

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Residential Development on Land East of Crease Drove, Crowland

Resubmission of planning application reference H02-0723-16

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The need for a Design and Access Statement is required by Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 1.2 It has been prepared in accordance with DCLG Circular 01/2006 to inform and accompany our **OUTLINE planning application** for the proposed residential development on land east of Crease Drove, Crowland, on behalf of Mrs Tina Hunter-Shaw, owner of the site¹.
- 1.3 An **Illustrative Layout Plan** has been prepared to accompany the planning submission to demonstrate that a development of the type and quantum proposed can be satisfactorily accommodated on this site.
- 1.4 Permission is sought in outline, but with the *means of access* submitted for **detailed consideration**.
- 1.5 *Appearance, scale, layout and landscaping* are all matters reserved for subsequent approval.
- 1.6 This application comprises is a simple resubmission of the proposal determined by the Council on 17th October 2016 (LPA reference H02-0723-16) which was

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refused on technical grounds relating to highways and the absence of heritage and breach analysis information.

- 1.7 For (policy) consistency purposes the proposal remains identical to that previously considered (LPA reference H02-0723-16).

2. Assessment

2.1 Physical Context

- 2.1.1 The application site extends to some 1.69 hectares and comprises a (generally level) rectangular agricultural field.

- 2.1.2 The site directly adjoins **the built-up area** of Crowland (and the Defined Settlement Limit) on two sides. The northern boundary lies immediately adjacent to a former warehousing and packing station² and the eastern boundary adjoins the rear gardens of those residential properties fronting Beccelm Drive. Crease Drove, an adopted highway, runs along the western boundary of the site. Fields opposite are also being promoted for residential development by longstanding local landowners³.

- 2.1.3 **Crowland** is identified as an Area Centre in the adopted South Holland District Council Local Plan⁴. Area Centres comprise the second tier of the Settlement Hierarchy, providing a range of services and local employment opportunities, and act as a focal point for the rural areas.

² Consent for its demolition was granted on 4 September 2014 under LPA reference H02-0708-14 to make way for its residential redevelopment. Outline consent for residential development is currently being sought and is under consideration by the Council under LPA reference LPA reference: H02-0554-16.

³ Now the subject of a planning application seeking 100 dwellings in outline (LPA reference H02-0158-17).

⁴ Policy SG3

2.2 Social Context

2.2.1 The ***Illustrative Layout Plan*** demonstrates that the site can satisfactorily accommodate approximately 41 dwellings whilst maintaining an acceptable relationship with adjoining land uses in terms of amenity issues etc. Clearly, detailed relationships between proposed and existing uses/buildings will be more thoroughly addressed through any subsequent 'Reserved Matters' submission.

2.2.2 The proposal would make a meaningful contribution to meeting housing (and affordable housing) needs in circumstances where the **Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply** by some margin⁵. The development will also assist in meeting the longer-term strategic need for housing in Crowland, identified in the *emerging* South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

2.2.3 There are two similar *live* planning applications in the immediate area. An application (also in outline) for the demolition of the existing industrial buildings and the erection of **up to 50 dwellings** at the warehousing and packing station site to the north of the application site is still pending determination⁶. It is understood that this proposal received a **positive response** from the Council during pre-application discussions.

2.2.4 Outline planning consent is also currently being sought by others for the residential development of **up to 100 dwellings** and the (same) widening of Crease Drove at land at Crease Drove opposite the application site⁷.

⁵ As confirmed in the South Holland District Council 5-year Housing Land Supply Assessment (as at 31st March 2016)

⁶ LPA reference: H02-0554-16

⁷ LPA reference H02-0158-17

2.3 Economic Context

2.3.1 In addition to making a meaningful contribution to meeting housing (and affordable housing) needs, in circumstances where the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, the proposal (alongside others) would also bring significant **local employment opportunities** to the area during the period of construction. Whilst not a permanent level of employment it should nonetheless be welcomed as the construction industry still seeks to exit the period of demise brought on by the recession and where a period of economic stability will be paramount following the decision to leave the EU⁸.

2.3.2 The development of the site for housing would not only provide a much needed boost to the local construction industry, but there is also an important economic implication insofar as future residents will bring additional spending power into the local economy. This will no doubt help support and sustain the local shops and businesses in the area, thereby **supporting and enhancing the vitality of the local community**, in line with national planning policy⁹.

2.3.3 Moreover, Section 143 of the Localism Act 2012 stipulates that local planning authorities may have regard to local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, which include sums that a relevant authority has received, or will or could receive, in payment of Community Infrastructure Levy (and Council Tax) and New Homes bonus for instance.

3. Planning Policy

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of applications and appeals under the Planning Acts should be

⁸ David Ritchie, the Chief Executive of Bovis Homes, once indicated that every house built generally creates 4.5 new jobs (Independent, October 2010).

⁹ Section 2 of the NPPF

in accordance with the Development Plan *unless* material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2 The **Development Plan** presently comprises the ‘*saved*’ policies of the South Holland Local Plan (adopted 2006).

3.2.1 Those Development Plan policies considered most relevant to the application are:

3.2.2 **Policy SG1 [General Sustainable Development]** states that planning permission will be granted where the proposal is consistent with the principles of sustainable development and where:

1. the quality of life for residents is unimpaired or enhanced;
2. reasonable measures have been taken to conserve energy and natural resources; and
3. South Holland’s essential character and main environmental assets are not damaged

3.2.3 **Policy SG2 [Distribution of Development]** states that all development must be located having regard to sustainable development principles. They should:

1. adopt a sequential approach which gives priority to the use of previously-developed land and buildings within the Defined Settlement Limits, then to greenfield land within Defined Settlement Limits, and finally to land adjacent to Defined Settlement Limits;
2. make efficient use of land;

3. wherever possible be served by a choice of transport modes or by improvements to public transport infrastructure; and
4. be acceptable in terms of traffic generation and road safety.

3.2.4 **Policy SG3 [Settlement Hierarchy]** sets out the Settlement Hierarchy for development. Crowland is considered to be an Area Centre. Area Centres make up the second tier of the Settlement Hierarchy and *'will continue to provide for housing, employment and commercial development to support their roles as service centres for surrounding rural areas'*.

3.2.5 **Policy SG4 [Development in the Countryside]** states that planning permission will only be granted for development in the open countryside which is essential in the proposed location and cannot reasonably be accommodated within the Defined Settlement Limits. Development proposals that would result in an unacceptable impact upon the landscape character of the area, either individually or cumulatively, will only be permitted where:

1. the need for the development in that locations outweighs its impact;
and
2. no other site or solution exists to accommodate the proposed development.

3.2.6 **Policy SG6 [Community Infrastructure and Impact Assessment]** requires new development to include measures to demonstrate how public infrastructure and services required to support the development will be delivered.

3.2.7 **Policy HS4 [New Housing in Spalding and the Area Centres (Other Towns and Donington) (Non-allocated Sites)]** seeks to permit residential development on suitable sites within Spalding and the Area Centres where the site is within

Defined Settlement Limits and constitutes brownfield land, unless no suitable brownfield sites are genuinely available.

3.2.8 **Policy HS7 [New Housing in the Open Countryside including Other Rural Settlements]** states that new housing development outside the Defined Settlement Limits of Spalding, Area Centres and Group Centres will only be permitted where it is proven to be essential to meet the needs of agricultural, forestry or other workers and complies with Policy HS12; or is for small scale, rural exception affordable housing that complies with Policy HS9.

3.2.9 **Policy HS8 [Affordable Housing]** states that the Council will require the provision of a minimum of one third of the residential units as affordable housing on residential development sites of three or more dwellings. Any planning application which, on the grounds of viability, proposes a lower level of affordable housing provision must be accompanied by evidence demonstrating that affordable housing at the level normally expected would impair the viability of the scheme and that the level proposed is the most that is achievable.

3.2.10 The Council is currently preparing (in conjunction with Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council) The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036. The Draft for Public Consultation version of this Local Plan was published in January 2016 and subsequently amended in July 2016. Whilst still in its infancy, this document indicates the Council's most up-to-date direction of travel for the District and identifies Crowland as a Main Service Centre (Policy 2) which is to accommodate a minimum requirement of 500 dwellings (Revised Policy 12).

3.3 National Planning Policy NPPF (the NPPF)

3.3.1 The NPPF is a **material consideration** in the determination of planning applications and appeals.

- 3.3.2 The NPPF confirms that the **presumption in favour of sustainable development** lies at its heart and should be seen as a *golden thread* running through both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 3.3.3 For decision-taking, **paragraph 14** of the NPPF advises that development proposals that accord with the Development Plan should be **approved without delay**.
- 3.3.4 Where the Development Plan is **absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date**, the NPPF requires local authorities, in engaging the presumption in favour of sustainable development, to **grant planning permission** for development proposals unless:
- any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
- 3.3.5 In the above connection, **paragraph 49** of the NPPF confirms that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should **not** be considered **up-to-date** *if* the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 3.3.6 **Paragraph 17** of the NPPF identifies **twelve core land-use planning principles** that should underpin decision-taking, including the need for planning (amongst others) to:

- *‘not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
- *proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth;*
- *always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings; and*
- *actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable’.*

3.3.7 **Paragraph 30** supports a pattern of development which facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.

3.3.8 **Paragraph 35** states that development should be located and designed, where practical, and amongst others, to have access to high quality public transport facilities.

3.3.9 **Paragraph 47** confirms that in order to boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should *‘identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable¹⁰ sites sufficient to provide **five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure***

¹⁰ To be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable.

choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land’.

3.3.10 **Section 10** of the NPPF sets out national planning policy on flooding and climate change. **Paragraphs 94 and 95** state that local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, take full account of flood risk, and plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions. **Paragraph 99** confirms this, stating that *‘Local Plans should take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures’.*

3.3.11 **Paragraph 100** sets out the need for a sequential test in areas of flood risk. Development should be directed *‘away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary’*, it should be made *‘safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere’*. *‘Local Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change, by applying the Sequential Test [and] if necessary... the Exception Test’.*

3.3.12 If after applying the Sequential Test, it is not possible, consistent with wider sustainability objectives, for the development to be located in zones with a lower probability of flooding, **Paragraph 102** advises that the Exception Test can be applied if appropriate. For the Exception Test to be passed:

- *'it must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment where one has been prepared; and*
- *a site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall'.*

3.3.13 **Paragraph 103** advises that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere and only consider development appropriate in areas at risk of flooding where it can be demonstrated that:

- *'within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location; and*
- *development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant, including safe access and escape routes where required, and that any residual risk can be safely managed, including by emergency planning; and it gives priority to the use of sustainable drainage systems'*

3.3.14 **Paragraph 187** states that *'local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should **seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.** Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area'* (our emphasis).

4. Involvement

4.1 Whilst there have been no detailed pre-application discussions with the Council in connection with the proposed development, due regard has been had to the character and appearance of the site and environs, the relevant local and national planning policies, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) published January 2016¹¹ and all material considerations prevalent, including recent decisions on similar proposals granted locally (and/or advice and consultation responses received during the consultation of those still pending), all of which have, where appropriate, informed the approach and formulation of this application.

4.2 In particular, detailed consideration has also been given to the (identical) proposal previously determined on the site¹². This proposal was refused on **purely technical grounds** and thus this resubmission now provides the additional justification/information required to demonstrate that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety, flood risk and the historic environment.

4.3 To assist and inform the preparation of the original proposal the Applicant commissioned a suite of investigatory surveys and reports. These comprised:

- a **Noise Assessment**, prepared by Blue Tree Acoustics;
- a **Transport Statement**, prepared by ADC Infrastructure Limited;
- a **Landscape and Visual Appraisal**, prepared by Influence Environmental Ltd; and

¹¹ in which the site was assessed

¹² LPA reference H02-0723-16

- a **Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment**, prepared by NeoFlood Ltd.

4.4 In addition, the following reports have been commissioned to support this resubmitted proposal and to provide the additional information required to address the (technical) reasons for refusal of the original application. These comprise:

- **FRA Addendum – Breach Analysis**, prepared by NeoFlood Ltd; and
- **Heritage & Archaeological Statement**, prepared by Trigpoint Conservation & Planning Ltd

5. Evaluation

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of applications and appeals under the Planning Acts should be in accordance with the Development Plan *unless* material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan should therefore always be the *starting point* for decision making.
- 5.2 The Development Plan comprises the South Holland Local Plan 2006 and contains three policies relevant to the *principle* of development on this site.
- 5.3 **Policy SG4** states that planning permission will only be granted for development in the open countryside which is essential in the proposed location and cannot reasonably be accommodated within the Defined Settlement Limits. Development proposals that would result in an unacceptable impact upon the landscape character of the area, either individually or cumulatively, will only be permitted where:

1. the need for the development in that location outweighs its impact;
and
2. no other site or solution exists to accommodate the proposed development.

5.4 **Policy HS4** seeks to permit residential development on suitable sites within Spalding and the Area Centres where the site is within Defined Settlement Limits and constitutes brownfield land, unless no suitable brownfield sites are genuinely available.

5.5 **Policy HS7** states that new housing development outside the Defined Settlement Limits of Spalding, Area Centres and Group Centres will only be permitted where it is proven to be essential to meet the needs of agricultural, forestry or other workers and complies with Policy HS12 or is for small scale, rural exception affordable housing that complies with Policy HS9.

5.6 Importantly the acceptability of the *principle* of the residential development of the application site against the above policies has clearly already been established by way of the previous application. The *principle* of the development did not comprise one of the reasons for refusal - the application was refused solely and simply on technical grounds regarding highway safety, flood risk and the impact on the historic environment.

5.7 In terms of Policy SG4, the application should be considered in light of the **significant deficit in the housing supply** in the District and the identified need for at least 500 new dwellings in Crowland in the most recently published *emerging* Local Plan document¹³. In order to significantly boost housing

¹³ The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan Draft for Public Consultation

provision¹⁴, and given the Council's clear acknowledgement of the sustainability of Crowland (identified as an Area Centre in Policy SG3 of the adopted Local Plan), new housing development in Crowland is **essential** if the Council is to meet its future housing obligations in a sustainable manner. The required numbers of housing outlined in *draft The South East Lincolnshire Local Plan* (Draft for Public Consultation) cannot be accommodated within the Defined Settlement Limits. Accordingly, since the Council is reliant on housing sites beyond current Defined Settlement Limits (i.e. there is not sufficient land *within* Defined Settlement Limits), the proposal can be regarded as being essential in the proposed location – and, therefore, **policy compliant**.

5.8 Whilst *any* development of a greenfield site inevitably causes some degree of impact on the landscape and character of the area, impact here is limited due to the topography of the landscape and the fact that the application site is not in a prominent location or visually significant. Furthermore, the location of the site already directly adjoining the built-up area means that the site would always be viewed against the backdrop of existing development. As such, the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape character of the area and is thus acceptable under Policy SG4.

5.9 This is confirmed by the **Landscape and Visual Appraisal**, undertaken by Influence Environmental Ltd, which was commissioned at the outset to inform the development of the proposal. The Appraisal analysed the landscape and visual context of the proposal and considered that '*Visibility in the study area is substantially limited due to the flat topography combined with existing vegetation and the built form of residential, commercial and agricultural buildings*'¹⁵. As a result, the proposed development '*would sit in context with existing housing developments and would appear as an extension to the existing*

¹⁴ A preliminary objective of the NPPF

¹⁵ Paragraph 1.12

*settlement edge and not as an isolated development*¹⁶ and *'would not cause significant impact on the landscape character within the study area or the visual amenity of the wider surrounding landscape'*¹⁷.

5.10 The Applicant acknowledges the automatic conflict of the proposal with policies HS4 and HS7 which arises from the location of the application site being outside the Defined Settlement Limits of Crowland and not meeting the needs of agricultural, forestry or other workers or comprising small scale, rural exception affordable housing.

5.11 However, the **NPPF** is a material consideration in planning decisions¹⁸ and of particular importance in circumstances where the Development Plan significantly *pre-dates* the NPPF, as is the case in South Holland District.

5.12 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF outlines the **presumption in favour of sustainable development** which runs through the heart of national planning policy and directs that where the Development Plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, the NPPF requires local authorities, in engaging the presumption in favour of sustainable development, to **grant planning permission** for development proposals unless:

- any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or,
- specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

¹⁶ Paragraph 4.5

¹⁷ Paragraph 3.4

¹⁸ Paragraph 2 of the NPPF

- 5.13 As the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (by some margin!), the Development Plan cannot be regarded as being up-to-date within the context of paragraph 49 and 14 of the NPPF.
- 5.14 The most recent 5-year Housing Land Supply Assessment confirms that, as at 31st March 2016, the Council only have 2.9 years-worth of housing land supply.
- 5.15 In these circumstances, as confirmed by paragraph 49 of the NPPF, those policies relevant to the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date.
- 5.16 **Policies HS4 and HS7** are relevant to the supply of housing and so cannot be considered up-to-date. Similarly, insofar as **Policy SG4** seeks to restrict development in the open countryside (and thus has the capability to restrict the supply of housing), it must also be regarded as a policy relevant to the supply of housing which cannot be considered up-to-date.
- 5.17 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF, on applying the **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, directs that development proposals are to be granted consent unless any adverse impacts of doing so would '*significantly*' and '*demonstrably*' outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
- 5.18 First, the proposal must represent a form of sustainable development. The site is well related to the existing built-up area of Crowland, already directly adjoining the Defined Settlement Limits on two sides. This was further confirmed in the SHLAA which stated that '*the site relates well to the existing town because it abuts residential to the east and an employment site to the north (also submitted for redevelopment)*'.

- 5.19 The site's location in Crowland also makes the proposal sustainable. **Crowland** is a sustainable settlement as evidenced by its classification as an 'Area Centre' in Policy SG3 in the adopted Local Plan¹⁹. Area Centres make up the second tier of the Settlement Hierarchy and the Council's aim is that they continue to provide for housing, employment and commercial development to support their roles as service centres for surrounding rural areas.
- 5.20 Furthermore, the South East Lincolnshire 'An Assessment of Settlements and Their Sustainability Credentials' (2015) confirms Crowland as the **fifth most sustainable settlement in South East Lincolnshire**.
- 5.21 The site is within walking and cycling distance of all services and facilities in Crowland²⁰. The centre of Crowland, provides services and facilities including several convenience stores, a pharmacy and South View Primary School.
- 5.22 The site also benefits from access to public transport. The nearest bus stop is presently approximately 660 metres from the site, from where bus services run to Peterborough, Eye, Spalding and Bourne (and beyond) on an hourly basis²¹.
- 5.23 The 2016 SHLAA confirmed the site to be '*accessible to Crowland's existing services and facilities*' and stating that '*services and facilities are accessible by foot, bicycle and public transport*'.
- 5.24 For all these reasons, the proposal accords with the core planning principles set out in paragraph 17 of the NPPF that planning should '*actively manage patterns*

¹⁹ Policy 12 of the emerging Local Plan also allocates 500 dwellings to Crowland, indicating that the Council consider the settlement sustainable and thus suitable for this level of housing development.

²⁰ Confirmed in the Transport Statement submitted alongside this application

²¹ More information regarding the bus services in Crowland can be found on pages 11 and 12 of the Transport Statement submitted as part of the application

*of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable*²². It also accords with paragraphs 30, 35 and 95 of the NPPF which support a pattern of development which facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport and will consequentially reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

5.25 As a form of **sustainable development**, the proposal is not only supported by the NPPF but also by the adopted Local Plan. **Policy SG1** states that planning permission will be granted where the proposal is consistent with the principles of sustainable development and where:

1. the quality of life for residents is unimpaired or enhanced;
2. reasonable measures have been taken to conserve energy and natural resources; and
3. South Holland's essential character and main environmental assets are not damaged.

5.26 As previously outlined, the proposal is consistent with the principles of sustainable development in terms of focusing development in areas with services and facilities and good transport links to minimise travel. By doing so, the proposal seeks to conserve energy by siting the development in a location where the need to travel is reduced.

5.27 Furthermore, the quality of life of existing residents in the area, predominantly those living on Beccelm Drive adjoining the application site and Crease Drove itself, would be preserved through the compatibility of the proposed land use,

²² And also that planning should '*proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs*' and '*respond positively to wider opportunities for growth*'

the improvements to Crease Drove, and the sensitive design of the development at the Reserved Matters Stage.

5.28 Finally, the proposal would not damage South Holland's essential character or main environmental assets. As outlined in paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8, and in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal, the site is not prominent within the landscape and is adjacent to the existing built-up area, which would provide the backdrop to views of the proposed development. The proposed development of the site would therefore not damage the essential character or main environmental assets of the District.

5.29 Similarly, **Policy SG2** states that all development must be located having regard to sustainable development principles. They should:

1. adopt a sequential approach which gives priority to the use of previously-developed land and buildings within the Defined Settlement Limits, then to greenfield land within Defined Settlement Limits and finally to land adjacent to Defined Settlement Limits;
2. make efficient use of land;
3. wherever possible be served by a choice of transport modes or by improvements to public transport infrastructure; and
4. be acceptable in terms of traffic generation and road safety.

5.30 Having regard to the above, it is clear from the work to date on the *emerging* Local Plan that there is insufficient land (whether previously-developed, or greenfield) within the current Defined Settlement Limits to meet the Council's current or future housing obligations. As such the proposal, comprising land

- adjacent to the Defined Settlement Limit of Crowland, is considered to be compliant with the sequential approach to development prescribed in *Criterion 1* of Policy SG2.
- 5.31 The proposal will make efficient use of land by adopting housing densities supported by the Council. It will be served by bus services providing public transport to surrounding settlements as outlined in paragraph 5.19, and measures will be put in place to ensure that traffic generation (which will be minimized by the sustainability of the location) will not adversely affect highway safety.
- 5.32 **The proposal thus accords with Policy SG1 and SG2 and is supported by both the Local Plan and the NPPF as a form of sustainable development.**
- 5.33 Paragraph 14 states that where the Development Plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, development proposals are to be granted consent unless any adverse impacts of doing so would ‘*significantly*’ and ‘*demonstrably*’ outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
- 5.34 It should be noted that the use of the terms ‘*significantly*’ and ‘*demonstrably*’ confirms that proposals that give rise to *some* adverse impacts can still be ultimately considered acceptable within the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.35 The proposal will not cause harm that would ‘*significantly*’ and ‘*demonstrably*’ outweigh its notable benefits.

- 5.36 The proposal comprises a logical and natural extension to Crowland given its location adjacent to the built-up area and it would not have a significant impact on the visual appearance of the area due to this proximity, as outlined previously in paragraphs 5.7, 5.8 and 5.24 and in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal submitted alongside the application.
- 5.37 The site was considered in the SHLAA (2016). When assessing the suitability of the site, the SHLAA concluded that the residential development of this site would not have adverse impacts on natural, built or historic assets, nor would it *'lead to the loss of existing infrastructure, such as open space, green infrastructure or community facilities'*.
- 5.38 The SHLAA did however raise concern over the site's proximity to industrial and business uses and concluded (in the absence of any technical investigation) that this would likely *'cause the site to have an unsatisfactory residential environment.'*
- 5.39 Owing to the above, the Applicant commissioned a **Noise Assessment** (prepared by Blue Tree Acoustics) which established the suitability of the site for residential development and also informed the design of the layout.
- 5.40 The Noise Assessment identified three potential sources of noise:
- the warehouse/storage premises to the north of the development site;
 - road traffic along the A16 and Crease Drove – considered to be *'The primary noise in the area'*²³; and

²³ Paragraph 2.1

- several industrial premises situated to the southwest of the site including Crowland Cranes.

5.41 The Noise Assessment identified no significant issues regarding any of these potential sources of noise, concluding that *‘The site can be considered suitable for residential development in planning and noise terms, as acceptable noise levels... can be achieved following the design and implementation of suitable noise mitigation measures’*²⁴.

5.42 Of course, the former warehousing site directly adjoining the site (to the north) has already been subject to a demolition notice to make way for its ‘residential’ development and there is now currently a planning application for 50 dwellings under consideration by Council²⁵. If granted, this would clearly remove any necessity for mitigation measures etc.

5.43 However, even if the residential development of the adjoining site does not occur, or come forward promptly, the measures referred to in the Noise Report could be put in place to protect the amenity of new residents at the *‘Reserved Matters’* Stage in line with one of the core planning principles outlined in paragraph 17 of the NPPF.

5.44 With regard to the industrial premises to the southwest of the site, the Noise Assessment found that after 7am, noise from Crowland Cranes was only faintly audible at the development site during lulls in traffic and passing vehicles. It also noted that the limited noise appears to emanate from the buildings to the south of the Crowland Cranes site and is thus shielded by the intervening buildings. The Assessment concluded that Crowland Cranes has a *‘minimal influence on the*

²⁴ Paragraph 7.5

²⁵ This application was validated by the Council on 7 June 2016

*magnitude of noise levels at the development site*²⁶ and raised no significant issues regarding the level of noise. Similarly, it also concluded that *'no significant noise emission was apparent from the other industrial buildings nearby'*²⁷.

- 5.45 The Applicant is aware that other adjoining (local) landowners are also intending to promote/submit residential proposals on land to the south of the site and on the opposite side of Crease Drove²⁸ – i.e. between the application site and Crowland Cranes and the A16. Again, whilst the Noise Assessment considered 'our' site (in isolation) to be acceptable subject to the design and implementation of suitable noise mitigation measures, should development occur to south and west, any issues of noise would be completely removed and the mitigation measures set out in the Assessment rendered unnecessary.
- 5.46 The SHLAA also highlighted concerns that the residential development of the application site would *'encourage further use of the sub-standard Crease Drove from Harvester way'* and that the site (on its own) *'would be unlikely to fund major improvements to the carriageway to Harvester Way'*.
- 5.47 The **Transport Statement** submitted alongside the application acknowledges the need to widen Crease Drove along its length from Monks Meadow to Harvester Way and incorporates plans showing the proposed widening and highway improvements (Drawing no. ADC1220/001B). As suggested in the SHLAA response, development of the application site in isolation would not likely be able to fund these highway improvement works on its own. However, there are *already* two planning applications before the Council seeking new housing

²⁶ Paragraph 4.7

²⁷ Paragraph 2.3

²⁸ LPA reference H02-0158-17

development on Crease Drove²⁹ which will also clearly impact upon Crease Drove and therefore there is the opportunity for these sites, including ours, to collectively and proportionally finance the required highway improvement works to Crease Drove, thereby securing (by S106 Agreement) a tangible **benefit to the local highway network** in circumstances whereby these are unlikely to ever be prioritised through the public purse.

5.48 This is a realistic prospect considering that the Transport Assessment for the application for up to 100 dwellings on land opposite the application site (LPA reference H02-0158-17) was prepared by the same Highway Consultant (ADC Infrastructure Limited) as for this application and recommends the exact same highway improvements.

5.49 Whilst all applications must be considered on their own merits, adopting a strategic approach and considering these sites collectively (from a highways standpoint) provides an opportunity for significant improvements to the infrastructure in the area to be secure for the benefit of both future residents and existing users of the road network³⁰.

5.50 In this regard, while this application has been prepared so it can be considered on an independent basis, the Applicant has, throughout the development of the scheme, been mindful of these other sites being promoted and has been careful to ensure that development on the applicant site should/would not jeopardise the development of these other sites coming forward.

²⁹ The application for up to 50 dwellings at the warehousing and packing station to the north on the site (LPA reference: H02-0554-16) and the application for up to 100 dwellings opposite the application site (LPA reference H02-0158-17).

³⁰ The Local Highway Authority acknowledges the current use of Crease Drove already poses a problem – something which is most unlikely to be resolved without the grant of further development necessary to fund these improvement works.

- 5.51 The proposal triggers the need for affordable housing as set out in **Policy HS8** and will therefore make a valuable contribution to affordable housing need provision, a further notable **benefit** of the scheme.
- 5.52 In addition, the Applicant will ensure that the appropriate level of public infrastructure and services are delivered in accordance with **Policy SG6**.
- 5.53 As with all the other developments recently granted and/or presently under consideration, the site lies within Flood Zone 3 as indicated by the Environment Agency flood zone maps³¹. In circumstances where the Council have no ‘*saved*’ policies relating to flood risk, guidance outlined in the NPPF should be considered.
- 5.54 The NPPF sets out the sequential approach to flooding which seeks to direct development ‘*away from areas at highest risk*’³². Paragraph 101 confirms that ‘*development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding*’.
- 5.55 However, whilst the NPPF advocates a sequential approach to flooding, it does not prohibit the development of land at risk of flooding. Paragraph 100 states that ‘*where development is necessary*’, it should be made ‘*safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere*’.
- 5.56 The Applicant commissioned a **Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment**, prepared by NeoFlood Ltd, to assess fluvial flood risk and the flood risk posed by

³¹ it should be noted that this does not account for all the flood defenses in this area and that the South Holland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010), which does take account of flood defenses, classified the site as being **outside** the flood zone.

³² Paragraph 100

the development itself. This Assessment confirms that the site is shown to be located in Flood Zone 3 on the Environment Agency's flood plain maps but highlights that the site is shown to be within Flood Zone 1 on South Holland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010) maps which take into consideration the **flood defences** (including the raised Corporation Bank to the north west and pumping stations at Peakirk and Newborough) surrounding the site. The Assessment concludes that, *'With a commitment to maintain the defences'*, and the maintenance of water levels in the local drainage system by the local internal drainage board (IDB) system, *'the site can be considered to be protected from fluvial flood risk'* and *'will not be a flood risk under normal operational circumstances'*³³. The Assessment confirms that the site is not at risk of flooding from other sources and **may be developed for residential use on this site**.

- 5.57 In relation to paragraphs 100 and 101 of the NPPF, the proposal is necessary. There is a significant deficit in housing provision in the District and an identified need for at least 500 dwellings in Crowland³⁴ which, as outlined previously, cannot be accommodated within the existing built-up area of the settlement. In order to deliver strategic housing growth in Crowland and **significantly boost housing** (and affordable housing) provision in the District more generally, as required by the NPPF, it is necessary for land beyond the Defined Settlement Limits of Crowland to be developed for housing. All the land surrounding Crowland is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. In order to deliver the desired housing growth in Crowland therefore, housing will inevitably have to be built on land within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The proposal thus passes the Sequential Test.

³³ paragraphs 5.1.1 and 5.1.2

³⁴ in the emerging Local Plan

- 5.58 The need for new housing to be located on land at risk of flooding is further evidenced by the fact that more than 50% of the District is within Flood Zone 3³⁵.
- 5.59 In addition to this, the acceptability of housing development on land within Flood Zone 3 has already been established through the Council's own decision to grant outline planning consent for 49 dwellings on land off Peterborough Road in December 2014³⁶.
- 5.60 The circumstances of the consented scheme and this application are very similar - both consist of residential development on land beyond, but adjoining, the Defined Settlement Limit and within Flood Zone 3. The fact that that development was granted permission provides further confirmation that the proposal subject to this application should also be similarly acceptable, especially given the fact that the application site is closer to centre of Crowland, and thus arguably in a more sustainable location.
- 5.61 Furthermore, the Flood Risk Sequential Test document of the aforementioned consented scheme on land off Peterborough Road confirmed that the Council had agreed that the sequential test need only be applied within Crowland (rather than the whole District).
- 5.62 As clear from the above, some residential development will inevitably have to be located, especially in Crowland, on land within the Environment Agency's Flood Zones 2 and 3. The site is in a highly sustainable location and the necessary remedial works will be incorporated into the development at the 'Reserved Matters' Stage to ensure that flood risk is minimised as far as possible and that the proposal does not increase flood risk elsewhere. As such, flood risk would

³⁵ as identified in The South Holland District Council Update of Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Final Report January 2010

³⁶ LPA reference: H02-0468-14

not '*significantly*' and '*demonstrably*' outweigh the multiple benefits of the scheme.

5.63 In accordance with Paragraph 102 of the NPPF, the proposal would also pass the Exception Test. The proposed development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community in terms of delivering housing (and affordable housing) in a sustainable location and supporting local services, facilities and public transport through the spending power of the new residents that would outweigh the flood risk. In addition, as is the case with all other developments being recently granted and/or currently under consideration, the necessary remedial works and adaptation measures will be incorporated into the development (detailed at the 'Reserved Matters' Stage) to ensure that the development would be '*flood resilient and resistant*' and '*safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall*', in accordance with paragraphs 99, 100 and 103 of the NPPF.

5.64 This is confirmed by the **Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment**. The Assessment considers that, given the immediate need for housing in Crowland and the general under delivery of sites across South Holland, plus the availability of the site for development and the acceptability of the proposal in terms of highways and the noise generated by nearby employment uses, established by the Noise Assessment Report and the Transport Assessment Report submitted as part of the application, '*it is considered that this site would be a prime location for immediate development and therefore delivery of much needed housing and as such passes the Sequential Test*³⁷.

³⁷ Section 6.4

6.65 The Assessment also considers that the proposal passes the Exceptions Test. It considers that the proposal provides **wider sustainability benefits** to the community that outweigh the flood risk, in terms of fulfilling a fundamental local housing need, helping support the local economy and *‘more efficiently utilise local services and facilities’*, being *‘in a sustainable location for access to local public transport linking the site to the main centres of Boston and Spalding’*, and comprising buildings built to the latest Building Regulations which are significantly superior in terms of heating and energy use than older housing³⁸. The Assessment also considers that the site is safe for the lifetime of the proposed development without impact on others, being **outside of a flood zone as classified by the South Holland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** and having several forms of existing flood defences. The Assessment concludes that with an appropriate flood drainage system and the slight elevation of the proposed development units, *‘it is considered that the site can be shown to provide both wider sustainability benefits and will be safe in operation for the lifetime of its use. As such the Exception Test is passed’*³⁹.

6.66 The Assessment outlines that *‘The development itself will yield an increase in the impermeable footprint’*, creating surface runoff that *‘will itself pose a flood risk to both the development site and the areas downstream of this point’ ‘and will therefore require suitable on-site mitigation’*⁴⁰. A **Drainage Masterplan** has been prepared and the Assessment also recommends *‘that a drainage system is installed with a free discharge to the adjacent IDB drainage system’* and the consideration of *‘the use of a permeable paving and permeable sub-base option... for the estate roads and private driveways as the principle means of collecting and conveying road and roof runoff from the site’*⁴¹.

³⁸ Section 7.2

³⁹ Section 7.4

⁴⁰ Sections 4.2.3 and 10

⁴¹ Sections 9.3 and 10

6.67 **The Assessment concludes that the site passes both the Sequential and Exceptions Tests and that the proposed development type is appropriate for this location.**

6.68 In refusing the previous application on the site the Council alleged that the Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment did not comply with the requirements set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to the NPPF and failed to adequately consider the impacts of climate change, or to consider the effect of a range of flooding events, including extreme events on people and property, including a breach in the Crowland Cowbit Washlands⁴².

6.69 To address the above, NeoFlood Ltd has prepared a **FRA Addendum – Breach Analysis** which assesses the flood risk associated with a 40m breach of the flood defences, taking into account the impact of climate change⁴³. Using the simplified approach described in Section 12.6 of the EA/DEFRA Technical Report FD2320/TR2 Flood Risk Assessment Guidance for New Development⁴⁴, flooding on the site is predicted to be at a peak of 262mm in a 1 in 1000 year flood, and 175mm in a 1 in 100 year flood. This classifies the site as ‘Danger for some’ which can be managed for the lifetime of the development⁴⁵.

6.70 To ensure protection from a 1 in 1000 year flood in the event of a breach of the local flood defences, the Breach Analysis advises that minimum finished floor levels are **set 300mm above existing ground levels**. It also recommends that the

⁴² This reflects the comments of the Environment Agency as set out in their Statutory Consultee response to the original proposal.

⁴³ as shown in Table 1 - Section 4.3 of the Breach Analysis

⁴⁴ This simplified approach was also used in the Breach Analysis for the Harvester Way development (LPA reference H02- 1087-14). Paragraph 4.6 of the Harvester Way Breach Analysis indicates that the Environment Agency ‘*agreed that a simple breach analysis method can be used to calculate the worst case scenario flood depth, velocity and risk*’ under the Flood Risk Assessment Guidance for New Development Technical Report FD2320/TR2.

⁴⁵ See Sections 4.3, 4.4 and 6 of the Breach Analysis

adjacent channel level of the site access road is set 200mm lower than the finished floor level to provide a permanent secondary flow capacity in the curtilage of the site access road⁴⁶. **If these mitigation measures are implemented, the Breach Analysis confirms that the site can be safely developed to included inherent protection against a breach event during a 0.1%AEP event⁴⁷.**

6.71 Given that the development is located a reasonable distance from the flood defences, is located in a flood warning area and the existing defences are in good condition, the Breach Analysis concludes that the residual flood hazard classification is considered to be acceptable for this development for the lifetime of its occupation⁴⁸.

6.72 The Breach Analysis has provided the information requested by the Environment Agency to allow a full assessment of the flood risks associated with the development and therefore addresses the second reason for refusal relating to the previous application. Notably, the Breach Analysis has provided the same information, follows the same method of calculation of flood risk⁴⁹, and takes account of the same level of climate change⁵⁰ as the Breach Analysis prepared to support the proposed development at Harvester Way⁵¹ (and considered acceptable by the Environment Agency). In adopting a consistent approach to flood risk for sites within close proximity of one another, within the same Flood Zone and protected by the same local flood defences, the submitted Breach Analysis for *this* proposal should therefore also be considered acceptable and

⁴⁶ Section 5.1 of the Breach Analysis

⁴⁷ Section 6 of the Breach Analysis

⁴⁸ Page 10 of the Breach Analysis

⁴⁹ using the simplified Breach Analysis approach described in EA/DEFRA Technical Report FD2320/TR2 Flood Risk Assessment Guidance for New Development

⁵⁰ taken from the EA's Crowland and Cowbit Flood Storage Reservoir Study (March 2008)

⁵¹ and more information than that provided by the FRA submitted to support the proposed B1 use at Crease Drove (LPA reference H02-0743-16). The Environment Agency did not object to this proposal or raise concerns regarding the information contained within the FRA.

considered to provide the additional information required to consider the proposal acceptable in relation to flood risk.

- 6.73 Not only can the site be safely developed to included inherent protection in the event of a breach event, but the proposal will also not have any adverse impact on the historic environment. Following the refusal of the previous application on the grounds of insufficient information regarding the proposal's impact on the setting and significance of designated and non-designated heritages or on the archaeological potential of the site, the Applicant has also since commissioned a **Heritage and Archaeological Statement** (prepared by Trigpoint Conservation and Planning Ltd) to provide the additional information required to enable the proposal to be determined favourably with regard to heritage assets.
- 6.74 The Heritage Statement considers the likely impact of the proposal on all listed buildings and scheduled monuments within 1km of the site but considers that, other than Crowland Abbey Church, none of the listed buildings or scheduled monuments are sensitive to, or affected by, the development proposed on the site.
- 6.75 As such, the Heritage and Archaeological Statement focuses specifically upon the significance of Crowland Abbey Church and the potential impact of the proposal on this listed building. It identifies that the Church's significance principally relates to its historic and architectural interest (its built fabric and composition), and its associations with the scheduled abbey site and is informed by its visual prominence within its wider surroundings as a result of the local topography⁵².
- 6.76 In assessing the proposal's impact upon Crowland Abbey Church, the Heritage Statement concludes that *'The proposed development will not have any direct*

⁵² Paragraphs 7.2 and 7.4 of the Heritage and Archaeological Statement

*impact on the historic and architectural interest of the church and will not diminish its relationship with the wider abbey site*⁵³ and that the limited degree of intervisibility that exists between Crease Drove and the church tower across this site makes only a very limited contribution to the setting of the church and its overall significance⁵⁴. As such, existing views of the tower will be largely unaffected by the proposed development, particularly as the proposed development is likely to be of a similar scale to the existing development that already surrounds the church on the south side of Crowland⁵⁵.

6.77 As a result of the above, the Heritage Statement concludes that the impact of the proposed development on the overall setting and significance of the church will therefore be largely neutral as there will be no deterioration in the visual importance of the church within its surrounding landscape. *'The proposed development will therefore have no adverse impact on the setting of this listed building or its overall significance'*⁵⁶.

6.78 The Heritage Statement also confirms that given the relative distance between the site and the Conservation Area and the screening provided by the intervening built development on the south side of Crowland, the development proposed would not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area⁵⁷.

6.79 With regard to the proposal's impact on the archaeological potential of the site, the Heritage Statement confirms that there was no evidence of any above-ground archaeology from the site visit⁵⁸ and the potential for prehistoric,

⁵³ Paragraph 7.3

⁵⁴ Paragraph 7.5

⁵⁵ Paragraph 7.6

⁵⁶ Paragraph 7.7

⁵⁷ Paragraph 5.8

⁵⁸ Paragraph 2.2

Romano-British, Medieval, and any below-ground archaeological remains within the appeal site is considered to be low to negligible⁵⁹. *'The site of the proposed development site does not appear to fall within an area of archaeological interest and the proposed development is therefore unlikely to have any harmful impact on any below-ground archaeology'*⁶⁰.

- 6.80 The Heritage Statement further confirms that the proposed development will not have any impact on surrounding Post-Medieval sites or their settings.
- 6.81 The Heritage Statement concludes that the proposed development is unlikely to have any harmful impact on any below-ground archaeology and it will not harm the setting or overall significance of any of the listed buildings within the vicinity of the site and will preserve the character and appearance of the Crowland Conservation Area⁶¹ in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and relevant local planning policies⁶².
- 6.82 The assessment contained within the Heritage and Archaeological Statement provides the information required regarding the significance of potentially affected heritage assets and the proposal's impact on the setting of these heritage assets and on the archaeological potential of the site and fulfils the requirements of Paragraph 128 of the NPPF. The information submitted demonstrates that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the historic environment in accordance with Section 12 of the NPPF, and as such, satisfactorily addresses the third reason for refusal.
- 6.83 Having regard to all of the above the proposal fully accords with those relevant up-to-date policies of the Local Plan and there are no adverse impacts of the

⁵⁹ See paragraphs 8.2-8.12

⁶⁰ Paragraphs 8.13

⁶¹ Paragraph 9.1

⁶² Paragraph 9.2

scheme which would ‘*significantly*’ and ‘*demonstrably*’ outweigh the noteworthy benefits of this proposal which include delivering much needed housing, (including affordable housing) in a highly sustainable location, the creation of jobs during construction and the spending power of new residents which will support the local economy, and the contribution towards the highway improvements to Crease Drove (in collaboration with adjoining sites currently under consideration, or known to be submitted shortly⁶³).

5.84 **As such, as directed by paragraphs 14 and 187 of the NPPF, in adopting the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the scheme should be granted consent without delay.**

6. Design

6.1 Use, Amount, Scale, Layout and Appearance

6.1.1 **OUTLINE planning permission** is sought for the proposed erection of around 41 dwellings with all matters reserved for subsequent approval save for means of access.

6.1.2 The detailed means of access⁶⁴ (to be considered in detail at this outline stage) is more particularly shown on the ***Illustrative Layout Plan*** and **drawing no ADC122/001 B** respectively, both submitted with the application.

6.1.3 The details of *scale, landscaping, layout* and *appearance* will constitute matters to be subsequently approved at the ‘Reserved Matters’ stage.

6.1.4 The *Illustrative Layout Plan* does, however, indicate that a 6 metre buffer will be created along the eastern boundary of the site as a no-build zone. This is

⁶³ Including the resubmission of the Harvester Way application (LPA reference H02-1087-14)

⁶⁴ and highway improvement works to Crease Drove.

necessary to avoid building over the IDB watercourse and pipe but will also ensure that the amenity and privacy of residents of Beccelm Drive is preserved.

6.1.5 The *Illustrative* Layout Plan also indicates includes provision of a public amenity space in the south-west corner of the site. This is supported by the Noise Assessment which considered that *'The site layout helps reduce noise impact from potential noise sources to the southwest by providing an area of public amenity space in the southwest corner to increase separation distance and provider a buffer zone'*⁶⁵.

6.2 Landscaping

6.2.1 Whilst Landscaping is not one of those matters submitted for approval at this stage, a proposed landscaping scheme (including the public amenity space) is shown indicatively on the *Illustrative* Layout Plan as part of the formal planning application.

6.2.2 The landscape approach has been informed largely by the conclusions and recommendations of the **Landscape and Visual Appraisal**, carried out at the outset by Influence Environmental Ltd, which concluded that *'with appropriate landscaping along its southern and western edges, ... any impact on landscape character would not be significant and very localised'*⁶⁶. In particular, the scheme has adopted the recommendations of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal in terms of:

- the retention of existing landscape features (hedgerows and trees) along the northern and eastern boundaries;
- the setting back of development from the existing residential settlement edge to the east;

⁶⁵ Paragraph 6.2

⁶⁶ Paragraph 3.5

- the provision of public amenity space within the south-western corner of the site;
- hedgerow and tree planting along the southern and western edges of the development to soften views of the development from the wider countryside;
- extending the existing wildlife corridors along site boundaries; and
- structural and amenity planting within the proposed development.

6.2.3 It is considered that a **standard landscaping condition** will be sufficient to adequately control the type and extent of future planting (and maintenance) at this stage.

7. Access

7.1 The means of access is submitted for detailed determination at this outline stage.

7.2 Access will be obtained directly off Crease Drove via a new priority controlled T-junction. The proposed access meets the required visibility splays to enable safe and convenient access to and from the site. The *Illustrative* Layout Plan suggests that turning heads will be provided to allow refuse and delivery vehicles to turn and exit in forward gear and an internal network of footways (connected to the wider network of footways) will be provided to enable safe pedestrian movement to, from and within the site.

7.3 The proposal has been informed by the **Transport Statement** prepared by ADC Infrastructure Limited. This considered the cumulative impact of the proposal alongside commitments and other residential developments being promoted

within the immediate area (and considered likely to come forward) and recommended the widening of Crease Drove to 5.5 metres along its length from Monks Meadow to Harvester Way and the provision of a new footway from the access junction towards the town centre connecting to the existing footway at Monks Meadow.

7.4 This application can be considered both on its own merits and collectively with planning applications for neighbouring sites which are currently before the Council, or likely to come forward shortly. On its own, the proposal will contribute to improvements to Crease Drove to enable it to safely accommodate the additional traffic generated by the proposal (which in any case will be kept to the minimum due to the proximity of the application site to services and facilities in Crowland and bus stops providing public transport to surrounding settlements). Considered cumulatively with potential development on surrounding sites, the Applicant is more than happy contribute proportionately alongside other land owners to fund the widening of Crease Drove - something that can easily and routinely be secured by either a **Grampian type planning condition**, or as part of any S106 Agreement prepared in association with the development.

7.5 In this regard, the proposal satisfies the requirement of Policy SG6 that new development includes measures to demonstrate how public infrastructure and services required to support the development will be delivered.

8. Conclusions

8.1 This proposal represents a logical extension of the settlement of Crowland which would not be prominent or damaging to the essential character of the area or main environmental assets of the District. The proposal embraces the principles of sustainable development and as a form of sustainable

development is supported by both national planning policy and policies SG1 and SG2 of the Local Plan.

8.2 In light of the significant deficit in the Council's five-year housing land supply, those policies relevant to the supply of housing in the Development Plan cannot be considered up-to-date. As such, as directed by paragraph 14 of the NPPF (when applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development), planning consent should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would '*significantly*' and '*demonstrably*' outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

8.3 This proposal comprises a sustainable form of development and any adverse effects will not '*significantly*' and '*demonstrably*' outweigh the tangible social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme which include:

- the provision of new market and affordable housing to meet the Council's current and future housing obligations;
- local employment opportunities during construction;
- support for local shops and services through the additional spending power of future residents;
- financial benefits for the Council sums received through Community Infrastructure Levy, and Council Tax, and the New Homes Bonus;
- significant new planting to the benefit of biodiversity on the site; and
- contributions to local highway improvements which will benefit existing as well as future residents.

8.4 For all these reasons, planning consent should be granted on this occasion as a form of sustainable development in accordance with the *presumption in favour of sustainable development* enshrined throughout the NPPF, subject to any reasonable and necessary planning conditions required to ensure a satisfactory development.