the time of submission of the amendments to the application the survey it has been completed only for part of the site. It is suggested the survey will be completed by mid-November. The update to the geophysical survey comprises single "grey-scale plot" showing those areas that have been surveyed. There is no description of the results of the additional of the geophysical survey although it would appear to have identified additional, previously unknown, archaeological remains on the north west side of West Sunderland Farm. The application can only be assessed on the basis of the submitted partial geophysical survey of the site.
- 6.82 The addendum to the ES (8.3.2) suggests that the grey scale plots "... can be relied upon to judge the likely significant archaeological effects of the proposed development." On the basis of the baseline information on archaeology presented in the ES (desk-based assessment and partial geophysical survey) and addenda it is concluded that the identified archaeological remains of the site are of local significance (8.5.1) and that "...buried archaeological remains of significance that would warrant preservation in situ are not expected." The impact of the proposed development on archaeological remains is assessed as minor adverse. The major impact of the development on archaeological remains is identified as occurring during groundworks required for construction. It is proposed that this impact can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological investigation, recording analysis and publication secured by a planning condition. It is also proposed to record the remains of the onion shed at West Sunderland Farm.
- 6.83 The additional information submitted on archaeology in the form of further, but still incomplete, geophysical survey results does not amount to sufficient or adequate information on the site's archaeology to allow the impact of the

proposal to be assessed. The level information required comprising a complete geophysical survey and programme of trial trenching, as indicated in the Archaeology Team's previous comments on this application and the scoping opinion has not been supplied by the applicant. Without this level of information, it is not possible to identify the location, extent, character, state of preservation and significance of the site's archaeological resources. Nor is it possible, on the basis of the submitted information to assert that the site does not contain any archaeological remains that are worthy of preservation in situ. In particular, the complex and extensive multi-phased site to the east and south east of West Sunderland Farm, likely to be of later prehistoric and Roman date, has the potential to be of national importance equivalent to a designated heritage asset and thus potentially worthy of preservation in situ (NPPF footnote 63 on page 56). The significance of this archaeological site (and others within the proposed development site) cannot be determined without intrusive trial trench evaluation. The lack of appropriate information on archaeology means that it is also not possible to substantiate the claim that the archaeological remains so far identified are of only local significance and so the impact of the proposed development will only amount to a minor adverse impact. The identified archaeological sites at West Sunderland Farm and the north west corner of the site certainly have the potential to be of regional if not greater significance, in which case the impact of the development would be classified as medium/severe adverse according to Table 14.1 of the Environmental Statement. The lack of an adequate understanding of the character and significance of the site's archaeological resources mean that it is not possible to assess whether archaeological investigation, recording, analysis and publication is an appropriate mitigation strategy. The information on archaeology submitted with the application as part of the Environmental Statement and addenda is not sufficient to identify the character and significance of the archaeological remains and to assess the impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage assets with archaeological interest. On these grounds, it is contrary to Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular paragraph 189.

- 6.84 The Environmental Statement indicates that the proposed development site lies within the setting of five Scheduled Monuments (designated heritage assets):
- Galley Hill Hillfort to the north west – HER 445 and NHLE 1015555
 - Sandy Lodge Hillfort to the north west – HER 1164 and NHLE 1015006)
 - John O'Gaunt's Hill Medieval Manor to the north east – HER510 and NHLE 1005043
 - Newton Bury Medieval Moat to the south east– HER 2815 and NHLE 1010113
 - Stratton Park Moat and associated manorial earthworks to the south – HER 520 and NHLE 101261.

- 6.85 The impact of the proposal will be greatest on Newton Bury Medieval Moat which is located in the crest of a ridge to the south east of the application site with clear views from it across the site and to the Monument from within the proposed development site. The setting of the Moat during its period of use in the medieval period would have been an open agricultural landscape comprising a palimpsest of fields, boundaries, woodland villages and individual farms with the town of Biggleswade in the distance. This setting largely survives today, although Biggleswade is a more prominent and indeed dominant feature in the landscape particularly as it has expanded to the east and north east in recent years. The proposed development will move the urban edge of Biggleswade much closer to the Monument having an obvious impact on its rural setting. This impact on the Monument's setting will affect its significance, however, it will still be possible to see, appreciate and understand its rural setting when viewed from Newton Bury Moat and when viewing the Moat from within the proposed development site. Therefore, although the impact of the development on the setting of Newton Bury Moat designated heritage asset which will result in some harm to its significance it does not amount to substantial harm (NPPF paragraph 195). The proposed development will have little or no impact on the setting of the other Scheduled Monuments: Galley Hill, Sandy Lodge, John O'Gaunt's Hill or Stratton Park Moat. Consequently, there is no objection to this application on the grounds of its impact on the setting of Scheduled Monuments and the significance of the designated heritage assets.
- 6.86 The remains of a late 19th century or early 20th century onion drying shed exist at West Sunderland Farm. The building has partially collapsed. The addendum to the ES states that the remains of the building will be subject to a programme of recording prior to its removal. Onion sheds are an important relict of the market gardening industry that dominated the agricultural landscape of the Ivel Valley in the 19th and 20th centuries. Onion sheds are not commonly found outside Bedfordshire and West Sunderland Farm lies at the heart of their distribution. However, given the condition of the structure, a programme of building recording in advance of development provides reasonable mitigation for the loss of the onion shed as a consequence of the development.

Recommendation

- 6.87 The impact of the proposed development on the setting of the five identified Scheduled Monuments (designated heritage assets) does not represent substantial harm to their significance. The loss of the onion shed at West Sunderland Farm represents a total loss of significance of the heritage asset which can, in this case, be satisfactorily mitigated through a programme of building recording. However, the information on archaeological remains and the heritage assets with archaeological interest they represent: a desk-based assessment and partial geophysical survey; is not adequate to identify the significance of the heritage assets with archaeological interest the proposed development is known to contain or locate previously unknown archaeological sites and features. It has been indicated previously that the appropriate level of baseline information on archaeology requires an archaeological field

evaluation comprising a geophysical survey of the complete site and a programme of trial trenching. Without this level of information, it is not possible to describe the character and significance of the archaeological remains the site contains and assess the impact of the proposal on the significance of those remains. The application site contains at least one substantial and complex, multi-phased archaeological site which has the potential to be of sufficient significance to require preservation in situ. Insufficient evidence has been submitted to support the assertion that the archaeological remains within the site are of only local importance and that there will be only a minor adverse impact on heritage assets with archaeological interest as a consequence of the development. Therefore, the Archaeology Team object to this application on the grounds that the application does not contain sufficient information to be able to assess the impact of the proposed development in heritage assets with archaeological interest and so the application is contrary to paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

CBC Public Protection

- 6.88 I have no objections to this outline application in principal but would advise that given the different types of uses you mention with a variety of as yet unmeasurable impacts on amenity these will need guidance and control by condition, as will environmental practices during construction.

CBC Trees Officer

- 6.89 This is an outline application in two phases with the first one consisting of 240 dwellings, access, roads, paths, drainage and landscaping.
- 6.90 The site consists primarily of agricultural land with boundary hedge lines and trees. Supplied with the application is an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and also an Illustrative Masterplan. These detail the proposed layout and position of trees, groups of trees within the site. We would be looking for retention of all A and B category trees along with as many of the C category trees that can be feasibly retained, this will ensure that mature landscape features will remain within the site.
- 6.91 Illustrative Masterplan shows that there is an intention to create a landscape buffer zone to the site boundaries of particular importance are the north and east boundaries overlooking open countryside. Being a two phase development and no real indication of when a second phase would be started if at all I would suggest that a secondary landscape buffer to the east along the edge of phase one would be an option that would ensure that regardless of phase two there would be a landscape buffer to the east.
- 6.92 Any full application will include a detailed Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- 6.93 Illustrative Masterplan does indicate that there will be substantial new planting on the development that will increase tree cover on the site and improve potential for biodiversity.

6.94 Landscape detail will emphasise the use of native species suitable for the locale and soil type in particular within buffer planting and site boundaries and consist of a combination of standard trees, whip planting and native hedge planting. Planting in more formal areas will ensure that species chosen will be suitable for their location at maturity and take into account canopy size and spread and issues of shade and fruit fall to ensure that the trees are retained and do not require size management to fit their location. Focal points eg access to site and main streets will make use of specimen trees that will be highly visible and create a landscape statement. Landscape management plan will be required.

CBC Sustainability Officer

6.95 The proposed development must 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. Policies DM1 and DM2 have not been acknowledged as relevant in the submitted documents; their requirements are outlined below.

6.96 Policy DM1 requires all new development of more than 10 dwellings to meet 10% energy demand from renewable or low carbon sources. The proposed development is above the policy threshold and therefore all dwellings should have 10% of their energy demand sources from renewable or low carbon sources.

6.97 Policy DM2 requires all new residential development to meet CfSH Level 3. The energy standard of the CfSH Level 3 is below standard required by the Part L2013 of the Building Regulations. The development should therefore as minimum comply with the new Part L2013 of Building Regulations and deliver 10% of their energy demand from renewable sources. In terms of water efficiency, the development should achieve 110 litres per person per day as this is the closest standard to the Level 3 of the CfSH. Requirement for non-residential development over 1000m² is to achieve BREEAM excellent rating.

6.98 Policy CS13 requires that all development considers climate change and its impacts on the development. The development therefore should be designed with climate change in mind taking account of increase in rainfall and temperature. Light colour building and landscaping materials should be prioritised over dark coloured which absorb more sun light and retain heat increasing urban heat island effect. The development should minimise hard standing surfaces and increase green, natural areas to allow rainwater infiltration and minimise heat island effect through evaporation and tree shading.

6.99 The developer is asked to submit a Sustainability Statement that demonstrates how the requirements of the above policies would be met. The statement should cover:

1. Energy efficiency
2. Renewable energy contribution

3. Water efficiency
4. Climate change adaptation including overheating and ventilation in dwellings.

CBC Self-Build Officer

- 6.100 The Development Brief acknowledges a need to provide self and custom build dwellings in section 6.5, however I would like the self and custom build to be identified under its own heading as it is our statutory duty under the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), to provide this type of housing. The NPPF is also clear that mix of houses must provide a mix that meets local needs, including arising from people who wish to build their homes.
- 6.101 We have commissioned consultants to look at the demand and the draft report (that I can share with you if needed) demonstrates that 10% of dwellings delivered should be self and custom build to meet our demand. It seems that this development will offer more opportunities for custom than self-build dwellings, but I would like to see both type in the mix.
- 6.102 Self-build means provision of serviced plots for buyers to design their home to their own specification, but their design will be expected to reflect any adopted Design Codes. Custom build means dwellings that are delivered by a developer and a customer has an input into a layout and design of a dwelling, but this can be done by offering pre-determined options for layout and design. I believe HTA are familiar with a custom build concept.
- 6.103 Delivery of self/custom build needs to be conditioned or to be set out in s106 agreement.

CBC Education

Land required

- 2 x 2.1ha primary school sites

Total financial contributions required

- Early Years - £1,831,237
- Primary - £12,450,000
- Secondary (middle and upper) - £13,611,593
- Total SEN contribution = £1,956,336

CBC Leisure Officer

- 6.104 A contribution to either the new library or refurbishment/extension of the existing library will be £210,000.

- 6.105 To mitigate the demand generated by the development a contribution of £1,422,673.00 will be sought towards extending and improving facilities at Saxon LC or new facility in the area.
- 6.106 On-site allotments should be provided to ensure residents have good access to facilities close to home.
- 6.107 This development should therefore provide the following football pitches/facilities:
- 6.108 The development should provide a site equivalent of 6-7 full size adult pitches, designed and constructed to Sport England/FA standards;
- 6.109 One or more of these pitches could be substituted by full size 3G pitches with floodlights.
- 6.110 Sports pavilion with 3+ changing rooms, referees changing rooms, social area, kitchen, WC's, disabled WC's etc. to Sport England and FA standards.

CBC Waste Officer

- 6.111 The Council's waste collection pattern for Biggleswade is as follows:
- Week 1 – 1 x 240 litre residual waste wheelie bin, 1 x 23 litre food waste caddy
- Week 2 – 1 x 240 litre recycling wheelie bin, 2 x reusable garden waste sacks, and 1 x 23 litre food waste caddy.
- 6.112 Please note that there is a contribution to pay for the supply/delivery of the bins. Our current charges for this are:
- Set of food waste bins - £5 +VAT
- 240 - £25 +VAT per bin
- 360 - £35 + VAT per bin
- 660 - £250 + VAT per bin
- 1100 - £350 + VAT per bin
- 6.113 This must be paid prior to discharging the relevant condition. A purchase order must be raised for the quantity of bins required and sent to Waste Services quoting the relevant planning reference number. We will also require a map of the site detailing street names, plot and house numbers.
- 6.114 Wherever possible, refuse collection vehicles will only use adopted highways. If an access road is to be used, it must be to adoptable standards suitable for the refuse vehicle to manoeuvre safely around site (please see vehicle dimensions below). Typically, until roads are adopted or if the RCV is unable to manoeuvre around the site, 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 2 reusable garden waste bags. However, householders should not be expected to transport waste bins over a distance greater than 25m. Bins must not encroach on or cause a hazard or obstruction to the public highway. Waste vehicles will reverse a maximum of 15m to the point of collection. If there are any parts of the development that are not accessible to the RCV, bin collection points will need to be provided.

6.115 If there are any flats as part of the development the following information applies. Communal waste provision is allocated on the basis of 90l per week per waste stream per property; therefore, we would provide 1100 litre, 660 litre or 360 litre bins to be collected fortnightly. Our waste collection crew will move communal bins a maximum of 10m from the bin store to the waste collection vehicle, providing there are suitable dropped kerbs. We will require confirmation of this prior to ordering any bins for the development.

6.116 Bin stores should be easily accessible from the main highway and it is crucial that the store is secure with a lock to prevent potential fly tipping issues. A lock code will need to be provided to the Central Bedfordshire Waste Services Team. The door used by the collection crews will need to be wide enough to allow for easy removal of bins from the storage area. A dropped kerb will need to be provided to enable easy manoeuvrability, access and egress of the bins. The crew are not expected to move the bins over any undulating, non-paved, uneven surface, or where the gradient is deemed excessive. Lighting within the bin store should be provided so that the bins can be used safely by residents when it is dark.

6.117 On a development of this size, I would look for the developer to provide a bring bank area. This would allow for the residents of this development to have the ability to recycle further materials currently not offered for collection by the Council. This would mainly be in the form of glass waste recycling.

6.118 Please also refer to the Design Guide as the Council will not be able to supply waste collections where the bin and access requirements do not meet our contractual provision, anything else differing to this will be incorporated as a condition. <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/design/info.aspx>

CBC Conservation Officer

6.119 No objection.

CBC Community Engagement Manager

6.120 Community facilities are vital in order to underpin the creation of 'social infrastructure'. People need places to meet in a social and informal context, develop networks around common needs such as keep fit, toddler groups, and committee meetings, and to hold events and gatherings both small and large. It is such activities that help to bring people together as cohesive communities. According to the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), "to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the

community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.”

- 6.121 Community facilities need to be multi-purpose and flexible to accommodate a vast range of activity. They need to be of different sizes to accommodate a range of activity, from small meeting rooms so that a group can come together to plan activities, to larger rooms and halls to host regular activities and larger events. They need to be both modern but intimate and need to be efficient and ‘cheap’ to run and maintain.
- 6.122 New centres or halls should be located in the neighbourhood centre of a new development to ensure that the majority of local residents live within 800 metres or 5-10 minutes travel time of the facility and ancillary facilities such as parking can be shared.”
- 6.123 For early residents, having to wait years for new facilities to be provided decreases quality of life, impedes the creation of communities and causes frustration. In particular the informal community space should be provided early on say by 10 occupations, this would be in anticipation that new residents would access the Orchard when needing larger facilities for local functions etc.
- 6.124 Social processes form an important part in the wellbeing of a growing community. Gaining the confidence of local residents, welcoming new residents, encouraging them to use and take ownership of the Community facility and enabling them to organise themselves is vital
- 6.125 The new Civil Society Strategy (2018) recognises the contribution of local asset ownership to viable and sustainable communities, we should aspire to achieve this. Whichever body is due to own and govern each building it should be involved at the earliest possible stage – if a new body (e.g. charitable trust) is being created, it should be set up in time to be involved in the early discussions.
- 6.126 Governance can also include community development workers; a ‘community chest’ for funding small scale community projects; working with the community and voluntary sector; working with church and faith groups; providing resources in terms of buildings, computers etc. A Community Development Trust that could be funded by developer contributions may be considered (this has been established elsewhere in Central Beds – Silsoe and soon Shillington).

CBC Public Art Officer

- 6.127 Given the proposed scale of development public art is required to be included in development proposals to enhance public interfaces, reinforce quality in design and highlight sense of place. A Public Art Plan will be required by Condition if the application were to be approved.

CBC MANOP

- 6.128 The plans submitted for Phase One of the scheme which is seeking full planning permission meets the policy requirements above and we would be in support of the development from this perspective.
- 6.129 For Phase Two of the scheme, if the development is acceptable in principle, then we consider that the development should include the following dwellings of a design and layout that makes them suitable for older people in accordance with the standards set out in the appendix to this response:
- Not less than one hundred and seventy-three (173) Units of Mainstream Housing for Older People.
 - Not less than sixty-eight (68) units of Housing with Support for Older People.
 - Not less than forty-nine (49) units of Housing with Care for Older People.
- 6.130 In addition, consideration should be given to the incorporation of a care or nursing home for older people (C2 use class) in a suitable location. This could potentially be provided in lieu of some of the units set out above.

7.0 Neighbour consultation responses

- 7.1 Local residents were notified of the application by the Council when it was submitted and were notified again when amendments were made to it. Press notices and site notices were displayed.
- 7.2 223 responses were received. 206 of those objected to the application, four were in support of it and 13 passed comment. A summary of the responses received is set of below. Where appropriate, the matters raised have been addressed in the body of this report:

Objections

- Concerns regarding the level of existing infrastructure to deal with increase in house numbers.
- Will have an adverse impact upon the retail park and town centre.
- Will have an irreversible and adverse impact upon the open countryside.
- Existing infrastructure overstretched.
- Will cripple the existing roads, doctors' surgeries and parking facilities.
- No investment in road and rail infrastructure improvement.
- Should focus the revenue on the Kings Reach and existing Town infrastructure.
- Lack of policing to deal with existing Town population.
- The scheme is an overdevelopment for a town that already struggles with its current capacity.
- No new doctors' surgeries and no GP's to take control of the facility.
- There will be no new Middle and Upper schools.
- Increased road and rail traffic.

- There will be a loss of Green Space and Agricultural land.
- Concerns regarding traffic generation on Baden Powell Way with only one main access.
- The same inadequate parking scheme which has seen so much stress caused on the Kings Reach development has been replicated in this application.
- Healthcare, education and leisure facilities promised on the Kings Reach estate have not been delivered, and therefore how can we support a similar scheme.
- Increased pressure on the existing A1 junction which already struggles to cope with the existing traffic generation.
- 5 storey building would be out of character on the agricultural landscape.
- 1500 houses would generate an increase in crime in the town.
- There is no police station within the Town Centre.
- Lack of existing employment opportunities put pressure on people to commute, and roads and railways cannot cope.
- The site is proposed in accordance with Policy SA4, however the Local Plan is subject to examination, and it would be premature to approve the site before the examination.
- Policy SA4 requires a Development Brief to be adopted, this has not happened.
- Pylons remain on site which would detract from the landscape and cause health issues to the residents.
- The change from 3 tier school system to 2 tiers, with the number of houses from this development and kings reach is too much for the existing infrastructure to cope with.
- Health studies show the implications of living under pylons is dangerous.
- The site is Grade 2 agricultural land which is ideal for dog walks and has hundreds of natural habitats, and therefore the scheme would see the loss of a wonderful natural environment.
- Sports pitches proposed on areas where housing cannot be built – poorly thought out layout.
- Houses will not be affordable to the residents of Biggleswade.
- Impact upon the nature reserve.
- Site is proposed on the border of the Flood Zone and therefore development would result in more water run-off and further stress to surrounding areas.
- Ground Water level close to the surface so flooding is highly likely.
- The scheme is reliant on pumps to remove overflowing water with no backup.
- A1 retail park at capacity but not enough shops to support the population.
- Lack of leisure and entertainment opportunities for the existing town.
- The train station car park cannot cope with an increased population.
- Not all of the site falls within the applicant's ownership.
- Biggleswade only has one upper school so the town is stretched. The scheme does not propose a new one.
- Social infrastructure and facilities overcrowded.

- Noise and Air Quality have been impacted as a result of the constant development on the east of Biggleswade.
- Constant development impacting the natural environment.
- The development would rob the wildlife of their habitat.
- The application has not been supported with an Environmental Statement.
- Constructing 1500 new homes would significantly devalue the current house prices in Biggleswade.
- We want to see the social and affordable housing provided for actual Biggleswade residents and not Luton.
- The Green Wheel surrounding Biggleswade will be destroyed.
- There is a lack of public transport, especially to the Train station.
- The site gets regularly flooded.
- The prematurity of the application in relation to the Local Plan is a serious concern.
- The council are soon entering the examination period for the Local Plan, and therefore it is not part of the development plan as of yet.
- The application has been rushed in respect of the timing of the local plan and therefore makes it unsound.
- The evidence base for the site is deficient.
- The site would make the settlement unsustainable.
- The approval of the application would lead to the coalescence between settlements.
- The site is an urban expansion and not a new settlement.
- There is a significant lack of schools at all levels.
- Would like to see internal details of insulation as the houses approved on the Kings Reach estate are not well insulated.
- The development would constitute an overdevelopment of the landscape.
- The Town Centre is already dying because of the retail park, this development will make the situation worse.
- Loss of Green Open space is becoming problematic.
- There is no sustainable transport links, such as cycle paths.
- There has been no attempt to make the houses proposed low carbon
- There is no allocated provision of electric car parking and charging points.
- Concerns regarding the adoption of the roads proposed.
- The commercial aspect of the development would be significantly out of character.
- Detracts from the vibrancy of the Town Centre.
- Would result in a significant loss of a view and outlook onto the open countryside.
- Town is sprawling
- Pressure on the existing water supply and mains
- Environment can't cope with current levels of development
- Education and Leisure facilities can't cope
- Who will be responsible for maintaining green spaces, community buildings, car park security?

- Beach Hut homes out of character
- High rise flats too high and not in keeping with rural area
- No thought for Affordable Housing
- There should be more housing for the elderly
- Valuable farmland disappearing
- Dislike the communal car parking being out of sight
- Encouraging to see a new primary school, but not enough other infrastructure to support the no. of housing
- The scheme would not provide any dentists surgeries.
- Train station not fit for commuter expansion without appropriate car parking
- Increase traffic congestion
- No upper schools for older children – will lead to an oversubscription of middle schools and upper schools existing
- Development is premature of the Local Plan
- Development would see the loss of mature and established trees
- Town already lacks existing transport infrastructure
- Loss of mature habitat for wildlife
- Existing traffic and congestion is a problem
- Significant traffic movements result in increased noise
- Inadequate storm water designs or watercourse modelling provided
- Harm to the open countryside
- Infrastructure needs to be in place prior to more houses
- Merging closer to Dunton and Sutton
- NHS overloaded
- Impact on green land surrounding Biggleswade (Green Wheel?)
- Buildings 7 stories in height would be out of character
- No elderly accommodation and no Affordable housing
- Traffic congestion will worsen in the main town
- In the Green Belt
- Current methods of flood alleviation are dangerous – pools created
- High risk of flooding
- Premature of the Local Plan
- Public service strain increased – Police, Ambulances etc.
- In addition to the east west rail link – increased congestion
- More traffic at the Black Cat roundabout
- Poor Upper school provision
- A ploy to force through site in the Local Plan
- East West rail not to be complete until 2025
- There needs to be a plan in place for implementing and allocating medical facilities.
- The Police service is not sufficient to deal with a growing population.
- There needs to be a clearer Traffic mitigation plan in place if the Council are to approve the scheme.

- The Council need to think carefully about what provision of retail they would support in this location, not enough shops

Support

- Biggleswade need more houses for young families.
- Well Designed Scheme
- It would supply a policy compliant provision of affordable housing which Biggleswade needs.
- The scheme would reinvigorate the community.

8.0 Material Considerations

8.1 The material considerations in the assessment of this planning application are:

1. Whether the principle of the development would be acceptable;
2. Whether the impact of the development of the highways network would be acceptable;
3. Whether the impact of the development on other local infrastructure would be acceptable;
4. Whether the impact of the development on flood risk and drainage would be acceptable;
5. Whether the proposed housing mix would be acceptable;
6. Whether the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the site and the area would be acceptable;
7. Whether the impact of the development on heritage assets would be acceptable;
8. Whether the impact of the development on ecology would be acceptable;
9. Whether the impact of the development on existing residents within the vicinity of the site would be acceptable; and
10. Whether the quality of living accommodation for future occupiers would be acceptable.

8.2 These material considerations are assessed in the following sections of this report.

9.0 Assessment

The principle of the development

9.1 Policy DM4 seeks to protect the Open Countryside by limiting new development to within defined Settlement Envelopes. The proposed

development would conflict with that policy because the site is within the Open Countryside, and not within a Settlement Envelope. This policy conflict should weigh against the approval of the application.

- 9.2 Paragraph 170 of the Framework sets out that planning decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile land (BMV). These requirements are consistent with the objectives of Policy DM4. Around 90% of the site consists of Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a land, which are classified as BMV agricultural land. The loss of the site as countryside, albeit with a landscape led scheme, and the loss of a large area of agricultural land, with its associated benefits, which include to the economy, should also weigh against the approval of the application.
- 9.3 Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The dis-benefits associated with the development identified above, including the conflict with a Development Plan policy, can be outweighed, providing that material considerations exist to which sufficient weight should be attached to indicate that such a conclusion should be reached.
- 9.4 The site is allocated for development in the emerging Local Plan 2035 by Policy [SA4](#). That Plan has been consulted upon and submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. It has not yet been examined and this limits the weight that should be attached to policies within the Plan. That said, the site has passed a robust site selection process and has been found suitable for inclusion as a strategic housing allocation by the Council. That allocation closely aligns with the development for which planning permission is now sought.
- 9.5 The inclusion of an allocation for this site in that Plan is a material planning consideration to which weight in favour of the application should be attached. That positive weight should not be overriding given the current status of the Plan.
- 9.6 Significant weight should be attached to the contribution that this development would make towards housing supply in Central Bedfordshire. The delivery of up to 1,500 new homes in a range of tenures, including affordable housing and adjoining a large settlement with a range of services would very meaningfully assist the authority in continuing to meet its housing need into the next Plan period.
- 9.7 The applicant would enter into a Build Rate Timetable planning obligation, which would secure a minimum of 500 new homes within the five-year period from the date of any planning permission. That early, significant injection of delivery to reinforce the Council's housing land supply position should also attach positive weight in favour of the planning application.
- 9.8 Cumulatively, the positive weight that should be attached to the emerging site allocation and the delivery of a substantial quantum of new housing to help meet future need, including a significant contribution to the current five-year

housing supply, would outweigh the dis-benefits associated with the development of the site, including the identified conflict with Policy DM4.

- 9.9 Whilst the Local Plan 2035 is yet to be adopted, the Framework is clear at paragraph 49 that arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:
- 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 that are central to an emerging plan; and
 - b. the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.
- 9.10 That would not be the case here. Granting planning permission for a development at this site and that development commencing would have no material impact on other allocation in the Plan and so the policies contained within the emerging Plan would not be undermined in any way. As such, permission should not be withheld on prematurity grounds.

The impact of the development on the town centre

- 9.11 Planning permission is also sought for a range of non-residential uses at the site, including retail and leisure uses. The application is supported by a Retail Impact Assessment (RIA), that explains that these uses are designed to support the new community that would live at the site.
- 9.12 The RIA demonstrates that a sequential approach has been taken to the selection of this site for those uses (i.e. that it would not be appropriate to locate these uses within, or nearer to a town centre) and that these uses operating from this site would not likely have a detrimental impact on the vitality or viability of Biggleswade or Pottton town centres. Planning conditions would limit the total quantum of town centre and leisure floorspace at the site and the maximum size of individual uses so as to help ensure that these uses would be designed to meet day to day needs of residents at the site and would not undermine existing centres.
- 9.13 The proposed non-residential uses would be consistent with Policy DM7 of the Core Strategy and Development Policies and Section 7 of the Framework, which seeks to protect existing town centres and would be acceptable in principle.

Summary

- 9.14 The use of this site for the proposed development would result in a conflict with Policy DM4 and would result in the loss of countryside and high-grade agricultural land. Those dis-benefits would be outweighed by the cumulative weight that should be attached to the emerging site allocation for the site and the evidence base and site selection process that supports that allocation and

the significant contribution that would be made to the housing stock, including in the immediate five-year period. The non-residential uses at the site would, subject to planning conditions, be acceptable and appropriate.

- 9.15 Whether or not planning permission should be granted is dependent on other impacts of the development being found to be acceptable, and whether that would be the case is described in the remainder of this report.

The highways network

The strategic road network

- 9.16 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment. It models the impact of the development on the strategic road network and on junctions leading to the A1.
- 9.17 Highways England lodged a holding objection against the application when it was initially consulted upon it because it felt that the planning application, at that time, was not supported with sufficient information relating to the potential impacts of the development on the strategic highways network. A full Transport Assessment was prepared by the applicant and HE received it in November 2018. An early review led to some requests for further details and clarifications. The applicant has responded to these requests.
- 9.18 Highways England is currently reviewing all of the information provided to it. It is not possible for it, at this stage, to withdraw its holding objection to the application because that review has not been completed.
- 9.19 The review will determine Highways England's position on the way in which potential impacts have been modelled and what mitigation would be required to address those potential impacts. The applicant currently proposes mitigation in the form of amendments to the lanes and the length of flares at both the A1/Hill Lane and A1/London Road roundabout junctions.

The local road network

- 9.20 The Local Highways Authority is satisfied that the Transport Assessment provides a considered assessment of the proposed development from a transport perspective and that the highways impact of this proposal has been assessed with a robust and proportionate modelling approach with sufficient proposed mitigation to make the impact of the scheme acceptable.
- 9.21 The TA identifies that mitigation would be required to the following local junctions to ensure that the transport impacts of the development upon them would be acceptable:
- London Road/Pegasus Drive
 - London Road/Normandy Lane
 - London Road / Saxon Drive / Holme Court Avenue

- 9.22 Detailed designs for these mitigation measures are being worked up by the applicant, in consultation with the Local Highways Authority. A s106 agreement would ensure that they were carried out at an appropriate point during the development.
- 9.23 A contribution of £250,000 would be made available for further local transport enhancements, including within the town centre. This contribution could assist in responding to local aspirations for accessibility improvements identified through the Biggleswade Neighbourhood Plan, which is currently at an early stage of its development.

Sustainable transport

- 9.24 The planning application is supported by a Travel Plan for the development. The Council's Strategic Transport Team is satisfied that subject to some amendments, that would be secured through the s106 agreement, the Plan would promote the use of sustainable transport to an acceptable degree.
- 9.25 In addition to measures included to promote walking and cycling, the s106 would secure contributions that would be used to enhance existing public transport provision in the local area (for example, bolstering the existing bus service that links King's Reach to the town centre and the train station). A total of £225,000 would be secured towards upgrading public transport for the three-year period from the commencement of development.
- 9.26 Once the development was more advanced, and 250 of the new homes were occupied, a sum of £2,240,000 would be made available for implementing a comprehensive Public Transport Strategy, that would be developed in consultation with the Local Highways Authority. This provision would allow for the implementation of a scheme or schemes appropriate at that point in time, having regard to circumstances that may have changed since the development was first implemented.

The site accesses

- 9.27 The main access to the site would be from Baden Powell Way, with a secondary access to the south of it. The design of the accesses would be safe and suitable for the volume and type of traffic that would use them. A planning condition would secure full engineering details of the main access and it would be complete prior to the occupation of any dwellings at the site.

Car and cycle parking

- 9.28 A Design Code for the site and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide would inform the quantum and location of car (including electric) parking and cycle spaces. These would be submitted and assessed as part of applications for the approval of reserved matters for each phase.

Rights of Way

- 9.29 The site contains a number of rights of way, which connect the site to the wider green infrastructure network, including the Biggleswade Green Wheel.

The Design Code and planning conditions would secure a scheme of enhancement of rights of way within the site to maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and access to the countryside.

- 9.30 Subject to the planning conditions and planning obligations described, the development would be in accordance with policies CS2, CS3, CS4, CS14 and DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and the impact of the development on highways and sustainable transport impacts of the development would be acceptable.

Local infrastructure

- 9.31 The development would mitigate its impacts on existing local infrastructure through planning obligations secured by a s106 agreement. The principle heads of terms are set out below:

Schools

- 9.32 Two serviced primary school sites totalling 4.2ha would be made available for transfer to the Council. A contribution of £12,450,000 towards building the primary schools would be made by the applicant. The timing of payments has been agreed with the Local Education Authority to ensure that new facilities could be delivered at the rights times to meet the needs generated by the development.
- 9.33 A contribution of £1,831,237 would be made towards the provision of early years facilities. The timing of payments has been agreed with the Local Education Authority to ensure that new facilities could be delivered at the rights times to meet the needs generated by the development. These would likely be delivered at the new primary school sites within the development.
- 9.34 A contribution of £13,611,593 would be made towards the provision of secondary school facilities in Biggleswade. The timing of payments has been agreed with the Local Education Authority to ensure that new facilities could be delivered at the rights times to meet the needs generated by the development. The middle school contribution could go towards the expansion of Edward Peake Middle school and/ or Biggleswade Academy with the upper school contribution being put towards the expansion of Stratton. Or, if schools have moved to a 2-tier system by the time the development comes forward, the funding would be used to create additional places for the relevant age range, at whichever schools serve the development at that point in time.
- 9.35 A total of £1,956,336 would be made towards provision of Special Educational Needs facilities (SEN) in Biggleswade. The timing of payments has been agreed with the Local Education Authority to ensure that new facilities could be delivered at the rights times to meet the needs generated by the development.

Health

- 9.36 A contribution of £3,677,000 would be made towards enhancing local health facilities. This contribution, and the timing of the payments has been agreed with the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group/NHS to ensure that new facilities could be delivered at the right times to meet the needs generated by the development. It is anticipated that this contribution would be directed towards a new Health Hub, potentially at the existing hospital site, which is near to the development.

Community

- 9.37 A minimum of 1,080m² of new community buildings would be provided at the site.
- 9.38 A contribution of £10,500 would be made towards cemeteries and churchyards in the local area.

Rights of Way

- 9.39 A contribution of £36,000 would be made towards the enhancement of off-site rights of way would be made.

Allotments

- 9.40 Allotments with a minimum area of 1.33ha would be constructed at the site.

Leisure

- 9.41 A contribution of £1,422,673 would be made towards improvements to off-site indoor leisure facilities in the local area.
- 9.42 A contribution of £315,000 would be made towards local library services in Biggleswade.
- 9.43 A sports pavilion and at least six sports pitches constructed to Sport England and Football Association standards would be constructed at the site.

Lindsell's Crossing

- 9.44 There is an existing level-crossing on the northwest side of Biggleswade known as Lindsell's Crossing. It provides the existing means of crossing the railway to access the wider countryside leisure routes. Network Rail has set out that it cannot support any application that would import increased risk on to this level crossing and therefore it requires that appropriate proposals are put in place to reduce risk on the level crossing.
- 9.45 There are plans to upgrade that level-crossing to an overbridge across the railway line. In addition to an initial contribution of £100,000 to assist Network Rail in their feasibility and design work associated with upgrading the crossing, the development would meet the full costs of carrying out that work prior to the 250th occupation at the site in the event that alternative funding for some or all of the cost had not been secured by that point in time. Network Rail has confirmed that these arrangements are satisfactory.

Waste

- 9.46 A contribution of £37,452 would be made towards waste services associated with the development.

Summary

- 9.47 The heads of terms set out above have been developed in close consultation with relevant spending officers. They are comprehensive and would be secured at appropriate and acceptable stages throughout the development, with a significant early outlay for the developer.
- 9.48 Subject to the planning obligations described, the development would be in accordance with Policy CS2 Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009 and the impact of the development on existing local infrastructure would be acceptable.

Flood risk and drainage

- 9.49 Parts of the site are within Environment Agency Flood Zones 2 and 3. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment. This has been reviewed by the Environment Agency, who are satisfied that subject to planning conditions that would demonstrate that the development would pass the Sequential and, if appropriate, Impact Tests described in the Framework, the impacts of the development on flood risk would be acceptable.
- 9.50 Planning conditions would secure drainage schemes for the phases of the development in line with the requirements of the Internal Drainage Board and the Council's Drainage Engineer.
- 9.51 The Design Code would set out how existing water features at the site would be incorporated into the design of the scheme.
- 9.52 Subject to conditions, the impacts of the development on flood risk and drainage would be acceptable, in accordance with policies CS14 and DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

Housing

- 9.53 Each Phase of the development would be accompanied by a Housing Scheme for that Phase, detailed in the reserved matters application. That Scheme would include details of how that Phase would provide a policy compliant mix of housing, including affordable housing. It would describe how many starter homes, self-build homes and homes for older people would be provided at that Phase and the Scheme would be assessed and approved or refused by the Local Planning Authority, with reference with current planning policy and guidance.
- 9.54 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the planning application and the Development Brief for the site, that has been endorsed for

development management purposes, demonstrate a commitment to deliver a wide choice of homes to meet the needs of Central Bedfordshire.

- 9.55 These measures would ensure that the development delivered an acceptable mix of housing at the site in accordance with policies CS2, CS5, CS7, CS14 and DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

Character and appearance

- 9.56 A development of this scale on what is currently largely undeveloped land in the countryside would inevitably have an impact on the appearance of the site. The application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment that seeks to articulate impacts in wider landscape views.
- 9.57 Despite those unavoidable impacts, a landscape led approach has been taken to the layout of the site, in so far as it has been developed at Outline stage and agreed in the approved Development Brief. Around 60% of the site would remain undeveloped. Within the site, landscape buffer areas along the western and southern boundaries would, over time, reduce the visual impact of the development in views back towards the site. The landscaped edges of the site would assist in reducing any sense of coalescence between the town and its neighbouring villages.
- 9.58 The development would include a substantial extension to Biggleswade Common at the north of the site and an extension to the Linear Park that runs along the eastern side of Baden Powell Way. These enhancements would represent significant additions to green infrastructure provision within the vicinity of the site and would increase public access to the countryside.
- 9.59 The contents of any Design Code would be of key importance to the successfulness of landscaping within the site and that, together with planning conditions would help to secure a successful scheme in this regard. Conditions would also seek to protect existing trees of value of the site.
- 9.60 The application is accompanied by an Illustrative Masterplan, which demonstrates that the quantum of development could be accommodated at the site, whilst maintaining large areas of green and open space within in.
- 9.61 The design and quality of buildings and space at the site would be controlled by a Design Code and would be assessed as part of reserved matters submissions. The Design Code would set out how different Character Areas within the site would be designed and laid out and where different types of uses would be located.
- 9.62 It is anticipated that the Design Code would be developed through a Forum, with a range of interested parties involved and able to influence its contents.
- 9.63 The Design and Access Statement and the Development Brief provide comfort that a successful scheme can be achieved and subject to planning conditions, including that which would secure the Design Code, the impact of

the development on the character and appearance of the area would be acceptable.

- 9.64 The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide 2014 is a material consideration against which future applications for the approval of Reserved Matters would also be assessed.
- 9.65 A planning condition would secure details of phasing to ensure that the way in which the development was built out was appropriate and acceptable.
- 9.66 Subject to a Design Code and other necessary planning conditions, the character and appearance of the development would be acceptable, in accordance with policies CS14, CS16, CS17, DM3, DM14 and DM16 of the Central Bedfordshire Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

Heritage

- 9.67 There is no built heritage at the site and no objections have been raised by Historic England or the Council's Conservation Officer.
- 9.68 The Council's Archaeology Officer is concerned that a comprehensive assessment of archaeology at the whole site should be carried out prior to planning permission being granted and prior to the commencement of any development. That concern is noted, but a planning condition that prevented development commencing at any Phase before details of a full evaluation and details of necessary mitigation for that Phase, would, on balance, secure a satisfactory outcome.
- 9.69 Subject to conditions, the impact of the development on heritage assets would be acceptable in accordance with policies CS15 and DM13 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

Ecology

- 9.70 The planning application is supported by ecological surveys of the site. The Council's Ecology Officer is satisfied that subject to biodiversity being addressed by a Design Code, and other planning conditions being imposed, the site could deliver a net-gain in biodiversity and ensure that exiting species are properly protected.
- 9.71 Subject to conditions, the impact of the development on biodiversity and ecology would be acceptable in accordance with policies CS18 and DM15 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

Neighbours

- 9.72 The nearest neighbours to the site are at West Sunderland Farm Cottages and Sunderland Hall Farm to the east. Existing residents at the King's Reach Development would also be reasonably near to the site.

- 9.73 The planning application is supported by technical report relating to the potential noise, air quality and light implications of the development on neighbours and they confirm that subject to controls, those impacts would be acceptable. The Council's Public Protection Team agrees with those conclusions.
- 9.74 The detailed design of the site would need to carefully consider the relationship between the development and existing neighbours. The Design Code should address how those relationships would be managed.
- 9.75 Construction, which could impact upon those further afield than those directly adjacent to the site, would also be controlled by a planning condition, to seek to mitigate its impacts, whilst acknowledging that a level of disruption is an inevitable consequence of a development of this scale.
- 9.76 Subject to conditions and subsequent reserved matters submissions, the impacts of the development on existing neighbours of the site would be acceptable, in accordance with policies CS14 and DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

Quality of accommodation

- 9.77 A Design Code and reliance upon the Council's Design Guide, where appropriate, would help secure a high quality of living accommodation for future occupiers. The applicant has been keen to highlight that the delivery of a very high-quality living environment is a key focus for them.
- 9.78 The Council would assess the standard of accommodation provided when reserved matters submissions are made.
- 9.79 Planning conditions would seek to minimise noise and odour that might result from commercial uses at the site.
- 9.80 A planning obligation would secure details of high-speed broadband for homes at the site. This could facilitate increased home working and reduce reliance on commuting.
- 9.81 Planning obligations would secure the provision of shops, a public house and a range of community and leisure facilities that would enhance the overall quality of the development for future occupiers.
- 9.82 Planning conditions would ensure that new buildings were constructed to appropriate sustainability standards and that fire safety was properly considered in the design of the site.
- 9.83 Subject to planning conditions and planning obligations, the quality of the accommodation provided for future occupiers would be acceptable, in accordance with policies CS14, DM1, DM2 and DM3 of the Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2009.

Other matters

Human Rights

- 9.84 The development has been assessed in the context of human rights and would have no relevant implications.

Equality Act 2010

- 9.85 The development has been assessed in the context of the Equalities Act 2010 and would have no relevant implications.

10.0 The Planning Balance and Conclusions

- 10.1 The development would result in a conflict with Policy DM4 because the site is not within a Settlement Envelope and would result in the loss of an area of countryside and agricultural land. These factors weigh against the development in the planning balance.
- 10.2 However, the site has been allocated for this scale and type of development in the emerging Local Plan and would result in a substantial contribution towards local housing delivery, including in the immediate five-year period, which would help to bolster the Council's housing land supply.
- 10.3 Whilst in Outline, the parameter plans show that this would be a landscape led development. The Illustrative Masterplan, Design and Access Statement and Development Brief provide comfort to the Local Planning Authority that a high-quality development could be secured at the site.
- 10.4 This would be secured through, amongst other planning conditions, a Design Code. This, together with appropriate reference to other planning policies and guidance, including the Council's Design Guide, will inform how reserved matters applications for phases of the development will be designed and assessed by the Local Planning Authority. The planning permission would be robust and would have in place mechanisms for the Council to secure a high-quality development at the site.
- 10.5 Impacts on existing local infrastructure would be mitigated through a comprehensive set of planning obligations. Conditions and/or planning obligations deemed necessary by Highways England to mitigate the impacts of the development on the strategic highways network would be imposed.
- 10.6 Subject to planning conditions, all other material issues would be satisfactorily addressed and so planning permission should be granted subject to planning conditions and planning obligations, once the Highways England holding objection has been lifted.
- 10.7 These conclusions have been reached having examined the environmental information submitted with the Environmental Statement and addendum that accompanied the planning application. For the reasons set out in this report, no significant effects on the environment have been identified that cannot be mitigated or are not outweighed by benefits associated with the development.

It is not considered necessary to impose monitoring measures. As such, the Local Planning Authority has satisfied its obligations under paragraph 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1 It is recommended that:

Development Management Committee supports the outline planning application subject to withdrawal of the Highways England holding objection, the conditions set out at Appendix 1 and the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement securing the obligations described in this report and thereafter authorises the Assistant Director – Development Infrastructure in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Executive Member for Regeneration and Business and relevant Ward Members to grant outline planning permission providing that no new material changes to the planning application arise as a result of the measures proposed to mitigate the impacts of the development on the strategic highways network.

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

The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and 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 National Planning Policy Framework and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

DECISION

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