

PLANNING COMMITTEE DATE: 21 August 2024

Agenda No: 5

REFERENCE NO F/YR23/0696/O

SITE ADDRESS Land South of Barkers Lane and East of, Wimblington Road, March.

PROPOSAL: Outline planning permission (all matters reserved, except for access) for up to 425 dwellings (including affordable housing), formation of 2 x accesses, and a dropped kerb (for 38 Wimblington Road), safeguarded land for grass playing fields, public open space, landscaping, community garden, community orchard, children's play areas, sustainable drainage infrastructure, retention of informal parking area, all other associated infrastructure, and demolition of an existing dwelling (40 Wimblington Road).

**UPDATE:**

**1. Foul Drainage**

1.1 Anglian Water have provided an update (received 18 August 2024) to their previous comments, in summary setting out the following key updates.

- The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of March Water Recycling Centre (WRC) that will have available capacity for these flows.
- Anglian Water is aware of concerns regarding flooding in Barkers Lane and Knights End Pumping station. Since the issues with Knights end station during the winter the station has had a full wet well clean, non-return valves have been replaced and pumps checked and replaced. A flow meter and a pressure monitor have also been installed.
- Anglian Water has worked with the applicant to establish a sustainable point of connection for the proposed development site. The required foul network connection point is manhole 5303 in The Avenue. This will avoid the constrained network in Barkers Lane and the Knights End pumping station.
- Recommended Planning Condition:  
*No development shall commence until a strategic foul water strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with Anglian Water. This strategy should identify the connection point to the 300mm sewer network in The Avenue. Prior to occupation, the foul water drainage works must have been carried out in complete accordance with the approved scheme.*

*Reason: To reduce the impacts of flooding and potential pollution risk.*

1.2 The applicant has provided a non-technical summary note of foul drainage and a plan denoting the proposed point of connection (ref; 19196/FWD/NTSV2) which follows discussion with Anglian Water.

1.3 Officer Response: Anglian Water's latest response does not raise any fresh concerns

in respect of foul drainage of this development and it is considered that a suitable design can be achieved subject to securing this via planning condition. As confirmed by Anglian Water, the foul drainage strategy will avoid the existing constrained network in Barkers Lane and the Knights End pumping station. As such, it is recommended to amend condition proposed Condition 9 as set out in Appendix 1 of the officer's report, in order to reflect the above amended condition wording.

## **2. Further comments**

- 2.1 Two further objections have been received from residents at Cavalry Drive, March raising the following concerns: *GP surgeries already overwhelmed, schools already struggling for places, roads in and out of town already very busy especially at peak times. Shops and banks closing down in the town centre. 425 dwellings is a lot – suggests an initial phase of one hundred dwellings to allow for infrastructure enhancements.*
- 2.2 Officer Response: As set out in the officer's report, contributions are proposed for upgrades, enhancement or expansion towards education and healthcare facilities. Furthermore, the housing growth is anticipated to assist with the vitality and viability of the town. It is considered therefore that these matters are sufficiently addressed through the proposal. Furthermore, the quantum of development aligns with the growth ambitions of the Local Plan and this allocated site and therefore a smaller phasing is not warranted.

## **3. Corrections and clarifications**

### **3.1 Heritage Impacts**

Further to the officer's report (section 10.31-10.34) and in accordance with paragraph 208 of the NPPF, the public benefits which would arise from this development e.g., through increased housing stock for the district, local spending thereby supporting local economy and helping to improve the overall vitality and viability of the town are cumulatively considered to outweigh the 'less than substantial harm' to heritage assets in the locality, with this harm in any case considered to be at the 'lower end of the spectrum' according to both the council's and applicant's heritage consultants.. As such, it is considered that the development would accord with both the NPPF and Local Plan policies LP16 and LP18.

### **3.2 Bus Service**

Section 10.8 of the officer's report refers to a contribution being secured to fund a new demand-responsive bus service. In correction, the contribution is to fund an extension to an existing bus service serving the locality.

### **3.3 Affordable Housing**

Section 10.55 of the officer's report refers to the development securing eighty-five affordable dwellings. Please note that this would be based on a quantum of 425 dwellings and therefore, as the proposal is 'up to' 425 dwellings (meaning the final development could be less dwellings) the affordable housing quantum is also 'up to' 85 dwellings – but nonetheless 20% of the total quantum is proposed to be affordable housing.

### **3.4 Proposed Conditions**

The proposed planning conditions are set out at Appendix 1 of the officer's report. Through further negotiation, it may be necessary to amend, add or remove some of these conditions, for example, where they may otherwise be captured in the S106 agreement, or where amendments to conditions are necessary to refine their requirements. As such, and in accordance with the recommendation at section 12 of the officer's report, delegated authority to the Head of Planning is sought to finalise the schedule of planning conditions with this application and the S106 agreement.

- 3.5 Notwithstanding, The Framework Plan (revision X) noted in the list of approved plans under condition 20 is recommended to be removed, in view of the terms of proposed Condition 6, which seeks future phases to be in 'broad' compliance with the Framework Plan. Due to the high-level nature of this plan, it is not appropriate to secure this under Condition 20, as a degree flexibility may be required on some layout aspects. Nonetheless, future reserved matters parcels will be expected to broadly comply with the Framework Plan (as per condition 6) and will be assessed against this document.

**Recommendation:**

Grant as per the recommendation at section 12 of the officer's report and subject to amendments to proposed condition 9 and 20, notwithstanding the recommendation to delegate authority to the Head of Planning to finalise the schedule of planning conditions and the S106 agreement.