

**Case No:** 18/02569/OUT (OUTLINE APPLICATION)

**Proposal:** PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING THE ERECTION OF 16 DWELLINGS AT LAND EAST OF NO. 66 THRAPSTON ROAD, BRAMPTON, PROPOSED ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

**Location:** LAND EAST OF 66 THRAPSTON ROAD BRAMPTON

**Applicant:** ABBEY PROPERTIES CAMBRIDESHIRE LIMITED

**Grid Ref:** 521194 271134

**Date of Registration:** 29.11.2018

**Parish:** BRAMPTON

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**RECOMMENDATION** - **APPROVE** subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 obligation relating to affordable housing, provision of an off-site open space and maintenance contribution, wheeled bins, and subject to conditions.

**OR**

**RECOMMENDATION** - **REFUSE** in the event that the obligation referred to above has not been completed and the applicant is unwilling to agree to an extended period for determination, or on the grounds that the applicant is unwilling to complete the obligation necessary to make the development acceptable.

**This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) in accordance with the current Scheme of Delegation as it is a Departure from the Development Plan as the proposals are for 16 dwellings (10 market and 6 affordable) in the countryside and Brampton Parish Council's ultimate recommendation of refusal is contrary to the officer recommendation of approval.**

## **1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION**

- 1.1 The application site relates to a roughly rectangular shaped parcel of undeveloped land covering an area of 0.78 hectares that is located on the north side of Thrapston Road, Brampton. The frontage to the site, which currently comprises existing trees and hedgerow, measures approximately 175m. The site has a depth of approximately 85 m. The site has its boundary to the west with number 66 Thrapston Road and there is a footpath along the site frontage and National cycle route 12. There are ponds located further to the north of the site.
- 1.2 The adjoining land uses comprise open land with an agricultural tied dwelling and cattle sheds to the north, residential dwellings to the east and west and Thrapston Road to the south of the site. There is an existing children's nursery and residential dwelling to the north

east and the access to this nursery and Poplars Farm forms the eastern boundary of the site.

- 1.3 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency's Flood Mapping and Huntingdonshire District Council's Updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Maps (2017). There are no designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the application site.
- 1.4 The application seeks outline consent for residential development of the site for 16 dwellings with all matters reserved apart from access into the site from the public highway.
- 1.5 The application is accompanied by an illustrative layout plan which aims to demonstrate that the site is capable of accommodating the scale of development proposed (16 dwellings). The illustrative layout shows one option for how the site could be developed should permission be granted. An illustrative landscape masterplan also accompanies the proposals which details a number of soft landscape works, including a landscape buffer to the north. These submitted plans are indicative only and the final layout and details of the development would be established at the reserved matters stage.
- 1.6 The application is however accompanied by the following plans which have been submitted for approval at this stage:
  - \* Site boundary
  - \* Site access arrangements
- 1.7 During the lifetime of the application revised plans have been submitted to address comments received from consultees. Following the submission of revised plans, re-consultation has been undertaken accordingly.

## **2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE**

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (19th February 2019) (NPPF 2019) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2019 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'
- 2.2 The NPPF 2019 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
  - \* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
  - \* achieving well-designed places;
  - \* conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
  - \* conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 2.3 The NPPF 2019 replaces the NPPF 2012 (and updates the 2018 publication). Transitional arrangements are in place for authorities who have submitted Local Plans on or before the 24 January 2019. To ensure consistency, the 2012 Framework policies will continue to be relevant for the purposes of examining those plans. For clarity HDC submitted their Local Plan on 29 March 2018 and the

examination hearings took place in July and September 2018. This emerging Local Plan is a material consideration. The NPPF 2019 should also in the normal way be taken into account as a material consideration in dealing with applications.

- 2.4 Planning Practice Guidance is also relevant and a material consideration.

For full details visit the government website: <https://www.gov.uk>

### **3. PLANNING POLICIES**

- 3.1 Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995) (saved policies):

- H23: Housing development outside environmental limits
- H31: Residential privacy and amenity standards
- H37: Housing and Environmental pollution
- T18: Access requirements for new development
- T19: Footpath provision in new development
- T20: Cycleway provision in new development
- EN11: Ancient monuments and archaeological sites
- En12: Archaeological recording
- En13: Archaeological potential evaluation
- En17: Development in the Countryside
- En18: Protection of countryside features
- En19: Tree Preservation Orders
- En20: Landscaping Schemes for new development
- En22: Nature and Wildlife conservation
- En24: Access provision for the disabled
- En25: General Design Criteria
- CS8: Water supply, sewerage, sewage disposal and surface water drainage requirements
- CS9: Flood water management
- R7: Open playspace provision standards in new housing schemes
- R8: Commutation of open playspace

- 3.2 Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations 2002 (Saved policies):

- HL5: Quality and Density of Development
- HL6: Housing Density
- HL10: Choice in new housing
- OB2: Maintenance of Open Space

- 3.3 Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2009:

- CS1: Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire
- CS2: Strategic Housing Development
- CS3: The Settlement Hierarchy
- CS4: Affordable Housing in Development
- CS10: Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements

- 3.4 Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2009 (adopted 2011):

- Policy HW6 – The Council will pursue an extension of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. Paragraph 8.4 of the AAP says “It is anticipated that there will be no major development along

the Thrapston Road/Huntingdon Road border which will help to maintain the rural outlook of the Country Park”.

- 3.5 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission):
- HU10: Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Extension, Huntingdon
  - LP 1: Amount of Development
  - LP 2: Strategy for development
  - LP 3: Green Infrastructure
  - LP 4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
  - LP 5: Flood Risk
  - LP 6: Waste Water Management
  - LP 7: Spatial Planning Areas
  - LP 11: The Countryside
  - LP 12: Design Context
  - LP 13: Design Implementation
  - LP 15: Amenity
  - LP 16: Surface Water
  - LP 17: Sustainable Travel
  - LP 18: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
  - LP 25: Affordable Housing Provision
  - LP 26: Housing Mix
  - LP 32: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
  - LP36: Heritage Assets and their Settings
  - LP 33: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
  - LP 39: Ground Contamination and Groundwater Pollution
- 3.6 The LPA considers the Local Plan to 2036 to be a sound plan and it was submitted for examination on the 29th March 2018. Footnote 22 of the NPPF 2019 states during the transitional period for emerging plans submitted for examination (set out in paragraph 214 of NPPF 2019), consistency should be tested against the previous Framework published in March 2012. The plan has therefore reached an advanced stage and is considered to be consistent with the policies set out within the NPPF 2012. The Local Plan examination hearings ended on 27 September 2018 and the Inspector's initial findings are that the plan can be made sound by main modifications.
- 3.7 Following the examination hearings held in July and September 2018, the wording of LP2, LP3, LP5 and LP11 are to be changed. For LP2 “recognise” is to be added in relation to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, LP3 adds text above the Grafham Water heading, LP5 is to be amended as agreed with the Environment Agency and County Council, and LP11 the word "protect" is to be replaced with "recognise".
- 3.8 With regard to Policy HU10, the Inspector has requested a modification to the size of the extension to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, to reduce this from 44ha to 27.5ha. This removes the land to the north of the application site from the proposed extension to the country park.
- 3.9 The Inspector has not required any main modifications to any of the other policies listed above that would have any material implications for this application.

- 3.10 The emerging Local Plan has now reached an advanced stage and in the light of the Inspector's initial findings should be afforded more weight. Save for policies LP2, LP3, LP5 and LP11, it is considered that significant (but not full) weight should now be afforded to the policies referred to within the Local Plan to 2036 (as amended March 2018 for submission). The Local Planning Authority has agreed to the required changes to LP2, LP3, LP5 and LP11 but as the required changes to Policies LP2, LP3, LP5 and LP11 have recently been subject to further consultation before adoption, it is considered that moderate rather than significant weight should be afforded to these policies as modified.
- 3.11 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD 2017
  - Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment SPD 2007
  - Developer Contributions SPD 2011
  - Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017
  - Huntingdonshire Tree Guidance Note 3
  - December 2018 Annual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply.
  - RECAP CCC Waste Management Design Guide (CCC SPD) 2012

Local policies are viewable at <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk>

#### Housing Land Supply:

- 3.12 In order to satisfy the requirements of the NPPF to boost housing supply the Council must demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable housing sites to meet its objectively assessed need, with an additional buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; this requirement is set out in paragraph 73 of the NPPF. Due to under delivery in recent years the buffer to be applied for the District is 20%. The December 2018 Annual Monitoring Review applies the 20% buffer and demonstrates that the Council has a five year supply of housing land.
- 3.13 The Development Plan policies relevant to the supply of housing (En17 and H23 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan (HLP) 1995 and CS2 and CS3 of the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy (HCS)) 2009 were set against a lower Objectively Assessed Need figure such that strict application of these policies would result in failure to achieve the objectively assessed housing need figure that the Council currently has identified as part of the emerging Local Plan to 2036. These policies are therefore no longer fully up-to-date or consistent with the NPPF and, at this time and until the Council adopts the Local Plan to 2036 with up-to-date policies, the 'tilted balance' as set out within paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2019) is engaged. For decision-taking this means where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole), or specific policies of the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

#### Weight of Development Plan Policies & NPPF Consistency:

- 3.14 The fact that the Development Plan policies are old is in itself irrelevant as they remain saved policies and the statutory starting point and under S.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (PCPA) 2004.
- 3.15 As a material consideration carrying significant weight, the NPPF advises at paragraph 213 due weight should be given to Development Plan policies which pre-date the NPPF according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. The closer the policies are to the NPPF, the more weight they may be given. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF 2019 identifies the weight to be given to emerging plans. The LPA consider the Local Plan to 2036 to be a sound plan and it was submitted for examination on the 29th March 2018. The plan has therefore reached an advanced stage and is consistent with the policies set out within the NPPF.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 16/01255/OUT - Proposed Residential Development involving the Erection of 63 Dwellings access arrangements and associated works – Refused 27.01.2017.
- 4.2 A subsequent appeal was dismissed under reference APP/H0520/W/17/3172571 on 11.12.2017 as the Inspector concluded that this larger 3ha site would result in a harmful impact on the ‘valued’ local landscape and townscape.
- 4.3 17/01161/OUT - Proposed Rural Exceptions Residential Development involving the Erection of 63 Dwellings, proposed access, arrangements and associated works – Pending determination.
- 4.4 18/01489/OUT - Residential development involving the erection of 14 dwellings, proposed access arrangements and associated work – Pending consideration. There are outstanding objections from statutory consultees and the LPA, including the LLFA and Urban Design.

#### **5. CONSULTATIONS**

- 5.1 **Brampton Parish Council** – 19.12.2018 – Recommends APPROVAL (COPY ATTACHED)  
Brampton Parish Council has concerns over additional vehicular movements into and out of the proposed development. The junction shown on Drawing No. 2100 will not be adequate in dealing with the new traffic flow. Although the transport statement indicates a reduction in overall traffic flow along Thrapston Road, Brampton Parish Council is not convinced this will be the case. A traffic calming scheme, similar to the one currently being carried out in Ermine Street, Great Stukeley, will go some way towards slowing the traffic using this route and reduce “rat running” with vehicles taking short cuts to Huntingdon and the station. In view of this Brampton Parish

Council recommends HDC is asked if any traffic calming scheme is planned.

Partly dependent on an answer from HDC re a traffic calming scheme,

1. Brampton Parish Council recommends approval for the proposed 16 no dwellings subject to modification of the new junction with a revised layout submitted to Brampton Parish Council.

2. Recommend approval subject to the existing hedge at the southern/road boundary being retained.

- 5.2 **Brampton Parish Council** - 30.01.2019 – The PC notes the comments from County Highways relating to this application (COPY ATTACHED).
- 5.3 **Brampton Parish Council** - 01.03.2019 – Recommends REFUSAL (COPY ATTACHED) noting that there are concerns regarding the access onto Thrapston Road.
- 5.4 **HDC Landscape and Trees** – NO OBJECTION, subject to conditions.
- 5.5 **HDC Urban Design** – OBJECTIONS – see below in report.
- 5.6 **Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust** – NO OBJECTION subject to conditions.
- 5.7 **Cambridgeshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)** – NO OBJECTION subject to conditions.
- 5.8 **HDC Environmental Health** – NO COMMENTS.
- 5.9 **Cambridgeshire County Council as Local Highway Authority** - NO OBJECTION subject to conditions.
- 5.10 **Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology** - NO OBJECTION subject to conditions.
- 5.11 **Highways England** – NO OBJECTION.
- 5.12 **HDC Policy and Enabling Officer** – NO OBJECTION.
- 5.13 **HDC Waste** – NO OBJECTION.
- 5.14 **HDC Green Spaces** - NO OBJECTION subject to securing an off-site contribution through S106.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 6.1 Nine representations have been received from local residents objecting to the application which raise the following concerns:
- \* Proposals represent over-development in the village and the site is only suitable for 8 or 9 dwellings.
  - \* Infrastructure, roads, surgery, school and wildlife concerns.
  - \* Concerns regarding access into the site, which is close to the vehicular and pedestrian access to the memorial park.
  - \* Request for traffic calming measures along Thrapston Road.

- \* Concern regarding cycle path and risk of traffic collisions.
- \* Properties should be limited to 2 storeys in height.
- \* Concerns regarding the new road opening into the existing hedge on the use of the shared foot and cycle path.
- \* Insufficient parking for new residents.
- \* Justification for the farm access road leading to the rear is required.
- \* The frontage hedge should be retained as part of any proposal.
- \* The ecological value of the site must be maintained and enhanced to offset loss of habitat.
- \* The site is liable to flooding.
- \* Existing traffic congestion in Brampton will be exacerbated.
- \* The developers should take measures to avoid damaging or destroying active bird nests during tree, hedgerow and scrub clearance works on site.
- \* The mature trees and the retained hedgerows should be protected during construction through the provision of appropriate fencing to protect the root zone from compaction.
- \* Concerns regarding the rapid expansion of the village in a very short timescale.
- \* The proposed development would cause serious harm to the character and the appearance of the area's landscape and townscape.
- \* Concern regarding site levels (the road is just over a metre higher than the ground immediately north of the hedge).
- \* The access design does not comply with Sustrans guidelines and the NPPF calls for cyclists to have priority.
- \* A CEMP should be required as part of any reserved matters application.

## **7. ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 When determining planning applications it is necessary to establish what weight should be given to each plan's policies in order to come to a decision. The following legislation, government policy and guidance outline how this should be done.
- 7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 47 of the NPPF (2019). The development plan is defined in section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".
- 7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan consists of:
- \* Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 (Parts 1 and 2)
  - \* Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002
  - \* Adopted Core Strategy 2009
  - \* Huntingdon West Area Action Plan 2011
  - \* Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Development Plan Core Strategy
  - \* St Neots Neighbourhood Plan
  - \* Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan

\* Houghton and Wyton Neighbourhood Plan

- 7.4 The statutory term 'material considerations' has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the circumstances which bears on the use or development of land: *Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor* [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P. & C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, para 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.
- 7.5 The main issues to consider in assessing this application are whether there is any conflict with Development Plan policies. If there is any conflict, whether the application can be considered to be in accordance with the Development Plan when taken as a whole. If the application is not in accordance with the Development Plan, whether there are any material considerations, including emerging policies in the Local Plan to 2036 and the NPPF, which indicate that planning permission should be granted. With this in mind the following issues are assessed below:
- Principle of Development;
  - Indicative Layout, Landscape and Visual Impact, Trees and Open Space;
  - Flood Risk, Drainage, Ground Conditions and Contamination;
  - Residential Amenity;
  - Ecology and Biodiversity;
  - Archaeological Impacts;
  - Sustainability, Access, Transport and Parking; and
  - Infrastructure Requirements and Planning Obligations.

**Principle of Development:**

- 7.6 The site is located adjacent to, but outside of the built up area of Brampton, and within the open countryside as classified in Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy 2009. The Development Plan policies seek to ensure that development is located in places well served by public transport and accessible to services so that the need to travel is minimised, thus helping to tackle climate change at a district level. For this reason, and to restrict the loss of high quality agricultural land and to help protect the character of the countryside, development outside the built up area is carefully controlled.
- 7.7 Development outside the built up area is restricted, for example to dwellings required for the efficient management of agriculture, forestry or horticulture enterprises (policies En17 and H23 of the 1995 Local Plan apply). Building on this, policy CS3 of the Adopted Core Strategy continues the strategic aim of concentrating development in the larger sustainable settlements and protects the character and scale of smaller villages and the countryside through limiting general housing development outside of the built up area (with the exception of essential needs housing and specific allocations).
- 7.8 To address the identified shortfall in housing delivery, Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 contains a significantly revised strategy from the Adopted Core Strategy (2009). The strategy for development in the District is set out in policy LP 2 of the emerging

Local Plan to 2036 and focuses on concentrating growth in the four identified Spatial Planning Areas, with approximately three quarters of the objectively assessed need for housing being focused within these areas.

- 7.9 Working down the settlement hierarchy identified within policy LP2, seven Key Service Centres are designated, reflecting the concentration of services and facilities in these settlements; serving not only residents of these settlements but also residents of other nearby communities. Working further down from this, the role of small settlements is identified. Policy LP2 notes that "Approximately a quarter of the objectively assessed need for housing, together with a limited amount of employment growth, will be permitted on sites dispersed across the key service centres, local service centres and small settlements to support the vitality of these communities and provide flexibility and diversity in the housing supply". Policy LP7 provides support for development proposals within the built-up area of a Spatial Planning Area. It is acknowledged that the application site is not identified for allocation within the emerging Local Plan to 2036 and falls outside the built-up area of the area. Policy LP11 states that development in the countryside will be restricted to the limited and specific opportunities as provided for in other policies of this plan.
- 7.10 As such, the proposals would not accord with policies within the emerging Local Plan to 2036.
- 7.11 In the Emerging Plan: Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission), Brampton is defined as being within the 'Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area' within Policy LP7. In this regard, Huntingdon including Brampton is considered to be a sustainable location for new development due to the availability of local facilities and services, including schools and employment opportunities, which reduces the need to travel. The settlement is also served by public transport.
- 7.12 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan to 2036 Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) sets out that development within the countryside will be restricted to the limited and sporadic opportunities as provided for in other policies of the plan. Amongst other requirements, this policy outlines that development must protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and not give rise to noise, odour, obtrusive light or other impacts that would adversely affect the use and enjoyment of the countryside by others.
- 7.13 As stated within Paragraph 48 of the NPPF, 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). During the transitional period for emerging plans submitted for examination (set out in paragraph 214), consistency should be tested

against the previous Framework published in March 2012. Due to the advanced stage of the emerging local plan within the examination period, it is considered that these policies carry significant weight (as set out earlier in this report).

- 7.14 In considering the current application, the development would not be 'isolated' (referred to in para 79 of the NPPF) as it is in close proximity to other properties. However, the proposed dwellings do not meet any of the exception criteria set out in the local policies regarding development in the countryside, such as an agricultural need or exceptional design quality.
- 7.15 Policies H23, En17 and CS3 have environmental objectives which are all firmly aimed at protecting the environment and landscape character. Core principles of the NPPF 2019 are to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the differing roles and character of the areas whilst supporting local communities in rural areas. The NPPF (2019) therefore has a slightly more positive approach to development in the countryside than the restrictive development plan policies, and this partial inconsistency requires a reduction in weight.
- 7.16 Whilst there is some difference in the wording between the policies written before the NPPF 2019 publication and the precise wording of the NPPF 2019, the countryside policies are considered to accord with one of the overarching aims of the NPPF 2019. As such, having regard to paragraph 213 of the NPPF 2019, it is considered that when assessing impacts of development upon the countryside these policies can be afforded significant (reduced from full) weight.
- 7.17 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF 2019 says that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst others, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils. It is also a Core Principle of the NPPF that the planning system should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 7.18 As stated above, the application site is adjacent to but outside of the built-up area of Brampton and is not allocated for development within the Local Plan 1995/2002 or the Core Strategy 2009. The site is therefore considered to be in the countryside for the purposes of the Development Plan. Being within the countryside, the development of the site, as proposed, is contrary to Development Plan policies H23 and En17 of the Local Plan (1995) and policy CS3 of the Adopted Core Strategy (2009). The proposal is also contrary to emerging policy LP7 and LP11 for the same reason (site being located outside the built up area of the Huntingdon SPA). The application has been advertised as a departure from the Development Plan as it is contrary to the Development Plan currently in place for Huntingdonshire, due to the application site being outside of the built up area of Brampton and forming part of the countryside.
- 7.19 In terms of the loss of the existing site as agricultural land, Agricultural Land Classification provides a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long term limitations on agricultural use. The classification is well established and provides an appropriate

framework for determining the physical quality of land at national, regional and local levels. Grade 1 is excellent quality agricultural land and Grade 5 is land of very poor quality. Grade 3 constitutes about half of the agricultural land in England and Wales, is subdivided into two subgrades – 3a and 3b. The NPPF 2019 advises in paragraph 170 that the economic and other benefits of best and most versatile agricultural land should be taken into account. The NPPF 2019 within paragraph 171 (footnote 53) states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, Local Planning Authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to those of higher quality.

- 7.20 The site itself covers 0.78 hectares and would involve the loss of Grade 3 agricultural land; this is regrettable, but the loss of such a small area is not considered to be significant when assessed against the remaining availability of good agricultural land in the vicinity and wider local area. The application site and loss of 0.78ha of agricultural land is not considered to be significant in this context.
- 7.21 There is no relevant Development Plan policy relating to loss of agricultural land. There is considered to be limited conflict with this part of the NPPF 2019 (paragraph 171, footnote 53) due to the size and scale of the site and the lack of availability of lower grade land.
- 7.22 It is therefore concluded that there is no in-principle policy support for the development of this countryside site. The proposed development must however be considered alongside the three dimensions of sustainable development as set out within paragraph 11 of the NPPF; economic, social and environmental. These factors are considered in detail within the proceeding sections of this report. The proposal will also be assessed against the material planning considerations discussed below.

### **Indicative Layout, Landscape and Visual Impact, Impact upon Trees:**

Indicative Layout:

- 7.23 The locality of the site is characterised by existing residential development to the east, south and west of the site. To the north is open countryside and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. A mature hedgerow with sporadic trees defines the southern boundary along Thrapston Road and the garden fence and vegetation of number 66 Thrapston Road forms the western boundary of the site. The northern boundary of the site is undefined within the grassland field and the eastern boundary is formed by the access road to Poplars Farm.
- 7.24 As previously noted, the application is for outline consent with matters relating to appearance; landscaping; layout; and scale being reserved. To allow full evaluation and consideration of the development and to determine whether the proposed amount of development can be satisfactorily accommodated on the site, an Illustrative Masterplan for the application site has been submitted.
- 7.25 The Illustrative Masterplan has been subject to amendments following comments from HDC Urban Design and although some changes

have been made, concerns still remain. For confirmation, no scale parameter plans have been submitted and storey heights have not been shown on the illustrative masterplan. Written confirmation has been sought from the Applicants' Agent that the proposed dwellings will be 2 storeys in height.

- 7.26 The Illustrative Masterplan for the application site shows how the development could be arranged such to accommodate the quantum of development proposed (16 dwellings) and shows the potential for development of eight pairs of semi-detached dwellings. The submitted Planning Statement sets out an indicative mix of dwellings (2, 3 and 4 bedroom semi-detached dwellings); however the proposed mix of development will be agreed at reserved matters stage. The proposed layout comprises a single row of properties arranged along a pair of private side roads, separated into two groupings by a proposed farm access track to serve land to the rear. The site would be accessed via a new junction on Thrapston Road.
- 7.27 The proposals would retain the majority of the hedgerow boundary and this would be supplemented with new native hedgerow planting either side of the road access, to replace sections of removed hedgerow. A new linear strip of soft landscaping / open space would be located behind the hedgerow, parallel with Thrapston Road. Hedgerow planting and trees are proposed to be located around the rear garden boundaries and wrap around the eastern side of the scheme to connect with the Thrapston Road hedgerow, to form a boundary to the new properties. An attenuation pond set within tree and shrub planting is proposed to form part of a landscape buffer approximately 15m deep on the northern boundary of the development, beyond the rear gardens of the proposed properties.
- 7.28 The development proposes 16 dwellings on 0.78ha of land. This equates to a gross density calculation of 20.5 dwellings per hectare which is considered to be low density and below an expected density on comparable housing sites, which are usually between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare. However, with the area identified as a landscaped buffer zone removed from the overall site area (which amounts to 0.18ha), the net density of the development increases to 27 dwellings per hectare. In respect of the density of development, whilst it is appreciated that Policy HL6 seeks to achieve a density of between 30 and 50dph, and the NPPF 2019 seeks to encourage higher densities of development, it is also noted that the NPPF 2019 advises that it depends on the appropriateness of achieving high densities on a site by site basis. Site specific constraints are taken into account through the overall layout of the site. In this respect, given landscape sensitivity and the established form and character of development in the locality (generally semi's on wider width plots), a higher density of development would not be suitable. The lower density allows the opportunity for the site to provide effective boundary treatments and landscape buffering, particularly upon the northern edge of the site, whilst retaining the majority of the existing hedgerow along the site frontage.
- 7.29 In terms of the design of the scheme, HDC Urban Design have assessed the proposal and provided detailed suggestions which have resulted in changes to the Illustrative Masterplan and Illustrative Landscape Masterplan. Having reviewed the amended plans, HDC

Urban Design still maintain some concerns regarding the masterplans submitted, the details of which are set out below.

- 7.30 With regard to layout, concerns have been raised regarding the location of the vehicular access being 'off line' with a proposed farm access track, to serve land to the rear. Access to this rear land is currently via the existing farm track to the east which connects to Thrapston Road. Clarification has been sought from the Applicants' Agent regarding access and the need for the farm access track. The agent has confirmed that the existing access arrangements are based upon cooperation rather than any legal right and the applicants are therefore securing longer term access to the area to the north of the application site.
- 7.31 Concerns have also been raised with regard to the access location into the site being directly opposite the side drive for proposed plot 7, which results in a poor vista stop and sense of arrival to the development. However, having considered in the context of development in the locality, the arrangement as shown is comparable with the private drive arrangement at number 76 Thrapston Road. Whilst it is considered that the Illustrative Masterplan creates a poor sense of arrival and does not create an attractive vista, this can be further negotiated as part of any reserved matters submission, should outline permission be granted.
- 7.32 There are also concerns relating to the need to consider cyclist priority, as the proposed access gives priority to the motor car. As detailed later in this report, the detailed access arrangements have been subject to negotiations with the County Council as part of application reference 16/01255/OUT. The Highways Safety Audit agreed as part of these previous proposals (although the subsequent appeal was dismissed) required that priority is given to motorised vehicles rather than cyclists. The submitted plans for this current application therefore illustrate an access arrangement whereby cyclists have to give priority to motor vehicles, which is consistent with the cycle crossing points along Thrapston Road in close proximity to the site. The proposed edge alignment and partial removal of hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site is required for the junction and inter-visibility purposes, and is therefore required to ensure safety for all users.
- 7.33 Concerns have also been raised by both HDC Urban Design and the Landscape officer regarding the structural landscaping outside the boundary of proposed plot number 16, on grounds that sufficient space is required to allow soft landscaping along this boundary to integrate the plot / development with adjacent land and views into the site from the adjacent farm access and Thrapston Road. The Applicants' Agent has suggested this could be secured though a condition requiring details of land ownership along this boundary. As no parameter plans have been submitted with this application, it is considered that this should be secured through any reserved matters landscape condition, specifying that there should be a 2m wide belt of trees and hedging outside the eastern boundary of plot 16 (as indicatively shown on the Illustrative Masterplan). It is envisaged that this landscaping would be incorporated into a management company as per the attenuation ponds and landscaping to the rear of the dwellings. It is noted that any development adjacent to this structural

landscape belt may require specialist foundations or be moved further back from the centre line of the landscaping belt to avoid potential root damage to the trees.

- 7.34 HDC Urban Design have however confirmed that the indicative roof plans of the dwellings as shown on the illustrative masterplan, with front projecting features are acceptable as there are examples of other semi-detached dwellings along Thrapston Road with forward projecting elements. As noted, a landscape buffer is proposed to the rear of the dwellings with attenuation ponds; subject to detailing HDC Urban Design have confirmed these are acceptable in principle. The application proposes an off-site contribution towards public open space, which is considered acceptable as the site is located close to the Memorial Playing Fields.
- 7.35 In relation to the refuse collection points proposed, whilst these are not specified there is sufficient space to accommodate this provision within the site and can be agreed as part of any collection point at the vehicular entrance, and also one further east adjacent to a pedestrian connection through the hedgerow from Thrapston Road to the eastern end of the private drive.
- 7.36 The HDC Urban Design comments therefore conclude that with regard to the layout of the proposals (submitted as an Illustrative Masterplan), whilst concerns remain, the site constraints (which include an agricultural access track which is excluded from the red line area) is likely to preclude an alternative layout arrangement, however the detailed layout will therefore be considered as part of any reserved matters submission, should outline permission be granted.

#### **Landscape and Visual Impact:**

- 7.37 An assessment has been undertaken on landscape character and visual amenity (Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment) and the resulting landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. This assessment concludes that the development of part of a grass field on the edge of Brampton and the removal of a section of hedgerow would result in the relatively minor loss of typical landscape features of the Ouse Valley character area. However, the proposals would not result in significant harm to visual amenity. Although some views from upper floor windows of neighbouring residential properties in close proximity would undergo a significant change, the LVIA states that the proposed development would be of a similar character to the residential districts of the village and would be characteristic of the urban fringe context and would replicate the scale, type and spacing of the properties and pattern of linear development within adjacent areas along Thrapston Road.
- 7.38 Of material consideration for the determination of this application is appeal reference APP/H0520/W/17/3172571 (following refusal of application reference 16/01255/OUT) which is referenced earlier in this report and proposed the erection of 63 dwellings which included part of the application site. This appeal was dismissed on the 11 December 2017 on the basis of the harmful impact on the local townscape and character.

- 7.39 With regard to the location of the site within the Ouse Valley, paragraph 14 of the appeal decision states that:  
“This combination of the distinctive land form, tranquillity, and partial public access, gives this section of the valley an importance significantly exceeding that of ‘ordinary’ countryside. As such, the area falls within the scope of the advice in paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relating to valued landscapes. The appeal site forms an integral part of this landscape compartment, and of the valued landscape that it represents.”
- 7.40 Paragraphs 15 and 16 of the appeal decision explain that:  
“Although not part of the Country Park itself, the appeal site forms part of the block of undeveloped countryside which gives the Park its visual setting and provides a buffer to its outer edge. The eastern half of the appeal site is open to view from Thrapston Road, and forms part of a sequence of views from that direction towards the valley. Although the Brook and lakes are not directly visible from here, the land form makes it evident that the valley floor is just beyond the immediate view. The western part of the appeal site is not directly visible, but its openness and absence of development is readily perceived, in views through the wide gaps between the houses in Thrapston Road, and also from the allotments and from footpath 24. The appeal site therefore contributes positively to the landscape value of this part of the valley.
- 7.41 Housing development, as now proposed, would be highly visible from all of these viewpoints, and would intrude into this important area of open countryside. To my mind this would apply particularly to the rear part of the site, where development would extend further into the undeveloped valley slope, and the presence of built development on this part of the site would be especially intrusive. At night, this harm would be further exacerbated by lighting. The proposed development would thus erode and urbanise the valley’s most visible and vulnerable edge, and damage the integrity of the landscape block as a whole. As such, the development would conflict with the aims of HCS Policy CS1, HLP Policies H23 and En17, and with the NPPF advice that I have identified.
- 7.42 Paragraph 17 of the appeal decision notes that:  
“Although there is some limited development along Thrapston Road’s northern side, this is intermittent and mainly confined to the frontage. Consequently, Thrapston Road acts mainly as a village edge, rather than as part of the settlement itself. Development in depth on the appeal site would breach this clear visual boundary, and would be poorly related to the village as a whole. The proposed development would therefore be at odds with the village form and settlement pattern, and detract from the semi-rural character of the village edge and its setting.”
- 7.43 Paragraph 20 of the appeal decision states that:  
“Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would cause serious harm to the character and appearance of the area’s landscape and townscape.”

- 7.44 The HDC Landscape Officer notes that the appeal decision for the previous, and much larger, scheme (planning ref 16/01255/OUT) accepted the LPA's argument that the land extending north from Thrapston Road to the Alconbury Brook corridor and beyond to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park was a 'valued landscape' in terms of NPPF (2012) para 109. The current proposal occupies a smaller part of that valued landscape than the previous application, but its development will still result in adverse landscape and visual impacts, albeit on a reduced scale.
- 7.45 The HDC Landscape Officer notes that the application site contributes to the relative openness of the northern edge of the settlement, where currently there is a rough balance of alternating development and open space having views through and perception of the open broad Alconbury Brook corridor and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park beyond. The Landscape Officer considers that the proposal would result in a significant change to this balance with development now predominant at the northern edge of Brampton, which would have an adverse landscape and visual impact.
- 7.46 However, the HDC Landscape Officer has confirmed that subject to conditions relating to landscaping, including a 2m wide landscaped belt adjacent plot number 16, the proposal is acceptable and would not give rise to any significant unacceptable landscape and visual harm.
- 7.47 With regard to the previous appeal decision, the Inspector states that the proposals would be highly visible and protrude into open countryside, noting that this would apply particularly to the rear part of the site where development would extend further into the undeveloped valley slope and the presence of built development on this part of the site would be especially intrusive (paragraph 16). The current proposals do not extend into the countryside in depth (unlike the previous proposals), and as a reduced size allows for the views through the wide gaps between the existing houses along Thrapston Road. The submitted illustrative masterplan for the site allows for views through the application site to the land to the rear between the proposed houses and whilst this plan is illustrative, this will be secured as part of any reserved matters submission, should outline permission be granted.

#### **Impact upon Trees:**

- 7.48 The site currently hosts trees and hedging around its southern and western perimeter. The application is supported by a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (dated November 2018) which confirms that 3 trees and 1 group of trees will require removal to accommodate the proposals. 1 further group of trees will require partial removal to accommodate the vehicular entrance and 4 further trees are recommended for removal for reasons of good arboricultural practice. All trees requiring or recommended for removal were rated as category C of the BS5837 tree grading criteria. Tree protection measures including establishing a Construction Exclusion Zone through Tree Protection Fencing are proposed.
- 7.49 The HDC Landscape Officer notes that the loss of a significant part of the frontage hedge and trees will have an adverse impact on visual

amenity and landscape character, but has confirmed that the tree protection proposals set out are acceptable.

- 7.50 Whilst the loss of any trees is regrettable, the trees proposed to be removed are not considered to be of particular merit such to resist their loss. On balance, it is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable with regards to the impact upon trees, subject to the imposition of conditions to ensure that tree protection measures are put in place to protect the retained trees during the construction process.

#### **Open Space:**

- 7.51 With regard to open space, a contribution towards public open space is proposed by the applicants, given the village Memorial Playing Fields are situated on the opposite side of Thrapston Road close to the application site. HDC Urban Design and Green Spaces are content with this arrangement, and the Parish Council have identified that the contribution can be used towards a new cricket wicket. Further details of the formula based approach to this contribution are set out later in this report.

- 7.52 In conclusion, although the site is considered outside of the settlement of Brampton, it is well related to the existing built form with only one side (northern edge) bordering the countryside and land to the south of Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. It is considered that the proposal effectively addresses this relationship through a landscape buffer. Therefore on balance it is deemed that the proposal will not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with the aims of the NPPF (2019), policies En18, En20 and EN25 of the Local Plan (1995), policies HL5 and HL6 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration (2002) and policies LP12, LP13, LP14 and LP33 of the Proposed Submission 2017 Local Plan to 2036 (as amended).

- 7.53 In taking account of paragraphs 47 and 213 of the NPPF (2019), it is considered that policies En18, En20 and En25 of the Local Plan 1995, policies HL5 and HL6 of the Local Plan Alteration 2002 and policy CS1 of the Core Strategy 2009 are all broadly consistent with the NPPF (2019) and can therefore be afforded full weight. Policies LP12, LP13, LP14 and LP33 of the emerging Local Plan to 2036 have been subjected to Examination and the Inspector's initial findings are that the plan can be made sound by main modifications. None of these modifications relate to Policies LP12, LP13, LP14 or LP33, therefore when taking account of paragraph 48 and footnote 22 of the NPPF (2019); it is considered that these policies can be attributed significant weight.

#### **Flooding, Drainage, Ground Conditions and Contamination:**

##### **Flood Risk and Drainage:**

- 7.54 The overall approach to the consideration of flooding in the planning process is given in paragraphs 148-169 of the NPPF (2019) and these paragraphs set out a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development. This approach is intended to ensure that areas at little or no risk of flooding are developed in preference to

areas at higher risk. It involves applying a Sequential Test to steer development away from medium and high flood risk areas (FZ2 and FZ3 land respectively), to land with a low probability of flooding (FZ1).

- 7.55 The NPPF 2019 recognises that flood risk and other environmental damage can be managed by minimising changes in the volume and rate of surface run-off from development sites through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs). Further the accepted principles are that surface water arising from a developed area should, as far as practicable, be managed in a sustainable manner to minimise the surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development, while reducing the flood risk to the site itself and elsewhere, taking climate change into account.
- 7.56 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared in support of this application. The report states that based on the Environment Agency Flood zone maps, the application site is located within Flood Zone 1 (less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year) which is defined as having a low probability of flooding in the Planning Practice Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). As the site lies within Flood Risk Zone 1, a Sequential Test is not required.
- 7.57 In terms of SuDS, an attenuation pond has been proposed in the buffer zone in the northern area of the site. It is proposed that surface water runoff will be stored within the pond during storm events prior to discharge into a pond north west of the site, or via ground infiltration. As a result of recent changes to the Illustrative Masterplan, the proposed impermeable area has decreased as there is now additional landscaping. Revised water drainage calculations have been submitted to support the revisions.
- 7.58 The County Council as LLFA reviewed the revised information and advised that they raised no objection to the proposed development, subject to the imposition of conditions. The LLFA request that conditions be appended requiring an investigation into the capacity and condition of the pond to the north west of the site (as identified within the Flood Risk Assessment) and the submission of detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site and requiring details for the long term maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage system to be provided. These conditions are considered to meet the statutory tests and are therefore acceptable.
- 7.59 Accordingly the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of flood risk and drainage, subject to a condition requiring a surface water drainage scheme for the site and an investigation into the capacity and condition of the pond to the north west of the site.

Ground conditions and contamination:

- 7.60 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF (2019) outlines that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- "e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve

local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans;" and

"f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate".

- 7.61 Policies H37 of the Local Plan (1995), Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy (2009) and Policy LP39 of Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) require land to be remediated where necessary, such to ensure the best use of land and to protect the amenities of future residents.
- 7.62 The HDC Environmental Health Team raise no objection to the proposals on grounds of contamination.
- 7.63 Overall, subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposed development is therefore considered acceptable with regards to drainage arrangements, flood risk and contamination, and accords with the NPPF (2019), Planning Practice Guidance and local policies in this regard. The relevant Development Plan policies relating to flooding, drainage and contamination impacts of the proposal are H37, CS8 and CS9 of the Local Plan 1995 and policy CS1 of the Core Strategy 2009. The proposed development complies with these policies and does not create a conflict. There is considered to be no conflict with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) emerging policies LP5, LP16 or LP39.
- 7.64 In terms of policy weighting, policies H37, CS8 and CS9 of the Local Plan 1995 and policy CS1 of the Core Strategy 2009 are broadly consistent with the NPPF (2019) and when taking account of paragraphs 47 and 213 of the NPPF (2019), can be afforded full weight. Policies LP5, LP16 and LP39 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) are considered to be consistent with the NPPF (2019). Policy LP16 and Policy LP39 of the emerging Local Plan to 2036 have no modifications to them and therefore when taking account of paragraph 48 and footnote 22 of the NPPF (2019), it is considered that these policies can be attributed significant weight. Policy LP5 of the emerging Local Plan to 2036 is to be amended as agreed with the Environment Agency and County Council and therefore when taking account of paragraph 48 and footnote 22 of the NPPF (2019) it is considered that this policy can be afforded moderate weight.

**Residential Amenity:**

- 7.65 The NPPF (2019) in para 127 and policy H31 of the Local Plan (1995) seek to ensure developments do not have an unacceptable impact upon residential amenity for both existing and future occupiers. Policy H31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 states that new dwellings will only be permitted where appropriate standards of privacy and amenity can be maintained and adequate parking provision provided. Policy H37 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 confirms that housing development will not be permitted in locations where there is a known source of environmental pollution

which would be detrimental to residential amenity. Policy LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) also seeks to protect amenity of neighbouring occupiers and ensure a high standard of amenity for future occupiers of new developments.

- 7.66 The application has been submitted in outline form, with all matters reserved except access, therefore the submitted Illustrative Masterplan is indicative only. The site is not adjacent to any sources of environmental pollution.
- 7.67 Given the plans submitted (although illustrative) as set out earlier in the report, it is considered that the overall quantum of development sought could be accommodated without significant harm to residential amenity. The reserved matters application(s) will however fully assess the impacts of matters such as overlooking, overbearing, overshadowing and loss of light.
- 7.68 It is acknowledged that the closest residents to the application site will experience a change in outlook and view, but it should be noted that change does not necessarily equate to harm. Overall, based on the submitted Illustrative Masterplan, it is considered that the quantum of development sought could be accommodated by the application site without significant harm to residential amenity.
- 7.69 It is acknowledged that the proposals could lead to an increase in traffic movements and associated noise disturbance. However, in the context of the site and the existing uses in the locality and the location of the proposed access point from Thrapston Road, it is considered that the proposal would not have a significant detrimental impact upon the amenities of adjacent and neighbouring properties as a result of additional vehicle movements and activities within the site as proposed.
- 7.70 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties, and would ensure a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development.
- 7.71 The relevant Development Plan policy relating to residential amenity impacts of the proposal are policies H31 and H37 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995. The proposed development complies with these policies and does not create a conflict. There is considered to be no conflict with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) emerging policy LP15.
- 7.72 In taking account of paragraphs 48 and 213 of the NPPF (2019), policies H31 and H37 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are broadly consistent with the NPPF (2019) and can be afforded full weight. Policy LP15 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) follows a similar vein and is also considered to be consistent with the NPPF (2019). Policy LP15 of the emerging Local Plan to 2036 has been subject to Examination and the Inspector has not requested any modifications to this policy, therefore when taking

account of paragraph 48 and footnote 22 of the NPPF (2019), it is considered that this policy can be attributed significant weight.

### **Ecology and biodiversity:**

- 7.73 With regards to biodiversity, paragraph 170 of the NPPF (2019) outlines that "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:  
"a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);  
b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; ..."  
..."d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;".
- 7.74 Policy En22 of the Local Plan (1995) requires appropriate account to be taken of nature and wildlife conservation. Policy CS1 of the Adopted Core Strategy (2009) seeks to protect, maintain and enhance the range and vitality of characteristic habitats and species and policy LP32 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) aims to conserve and enhance biodiversity and advises that opportunities should be taken to achieve beneficial measures within the design and layout of development and that existing features of biodiversity value should be maintained and enhanced. LP32 goes on to state that large scale development proposals should provide an audit of losses and gains in biodiversity produced according to a recognised methodology. Policy LP2 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) confirms that the strategy for Huntingdonshire is to provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation. Policy LP3 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) states that proposals will be expected to support green infrastructure and that within Green Infrastructure Priority Areas proposals will be supported where they contributes to the landscape, wildlife, cultural and historical value of the area. Policy LP12 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) notes that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, including amongst others, the natural environment.
- 7.75 The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which also details survey results in respect of bats, reptiles and Great Crested Newts.
- 7.76 The PEA report confirms that there are three statutory and five non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation value within 2 km of the site. The closest of these is Hinchbrooke Gravel Pits County Wildlife Site (CWS) located approximately 93 m north of the site. This designated site could be affected by dust, debris, light and noise

during construction although the 93 m distance from the site reduces the likelihood of significant impacts occurring. It is noted that these impacts will be further minimised through adoption of best practice construction measures, formalised through the production of a Construction and Environmental Management Plan.

- 7.77 It is noted that the site has the potential to support invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, breeding birds, foraging and commuting bats, and hedgehogs. A reptile survey found no evidence of reptiles on site. No signs of Badger presence have been found.
- 7.78 An eDNA analysis of a pond located on the south boundary of the Hinchingsbrooke Gravel Pits CWS, approximately 93 m from the site, confirmed presence of Great Crested Newts (GCN) in 2016 and 2018. The pond containing GCN is not directly affected. However, the development of the site will result in the loss of approximately 0.8 ha of terrestrial habitat. The majority of the habitat available to GCN is outside of the site boundary and will therefore be retained, but the loss of the habitat on site does represent an impact that would require a licence and appropriate mitigation. Mitigation would comprise management of the pond to improve its suitability for GCN by removal of shading scrub. Habitat enhancements will be provided on land around the pond, which would involve management of the grassland to maintain a rough grassland sward, combined with additional scrub planting and provision of log pile and rubble mound refugia. Given the above measures, including improving the quality of the pond, the applicant considers that the development would not adversely affect GCN and potentially an increase in population size could be achieved.
- 7.79 Bat activity surveys comprising transect surveys and static monitoring of the site have been undertaken to determine whether the habitats on site are used by foraging or commuting bats. As part of the mitigation measures proposed, it is noted that lighting should be carefully modelled and designed to ensure that the habitats that provide feeding and commuting habitat around the proposed development are not lit to avoid disturbing bats and their invertebrate prey. The development would not result in fragmentation of bat flightlines given that the land to the north of the site will not be directly affected.
- 7.80 The PEA states that measures should be undertaken to avoid damaging or destroying active bird nests during tree, hedgerow and scrub clearance works on site and that hedgehogs should be protected during construction.
- 7.81 The PEA details opportunities for other ecological enhancements, which include the provision of bat and bird boxes on retained trees or new buildings and the removal of scrub and creation of log piles from cleared vegetation in landscaping plans around the pond north of the site.
- 7.82 The Wildlife Trust has reviewed the submitted documents and note that the Great Crested Newt and reptile report is similar to the 2016 report; this confirmed that Great Crested Newt habitat would be lost and therefore mitigation is required. The Wildlife Trust confirm that the proposed translocation of newts to land adjacent the pond to the

north of the application site and future management of this pond as Great Crested Newt habitat should be suitable mitigation, but as noted within the submitted report, an EPS license will be required and the exact details of mitigation should be agreed as part of the licensing process.

- 7.83 With regard to bats, a revisit in July 2018 found that the habitats had not changed from 2016 and the levels of bat activity were therefore not likely to have changed. Therefore the Wildlife Trust consider that the mitigation and enhancements proposed for bats (i.e. sensitive lighting scheme, provision of bat boxes and inclusion of nature flowering plants within the landscaping scheme) should be secured by condition.
- 7.84 The Wildlife Trust note that there is a need to consider the availability of suitable accessible natural greenspace to meet the recreational needs to be the new residents and the likely timescale of the delivery of the extension to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. On this particular matter, it should be noted that there are currently no details of the proposed extension to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park available and given the nature of these proposals (for 16 dwellings) it is considered that the proposed development of the site would not give rise to significant additional impacts from visitor pressure.
- 7.85 The Wildlife Trust has advised that the recommendations for mitigation and enhancement in section 5 of the PEA are suitable and appropriate for the site. It is suggested that these be incorporated into the detailed design and secured by conditions. These conditions are considered to be reasonable and necessary.
- 7.86 With regard to biodiversity net gain, the Wildlife Trust has confirmed that the proposals, with the recommendations of the submitted PEA, should demonstrate a net gain. In this instance it is acknowledged that there is some conflict between LP32 and the NPPF 2019 where the NPPF now sets out that developments should demonstrate a net gain, however LP32 sets out that development should look to provide a net gain where possible, with only large scale proposals (over 50 dwellings) required to provide an audit of losses and gains; this approach is consistent with NPPF 2012.
- 7.87 Overall, subject to the imposition of conditions, it is considered that the impacts on biodiversity would be minimised, such that the proposed development would not have a significant adverse impacts on biodiversity; in accordance with paragraph 170 of the NPPF (2019), policies En18 and En22 of the Local Plan (1995), policy CS1 of the Core Strategy 2009 and policy LP 32 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission).
- 7.88 NPPF 2019 provides that planning decisions should enhance the natural and local environment by providing net gains for biodiversity. The NPPF 2019 removes the previous 'where possible' reference to providing net gains within the NPPF 2012. The ecological and biodiversity impacts of the proposed development are considered to be compliant with policies En18 and En22 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and policy CS1 of the Core Strategy 2009. These Development Plan policies are not considered to be fully compliant

with the NPPF 2019 as they do not make specific reference to providing net gains for biodiversity. As such they can be afforded only significant rather than full weight.

- 7.89 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) policies LP2, LP12 and LP32 relate to biodiversity considerations as part of development proposals. The proposed development is considered to comply with these policies. The proposed main modification to policy LP2 as set out earlier in this report has been subject to further consultation. The Local Planning Authority has agreed the changes. In light of this, it is considered that moderate rather than significant weight should be afforded to this policy as modified. The Inspector has not required any main modifications to LP12 and LP32 and therefore significant weight is afforded to these.

#### **Archaeological Impacts:**

- 7.90 Cambridgeshire County Council has advised that the site has been previously subject to geophysical survey and a preliminary evaluation carried out in conjunction with the prior (refused) application 16/01255/OUT for the wider site (Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record reference ECB5078). The scale of this initial evaluation was much reduced by access issues, with only one of the trenches (Trench 6) being opened within the bounds of this latest application, towards the eastern end of the area proposed for development, due to this area appearing archaeologically 'quieter' on the geophysical survey. In spite of this, the evaluation identified significant archaeology, confirming the presence of a Bronze Age ring ditch which was identified during the earlier geophysical survey, as well as settlement evidence relating to the middle Iron Age and Roman periods.
- 7.91 The Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Officer has therefore advised that they do not object to the proposed development, but consider that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation and request a condition to secure this accordingly. This is considered reasonable and necessary and should therefore be secured by condition.
- 7.92 Taking the above into account, subject to the imposition of conditions, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable with regards to archaeological impacts. In this regards, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the NPPF (2019), policies En12 and En13 of the Local Plan 1995, policy CS1 of the Core Strategy (2009) and policy LP36 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission).
- 7.93 The impacts of the development on the identified heritage assets are considered to conflict with policy En11 of the Local Plan 1995. However, they would accord with policy En12 of the Local Plan 1995 and CS1 of the Core Strategy 2009. It is considered that En12 and CS1 are compliant with the NPPF 2019 and can therefore be afforded full weight. However it is acknowledged that in respect of the specific wording of En11, there is a degree of inconsistency with the NPPF

2019 in so far as it does not allow for justification of any harm (paragraph 194) or include the balancing of harm with public benefits.

- 7.94 Policy LP36 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) is also considered to be broadly consistent with the NPPF, has been subject to Examination and the Inspector has not requested any modifications to this policy, therefore when taking account of paragraph 48 and footnote 22 of the NPPF (2019), it is considered that this policy can be attributed significant weight.

### **Sustainability, Access, Transport and Parking**

- 7.95 Section 9 of the NPPF 2019 discusses the importance of promoting sustainable transport. Paragraph 108 of the NPPF (2019) advises that in assessing applications for development, it should be ensured that 'appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be - or have been - taken up, given the type of development and its location' and that 'safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users', and that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree. Paragraph 109 goes on to state that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, and paragraph 110 explains that applications for development should give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas.
- 7.96 Policies T18 and T19 of the Local Plan (1995) seek to ensure all new development would be accessed by highways of an acceptable design and construction, and that safe and convenient pedestrian routes would be provided, having due regard to the existing and planned footpath routes in the area.
- 7.97 Policies LP17 and LP18 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) seek to promote sustainable travel and ensure that development proposals incorporate appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitate accessibility for service and emergency vehicles and incorporate adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.
- 7.98 The application proposals include detailed access design to be agreed at this outline stage. The submitted Transport Statement details that scoping discussions were held in 2016 with CCC Highways as the Local Highway Authority (LHA) and Highways England (HE) as part of a larger 63 dwelling development on the site plus land located immediately to the north (planning ref: 16/01255/OUT). This application was refused planning permission (as set out earlier), but not on highway grounds. The 2016 submission agreed the person trip rates to be applied to the development, multi-modal split, trip distribution and assessment years including traffic growth on the local highway network. The Transport Statement accompanying the current planning application is based on the scope and methodology agreed as part of the 63 unit application, which has been reviewed and updated accordingly.

- 7.99 As part of this current application, a new vehicular access to the development from Thrapston Road via a new access point is proposed by way of a simple priority junction. The access point is to be located where the southern boundary meets Thrapston Road and the access will operate as two-way. The proposed access will include a raised pedestrian / cycle crossing, recessed from Thrapston Road as part of the development. Two metre wide footways are proposed alongside the shared surface area for a short distance beyond the raised pedestrian / cycle crossing to provide for a safe transition for pedestrians between traditional carriageway / shared surface.
- 7.100 The submitted Transport Statement concludes that the proposals would not have a severe residual impact on the local highway network in accordance with the requirements of national and local policy. Furthermore the development will provide a safe means of access to the site.
- 7.101 The main issue is whether there would be any severe adverse impacts on highway safety or on the transport network, as a result of traffic flows arising from the proposed development. In determining whether the development would have severe residual cumulative impacts or adverse highway safety impacts, Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) as Local Highways Authority has been consulted on the proposals.
- 7.102 The CCC as Local Highway Authority has advised that the submitted access plan has been through a safety audit process and been deemed acceptable in relation to the best design taking into account highway safety for all users of the highway. The Local Highway Authority concludes that given the above, they raise no objections to the proposal, but recommended that conditions be appended to any permission granted requiring visibility splays to be provided each side of the access prior to occupation and that off-site highway improvement works shall be completed prior to occupation. These are considered reasonable and necessary and should therefore be secured by condition.
- 7.103 It is noted that the NPPF 2019 states that applications for development should give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements. The current proposals do not allow for this priority at the point of access into the site. However, the proposals do allow for a 5m space from the junction to the cycle path to allow a car to wait to exit the junction onto Thrapston Road and a cycle to manoeuvre past the stationary car. The junction arrangement and alignment of the cycle path will also slow cyclists down. Further discussions have taken place with County Highways where it has been confirmed that there are no other examples of cyclist priority routes in the immediate area and the scheme has been subject to a full and detailed road safety audit.
- 7.104 The Parish Council have requested a traffic calming scheme be considered along Brampton Road, similar to the one being carried out in Ermine Street, Great Stukeley. Following discussions with County Highways it has been confirmed to the Parish Council that the proposed access has appropriate visibility for the speed of the road, thus there is no basis on which to request traffic calming as it would not be reasonable and necessary for this development.

- 7.105 At this stage, it is considered that based on the submitted Proposed Access Plan (JNY8798-01 Rev K), submitted for approval, it has been demonstrated that a safe means of access could be provided to serve the development and therefore the proposed development is acceptable with regards to highway safety.
- 7.106 Whilst the previous scheme for 63 dwellings was refused and dismissed at appeal, the fact that neither the LPA or the Inspector objected to the larger scheme on highway grounds is considered to be a material consideration when assessing the current application as there have been no 'on the ground' changes since those decisions.

**Parking:**

- 7.107 Precise details will be submitted and considered at the reserved matters application stage. It is however anticipated that the site can accommodate the quantum of development sought with sufficient parking provision; as indicatively shown on the Illustrative Masterplan submitted for the site.

**Sustainability:**

- 7.108 With regards to sustainability, Brampton is identified as a 'Key Service Centre' in Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy (2009) which notes that such settlements consist of large villages which benefit from a good level of services such as a primary school within the village, a secondary school within the village or easily accessible by public transport, primary health care facilities, such as a GP surgery, a range of shops and services that can meet day-to-day needs, local employment opportunities and a reasonable public transport service to higher order settlements. Policy LP7 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) identifies Brampton as part of the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area. The pre-text to this policy notes that within the settlements around the Market Towns, such as Brampton, residents enjoy greater opportunities for a sustainable lifestyle given the range of accessible services available within the Market Towns.
- 7.109 At the current time there are existing shared footway / cycleways provided on both sides of the B1514 Thrapston Road adjacent to the proposed site. These footways / cycleways provide a link to the High Street and Brampton village centre. The footway / cycleway on the northern side of Thrapston Road is approximately 2.4 metres in width and the footway / cycleway on the southern side is approximately 1.5 metres in width.
- 7.110 There is a controlled pedestrian crossing provided on Thrapston Road between Grove Lane and Orchard Lane, which assists with connecting pedestrians requiring access to Brampton village centre and Brampton Village Primary School. There is also a pedestrian refuge island between the proposed site and the skate park and recreation facilities.
- 7.111 The nearest bus stops to the site are located on the B1514 Thrapston Road 200 metres west and 240 metres east of the proposed site access. These bus stops are marked by a flag and pole and are provided with shelters, seating, bins and good lighting. Bus route 66

operates six days a week (excluding Sunday) providing a direct service to the centres of Brampton and Huntingdon as well as St Neots. Bus route 400 operates four services per day Monday-Friday in either direction between Huntingdon and Grafham, and bus route 401 operates two services per say Monday-Friday in either direction between Huntingdon and Great Gidding. The Busway A operates one service per day in either direction between Brampton and Cambridge. The site therefore benefits from public transport links close by, which would provide opportunities for occupiers of the site to travel by sustainable transport modes, rather than by private car.

- 7.112 Overall, given the location of the site adjacent the built up area of Brampton and the proximity to a range of services and facilities within Brampton and Huntingdon, it is considered that occupiers of the proposed development would have a good level of access to services and facilities; either on foot, by cycle or by bus. It is therefore considered that the proposed development is sustainable when having regard to the level of service and infrastructure provision within Brampton itself and within Huntingdon when taking account of the opportunities for future occupiers of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel (including walking, cycling and public transport).
- 7.113 Taking all the above into account, it is considered that a safe means of access could be achieved and that the traffic generated by the proposal would not have a severe impact upon the highway network. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 109 of the NPPF (2019), the development should not be refused on transport grounds.
- 7.114 The proposed development would therefore accord with policies T18 and T19 of the Local Plan (1995), policy CS1 of the Core Strategy (2009) and policies LP17 and LP18 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission). Policies T18 and T19 of the Local Plan (1995) and CS1 of the Core Strategy (2009) are broadly consistent with the aims of the NPPF (2019) to promote use of sustainable transport modes and ensure safe access for all users. In taking account of paragraphs 48 and 213 of the NPPF (2019), it is considered that these policies can therefore be afforded full weight in this regard. Policies LP17 and LP18 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission) are also considered to be broadly consistent with the NPPF, have been subject to Examination and the Inspector has not requested any modifications to these policies, therefore when taking account of paragraph 48 and footnote 22 of the NPPF (2019), it is considered that these emerging policies can be attributed significant weight.

#### **Sustainable Development:**

- 7.115 The three objectives to sustainable development are identified as the social, environmental and economic objectives. Each objective is summarised below.
- 7.116 Social: The development will provide new residential dwellings and a suitable mix of market and affordable house types and tenures will be achieved. This includes 40% affordable homes (6 units).

- 7.117 The proposal would make provision for any other required contributions towards healthcare, education and community facilities through the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 7.118 The proposal also provides an off-site contribution towards public open space (a cricket wicket), which will be secured through S106.
- 7.119 Environmental: There will be environmental harm caused by the proposals, however the majority of trees and hedgerows are to be retained where possible, along with the addition of further tree planting and landscaping including the rear landscape buffer on the northern boundary of the site.
- 7.120 Economic: In accordance with Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) LPAs must have regard to any local financial considerations when determining planning applications in so far as they are a material consideration. In this respect, the proposal will generate economic benefits via the provision of construction jobs, indirect jobs in the housebuilding supply chain, increased expenditure in the local area associated with the furnishing of new homes, as well as revenue for Huntingdonshire District Council via council tax payments and New Homes Bonus payments. The local economy would also benefit from increased footfall and expenditure at local shops and businesses.
- 7.121 Information taken from the HBF report “The Labour Needs of Extra Housing Output: Can the Housebuilding Industry Cope” identifies that about 1.5 construction jobs per dwelling is associated with the build of houses. On this basis, the proposal will result in the creation of circa 24 local full time equivalent jobs associated with the construction of the development and more in the supply chain.

**Other Matters:**

**Environment Impact Assessment (EIA):**

- 7.122 According to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), ‘Screening’ is the procedure used to determine if a proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment.
- 7.123 It is for the Local Planning Authority to determine whether a development is of a type listed in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The PPG sets out the criteria and thresholds representing ‘exclusion thresholds’ in Schedule 2 of the Regulations, below which an Environmental Impact Assessment does not need to be considered (subject to the proposal not being in a ‘sensitive area’). It also provides indicative criteria and thresholds to help to determine whether significant effects are likely.
- 7.124 Under Schedule 2 the proposal is considered to comprise an Urban Development Project (development type 10b in the PPG Annex). Schedule 2 sets out the assessment criteria for these types of development as follows:
- (i) includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or
  - (ii) The development includes more than 150 dwellings; or

(iii) The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

- 7.125 The overall site area is 0.78ha and fewer than 150 dwellings are proposed. The development therefore falls below the thresholds set out in the assessment criteria in Schedule 2. EIA Screening has taken place, but as the proposed development falls beneath the thresholds and is not in a sensitive area, it is not EIA development.

**Infrastructure Requirements and Planning Obligations:**

- 7.126 The Infrastructure Business Plan 2013/2014 (2013) was developed by the Growth and Infrastructure Group of the Huntingdonshire Local Strategic Partnership. It helps to identify the infrastructure needs arising from development proposed to 2036 through the Core Strategy 2009.

- 7.127 Statutory tests set out in the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (Regulation 122) require that S.106 planning obligations must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonable related in scale and kind to the development. S.106 obligations are intended to make development acceptable which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.

- 7.128 Without prejudice to the eventual determination of the planning application, discussions have been held with the Applicants in order to determine the extent of the obligations required to make the development acceptable. These negotiations have been held in line with the advice within the Regulations and the outcome is summarised below. Other relevant matters will be addressed via specific planning conditions.

- 7.129 The Planning Obligations SPD sets out within Part 2 that in determining infrastructure needs, the Council and partners have had to translate dwelling numbers into population generation. This has been undertaken utilising the anticipated change in average household sizes. For the purposes of calculating the likely infrastructure requirements, the 2016 average household size has been used (2.25 people per household). With the application seeking permission for 16 dwellings this equates to (16 x 2.25) 36 people.

- 7.130 The Planning Obligations sought and as agreed by the Applicant, are summarised below:

**Affordable Housing:**

- 7.131 The site is over 0.5 hectares in size and Core Strategy Policy CS4, the Developer Contributions SPD (part A) and Draft Local Plan 2036 and policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission 2017 (as amended March 2018 for submission), seek to achieve a target of 40% affordable housing on sites of this size.

- 7.132 With the proposed number of dwellings being 16, this would equate to a maximum total of 6 units. The policies indicate that provision should be made on site and should seek to achieve a target tenure split of 70% social/affordable rented and 30% made up of other tenures. Policy does however acknowledge that, in determining the amount

and mix of affordable housing to be delivered, site specific considerations and other material considerations, including viability, will be taken into account.

- 7.133 The application proposes affordable housing provision at 40% to be secured through a Section 106 Agreement. Although the 40% affordable housing provision is welcomed, it is highlighted that it is a policy compliant provision and therefore accords with what should be expected on all qualifying sites.
- 7.134 Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy (2009) is based upon identified need and it is therefore considered that policy CS4 can be given significant weight given the consistency with section 5 of the NPPF 2019. Emerging Policy LP25 also identifies a 40% target of affordable homes, but with a lower threshold for qualifying development (11 homes/over 1000m<sup>2</sup> of residential floor space). Both policies are therefore afforded significant weight.
- 7.135 In this instance no site specific considerations have been submitted provision. Should the pursuant Reserved Matters applications seek approval for fewer dwellings, then the number of affordable dwellings would reduce accordingly; but the target of 40% would remain applicable.

**Green Space:**

- 7.136 In accordance with policies R7 and R8 of the Local Plan 1995 and policy CS10 Core Strategy 2009 and the Developer Contributions SPD (Part B), proposals are required to provide the development specific land for public open space or provide contributions towards improving recreation facilities in the vicinity of the proposed development. Saved policy OB2 of the HLPAs 2002 advises that financial contributions for the maintenance of green space may be sought to benefit the development.
- 7.137 As set out earlier in this report, a contribution towards public open space is proposed, given the village Memorial Playing Fields are situated on the opposite side of Thrapston Road close to the application site. HDC Urban Design and Green Spaces are content with this arrangement, and the Parish Council have requested this contribution goes towards an identified project being a new cricket wicket.
- 7.138 Discussions have been held with the Applicants' Agent regarding this contribution and it has been agreed that a formula based approach will secure this, as the proposals are in outline form and there may be scope to include some element of public open space at reserved matters stage, if outline consent is granted.
- 7.139 Given the above, an off-site contribution towards a new cricket wicket is considered reasonable and necessary and should therefore be secured by S106, utilising a formula based approach.
- 7.140 Policies R7 and R8 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 policy OB2 of the Huntingdon Local Plan Alteration (2002) are considered to be consistent with the social dimension of the NPPF and as such are afforded significant weight. Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy (2009)

along with the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) and emerging policy LP4 are considered to be consistent with paragraphs 54 and 56 of the NPPF 2019 and are also afforded significant weight.

#### **Residential Wheeled Bins:**

- 7.141 Each dwelling will require the provision of one black, blue and green wheeled bin. For flats, communal 1100 litre bins could be provided rather than individual bins for each dwelling. As such, a formula based approach is suggested with the scheme to cover these costs, with details to be secured through the S106 Agreement.

#### **CIL:**

- 7.142 As this application site is for a small-scale major development (under 200 dwellings) the development will be CIL liable in accordance with the Council's adopted charging schedule; CIL payments could cover infrastructure relating to footpath and access, health, community facilities, libraries and lifelong learning, and education.

#### Response to representations:

- 7.143 With regard to the representations which have been submitted in respect of these current proposals, these are covered earlier in this report.

#### **Conclusion and Planning Balance**

- 7.144 This proposal would result in development outside of the built-up area of the settlement and would conflict with policies H23, En17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 and CS3 of the Core Strategy. Paragraph 47 of the NPPF is clear that the Framework can override Development Plan policies which are not consistent with provisions of the NPPF and this is a material consideration in the determination of the application. Given the inconsistencies of the adopted housing supply policies with the NPPF, the 'tilted balance' set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF is engaged and shifts the planning balance in favour of the grant of consent, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 7.145 The presumption in favour of sustainable development requires proposals to achieve economic, social and environmental gains; as such a balancing exercise has to be undertaken to weigh the benefits of the scheme against its disadvantages. Consideration has been given to the points previously in this report but can be summarised as below:
- 7.146 In terms of the economic dimension of sustainable development, the proposal would contribute towards economic growth, including job creation - during the construction phase and in the longer term through the additional population assisting the local economy through spending on local services/facilities. There will also be Council Tax and New Homes Bonus receipts arising from the development.

- 7.147 Regarding the social dimension, the site appears to have no significant constraints and is deliverable. It would also increase the supply of housing. There is a local and district wide identified need for both private and affordable housing and whilst the Council can demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land, the provision of market housing and a 40% affordable provision on the application site (6 dwellings) would amount to a moderate benefit in terms of providing a greater flexibility to the supply of housing. The proposals would also make provision for contributions towards healthcare, education and community facilities through the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 7.148 In terms of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, the proposal retains the majority of trees on the site where possible and offers a rear landscape buffer to the north and the majority of trees are retained where possible.
- 7.149 The application site constitutes a sustainable location for the scale of development proposed in respect of access to local employment opportunities, services and facilities within Brampton and the wider Spatial Planning Area of Huntingdon; accessible by sustainable transport mode. This is a further factor in support of the proposal.
- 7.150 In terms of harm identified, this is limited to the impact of the proposal upon the landscape and character and appearance of the area, and specifically the landscape value of this part of the Ouse Valley. To mitigate against this harm, the northern edge includes a landscape buffer that helps the site transition softly into this countryside edge and landscape, and the quantum of development sought can maintain views through the site.
- 7.151 Having fully assessed all three objectives of sustainable development; economic, social and environmental within this report it is concluded that the development of this site will:  
\*Provide a supply of affordable and market housing within a sustainable location to help meet needs from current and future generations;  
\*Promote healthy, active lifestyle through an off-site contribution towards a new cricket wicket;  
\*Be acceptable in terms of highways safety and maximise opportunities for use of public transport, walking and cycling;  
\*Minimise pollution;  
\*Manage flood risk, drainage and contamination effectively;  
\*Have no significant negative impacts upon residential amenity;  
\*Have no significant adverse impacts on features of ecological value;  
\*Satisfactorily safeguard impacts upon archaeological assets;  
\*Provide appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs generated by the development.
- 7.152 It is accepted that the proposed development would result in some harm as the proposal would not accord with development plan policies that seek to restrict development in the countryside and there would be an adverse landscape and visual impact. It is also noted that there is local opposition to the proposal.
- 7.153 Overall, the harm identified is not considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the scheme's benefits when assessed against

the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole. This is a significant material consideration which outweighs the conflict with the Development Plan and therefore it is recommended that permission should be granted.

8. **RECOMMENDATION** - **APPROVAL** subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 obligation relating to affordable housing, provision of an off-site open space and maintenance contribution, wheeled bins, and subject to conditions to include those listed below.

**OR**

8. **RECOMMENDATION** - **REFUSAL** in the event that the obligation referred to above has not been completed and the applicant is unwilling to agree to an extended period for determination, or on the grounds that the applicant is unwilling to complete the obligation necessary to make the development acceptable.

**Conditions**

- Timing of permission and submission of Reserved Matters.
- Approved plans in so far as they relate to access.
- Scale parameters - maximum of 16 dwellings and 2 storeys.
- Site access arrangements (see drawing JNY8798-01 Rev K).
- Site levels and finished floor levels.
- Surface water drainage scheme
- Details of maintenance arrangements for the surface water drainage scheme.
- Investigation into capacity and condition of the pond to the north west of the site.
- Foul Water drainage scheme.
- Hours of work.
- Construction and Environmental Management Plan.
- Archaeological investigation.
- Development carried out in accordance with ecological mitigation and enhancement measures.
- European Protected Species Licence.
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment adhered to.
- Tree Protection measures alongside any application for reserved matters.
- Landscaping including boundary treatments and 2m wide belt of trees and hedging outside the eastern boundary of plot 16.
- Waste Management.
- Visibility splays to be provided.
- Off-site highway improvement works.

**Informatives**

- Works to the Public Highway

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

**CONTACT OFFICER:**

Enquiries about this report to **Laura Fisher Senior Development  
Management Officer 01480 388365**

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Developmentcontrol@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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Head of Planning  
Services Pathfinder  
House  
St. Mary's Street  
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Cambridgeshire PE29 3TN

Application Number: 18/02569/OUT

Case Officer: Laura Fisher

**Proposal: Proposed residential development involving the erection of 16 dwellings at land east of No. 66 Thrapston Road, Brampton, proposed access arrangements and associated works**

**Location: Land East of 66 Thrapston Road, Brampton**

Please ✓ box as appropriate

Recommend **approval** because .....(please give relevant planning reasons in space below)

Brampton Parish Council has concerns over additional vehicular movements into and out of the proposed development. The junction shown on Drawing No. 2100 will not be adequate in dealing with the new traffic flow. Although the transport statement indicates a reduction in overall traffic flow along Thrapston Road, Brampton Parish Council is not convinced this will be the case. A traffic calming scheme, similar to the one currently being carried out in Ermine Street, Great Stukeley, will go some way towards slowing the traffic using this route and reduce "rat running" with vehicles taking short cuts to Huntingdon and the station. In view of this Brampton Parish Council recommends HDC is asked if any traffic calming scheme is planned.

Partly dependent on an answer from HDC re a traffic calming scheme,

1. Brampton Parish Council recommends approval for the proposed 16 no dwellings subject to modification of the new junction with a revised layout submitted to Brampton Parish Council.
2. Recommend approval subject to the existing hedge at the southern/road boundary being retained.

Recommend **refusal** because...(please give relevant planning reasons in space below)

No observations either in favour or against the proposal

D Steel, Assistant Clerk to Brampton Town/Parish Council. (For GDPR purposes please do not sign)

Date : 19 Dec 18

Failure to return this form within the time indicated will be taken as an indication that the Town or Parish Council do not express any opinion either for or against the application.

Please send response to email address

below:-

[Development.control@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Development.control@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

**(Development Management)**

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**From:** Debbie Steel <depbrampton.pc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** 30 January 2019 11:17  
**To:** Fisher, Laura  
**Cc:** Janet Innes-Clarke; Nigel Maggs  
**Subject:** Land to the E of Thrapston Road, Brampton - 18/02569/OUT

Dear Laura

Further to your email regarding the above application, Brampton Parish Council notes the comments from County Highways relating to this application.

Many thanks  
Debbie

--  
*Debbie Steel*  
*Assistant Clerk*  
*Brampton Parish Council*  
*Brampton Memorial Centre*  
*Thrapston Road*  
*Brampton*  
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Application Number: 18/02569/OUT

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**Proposal: Proposed residential development involving the erection of 16 dwellings at land east of No. 66 Thrapston Road, Brampton, proposed access arrangements and associated work**

**Location: Land East of 66 Thrapston Road, Brampton**

Please ✓ box as appropriate

Recommend **approval** because .....(please give relevant planning reasons in space below)

Recommend **refusal** because...(please give relevant planning reasons in space below)

Brampton Parish Council recommends refusal as there are concerns regarding the access onto Thrapston Road.

There is too much development going on in Brampton at this point in time.

No observations either in favour or against the proposal

D Steel, Assistant Clerk to Brampton Town/Parish Council. (For GDPR purposes please do not sign)

Date : 26 Feb 19

Failure to return this form within the time indicated will be taken as an indication that the Town or Parish Council do not express any opinion either for or against the application.

Please send response to email address

below:-

[Development.control@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:Development.control@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

**(Development Management)**