
MAIN CASE

Proposal: Residential development of 24no. dwellings consisting of 2no. flats, 3no. bungalows and 19no. houses and associated works.

Location: Land North Of 9 To 11 Northumbria Close Haddenham
Cambridgeshire

Applicant: Sanctuary Group

Agent: KJ Architects Ltd

Reference No: 12/00429/FUM

Case Officer: Penelope Mills

Parish: Haddenham
Ward: Haddenham
Ward Councillor/s: Councillor Gareth Wilson
Councillor Ian Allen
Councillor Pauline Wilson

Date Received: 8 June 2012 Expiry Date: 7 September 2012

[M126]

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application seeks permission for 24 affordable homes and associated works, as an affordable housing exception site, on land outside the development envelope, to the north of Northumbria Close. It is brought before the Planning Committee at the request of the Local Member.
- 1.2 The main issues for consideration are:
- The compliance of the proposal with the affordable housing exception site policy H4;
 - The impact on visual amenity and the appropriateness of the layout and design of the development;
 - The impacts on residential amenity;
 - The impacts on highway safety;
 - The impacts on ecology and biodiversity; and,
 - The impacts on flood risk and drainage.
- 1.3 The application site is immediately adjacent to the edge of the settlement, accessed through an existing residential development, and it is therefore sufficiently closely related to the existing built-up framework of the village. The scale of the development is commensurate with the settlement hierarchy status of Haddenham and is also in line with identified local affordable housing need. It is considered that the scale,

layout and design of the development is such that it could be accommodated without significant adverse effect on the character and setting of the settlement, and any visual impact would be further reduced by the proposed soft landscaping, which would include tree and hedge planting as well as the provision of a central area of public open space. The development would provide a sufficient level of residential amenity for future occupants and would not give rise to any significant adverse effects on the residential amenity of existing neighbours to the site. Issues relating to protected species, biodiversity and drainage have been adequately addressed, and the development is also considered to be acceptable in highway safety terms. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of the relevant Core Strategy Policies, including policy H4, which specifically deals with affordable housing exception sites, and is recommended for approval.

1.4 A Members' site visit is arranged for 12.20pm

2.0 **THE APPLICATION**

2.1 The application seeks planning permission for a development of 24 affordable homes with associated works. The 24 homes include 2 one-bed flats, 3 two-bed bungalows, 11 two-bed houses, 7 three-bed houses and 1 four-bed house. It is proposed that 4 two-bed houses and 2 three-bed houses would be available for shared ownership and all other units would be for social rent.

2.2 The vehicular access to the development would be from Northumbria Close to the south, with an additional pedestrian access directly from Station Road. In addition, a field access to the adjacent agricultural land to the west would be retained.

2.3 The development would be served by an adopted 'shared surface', with waste collection points within the development and one on Station Road. An area of public open space, including a small play area, would be provided within the development and additional soft landscaping would take place along the adopted highway and the boundaries of the site.

3.0 **THE APPLICANT'S CASE**

3.1 The applicant's case is set out in the Design and Access Statement, which can be viewed online through the Council's Public Access using the following link:
<http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do;jsessionid=F3239271ABCA1AC491B55D5A0FC77FAC?action=firstPage>

3.2 A summary of the main points is set out below:

- The site is an appropriate one for affordable housing and meets the requirements of policy H4;
- The housing provided meets the identified local affordable housing need;
- The layout, scale and design of the development is appropriate and would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area

3.3 Additional comments from the applicant are set out in the Sanctuary Group letter dated 19th July 2012, which is attached at appendix 1.

4.0 **THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT**

4.1 The application site comprises a piece of undeveloped land on the northern edge of Haddenham, outside the designated development envelope. The site is adjacent to Northumbria Close, an existing residential development of two-storey dwellings, on the west side of Station Road. There is frontage development along Station Road between the site and the centre of the village to the south, with some backland development in the form of small cul-de-sacs, particularly on the eastern side of the highway. Open countryside surrounds the site to the north and west and an Anglian Water Pumping Station sits adjacent to the southeast corner. To the north, on the opposite side of the road, is the Anson Packaging Site.

4.2 The southern edge of the site is bounded by various types of fencing and planting, associated with the residential properties in Northumbria Close. To the east a mature hedge runs along the boundary with Station Road and beyond the application site to the north and west are hedges marking the wider field boundaries. The site rises to the northeast where the field is bounded by a ditch.

5.0 **PLANNING HISTORY**

5.1 No relevant planning history.

6.0 **REPLIES TO CONSULTATIONS**

6.1 **Local Member, Cllr Pauline Wilson** – made the following comments:

- This application should be discussed at Planning Committee, so that members of the public can have their say
- Design of the houses and the layout should be of the highest quality and an exemplar development
- There needs to be adequate play facilities and access to local countryside walks without the need to go up Station Road. Station Road has pavement only on one alternate side and children would have to cross this busy road twice to reach the recreation ground
- Affordable housing is much needed and this conforms to our housing needs survey

6.2 **Haddenham Parish Council** – Objects to the proposal and have raised a number of specific concerns, summarised below:

- Density, size and number of dwellings. The number of dwellings does not link to the response from parishioners to the Haddenham Village Vision Survey
- Land drainage and sewage problems
- Increased traffic on Station Road and safety issues for pedestrians using the road to access the village, particularly children walking to school
- Lack of public open space on site
- Social Infrastructure – Haddenham Primary School and doctor's surgery

- Access road into field
 - Are the houses built to passive standard?
 - Transport Statement is inadequate and does not conform to Government Guidelines
 - Use of Northumbria Close for construction traffic
 - Bin collection point is on Station Road inadequate and inappropriate
 - Emergency vehicle access
- 6.3 **ECDC Housing Officer** – Confirmed that the scale of the proposed development, the size, mix and type of dwellings proposed are appropriate in light of the evidence of housing need, and suggested affordable housing provisions for a S106 Agreement.
- 6.4 **ECDC Waste Officer** – Made the following recommendations:
- Adequate space should be available on each plot for up to 3 bins and there should be suitable access to enable waste to be transported to the waste collection points
 - Waste collection points should be adjacent to the adopted road.
- 6.5 **ECDC Environmental Health** – Reviewed the submitted reports and made the following comments:
- The Remediation Strategy and Verification Plan makes recommendations for remedial actions and what verification will be needed.
 - These works need to be undertaken and satisfactorily verified before the issue of contamination is addressed at this site so I recommend a condition (Implementation of Approved Remediation Scheme) be attached to any planning consent
 - The developer is responsible for addressing any contamination, whether it is foreseen or not, so a thorough visual and olfactory check of all excavations during groundworks must be undertaken
 - The following conditions are recommended: Construction times limited to 08:00 – 18:00 each day Monday-Friday and 08:00 – 14:00 on Saturday; No construction work to take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays; and, No burning of waste on site in preparation for construction
- 6.6 **East Cambridgeshire Access Group** – Comments regarding accessibility to be forwarded to the applicant for information.
- 6.7 **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue** – Requested that adequate provision be made for fire hydrants, to be secured either by S106 or by planning condition.
- 6.8 **Cambridgeshire County Highways** – No objection in principle to the extension of Northumbria Close for 24 dwellings. made the following additional comments:
- The site layout needs to be amended such that: the 1.5m x 1.5 pedestrian visibility splays are clearly labelled; and, the 2.4m x 25m visibility splay across the frontage of plots 3, 4 and 5 needs to be shown with highway boundary markers at the back of the splay as it will need to be adopted.
 - If the road outside plots 6-8 is to be 'adoptable' the pedestrian visibility splays should be shown to each side of the parking for plot 5 and adjacent to plot 6.
 - Other conditions relating to: construction of estate road, improvement to Northumbria Close; before and after inspections of Northumbria Close and

making good of defects; two dropped kerb crossing places are required to be provided by the developer in locations on Station Road; No vehicular access to Station Road; parking prior to occupation; temporary facilities for construction; and, visibility splays.

- 6.9 **Cambridgeshire County Council** – Confirmed that the County Council’s current policy is to not seek contributions for education on 100% affordable housing schemes. Therefore we would not seek any education contributions from this development. Other contributions may be required.
- 6.10 **Cambridgeshire County Archaeology** – made the following comments:
- The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential. If important archaeological remains survive on the site, these would be severely damaged or destroyed by the proposed development.
 - The plot lies in an area of known ridge and furrow (HER No. MCB11725) known to mask archaeology of an earlier date. Known Iron Age, Roman and Saxon remains surround the village (HER No. MCB18421) and it is thought that similar remains may be within the current application bounds.
 - The site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation and recommend that this work should be commissioned and undertaken at the expense of the developer. This programme of work can be secured through the inclusion of a negative condition
- 6.11 **Anglian Water** – Highlighted the location of the sewage pumping station and requested that there be no development within 15 metres from the boundary of that station.
- 6.12 **Neighbours** – representations received from 29 addresses. The issues raised are summarised below (full copies of the responses are on the planning file and can be viewed online through public access using the following link:
<http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=neighbourComments&keyVal=M4DB1QGG55000>

Highways

- Current issues with Station Road: unsafe for pedestrians; high traffic levels on Station Road, especially HGVs; no safe cycle route; curve in road
- Number of parking spaces provided and the potential for parking outside the site
- Current parking problems on Northumbria Close
- The proposed farm access
- Lack of pavement between the development and Northumbria Close
- Management of construction traffic
- The inadequacy of the transport statement and lack of a transport assessment
- Increased risk of accidents on Station Road
- Increased difficulty of existing residents of Station Road to access on to the highway
- Difficult access for emergency vehicles

Visual Amenity and Character

- Adverse impact on the setting of the village, contrary to EN1

- Properties set back from the road frontage is incongruous with form and character
- Out of scale with surrounding development and density not in keeping with the open rural character
- Fence around Anglian water station will cut off views to the north
- Loss of view from the existing gateway into the village and viewpoints on circular walking route along edge of village
- Permanent loss of historic landscape – ancient ridge and furrow (HER 09869).
- Amount of housing and layout creates a hard urban edge that does not fit with the rural setting.

Residential Amenity

- Impact on current residents of Northumbria Close
- Loss of Privacy for 56 Station Road; Noise and disturbance from additional traffic
- 4 properties overlooking 79 Station Road will impact on light, privacy, and view and will impact on quality of life

Ecology/Biodiversity

- Adverse impact on wildlife
- Great crested newts present on both sides of Station Road
- Pedestrian access to Station road will damage hedge; proximity to nature reserve

Type of development

- Too much affordable housing in one location – should be spread through village
- Lack of detail on sequential test
- Mix proposed with few shared equity is not best practice

Drainage and Flooding

- Sewage would need to be pumped away
- Low lying natural flood plain that would be difficult to drain
- Natural drainage decreased; increased risk of flooding to existing properties on Station Road
- Should only be for those with local ties to Haddenham;

Open space and Infrastructure

- Amount of open space inadequate and below SPD requirement
- Rubbish collection from Station Road
- Should provide a play area
- Haddenham medical facility already struggling
- Impact on village school

Other Issues

- Financial viability lead to poor quality development
- Archaeology and environmental surveys not factored into costs
- Current financial climate not excuse for poor provision
- Need for amendments calls into question quality of forward planning
- Suitability of this site has never been publically sought
- Not everyone on Station Road has had a notification letter
- Areas within the envelope could be considered for development
- Access to north would lead to further development

- Does not take account of the Parish Plan and not in line with Haddenham Vision consultation
- Outside the village envelope and loss of green field land
- Not sustainable development – 75 metres from village centre – propensity to walk is not just distance but quality of walking experience.
- Destruction of ridge and furrow landscape

7.0 **THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

7.1 **East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009**

CS1	Spatial Strategy
CS2	Housing
CS7	Infrastructure
CS8	Access
H2	Density
H4	Affordable housing exceptions
S4	Developer contribution
S6	Transport impact
S7	Parking provision
EN1	Landscape and settlement character
EN2	Design
EN3	Sustainable construction and energy efficiency
EN4	Renewable energy
EN6	Biodiversity and geology
EN7	Flood risk

7.2 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations
Design Guide

7.3 **National Planning Policy Framework 2012**

	Core Planning Policies
4	Promoting sustainable transport
7	Requiring good design
10	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
11	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

8.0 **PLANNING COMMENTS**

8.1 The application site is located outside the development envelope for Haddenham, on land designated as Countryside. In such locations, Core Strategy Policy CS2 states that there will be a strict control over new residential development, with some specific exceptions, one of which is the provision of affordable housing.

8.2 East Cambridgeshire has a significant need for affordable housing. However, as land values are high, registered social landlords often find it difficult to afford to purchase

sites within settlements, for the development of affordable housing schemes. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises this issue, and allows for rural exception sites to be used to provide affordable housing in perpetuity, in locations that would not normally be used for market housing. Policy H4 of the Core Strategy sets out the Council's approach to these exception sites and states that schemes may be permitted on sites within or outside settlement boundaries where:

- The proposal is outside the settlement boundary, the site is adjoining or in close proximity to the main built-up framework of the settlement;
- No significant harm would be caused to the character or setting of the settlement and the surrounding countryside; and
- The scale of the scheme is broadly related to the settlement hierarchy status of the settlement and to the scale of the identified local affordable housing need; and
- The affordable housing provided is made available to people in local housing need at an affordable cost for the life of the property; and
- It can be demonstrated that there is no land in a more suitable location that is available

8.3 In determining this application, the local planning authority must consider whether this proposal complies with the requirements of policy H4, set out above, in addition to considering all other relevant material planning considerations. In this case, these would be: the impact on visual amenity and the appropriateness of the layout and design of the development; the impacts on residential amenity; the impacts on highway safety; the impacts on ecology and biodiversity; and, the impacts on flood risk and drainage.

Compliance with policy H4

8.4 The application site sits alongside the edge of the settlement envelope, adjoining an existing residential development, Northumbria Close. The development would therefore relate well to the built-up framework of the village and would not sit isolated from it. Concerns have been raised by residents regarding the distance from the site to the centre of the village (approximately 1 km), and the amenities located there. However, the very nature of exception sites, and the fact that they use land outside the development envelope, means that they are unlikely to locate very close to centre. In this case, the relationship between the site and the settlement is considered to be acceptable, both in terms of the physical relationship to the existing built-up area and the distance to local amenities.

8.5 Concerns have also been raised over the impact the development would have on the setting of the village and the surrounding countryside. The development would undoubtedly change the character of the site, which is currently undeveloped agricultural land. However, it is considered that this change could be accommodated without significant harm to the character of the surrounding area and the wider setting of Haddenham.

8.6 The development has been laid out so as to prevent a single hard line of buildings at the northern edge of the site, and this area would be further softened by the planting of specimen trees and the use of post and rail fencing. New native species hedge

planting would also be used, along with some tree planting, to help soften the western side of the development and lessen its impact when viewed from the higher land to the west. The mature boundary hedge along Station Road would be retained to lessen the visual impact of the development on Station Road and the positioning of dwellings back from the highway, gable end on, would also help to reduce the bulk of the new development from this viewpoint. The pedestrian access from Station Road would lead directly into an area of open space at the centre of the development, which would contain new tree planting, creating a green view into the site.

- 8.7 The view that the development would not have a significant adverse effect on the setting of the village, is supported by the findings of the Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment submitted with the application. This document, prepared by a consultancy specialising in landscape impact and design, assesses the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposal. It looks at the character of the site and the surrounding landscape, and examines the sensitivity and capacity for change from 19 different viewpoints. It concludes that whilst the site is in a sensitive location adjacent to the settlement boundary, the proposed scheme with the retained vegetation and additional planting, is capable of being successfully integrated into the local setting and the wider village scene.
- 8.8 There are a number of visual receptors, mostly private dwellings on Station Road and Northumbria Close, that currently look onto agricultural land, and these properties would inevitably see a significant change in their outlook. However, this alone would not warrant the refusal of the scheme, particularly as the protection of private views is not a material planning consideration. It is also important to recognise that any visual impact would be lessened over time, as the landscaping reached maturity.
- 8.9 Policy H4 requires that the scale of the development be broadly related to the hierarchy status of the settlement and to the identified local affordable housing need. Haddenham is identified in the Core Strategy as a Key Service Centre, where within the development envelope, any scale of development could be permitted, provided that all other material planning considerations were met. In this context the proposal for 24 new dwellings is not out of scale with the designated settlement hierarchy. In terms of the local need, the Housing Officer has confirmed that, having had regard to the Housing Needs Survey and the current Housing Register, they are satisfied that the scale, size mix and type of dwellings proposed are appropriate. The Housing Officer has also provided the appropriate provisions for the S106 Agreement to ensure that the affordable housing is retained in perpetuity, and that priority is given to local residents or those with a local connection.
- 8.10 The Parish Council and Local residents have highlighted the results of the Haddenham Vision Consultation, which will feed into the new Local Plan. This consultation exercise was carried out to help ascertain what scale of new market housing development should take place within Haddenham and where this should be. It was not intended to set a limit for potential affordable housing exception sites as these would come forward separately in response to local need and would be assessed against the exception site policy.

- 8.11 In terms of whether there are other, more suitable sites for the development, the applicant has outlined the lengthy site selection process that took place prior to the submission of this application. This included presenting to the Parish Council (2004) and putting out a call to local residents to come forward with potential sites for affordable housing. Four other sites were assessed and rejected prior to the selection of the current site: Hod Hall Lane; Aldreth Road; Greenhouse land, New Road; and, Hinton Hall Farm. The explanation for the rejection of these sites is contained in their letter dated 19th July 2012 which is attached at appendix 1.
- 8.12 Many residents have expressed a preference for the affordable housing to be provided through a number of smaller sites throughout the village. However, as Sanctuary highlight in their letter, land suitable for affordable housing to meet the current need is not available throughout the village. This approach is also unlikely to be economically viable, not least because of higher land values within the settlement envelope, but also as this approach would not benefit from the same economies of scale that a single development would.
- 8.13 The Station Road site is available and deliverable and it is considered that the applicant has sufficiently demonstrated that no other better site could meet the current affordable housing need in the area. The scale and mix of the development is acceptable and in line with the hierarchy of the village and the current level of need, and the development of the proposed site, which is adjacent to the main built-up framework of the village, could take place without significant harm to character or setting of Haddenham. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of policy H4 of the Core Strategy.

Visual Amenity – Layout and Design

- 8.14 The development is located in a sensitive position at the edge of the settlement, and as such, it is important to ensure that the best layout and design is achieved to help minimise any visual impact.
- 8.15 The density of the development is relatively low at 35 dwellings per hectare and is comparable with the density of the adjacent Northumbria Close, which equates to 33 dwellings per hectare. The layout is such that a single line of buildings would not be created along the northern edge of the development, and given the use of open boundary treatments and additional tree planting, the edge of the village would be considerably softer than the current edge of Northumbria Close. The western edge would also appear softer and more appropriate for a rural location, due to the new native species hedge planting.
- 8.16 The landscaping proposed throughout the site would help to soften the development and assimilate it into its surroundings. The central area of open space would also help to 'green' the views into the development both from the vehicular access on Northumbria Close and from the pedestrian access on Station Road. The area of open space provided within the development has been increased during the course of the application, at the request of Officers. It is accepted that the total amount provided is still below the level required in the Council's Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document. However, there are a number of viability considerations to be taken into account on this site, and on

balance, the local planning authority is of the opinion that the current provision would be acceptable both in terms of visually enhancing the scheme, and providing amenity space for future occupants. Given the need for affordable housing in the area, the local planning authority would not want to prevent development from coming forward by imposing overly onerous requirements that would make the development unviable.

- 8.17 The layout of the development has been amended to enlarge the central area of open space by removing a shared parking area. The position of the dwellings in this part of the development has also been altered, allowing for parking by each property. It is considered that this arrangement would appear less vehicle-dominated, and allows the green space to become the focus of the site, making it more usable. This area will also provide play equipment, as there are no other play facilities for small children in close proximity to the development.
- 8.18 The scale of the individual dwellings is in line with other nearby properties on Station Road and in Northumbria Close. Some of the individual designs have been altered to simplify the elevations and incorporate the use of different materials, to help the development, particularly the new roofscape, blend well with the surroundings. The use of a shared surface within the development with different hard surfacing materials will also help to add interest and create a pleasant built environment.
- 8.19 The layout ensures that many of the dwellings will front an adopted highway. Those that are served by private accesses from that highway will be served by bin collection points, of which there are two within the development site and one on Station Road. Each of these will serve only a small number of dwellings and would therefore not have any detrimental effects on the amenity of the area.
- 8.20 Access to the adjoining agricultural field has been retained as part of the layout at the request of the landowner, and this will be for private domestic use only (farm traffic would not be permitted though the development). The current Local plan is under review and there is no intention within this review to extend the current settlement boundary in this area. As such, the existence of the field gate should not be viewed as a potential extension of residential development outside the current boundary. Market housing in this location would therefore be contrary to policy. It is also highly unlikely that further exception housing would be appropriate in this location, given the scale of the existing development.
- 8.21 The applicant has gone some way to address issues raised by officers in relation to the layout and design of the scheme, and the development as it now stands is considered to be acceptable. The improvements to the design, soft landscaping, open space and parking arrangements have helped enhance the visual appearance of the development and the way in which it will function in the future.

Residential Amenity

- 8.22 Policy EN2 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that there is no significantly detrimental impact on the residential amenity of existing occupiers, and that occupiers of new dwellings on the site are provided with acceptable residential amenity.

- 8.23 The development provides an adequate level of private amenity space for the occupants of all of the units within the scheme, including the two flats. Smaller gardens on the northern edge of the development will open out on to open countryside, creating a feeling of openness for those properties, and the landscaping within the site will also help to create a green and pleasant environment. The layout and orientation of the dwellings within the development also minimises the opportunity for overlooking, although as with most new developments of this type, some level of mutual overlooking between properties will be unavoidable.
- 8.24 Properties on the opposite side of Station Road have raised concerns about the impact the development would have on their residential amenity. These properties will be over 30 metres from the nearest dwellings in the new development. At this distance there would be no adverse effect either from overlooking or from the new buildings being physically overbearing. The creation of a pedestrian access on to Station Road at this point will lead to an increase in the level of pedestrian movements here, but again, given the degree of separation, this would not be considered to have a significant adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity. Similarly, the level of additional traffic generated by the development would not lead to an increase in noise and disturbance that would amount to a significant adverse effect on the amenity of those living alongside Station Road.
- 8.25 Concerns have been raised over the impact the development would have on neighbours adjacent to the southern boundary, in particular, the impact on 79 Station Road, the rear garden of which would be adjacent to the rear gardens of plots 20, 21 and 22. There will inevitably be some impact on this property, which is currently adjacent to undeveloped land, and therefore experiences a very low level of overlooking. The local planning authority would usually look for a window-to-window distance of 20 metres. In this case, the distance would be closer to 16 metres. However, the properties do not back directly on to one another and the oblique relationship between them means that the proposed distance is acceptable. New tree planting on this boundary would also help to mitigate the impact on this neighbour and minimise the perception of overlooking. In terms of loss of light and the potential overbearing impact, given the orientation of these dwellings directly to the north, the degree of separation proposed is considered to be acceptable.
- 8.26 Properties within Northumbria Close would experience an increase in traffic levels as a result of the development. However, the dwellings in Northumbria Close are set back from the edge of the highway, and the number of additional vehicle movements that would be likely to arise as a result of the development would not result in a significant adverse affect on their residential amenity.

Highways

- 8.27 Policies S6 and S7 of the Core Strategy require new developments to provide safe and convenient access to the highway network and provide adequate levels of car and cycle parking. The proposed development provides two parking spaces per dwelling, with access to the rear gardens for cycles, and it therefore meets the Council's adopted parking standards. The new road serving the development would

be a 'shared surface', sufficiently wide enough to safely accommodate vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. It is proposed that the access road, shared surface and associated turning head would be adopted by the Highways Authority. County Highways have confirmed that these proposals meet their requirements.

- 8.28 Numerous concerns have been raised regarding the current safety of Station Road for existing users, both pedestrians and drivers, and the exacerbating impact that this additional development would have. Particular concern has been expressed over the lack of a continuous footway from the application site to the centre of the village, and the safety implications this would have for new occupants of the development. The Highways Officer has been consulted on the proposals and they have confirmed that the A1421 (Station Road) is capable of serving more housing, and that given the speed limit and geometry of the access from Northumbria Close, detailed analysis of motor vehicle trips generated, would not be required in this instance.
- 8.29 It is acknowledged that accessibility from the site on foot and by cycle is not particularly good. However, the Highways Officer does not view the current situation as being exceptionally bad, and the absence of a continuous footway and the narrowness of the existing footway would not, in her opinion, justify an objection on the grounds of highway safety. This application cannot be expected to remedy perceived deficiencies in the existing highway. Within the site, and at its junction with the public highway, the proposal is acceptable in highway terms. The fact that more pedestrians, cyclists and cars will use the road system, does not make it more dangerous.
- 8.30 The applicant has submitted a basic Transport Assessment and the local planning authority considers that this is adequate for the nature of the development proposed. In this case, the current situation with regards to pedestrian access along Station Road to the centre of the village would not be made any less safe by the creation of 24 new homes adjacent to Northumbria Close. Similarly, the infrastructure for pedestrians using the highway is not so poor as to prohibit further residential development. On this basis and in the absence of a recommendation from County Highways, the local planning authority could not sustain a refusal of the development on highway safety grounds.
- 8.31 Due to the residential nature of Northumbria Close and Station Road, construction traffic would need to be carefully managed and this would be achieved through the use of a planning condition.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 8.32 An initial ecological assessment of the site identified the potential presence of protected species. An Amphibian and Great Crested Newt Survey, and a Reptile Survey were therefore carried out, in order to identify what species are present and establish what mitigation would be required.
- 8.33 The Amphibian and Great Crested Newt Survey confirms a high potential for Great Crested Newts and recommends a number of mitigation measures, to ensure that no harm comes to any newts on the site, and to compensate for the loss of newt

habitat. Prior to the commencement of any work on site, trapping would take place to ensure the entire newt population is removed, and an area of land to the west would be enhanced to provide compensatory habitat, where newts would be released. The creation of this compensatory habitat and its maintenance in perpetuity would be secured as part of the S106 agreement.

- 8.34 The reptile survey confirms the presence of Common Lizard on the site and sets out the required mitigation strategy. As with the Great Crested Newts, Common Lizards would need to be captured prior to work commencing and translocated to an area of grassland to the west of the site, which would be enhanced to provide suitable features for Common Lizard. All of the enhancement works would have to be completed prior to the translocation taking place, and would be secured as part of a S106 agreement.
- 8.35 In terms of the general impact on biodiversity, the development would result in the loss of an area of improved grassland. However, this habitat is considered not to be of wider ecological value, and as such its loss would not in itself prevent the development from taking place.
- 8.36 The existing trees and hedgerow on the site are considered to be ecologically important and these would be retained and protected, with only a small loss, to create a pedestrian access on to Station Road. A number of ecological enhancements would also be secured as part of the development, including the creation of additional native species hedging and tree planting and the provision of sparrow terrace boxes under the eaves of some buildings. In addition, the soft landscaping scheme would be required to demonstrate how it would enhance biodiversity within the site, in terms of the types of planting proposed.
- 8.37 On balance, it is considered that the development would protect the net biodiversity value of the land through the retention of particular environmental features and the provision of additional biodiversity enhancements within the scheme. The application also sets out appropriate mitigation measures and compensatory work in relation to the protected species and therefore meets the requirements of Policy EN5 of the Core strategy and the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Renewable Energy

- 8.38 Policy EN4 of the Core Strategy requires developments of ten or more dwellings to provide at least 10% of their energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. The applicant has advised that the intention is to provide this through the use of air source heat pumps and if necessary solar PV.
- 8.39 The detailed evidence that the renewable energy would provide the 10% of the development's requirements would be produced at the detailed design stage, as is often the case with proposals such as this. To ensure that this takes place, a condition would be applied to any consent, requiring the submission of a detailed energy statement and the subsequent installation of the renewable technologies outlined in that statement.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 8.40 The application site lies within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Flood Risk maps. In such locations, developments that are less than 1 hectare in size are not required to submit a Flood Risk Assessment, and there is no requirement for the local planning authority to consult with the Environment Agency. However, it is still necessary to demonstrate that surface water drainage will be dealt with in a sustainable manner, to ensure that the development does not increase the risk of flooding either onsite, or elsewhere, in accordance with national and local planning policy.
- 8.41 A Foul and Surface Water Drainage Strategy has been submitted with the application, setting out the existing surface water regime and how surface and foul water drainage will be dealt with once the new development is built. In order for the development to meet the requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes, surface water flows will need to be attenuated to existing greenfield run-off rates or 5 litres per second, whichever is the greater. In addition, the total volume of run-off should be no greater than the pre-development site.
- 8.42 Surface water run-off from the site will be discharged to the ditch to the north, to maintain the existing regime. However, due to the topography of the site and the layout, flows would not be attenuated by gravity alone, and a pumped solution is required. Rainwater harvesting would also be required to reduce the volume of runoff from the site that would take place due to creation of hard paved areas within the development.
- 8.43 The schemes detailed in the report are required in order to meet the Code for Sustainable Homes. However, they would also be secured through the use of planning conditions requiring their implementation prior to occupation and their maintenance in perpetuity.

Other Issues

- 8.44 There is an existing Anglian Water Pumping Station adjacent to the site next to Station Road. Anglian Water has advised that a 15 metre separation is required between any new development and this site to protect the amenity of future occupants. As it stands the proposed dwelling would be between 5 and 9 metres from the edge of the pumping station enclosure, significantly further away than the nearest existing neighbour, 3 metres away. Given the current situation and the need to ensure the development sits alongside existing development, it is considered that the distance proposed is acceptable. A new 1.8 metre high wall would also be erected around the pumping station, which would provide additional noise attenuation for the occupants of those dwellings closest to it.

Summary

- 8.45 The application site is immediately adjacent to the edge of the settlement, accessed through an existing residential development, and it is therefore sufficiently closely related to the existing built-up framework of the village. The scale of the development is commensurate with the settlement hierarchy status of Haddenham and is also in line with identified local affordable housing need. It is considered that the scale, layout and design of the development is such that it could be accommodated without significant adverse effect on the character and setting of the settlement, and any visual impact would be further reduced by the proposed soft landscaping, which would include tree and hedge planting as well as the provision of a central area of public open space. The development would provide a sufficient level of residential amenity for future occupants and would not give rise to any significant adverse effects on the residential amenity of existing neighbours to the site. Issues relating to protected species, biodiversity and drainage have been adequately addressed, and the development is also considered to be acceptable in highway safety terms. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of the relevant Core Strategy Policies, including policy H4, which specifically deals with affordable housing exception sites, and is recommended for approval.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to conditions...

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 3 years of the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.
- 2 No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 2 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside, in accordance with policies CS1, EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 3 No development shall take place until full details of soft landscape works (including for the central area of public open space) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include planting plans; a written specification; schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes, proposed numbers/densities; and an implementation programme. The details shall also indicate all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained. Planting should be in favour of native broadleaved species and trees should be selected as beneficial to wildlife with at least 50% to be fruit bearing. The soft landscaping should include planting of flower beds utilising species beneficial to wildlife, in particular to attract invertebrate. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority.
- 3 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers and the character and appearance of the area, to assimilate the development into its surroundings, and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with policies EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009

- 4 No development shall take place until full details of hard landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include: all hard surfacing materials, finished floor levels, street furniture, street lighting, bin store areas and boundary treatments. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority.
- 4 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers and the character and appearance of the area, and to assimilate the development into its surroundings, minimising the impact on the setting of the village in accordance with policies EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009
- 5 No development shall take place until a scheme for the maintenance/management regime of the hard and soft landscape (including the public open space and the equipment to be provided on it) and boundary treatments in perpetuity, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the methods for the proposed maintenance regime, a detailed schedule, and details of who will be responsible for its continuing implementation. The soft landscaping shall be maintained in accordance with the agreed scheme.
- 5 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers and future occupiers of the site, the character and appearance of the area, and to assimilate the development into its surroundings in accordance with policies EN1 and EN2, of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009
- 6 The approved Remediation Strategy and Verification Plan, forming part of the submitted contamination reports, must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of any development other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification of commencement of any remediation scheme works. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme, a verification report (referred to in PPS23 as a validation report) that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6 Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors, in accordance with policy EN8 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 7 In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported in writing to the Local Planning Authority within 24 hours. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where remediation is necessary, a remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The necessary remediation works shall be undertaken, and following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 7 Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors, in accordance with policy EN8 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.

- 8 Prior to the commencement of any development, a scheme for the provision of fire hydrants, or a satisfactory alternative, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The hydrants or alternative shall be installed and completed in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development.
- 8 Reason: To ensure proper infrastructure for the site in the interests of public safety, in accordance with policies EN2 and S4 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 9 Prior to commencement of development, an Energy Statement containing full details of the proposed methods of providing at least 10% of the buildings' proposed energy requirement, from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The agreed scheme shall thereafter be installed prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.
- 9 Reason: To ensure that the development takes the opportunities available to contribute to delivering the Government's Climate Change Programme and energy policies, and in doing so contribute to global sustainability, and to contribute effectively to tackling climate change in accordance with policy EN4 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009
- 10 Prior to the commencement of development, a joint inspection to record the current state of the public highway of Northumbria Close and of Station Road between Northumbria Close and the northern limit of the site frontage, shall be carried out by the developer together with Cambridgeshire County Council. On completion, a further joint inspection shall be made to assess any damage sustained during the construction phase. All damage shall be made good in accordance with a timescale, agreed with the lpa.
- 10 Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies S6 and S7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 11 Prior to first occupation of any of the dwellings:
- the estate road shall be constructed to at least binder course surfacing level from Northumbria Close; and,
 - the improvement in the bend in Northumbria Close and the 2 dropped kerb pedestrian crossing places at location A and B on Station Road, shown on the drawing submitted with the Highways Officer Comments dated 10th July 2012, shall be completed.
- 11 Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies S6 and S7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009
- 12 Prior to the first occupation of any dwelling, spaces shall be laid out within the site for cars to park in accordance with drawing number 004 revision C. These areas shall be levelled, surfaced and drained and thereafter retained for that specific use.
- 12 Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies S6 and S7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 13 Temporary facilities shall be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during the period of construction.
- 13 Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies S6 and S7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 14 Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings visibility splays shall be provided each side of the vehicular access in full accordance with the details indicated on the submitted plan 004 revision

C. The splays shall thereafter be maintained free from any obstruction exceeding 0.6m above the level of the adjacent highway carriageway.

- 14 Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies S6 and S7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 15 No vehicular access shall be made on to Station Road other than via Northumbria Close.
- 15 Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies S6 and S7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 16 Notwithstanding the provisions of Class A of Schedule 2, Part 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, (or any order revoking, amending or re-enacting that order) no boundary treatments shall be erected forward of the principal elevation of any of the dwellings, other than those agreed under condition 4 of this approval.
- 16 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 17 The boundary treatments on the rear of plots 6-17 inclusive shall be only as approved under condition 4 of this approval.
- 17 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside, in accordance with policies CS1, EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 18 Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings the rain water harvesting and proposed pumped flow attenuation system, set out in the submitted MLM Surface and Foul water drainage Strategy, dated 18th May 2012, shall be completed and shall be maintained in perpetuity.
- 18 Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding and to improve and protect water quality, in accordance with policies EN3 and EN7 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 19 The development shall be carried out in strict accordance the Great Crested Newt and Common Lizard mitigation strategies contained within the submitted amphibian and reptile surveys, prepared by MLM consulting, dated 29th June 2012.
- 19 Reason: To ensure protected species are adequately protected and mitigated for in accordance with policy EN6 of the Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 20 The development hereby approved shall include the following biodiversity enhancements, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority:
- Six house sparrow terrace boxes under the eaves of proposed buildings
 - Inclusion of swift bricks
 - Inclusion of bat bricks
- 20 Reason: to enhance the biodiversity of the site in accordance with policy EN6 of the Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 21 No development shall begin until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The archaeological work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

- 21 Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains are suitably recorded in accordance with policy EN5 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 22 The dwellings hereby approved, shall be occupied only as 'affordable housing' in perpetuity, defined as housing accessible to those who cannot otherwise afford to meet their housing needs on the open market. This may encompass both low cost market housing and subsidised housing that will be available to people who cannot afford to occupy houses available on the open market.
- 22 Reason: The site has been considered as an 'exception site' in terms of affordable housing provision only in accordance with Policy H4 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 23 The open space detailed on drawing number 004 revision C shall include 3 pieces of play equipment, details of which shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the local planning authority. The equipment shall be installed prior to the occupation of any of the dwellings on the site.
- 23 Reason: To ensure a reasonable level of amenity for future occupants in accordance with policy EN2 of the Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Sanctuary letter

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location(s)</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
Application file – 12/00429/FUM	Penelope Mills Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Penelope Mills Senior Planning Officer 01353 665555 penny.mills@eastcambs.gov.uk
	www.eastcambs.gov.uk	