

---

**MAIN CASE**

**Reference No:** 18/00393/OUM

**Proposal:** Construction of up to 126 dwellings and associated infrastructure.

**Site Address:** Land South Of Chamberlain Fields Littleport  
Cambridgeshire

**Applicant:** Cannon Kirk (UK) Ltd

**Case Officer:** Anne James, Planning Consultant

**Parish:** Littleport

**Ward:** Littleport West  
Ward Councillor/s: Councillor Christine Ambrose-Smith  
Councillor Paul Cox

**Date Received:** 27 March 2018      **Expiry Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018  
[T80]

---

1.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 Members are recommended that approval be delegated to the Planning Manager, following the completion of a s106 Agreement and subject to the draft conditions (with any minor revisions to the conditions delegated to the Planning Manager). The full planning conditions can be read in full on the attached Appendix 1.

- 1 Approved plans
- 2 Time Limit – OUM
- 3 Time Limit – OUT/RMM
- 4 Number of dwellings
- 5 Fire Hydrants
- 6 Contaminated land
- 7 Hours of construction
- 8 Construction Environmental Management Plan
- 9 Foul water drainage
- 10 Biodiversity Mitigation Plan
- 11 Welcome Travel Packs
- 12 Energy and Sustainability Strategy
- 13 Construction Traffic Management
- 14 Drainage
- 15 SUDS Management and Maintenance
- 16 SUDS Implementation
- 17 Estate Road construction

- 18 Highway built to adoptable standards
- 19 Management and maintenance of estate roads.

## 2.0 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 2.1 The application seeks outline planning permission for the construction of up to 126 dwellings, 26 of which would be affordable. Details of the access are to be determined at this stage with external appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be determined at reserved matters stage.
- 2.2 An indicative Masterplan submitted with the application indicates that the access into the site would be taken from an existing entrance in Grange Lane and would follow the route of the existing access which serves the Highfield housing estate. The proposal would incorporate 3 main vehicular and pedestrian access points taken from Lowfield Crescent to the south and Harvest Way and Cornfield Lane to the east. The proposal would also provide approximately 0.52 hectares of open space.
- 2.3 In line with Submitted Local Plan policy the scheme would provide 20% affordable housing, comprising the following mix of accommodation:

Affordable housing = 26 units

4 x 1 bed  
12 x 2no bed  
9 x 3 bed  
1 x 4+ bed

Market housing

18 x 1 bed  
14 x 2 bed  
55 3 bed  
13 x 4+ bed

- 2.4 The following documents have been submitted with the application:
  - Planning Statement
  - Design and Access Statement
  - Arboricultural Survey
  - Archaeological Evaluation
  - Biodiversity Assessment
  - Phases I and II Ground Investigation Reports
  - Transport Assessment
  - Reptile Survey
  - Renewable Energy and Water Consumption Statement

2.5 The full planning application, plans and documents submitted by the Applicant can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>. **Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, in the application file.**

2.6 This application has been brought to Planning Committee in accordance with the Council's Constitution as the application results in more than 50 dwellings.

### 3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 In October 1998 planning permission was approved for an outline scheme totalling 650 dwellings with all matters reserved except for access. (Plans Ref: 98/00426/OUT).

3.2 In April 2004 a reserved matters application was approved. (Plans Ref: 02/00950/RMA).

3.3 A number of pre-commencement conditions have been discharged and parts of the site have been developed.

3.4 Pre-application advice has been received in Jan 2018.

### 4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The site is located off Grange Lane to the west of Littleport and comprises an undeveloped parcel of land measuring approximately 4.16ha. This parcel was initially included within an outline planning application forming part of the Highfield estate which is presently in the process of construction. In the chronology of phasing, this land parcel represents Phase 5 of a wider multi-phased residential development.

4.2 The site is fairly open in character with a screen of trees abutting the northern and western boundaries. To the east of the site is an ongoing construction site relating to Phase 2 of the Highfields Farm scheme with the other phases forming parcels of land to the south, and these are yet to commence development. Further to the north of the site is residential development located in Chamberlain fields, Browning Chase and Cottier Drive.

4.3 Land levels are fairly even across the site although overall there is a drop from south east to North West.

### 5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

5.1 Responses were received from the following consultees and these are summarised below. The full responses are available on the Council's web site.

Anglian Water Services Ltd –

No objection subject to conditions relating to surface and foul water strategies.

Cambridgeshire Archaeology –

The application area was trenched in relation to the condition applied to E/98/0436/O. Excavation took place in advance of 08/00907/FUM and the particular block of land relating to this current application (18/00393/OUM) was considered to have low archaeological potential. For your records, we are still awaiting the final results for 08/00907/FUM.

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service –

No objection subject to condition that adequate provision being made for fire hydrants.

Cambridgeshire - Lead Local Flood Authority -

No longer objects to the scheme and consider that the material submitted demonstrates that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of a surface water sewer system draining water to a balancing lagoon before discharging to an Internal Drainage Board drain.

Cambridgeshire - Local Highways Authority –

No objections to the application. It should be noted that at this time the application is for access only. The shown new internal road layout differs from the previously approved layout and with the current adoption layout that has been submitted to the HA by the developer. This may have some future implication for the adoption of this area by the HA.

CCC Growth & Development – Education

The local education providers for this development are Littleport Community Pre – School, Stepping Stones Pre- School and 6 childminders for Early years provision; Littleport Community Primary School for Primary provision; and Littleport and East Cambridgeshire Academy for secondary pupils.

There is currently sufficient capacity for the 31 early years pupils eligible for free entitlement. As of Spring term 2018 there were 69, 15 hour equivalent surplus places across Littleport to mitigate these pupils. In light of the most recent admissions data, figures show that primary pupil numbers across the Littleport catchment fall significantly short of forecast predictions for September 2018, with 92 places being offered compared to a total of 117 predicted 4 Yr old pupils. This shortfall of 25 children will help to mitigate the impact of this development in the short term. As a result of this development, if consented, other proposed allocations, and increasing local demand for school places, the County Council proposes to provide 1 Form of entry (210 places) through an expansion at Littleport Community Primary and in addition a new 1Form of Entry Primary School in Littleport (including Early years provision) after 2021.

Mitigation for this development will be provided for under the ECDC CIL scheme, and therefore we will to seek to add education projects to the ECDC Infrastructure List as and when pupil numbers increase. The Council will mitigate the 32

secondary aged pupils generated by this development via the additional capacity created at the new Littleport and East Cambridgeshire Academy, which has the potential to be expanded as and when pupil numbers rise.

Contributions would be required for Libraries. The contribution would be used to finance library service provision, purchase additional information and fiction books for adults, including large print books and story CDs for people with hearing and sight impairment. In addition, to support the life-long learning needs of the locality, children's story books, picture books and board books for babies and toddlers, as well books for teenagers.

Consultee for Other Wards in Parish –

No Comments Received

Environment Agency –

No comments to make.

The Ely Group of Internal Drainage Board –

No objection - The surface water accommodation for this area was allowed for in the initial application for the whole site and a lagoon was constructed to balance flows before entering the Woodfen Catchwater Drain.

Littleport Parish –

No objection

Ward Councillors –

No Comments Received

ECDC - Senior Trees Officer –

Trees potentially affected are upon the site boundaries and include a number of Poplars, Ash and native hedgerow species. An Arboricultural report has been submitted to support the application.

No objections to the proposal as the trees at and adjacent the site are to be likely to be retained although, there are some concerns in relation to the indicative layout. However, the Trees Officer is satisfied that any tree related conditions can be applied at latter stages of the planning process.

ECDC - Environmental Health Scientific Officer –

No objection subject to condition relating to unsuspected contamination.

### ECDC – Environmental Health – Noise

No objection subject to appropriate conditions relating to hours of operation and a construction environmental management plan.

### ECDC – Housing –

No objection. 25 affordable homes to be provided to include 19 rented and 6 for shared ownership. The property types should reflect housing need at the time of the reserved matters application.

### ECDC - Waste Strategy -

No objection subject to informatives.

### Technical Officer Access –

As some properties abut the public footpath, the design needs to ensure there is step free access and sufficient turning space for a wheelchair to the footpath without going into the road.

If Yeomans Way is a new road it should have a footpath both sides, complying with BS8300 2009.

We would also encourage a cycle path

- 5.2 Neighbours –. In terms of statutory notification, the application was advertised by way of a number of site notices both at the entrance in Grange Lane and abutting the northern boundary of the site in Browning Chase on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and advertised in the Cambridge Evening News on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018.
- 5.3 A total of 403 neighbouring properties were notified and the responses received are summarised below. One letter has been received in support of the scheme and six opposing the scheme. A full copy of the responses is available on the Council's website and any further comments received will be tabled at Committee.
- 5.4 A summary of the main points raised by members of the public:

#### *Ecology and Biodiversity*

- Removal of trees along the northern boundary exposing the new development;
- Loss of habitat for local wildlife
- The tree impact assessment differs from the one carried out in 2007 raising concerns over impact on adjoining site.

#### *Residential amenity*

- Loss of privacy;
- Overlooking;

- Noise;
- Light pollution
- fumes

#### *Highways and parking*

- Wider transportation issues on A10 roundabout and the A10 in general;
- Concerns over pedestrian safety due to increased traffic movement so close to Millfield Infant school;
- A third access is required into this site;

#### *Infrastructure*

- Impact on schools, nurseries, doctors and other facilities, services or local amenities and would the developer contribute to these?
- Has consideration been given to rail infrastructure ie improvements to station etc
- Surface water drainage;

#### *Other*

- Factual inaccuracies in information submitted;
- Accessibility for disabled people buses and easy connectivity;
- Bus service in Littleport is poor;
- Overpopulated area;

## 6.0 THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### 6.1 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015

Policies GROWTH 1 [Levels of housing, employment and retail growth] and GROWTH 2 [Locational strategy] relate to the supply of housing and are now considered out of date.

The following policies do not relate specifically to the supply of housing and are accorded weight in so far as they are consistent with NPPF advice.

GROWTH 3	Infrastructure requirements
GROWTH 5	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
HOU 1	Housing mix
HOU 2	Housing density
EMP1	Retention of existing employment sites and allocations
EMP4	Re-use and replacement of existing buildings in the countryside
ENV 1	Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2	Design
ENV 4	Energy efficiency and renewable energy in construction
ENV 7	Biodiversity and geology
ENV 8	Flood risk
ENV 9	Pollution

- ENV 14 Sites of archaeological interest
- COM 7 Transport impact
- COM 8 Parking provision

Part Two: Village/Town Visions

Littleport

6.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

- Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations
- East Cambridgeshire Design Guide
- Contaminated Land - Guidance on submitted Planning Application on land that may be contaminated
- Flood and Water

6.3 National Planning Policy Framework 2018

- 2 Achieving sustainable development
- 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 6 Building a strong, competitive economy
- 8 Promoting Healthy and safe communities
- 9 Promoting sustainable transport
- 11 Making effective use of Land
- 12 Achieving well-designed places
- 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- 20 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Planning Practice Guidance

Consideration has been given to the advice provided in the PPG.

6.4 The Submitted Local Plan (February 2017)

The Council submitted the Local Plan Review to the Secretary of State in February 2018 and an Independent Examination in Public is underway. In view of the position of the Council, again the policies relating to the supply of housing are not dealt with in this report.

Those policies of relevance to the application are:

- LP1 A presumption in favour of sustainable development
- LP 6 Meeting Local Housing Needs
- LP 16 Infrastructure to Support Growth
- LP 17 Creating Sustainable, Efficient and Resilient Transport
- LP 22 Achieving Design Excellence
- LP 23 Water Efficiency
- LP 30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity



LP 25	Managing Water Resources and Flood Risk
LP 26	Pollution and Land Contamination
LP 27	Conserving and Enhancing Heritage Assets
LP 28	Landscape, Treescape and Built Environment

Littleport 1: Littleport's Local Character and Facilities

Littleport 4: Site LIT.H5 – Land west of Highfields

## 7.0 PLANNING COMMENTS:

- 7.0.1 The starting point for decision making is the development Plan ie the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance are both important material considerations in planning decisions. Neither change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making but policies of the development plan need to be considered and applied in terms of their degree of consistency with the NPPF, PPG and other material considerations. Determination of the application needs to consider whether the proposal constitutes sustainable development having regard to development plan policy and the NPPF as a whole.
- 7.0.2 A Five Year Housing Land Report setting out the five year land supply for East Cambridgeshire for the period 01 April 2017 to 31 March 2022 has been prepared following the resolution of the Council in October 2017. However, at a recent Public Inquiry [Appeal Ref: APP/V0510/17/3186785 Land off Mildenhall Road, Fordham], the Inspector found that the Council could only demonstrate 3.86 year housing land supply. The appeal was allowed on this basis.
- 7.0.3 As a consequence the Council is now currently unable to demonstrate a five year housing supply and therefore the policies within the Local Plan which relate to the supply of housing are now out of date. Para 11 of the NPPF states that 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 the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 7.0.4 In light of this, planning applications for housing within the district should now be considered on the basis of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 7.0.5 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are
- the principle of development,
  - Visual amenity,
  - Residential amenity,
  - Access and highway safety;
  - Housing mix and affordable housing;
  - Public Open space
  - Drainage and flood risk;

- Ecology and biodiversity

## 7.1 Principle of Development

- 7.1.1 The applicant seeks outline consent for up to 126 new dwellings, with access to be considered and all other matters reserved. The site is located within the established development framework of Littleport, within close proximity to the range of services and facilities available within the settlement. For the purposes of assessing the proposal in relation to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the location of the site within the settlement boundary means that the site is considered to be in a sustainable location.
- 7.1.2 The following sections of the report will consider the individual requirements of sustainable development as derived from the NPPF and the relevant policies of the development plan. And an assessment made of the benefits together with any harm that would arise from the failure to meet these objectives and how the considerations should be weighed in the overall planning balance.
- 7.1.3 Bearing in mind the location of the site within the development framework of the Highfield estate, access was the key consideration in the assessment of the outline application initially for the wider site area. The Local Highway Authority accepted the transport model and permission was granted on the basis of access being satisfactory to serve a scheme of this size without prejudicing users of the neighbouring development. An indicative layout demonstrated how the site could be developed to successfully accommodate an additional 126 units whilst respecting the character and pattern of development within the vicinity of the site.
- 7.1.4 The provision of up to 126 dwellings, 26 of which would be affordable, on this site is still a benefit to which significant positive weight is afforded and therefore the principle of housing is still considered acceptable.
- 7.1.5 As such in assessing the scheme and applying the tilted balancing exercise as set out in the NPPF the social benefits of the scheme would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any adverse impact of the development and therefore in principle, the scheme is considered acceptable.

## 7.2 Visual Amenity

- 7.2.1 The NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and creates better places in which to live and work.
- 7.2.2 In considering the visual impact on the landscape Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan requires new development to provide a complementary relationship with existing development, and conserve, preserve and where possible enhance the distinctive and traditional landscapes, and key views in and of settlements. Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan requires that new development should ensure its location, layout, form, scale, massing and materials are sympathetic to the surrounding area.

- 7.2.3 The site comprises a pocket of open land abutting the Highfields estate to the east with other areas adjoining the site, either under construction or, form land allocated for development.
- 7.2.4 The site is located at a considerable distance from Grange Lane to the south and Woodfen Road to the west and as such does not feature prominently in either of the streescenes. Bearing in mind that this is a landscape in transition with the majority of this area allocated for development, then the visual amenities would not be unacceptably harmed.
- 7.2.5 The application does not seek to determine details relating to external appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, all of which would need to be subject to a reserved matters application. The Tree Officer has indicted his agreement to the removal of some of the trees and hedges on the site necessary to facilitate the development and will provide further input at the detailed design stage on any replacement scheme.
- 7.2.6 Moreover whilst it is acknowledged that there would be some loss of trees and or hedgerow, an opportunity does exist to provide new landscaped areas which would result in a net environmental gain on site and in turn improve the visual amenities of this part of Littleport.
- 7.2.7 On balance the scheme would be in keeping with the vision for Littleport as part of the Masterplan for this area and given that the scheme extends an existing modern housing estate within the existing urban framework of Littleport, it is considered that the impact on the character of the area is considered to comply with Policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan 2015 and Police LP22 of the Submitted Local Plan acceptable. This factor is given neutral weight in the planning balance.
- 7.3 Residential Amenity
- 7.3.1 The NPPF seeks to ensure that a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan requires development to respect the residential amenity of existing and future occupiers. Policy LP22 of the Submitted Local Plan requires new development to provide a high standard of amenity and maintain the existing amenity of neighbours.
- 7.3.2 An indicative site layout plan has been submitted with the application and this outlines the proposed scale and layout of the development which illustrates that a scheme of this number of dwellings can be delivered and designed in accordance with the East Cambridgeshire Design Guide SPD. This takes into account the requirement to provide sufficient plot sizes and amenity space. Attention has also been given to the need to ensure that the minimum distance of 20m between rear window to rear window can be achieved. Likewise, all dwellings should have an acceptable outlook with adequate sunlight/daylight penetration to all habitable rooms.
- 7.3.3 In terms of the impact on existing residential amenity, a number of concerns have been identified by adjoining occupiers primarily with regard to overlooking, loss of privacy, light pollution, noise and general disturbance.

- 7.3.4 Those residents directly affected by this scheme are located to the north of the site, in and around the Browning Chase and Chamberlain Fields area. During construction of the development there would be strict controls in place imposed by means of a number of conditions. A Construction Environmental Management Plan which covers appropriate construction and delivery routes as well as mitigation measures to control the amount of noise, dust and fumes etc.
- 7.3.5 The indicative siting of the dwellings and the separation from the nearest properties would ensure that no loss of amenity would occur in terms of access to light and outlook. The detailed layout submitted with any subsequent application would assess the amenities for future occupiers but it appears from the indicative plans that adequate separation distances can be achieved to ensure that a satisfactory level of amenity can be provided. Details such as obscure glazing could also be secured by planning conditions at reserved matters stage upon the submission of floor plans and elevations.
- 7.3.6 Overall it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on residential amenities in accordance with policy ENV2 of the Local Plan, Policy LP22 of the Submitted Local Plan and the NPPF, and this is attributed neutral weight in the planning balance.
- 7.4 Access and highway safety
- 7.4.1 It is necessary to consider whether the proposed development is located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised and that safe and suitable access can be achieved. Para 29 of the NPPF states that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development and also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives.
- 7.4.2 Policy COM7 of the Local Plan also requires development to be designed in order to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car and should promote sustainable forms of transport appropriate to its particular location.
- 7.4.3 Policy LP17 of the Submitted Local Plan requires proposals for new development to demonstrate that appropriate, proportionate and viable opportunities have been taken into consideration. Amongst other criteria, to ensure safe, convenient access to the existing highway network and reducing the need to travel by ensuring that development is accessible, being well located in relation to existing or proposed services and facilities.
- 7.4.4 Littleport is considered to be a locationally sustainable town which offers a good range of services and facilities with close connectivity to the A10 and which also benefits from a railway station. However, as has been mentioned in the letters of representation, the bus service is poor and further enhancements are required at the railway station. The developer is in negotiation with the County Passenger Transport Team and is to contribute towards a bus service within the Highfields Estate and this will become operational once the development is occupied.
- 7.4.5 In terms of access into the site, the scheme would, in future, be served by two accesses on to two existing roads, namely Grange Lane and Highfields Drive with

the former access presently serving construction vehicles. Bearing in mind, the access from Grange Lane has already been agreed in principle when determining the initial planning application for this scheme, the Highways Authority have raised no concerns in this regard. However, they have noted that the internal layout would differ from what was previously agreed and that further modification may need to be undertaken. However, this can be dealt when further details would be submitted with the reserved matters application.

- 7.4.6 A Transport Assessment has been submitted with the application [Cannon Kirk (UK) Ltd – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018] and this has taken into consideration a number of committed schemes, namely the development of 680 dwellings and neighbourhood centre to the west of the site (Plans Ref: 17/00757/ESO).
- 7.4.7 The Transport Assessment considers that the opening of the Grange Lane site access to residents will result in a redistribution of traffic such that traffic flows at the Highfield Drive/Ely Road roundabout and at the Ely Road/Grange Lane roundabout would be improved.
- 7.4.8 The likely trip generation of the proposed development at peak times has also been calculated using trip rates derived from the existing Cannon Kirk development, adjacent to the proposed site. From an analysis of the junction modelling undertaken, there will be sufficient capacity in the future to accommodate the expected traffic generation from the proposed site.
- 7.4.9 The access arrangements have been examined by the Local Highway Authority and are considered to be adequate in regard to their width and layout. The access locations in regard to accessibility and permeability have also been assessed and deemed acceptable.
- 7.4.10 The indicative layout indicates that two car parking spaces per dwelling will be provided together with a number of visitor parking spaces and therefore the applicant has demonstrated that adequate vehicle parking can be provided in accordance with Policy COM8. However, the final layout would be dealt with at reserved matters stage.
- 7.4.11 To conclude Littleport is considered to be locationally sustainable with access to a wide range of services, facilities and modes of transport. The information submitted and the consultation responses received indicate that the applicant has demonstrated that safe and convenient access to the highway network can be achieved and that the development would not result in detriment to highway and pedestrian safety. The proposal therefore complies with Policy COM7 in this regard. The applicant has also demonstrated that adequate parking can be provided in accordance with Policy COM8 of the Local Plan and Policy LP22 of the Submitted Local Plan 2017. These factors are weighed neutrally in the planning balance.

## 7.5 Housing mix and affordable housing

- 7.5.1 The application proposes 126 dwellings, 26 of which are stated to be affordable dwellings. This equates to 20% of the total dwellings proposed and accords with

Policy LP6 of the Submitted Local Plan 2017 in relation to affordable housing provision. The 26 affordable units are to be split 70%-30% affordable rent/shared ownership with units pepper potted throughout the site.

- 7.5.2 The affordable housing is comparable to schemes delivered on neighbouring sites and will be secured by way of a s106 Agreement. The Council's Housing Strategy & Enabling Officer has confirmed that the proposed tenure mix is acceptable and the proposed mix of property types will meet the housing needs identified on the Housing Register. This factor is considered a benefit to be afforded significant positive weight in the planning balance.

## 7.6 Public Open Space

- 7.6.1 Policy GROWTH 3 of the adopted Local Plan requires residential developments of 20 or more dwellings to provide or contribute towards the cost of providing children's playing space and open space. Policy LP21 of the Submitted Local Plan requires 51-200 dwellings to provide open space on-site.

- 7.6.2 The scheme proposes an area of public open space in the north-western corner of the site of approximately 5,200sqm. The Council's Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations SPD calculates that the development should deliver 7,620sqm of public open space and therefore the scheme falls short of this requirement.

- 7.6.3 The applicants propose to provide a contribution towards off-site play space and sports facilities and this would be delivered via a s106 Agreement. Littleport Parish Council at their meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March agreed in principle to the offer of a financial payment towards informal open space in respect of the shortfall identified in the application. This factor is considered a benefit to be afforded moderate positive weight in the planning balance.

## 7.7 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.7.1 Policy ENV8 of the adopted Local Plan 2015 requires that all developments and re-developments should contribute to an overall flood risk reduction. All applications for new development must demonstrate that appropriate surface water drainage arrangements for dealing with surface water run-off can be accommodated within the site. Policy LP25 of the Submitted Local Plan 2017 requires all development proposals to be considered against the NPPF.

- 7.7.2 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and as such has a low probability of flooding. The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment [Pick Everard dated 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018]. The FRA refers to the initial planning application for the phased housing development where a drainage strategy was undertaken to accommodate all parts of the wider site, including this development.

- 7.7.3 The Local Lead Flood Authority, however, requested further information to demonstrate that surface water from the proposed development could be managed through the use of a surface water sewer system draining water into a balancing

lagoon before discharging to a drain. A Drainage Design Philosophy Statement (Pick Everard dated July 2006) was submitted as well as the Lagoon Calculations and these indicate that surface water discharge can be restricted to 28 l/s which is now acceptable.

7.7.4 Anglian Water have commented that provided the surface water hierarchy has been followed they consider these matters can be dealt with by condition and the information submitted at a later stage.

7.7.5 On balance the proposal has adequately demonstrated that it would be able to attenuate the additional surface water created by this development and as a result this is weighed neutrally in the planning balance. The proposal would comply with Policies ENV8 of the adopted Local Plan 2015 and Policy LP25 of the Submitted Local Plan 2017.

## 7.7 Ecology and Biodiversity

7.8.1 Policy ENV7 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to protect biodiversity and geological value of land and buildings. LP 28 of the submitted Local Plan 2017.

7.8.2 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has accompanied the application [Ecology Consultancy dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018] and makes the following recommendations:

- That the boundary trees are thought to qualify as a hedgerow;
- That there are habitats suitable for foraging, commuting and roosting bats which are present on site. Measures must be taken to avoid impacts from artificial lighting;
- That there are habitats suitable for reptiles and that further survey works should be undertaken;
- That there are habitats suitable for breeding birds and measures must be taken to avoid killing birds or destroying their nests;
- That there are habitats suitable for brown hare and hedgehogs and measures should be taken to continue accommodating these species on site post development;

7.8.3 A Reptile Survey has now been undertaken [Ecology Consultancy dated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018] and the findings revealed that no reptiles had been recorded on the site and that no further survey work would be required.

7.8.4 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement has also been submitted with the application [Hayden's Arboricultural Consultants dated 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018] and this report has identified thirteen individual trees, three groups of trees and one area of trees. Two Common Ash Trees would need to be felled and replaced with those of a similar size and species.

7.8.5 The Council's Senior Tree Officer has considered the AIA which is a fair account of the health and vitality of the existing trees on site. However, a number of concerns have been raised regarding the general degree of landscaping, in particular, the lack of provision of trees within the adoptable highway as well as poor connectivity

with the neighbouring sites. In addition, as the application is not sufficiently clear with regard to the future management and maintenance responsibilities of this land then this may impact on the living environment impacting on future occupants of the proposed dwellings. As such, further clarification would need to be sought when dealing with the landscaping strategy and landscape management plan at the reserved matters stage.

7.8.6 Whilst development on this site would be fairly constrained, there would be opportunities to explore gaining further detail on the landscaping of this site at the detailed design stage and as such could result in a net environment gain on site. Such that these matter are afforded moderate positive weight in the planning balance. The scheme therefore complies with Policies ENV7 of the adopted Local Plan 2015 and LP30 of the Submitted Local Plan 2017.

## 7.9 Other Material Matters

7.9.1 An Environmental Investigation Report [Pick Everard dated 24 March 2004] has been submitted with the application which covered the wider area of the Highfield Farm site and this has been examined by the Council's Scientific Officer who considered that as the report was now 14 years old it would be somewhat out of date in terms of the assessment criteria used. As a result a Phase 2 Ground Investigation [Pick Everard dated 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018] has been undertaken, the findings of which state that as no significant contamination was encountered at the site no remedial measures would be required. The Council's Scientific Officer has agreed with the findings of the Phase 2 report and suggests that a condition is imposed to safeguard against any unsuspected contamination being encountered on site. It is considered that any pollution or ground contamination can be dealt with at the detailed design stage and therefore this factor is attributed neutral weight in the planning balance. The scheme therefore complies with Policies ENV9 of the adopted Local Plan and LP26 of the Submitted Local Plan 2017.

7.9.2 In terms of archaeology, the Historic Environment Team at Cambridgeshire County Council have considered the information submitted with the application [Archaeological Evaluation], and as trial trenching took place as a result of the 1998 application, this particular block of land was considered to have low archaeological potential. This factor is weighed neutrally in the planning balance.

7.9.3 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service has requested that adequate provision be made for fire hydrants and this can be dealt with by way of a planning condition.

7.9.4 The indicative layout takes the RECAP Waste Management Design Guide SPD into account, however, concerns have been identified by the Council's Waste Strategy Team that 28 of the properties have no direct collection point on the public highway that is accessible by waste freighters. However, the final layout, to be determined at the reserved matters stage, should take account of the comments raised by the Waste Strategy Team and any impact on waste collection should therefore be minimised.



- 7.9.5 There have been a number of issues identified within a letter of representation concerning the inaccuracies of some of the information submitted with the application and the applicants have been requested to comment. With regard to the location of the existing drainage ditch, the applicants have confirmed that this lies outside of their boundary and therefore they would not be responsible for it. Bearing in mind that they have provided sufficient information to the satisfaction of all relevant water body authorities then it is considered the applicants have addressed concerns relating to flooding and surface water drainage.
- 7.9.6 With regard to the concerns expressed by a resident that there were factual inaccuracies in information submitted, a meeting with the resident took place and matters were discussed regarding the boundary treatment and boundary line that the development would take. As these matters would be dealt with during the detailed design stage, then it is not considered the applicants have provided factually incorrect information in support of their application.
- 7.9.7 A concern has been raised in the letters of representation regarding accessibility for disabled people, buses and easy connectivity. The Council would ensure that a proportion of new housing built as part of major housing development is suitable, or easily adaptable for occupation by the elderly or people with disabilities to lifetime homes standards or equivalent. The scheme has also been considered by the Plan Vetting Panel of the East Cambridgeshire Access Group who have provided feedback in the form of step free access to the footpath, sufficient turning spaces for wheelchair access with Yeomans Way benefitting for a footpath both sides.
- 7.9.8 With regard to the concern that the bus service in Littleport is poor both this development and other sites within the Highfield Estate would be contributing towards a bus service which serves this site.
- 7.9.9 Turning to the concerns raised regarding the overpopulated area, Littleport has been identified as a growth area and the Government in their re-issue of the NPPF (2018) recommends higher density development.
- 7.9.10 In terms of permeability, it is proposed to connect the development with footpath/cyclepaths throughout the site and connecting to the rest of Littleport.
- 7.9.11 A Renewable Energy and Water Consumption Statement has been submitted with the application and this document incorporates a holistic strategy to contribute to key climate change themes, promoting a fabric first approach will be taken to energy efficiency, including green infrastructure, water efficiency, sustainable construction practices and waste management controls.
- 7.10 Contributions
- 7.10.1 The site is allocated under the adopted Local Plan and therefore education would be covered by CIL. Littleport Schools are specified on the Regulation 123 list.
- 7.10.2 The County Education department have however requested a contribution towards library provision – This development is expected to accommodate around 286 new residents. Littleport Library is the local provider of library services for this

development and the Council is seeking a s106 contribution of £28.92 per new resident (around £8,271.12 depending on final development mix). Trigger for s106 agreement would be 100% prior to 50% occupation of the development. Monitoring – A fee of £150 to monitor the agreement would be payable and association contribution based on the Developer Contributions SPD.

- 7.10.3 The developer is offering 20% affordable housing as required under Policy LP6 of the Submitted Local Plan and for this reason is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.10.4 Open Space – the provision of an appropriate amount of open space will be negotiated with the Council. The open space will be subject to an appropriate management regime.
- 7.10.5 Out-door Sport Provision: the provision of an off-site contribution in the form of a commuted sum towards improving outdoor sport facilities in Littleport.
- 7.10.6 Playspace – the provision of an off-site contribution in the form of a commuted sum towards play facilities in the village, in lieu of the requirement to provide an on-site Local Area of Play.
- 7.10.7 Transport and Infrastructure there is a potential financial contribution requirement towards a bus service through the Highfields development and the roundabout at A10/A142/Witchford Road.

#### 7.11 Planning Balance

In view of the fact that the district is unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, the proposal to build up to 126 dwellings, 26 of which would be affordable housing, within the development envelope of Littleport is seen as a benefit to which significant positive weight should be given. The NPPF seeks the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes and there is no reason that the site could not be delivered within the next five year period making a contribution to the District's housing land supply which would be a benefit to which significant weight should be given.

The impact of the development on the visual amenities and character of the area are considered to be acceptable and as a consequence this matter is weighed neutrally in the planning balance.

In terms of residential amenity the dwellings are located at a distance to ensure acceptable levels of privacy, sunlight and daylight are observed and further details would be required at the detailed design stage to ensure residential amenity was not affected. As such these matters should also be afforded neutral weight in the planning balance.

The construction of affordable and market dwellings would have economic benefits, including the employment gains extending from the construction of the site. As these would be temporary in nature, the economic benefits of the scheme are afforded moderate weight. There would also be an impact on the local economy, which in Littleport's case supports a number of services and facilities within the town and the development through the increase in population, would continue to serve

this as well as support future services through increased local spending. This benefit would be afforded moderate weight in the overall planning balance due to the number of dwellings such that it would be afforded moderate positive weight.

Littleport is sufficiently locationally sustainable taking into account the facilities and amenities available within Littleport, however, until the wider site is developed, there may be an over reliance on the private car to access wider services and facilities. It is recognised that sufficient parking and cycle provision could be provided within the site and the impact on access and highway safety has been assessed and would not be detrimentally affected. Neutral weight is therefore afforded to this proposal.

In terms of public open space, biodiversity and ecology the redevelopment of this site would result in a net environmental gain which is seen as a moderate positive benefit.

With regard to archaeology; pollution; ground contamination; flood risk and drainage, these are weighed neutrally in the planning balance.

In applying the tilted balancing exercise as set out in para 11 of the NPPF, the benefits of the scheme significantly and demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts and therefore the proposal is recommended for approval.

## CONCLUSION

This application has been evaluated against the extant Development Plan which is the starting point for all decision making and is considered to represent sustainable development. The Development Plan comprises the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the Submitted Local Plan 2017.

The report has assessed the application against the core planning principles of the NPPF and whether the proposal delivers sustainable development.

### 8.0 COSTS

- 8.1 An appeal can be lodged against a refusal of planning permission or a condition imposed upon a planning permission. If a local planning authority is found to have acted unreasonably and this has incurred costs for the applicant (referred to as appellant through the appeal process) then a cost award can be made against the Council.
- 8.2 Unreasonable behaviour can be either procedural ie relating to the way a matter has been dealt with or substantive ie relating to the issues at appeal and whether a local planning authority has been able to provide evidence to justify a refusal reason or a condition.
- 8.3 Members do not have to follow an officer recommendation indeed they can legitimately decide to give a different weight to a material consideration than officers. However, it is often these cases where an appellant submits a claim for costs. The Committee therefore needs to consider and document its reasons for going against an officer recommendation very carefully.

8.4 In this case Members' attention is particularly drawn to the following points:

- This site has been allocated in the adopted Local Plan 2015;
- No objections from statutory consultees.

9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1 – Conditions.

---

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
18/00393/OUM	Anne James Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Anne James Planning Consultant 01353 665555 anne.james@eastc ambs.gov.uk

National Planning Policy Framework -

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 -

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Plan%20April%202015%20-%20front%20cover%20and%20inside%20front%20cover.pdf>