



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Meeting: Planning Committee

Time: 2:00 pm

Date: Wednesday 4 March 2026

Venue: Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE

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Committee membership

Quorum: 5 members

Conservative members

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Lavinia Edwards
Cllr Martin Goodearl
Cllr Mark Goldsack (Vice Chair)
Cllr Bill Hunt (Chair)
Cllr Alan Sharp

Conservative substitutes

Cllr Keith Horgan
Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr Lucius Vellacott

Liberal Democrat and Independent members

Cllr Chika Akinwale
Cllr Christine Colbert
Cllr James Lay
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Ross Trent
Cllr Christine Whelan (Lead Member)

Liberal Democrat and Independent substitutes

Cllr Lee Denney
Cllr Lorna Dupré
Cllr Mary Wade

Lead Officer: David Morren, Strategic Planning and DM I Manager

11 am Planning Committee members meet at The Grange reception for site visit.

AGENDA

1. Apologies and substitutions

[oral]

- 2. Declarations of interests** **[oral]**
To receive declarations of interests from Members for any items on the agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.
- 3. Minutes** **Page 5**
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14 January 2026.
- 4. Chair's announcements** **[oral]**
- 5. 25/00639/FUM – Hightown Drove, Burwell** **Page 27**
Location: Land Southwest of Hightown Drove, Burwell, Cambridgeshire
Applicant: Greenergy Renewables UK Limited
Public access link: [25/00639/FUM | Erection of a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure | Land Southwest Of Hightown Drove Burwell Cambridgeshire](#)
To erect a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure.
- 6. 25/00717/F3M – Land South of Princess of Wales Hospital, Ely** **Page 95**
Location: Land South of Princess of Wales Hospital, Ely
Applicant: East Cambs Trading Company Ltd
Public access link: [25/00717/F3M | Development of 13no. new homes, including 5no. apartments and 8no. houses with access, parking and landscaping | Land South Of The Princess Of Wales Hospital Ely Cambridgeshire](#)
Development of 13 new homes, including 5 apartments and 8 houses with access, parking and landscaping.
- 7. Planning performance report – December 2025** **Page 131**
- 8. Planning performance report – January 2026** **Page 135**
- 9. Planning performance annual report – 2026** **Page 139**

Exclusion of the public including representatives of the press

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining items because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information in categories 1, 2 and 7 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

- 10. Quarterly performance in resolving planning enforcement cases**

Notes

1. Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. Please report to the main reception desk on arrival at The Grange. Visitor car parking on-site is limited to 1h but there are several [free public car parks close by](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/parking-open-spaces-and-toilets/car-parks/car-parks-ely) (<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/parking-open-spaces-and-toilets/car-parks/car-parks-ely>). The maximum capacity for meetings in the Council Chamber has been set by the Fire Officer at 100 persons. Allowing for Member/Officer attendance and room layout constraints this will normally give a capacity for public attendance of 30 seated people and 20 standing. Public access to the Council Chamber will be from 30 minutes before the start of the meeting and, apart from for registered public speakers, is on a “first come, first served” basis.

The livestream of this meeting will be available [on the committee meeting’s webpage](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/node/2643) (<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/node/2643>). Please be aware that all attendees, including those in the public gallery, will be visible on the livestream.

2. The Council has a scheme to allow [public speaking at Planning Committee](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/public-participation-meetings/speak-committee-meeting) (<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/public-participation-meetings/speak-committee-meeting>). If you wish to speak on an application being considered at the Planning Committee please contact the Democratic Services Officer for the Planning Committee democratic.services@eastcambs.gov.uk, to **register by 10am on Tuesday 3 March**. Alternatively, you may wish to send a statement to be read at the Planning Committee meeting if you are not able to attend in person. Please note that public speaking, including a statement being read on your behalf, is limited to 5 minutes in total for each of the following groups:
 - Objectors
 - Applicant/agent or supporters
 - Local Ward Councillor
 - Parish/Town Council
 - County Councillors
 - National/Statutory Bodies
3. The Council has adopted a ‘Purge on Plastics’ strategy and is working towards the removal of all consumer single-use plastics in our workplace. Therefore, we do not provide disposable cups in our building or at our meetings and would ask members of the public to bring their own drink to the meeting if required.
4. Fire instructions for meetings:
 - if the fire alarm sounds, please make your way out of the building by the nearest available exit, which is usually the back staircase or the fire escape in the Chamber and do not attempt to use the lifts
 - the fire assembly point is in the front staff car park by the exit barrier
 - the building has an auto-call system to the fire services so there is no need for anyone to call the fire services
 - the Committee Officer will sweep the area to ensure that everyone is out
5. Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked “oral”.
6. If required, all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (such as large type, Braille or audio tape, or translated into other languages), on request, by calling main reception on (01353) 665555 or e-mail: translate@eastcambs.gov.uk

7. If the Committee wishes to exclude the public and press from the meeting, a resolution in the following terms will need to be passed:

“That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no(s). X because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category X of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee

Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 2:00pm on
Wednesday 14 January 2026

Present:

Cllr Chika Akinwale (left at 4:15 pm)
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Christine Colbert
Cllr Lavinia Edwards
Cllr Mark Goldsack (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Martin Goodearl
Cllr Bill Hunt (Chair)
Cllr James Lay
Cllr Alan Sharp
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Ross Trent
Cllr Mary Wade (substitute)

Officers:

Patrick Adams – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Philip Baum – Planning Officer
Kevin Breslin – Locum Planning Lawyer
Sophie Brown – Planning Team Leader
Rachael Forbes – Senior Planning Officer
Yole Medieros – Major Projects Officer
David Morren – Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager
Christopher Partrick – Conservation Officer

In attendance:

ECDC Comms
Members of the public

39. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Christine Whelan. Cllr Mary Wade substituted for Cllr Christine Whelan.

40. Declarations of interest

Cllr Bill Hunt declared an interest in agenda item 7, Main Street, Little Thetford, as he knew the applicant. He left the Chamber whilst this item was discussed. He did not participate in the debate and did not vote.

Cllr Christine Colbert declared an interest in agenda item 6, Little Lane, Ely, as the applicant. She left the meeting whilst this item was discussed. She did not participate in the debate and did not vote. Cllr Colbert also declared an interest in agenda item 5, land off Water Lane, Kirtling, as she had been present at the Committee that had discussed this item in July. She declared that she was coming to the meeting afresh and with an open mind.

Cllr Alan Sharp declared an interest in agenda item 5, land off Water Lane, Kirtling. He had called this decision in as the local member and had been present at the Committee that had discussed this matter in July. He declared that he was coming to the meeting with an open mind.

41. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

42. Chair's announcements

The Chair reported that agenda item 10 would be discussed after agenda item 5, due to the amount of public interest in this item.

43. 25/00371/FUL – Land Off Water Lane, Kirtling

Rachael Forbes, Senior Planning Officer, presented a report (AA114, previously circulated) recommending refusal for the building of a purpose built Wildlife Veterinary Hospital including residential facilities on land off Water Lane in Kirtling. She stated that Planning Committee on 2 July 2025 had voted to defer this application. However, despite amendments to the application the officer's recommendation was to refuse on the grounds of conflicts with policies GROWTH 2, ENV1 and ENV2.

The Committee received the following statement from objector Simon Gooderham:

"Good afternoon, my name is Simon Gooderham, I am a resident of Kirtling and speaking as an objector to this application. I am also speaking on behalf of a number of other local residents, some of whom are here today, who are strong objectors to this application.

"This objection is not about being against the support and care of wildlife, it is about upholding the policies of East Cambs District Council and protecting the countryside. The application is for a 24/7 commercial scale wildlife hospital situated in open countryside, which would cause irreversible damage to the

landscape and tranquillity of the area and will have a detrimental effect on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings because of noise and light pollution. The proposed development is totally inappropriate for this location, and wildlife care can be provided on a more suitable and sustainably located site.

“Whilst the revised application includes additional design and supporting information, no amount of design or mitigation can overcome the fact that development in this location is fundamentally contrary to a number of the East Cambs District Council Local Plan policies, and the proposal is not supported by any overriding National Planning policies.

“The application site is outside of the Kirtling village development envelope and is contrary to East Cambs Policy EMP 3 which states that rural employment sites should be “closely related to the built framework of the village”. The location of the proposed development is contrary to this Policy.

“East Cambs Policy GROWTH 6 has been adopted to prevent sprawl into the open countryside and therefore the application is contrary to the strategic objectives of the Local Plan. The proposed residential accommodation on site is unjustified and is contrary to East Cambs Policy HOU 5 (Dwellings for Rural Workers) which permits such housing only where there is a proven and essential functional need. The proposed shift pattern of workers at the site means that there is no requirement for permanent living accommodation and the need for such a facility is neither proven nor essential.

“The assessment of alternative sites is inaccurate and misleading, and there have been a number of suitable alternative sites available to purchase in the past 12-18 months in the locality which would have much less harm and impact on the rural landscape. The development will result in the loss of high-quality Grade 2 agricultural land and this type of facility should be situated on a previously developed site or on lower quality Grade 3 or 4 land or in close proximity to an established veterinary facility.

“In addition to being contrary to the above major policies, the proposal will require significant highway improvements which will impact on a Protected Road Verge, and the proposed development is located immediately adjacent to an active badger sett and will have a direct impact on this protected species.

“There are significant material planning considerations why this application should be refused, and no justification to deviate from the adopted policies in the East Cambs Local Plan, the very purpose of which are in place to prevent inappropriate development in this type of location. We strongly urge the Committee to uphold the recommendations of the planning officer and to refuse this application for all the grounds stated in the officer’s report and this statement.”

Councillors were invited to ask questions to Simon Gooderham.

Following questioning from Cllr Christine Colbert, Simon Gooderham explained that there had been a number of alternative sites for the development that had become available in the parish and across the district. Many of these sites were on the outskirts of villages, were screened by hedgerows and in his view would have been affordable.

The Committee received the following statement from the applicant's agent Angie Curtis:

"I am here to support the Long Acre Wildlife Hospital application: a purpose-built veterinary wildlife hospital, with modest on-site accommodation.

"This is not a speculative scheme. It is a practical response to a real and worsening crisis. Local wildlife is under increasing pressure, while rescue capacity across the region is shrinking rapidly.

"In the last two years alone, more than nine wildlife rescue centres have closed in the region. When centres close, the need does not disappear—it is displaced. It falls onto those remaining and, ultimately, onto individuals like Sue.

"Sue treats more than 1,000 animals every year: not just hedgehogs, but deer, foxes, badgers, bats, birds, hares and leverets, rabbits, stoats and weasels. Her operation has outgrown what can be delivered within a domestic home. Every room is now used for treatment, recovery, quarantine or storage.

"This is not sustainable for animal welfare, biosecurity, or for Sue herself. Without a purpose-built facility, there is a very real risk that this established, trusted service will be forced to close. It also supports ten smaller rescue centres, each taking between 50 and 150 hedgehogs a year. Losing Sue's facility would mean losing that entire network, that supports another 900 hedgehogs annually.

"This proposal keeps the service alive with a proper clinical base. A concern has been raised that the on-site accommodation is a "ruse" for a house in the countryside. It is not.

"Sue is the founder, the key worker, and the person providing 24/7 care. Wildlife admissions are unpredictable. Juvenile and critically injured animals require frequent feeding, medication and monitoring – day and night. Emergencies can arrive at any time. The accommodation proposed is modest and functionally inseparable from the hospital.

"If Members wish to secure this further, they can with conditions: standard safeguards that allow the hospital to function whilst protecting countryside policy.

"This application relates to a defined 1.18-acre red line boundary, within the 27-acre field, which will be managed as a wildlife meadow, with native planting, habitat creation and ecological restoration of the land.

“The hospital is a contained, purpose-built facility within a much larger conservation-led landscape. It is not an urbanising intrusion; it creates a nett gain for biodiversity. Sue is keen to engage with the Cambridgeshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy team with woodland and tree planting that aligns the site with county-wide nature recovery objectives.

“Sue has spent over six years searching for a suitable site. Many sites were unavailable or unsuitable. Long Acre meets the important requirements of wildlife rehabilitation:

- no overhead power lines
- separation from dense housing
- minimal light pollution
- and, critically, low noise.

“Noise is not theoretical. A stressed leveret can fail to thrive—or even die—due to disturbance. This hospital is designed to be tranquil by necessity. That same tranquillity protects neighbours: this is not a public attraction, but a quiet, well-managed facility with controlled drop-offs and low traffic.

“The site lies just outside the village envelope; it is not a typical residential or commercial development, but a specialist wildlife hospital that must, by its nature, be in a rural setting. To assess it, as if it were another housing proposal misses its essential purpose and public benefit.

“Most technical concerns have been answered. Highways and parking are no longer reasons for refusal. Visual amenity objections have been substantially conceded. Environmental Health has not objected, and any residual noise concerns can be addressed by condition rather than refusal. Ecological matters can be resolved through engagement with the appointed ecologists and the LNRS process.”

Members were invited to ask questions to Angie Curtis and Sue Stublely.

In reply to Cllr Chika Akinwale, Sue Stublely stated that she had spent the last six to seven years looking for alternative sites. She had been out bid on one site and the owner had decided not to sell a second site. All other sites had not been unsuitable due to their proximity to roads or power lines. She owned the site of the application and the surrounding land, which animals such as hares and leverets could be released onto. She added that wild animals could often die through stress when transported but animals could be released onto the land surrounding the site of the proposed development, where hares and leverets were already living.

In reply to Cllr Chika Akinwale and Cllr Christine Colbert, Sue Stublely stated she planned to live on the site of the hospital, as the animals required constant care and it was difficult to secure volunteers to work throughout the night.

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, Angie Curtis explained that the project had a fund raising campaign in place, waiting for planning permission to be granted, but it would be fraudulent to raise money without planning permission. The project

had 10,000 named supporters and a plan was in place to fund the ongoing costs over the longer term. She added that the containers on site would be moved as part of the building plan.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, Angie Curtis confirmed that the £1.5 million required related to building costs. Sue Stublely explained that it was not possible to expand the existing hospital, and a larger premises was required. The plans for the new hospital included an operating theatre and an X-ray facility.

The Senior Planning Officer reported that the Highways Authority had estimated the cost of their works on site as £35,000 to £85,000. In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, Angie Curtis accepted that the cost of the roadworks could be more than the amount estimated by the Highways Authority.

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, Sue Stublely explained that the proposed hospital would be able to offer work experience for veterinary nurses as part of their training.

Councillors were asked if they had any questions for the officers.

In reply to Cllr Chika Akinwale, the Senior Planning Officer explained that the report to the Planning Committee in July had listed five reasons for refusal. Two of these issues, ecological and highways, had been addressed and so the report to the Committee recommended refusal for three reasons. The site was outside the development envelope in contravention of policy GROWTH 2 of the Local Plan. The development would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and the resulting noise and disturbance would have a detrimental effect on the nearby occupiers in contravention of policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the Local Plan.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, the Senior Planning Officer confirmed that a condition could be added as part of the Section 106 Agreement to ensure that the building was restricted for use as an animal hospital.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Senior Planning Officer explained that the work of caring for animals could be covered by shift workers and so there was no need for someone to stay there all night.

The Committee moved into debate.

Cllr James Lay stated that whilst there would be local support for a wildlife hospital in the district, there was opposition for any development outside the village envelope. He supported the officer's recommendation to refuse the application. Cllr Christine Colbert disagreed, and stated that by its very nature, a wildlife hospital had to be located in a remote area, away from existing development.

Cllr Alan Sharp expressed his sympathy for the application but stated that it was in the wrong location. He could not support the building of a facility that was outside the village envelope, on agricultural land, which would create noise

disturbance and a detrimental visual impact on the area. Cllr John Trapp agreed, stating that it was large, intrusive building in the wrong location. Cllr Bill Hunt recognised the emotive support for a wildlife hospital, but he could not support an application contrary to the Council's policies for a building outside the village envelope. Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith agreed. Cllr Mark Goldsack expressed his sympathy for the applicant who needed to find a remote location where development was permitted. He had concerns about the cost of the building and associated works. He queried whether the development could be completed within the three-year timeframe.

Cllr John Trapp proposed and Cllr Bill Hunt seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and with 9 votes in favour, 3 votes against and no abstentions.

It was resolved:

to refuse planning application 25/00371/FUL, for the reasons laid out in the report.

44. 25/01170/FUL – Little Lane, Ely

Cllr Christine Colbert left the Chamber whilst this item was discussed.

Philip Baum, Planning Officer, presented this report (AA115, previously circulated), which recommended that the Committee approve the application for a garage conversion, removal of garage door and infill with window and addition of porch to rear.

Councillors were invited to ask questions to the officer.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Planning Officer confirmed that the application proposed the replacing of the garage door.

The Committee moved into debate.

The Cllr Mark Goldsack proposed and Cllr Bill Hunt seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and the Committee unanimously agreed

to resolve:

to Approve the application 25/01170/FUL for the garage conversion, removal of garage door and infill with window and addition of porch to rear.

45. 25/0309/LBC – Main Street, Little Thetford

Cllr Bill Hunt left the meeting whilst this item was discussed and Cllr Mark Goldsack took the Chair.

Christopher Partrick, Conservation Officer, presented this report (AA116, previously circulated), which recommended that the Committee approve the application to replace the window in the north dormer of 4 Main Street, Little Thetford, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.S

Councillors were invited to ask questions to the officer.

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, the Conservation Officer explained that unlike the window under discussion, the other dormer window on the building had not been added in 1994.

The Committee moved into debate.

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith proposed and Cllr Martin Goodearl seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and the Committee unanimously agreed

to resolve:

to **Approve** application 25/0309/LBC to replace the window in the north dormer of 4 Main Street, Little Thetford, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

46. Sunnica Non-material Change (NMC) Application

Yole Medeiros, Major Projects Officer, presented this report (AA117, previously circulated), which recommended that the Committee approve the Council's response to the non-material change (NMC) proposed by Sunnica Limited to The Sunnica Energy Farm Order 2024 (the Development Consent Order, DCO), which came into force on 3 August 2024.

Councillors were invited to ask questions to the officer.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, the Major Projects Officer confirmed that the drain that was being crossed was not a navigable water course.

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that the substation on this location had already been built, and the Committee were being asked to confirm no objection would be raised to the application to move the boundary in the original DCO. The Major Projects Officer confirmed that permission to lay the cables had been agreed in the original DCO.

The Committee moved into debate.

Cllr Mark Goldsack proposed and Cllr John Trapp seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and with 10 votes in favour and 1 abstention the Committee agreed

to resolve:

- (i) To **approve** the draft response (Appendix 1), agreeing with the nature and scope of proposed changes as non-material to the DCO; and;
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager to submit the response on behalf of ECDC.

47. Planning Performance Report

David Morren, Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager, presented a report (AA118, previously circulated) summarising the performance of the Planning Department in November 2025. He explained that the appeal regarding the decision to refuse an application to build tennis courts at Ben's Yard, Soham Road, Stuntney had been dismissed, as the applicant had been unable to overcome the refusal in relation to the presences of bats, a protected species. It was noted that the application could be resubmitted if this issue was addressed.

The Chair thanked the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager for his work regarding a planning matter on Main Street, Witchford.

It was resolved:

To **note** the report.

48. 25/00639/FUM – Hightown Drove, Burwell

This item was considered after agenda item 5.

The Major Projects Officer presented the report, (AA119, previously circulated) which recommended that the Committee approve the erection of a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure on land south west of Hightown Drove, Burwell. She reported that Cllr Charlotte Cane, local member for the parish of Reach, had written to express her opposition to the application.

Sara Phipps made the following statement as an objector to the application. "My name is Sara Phipps. I am the secretary of BEAT – Burwell Energy Awareness Team, and I speak on behalf of our group today.

“BEAT formed in October last year. We exist to make Burwell residents aware of energy developments in our village. We are a community group comprising of Burwell residents who are engineers and physicists, with direct industry experience.

“We recently carried out a technical assessment of the Weirs Drove BESS using only publicly available documents from the ECDC Planning Portal. Our assessment was based on resident concerns, and lessons learned from battery storage failures worldwide.

“We tested whether those concerns were properly addressed by the approved planning documents.

“Our findings are stark. Across the areas assessed, 67% were rated red. Meaning there was no visible evidence, there was missing information, or evidence of poorly, if any, quality controls applied.

“Last week this assessment was formally passed to the ECDC planning team, via our District councillor David Brown, and is now with Sophie Browne who is currently investigating our findings.

“These unresolved issues highlight serious weaknesses in how battery storage sites are regulated, monitored and enforced, creating potential risks to public safety. We raise these points today to ensure the same failures are not repeated at Hightown Drove.

“Our statement is clear. Robust planning is not just about approving infrastructure. It is about ensuring it operates safely for the lifetime of the development. It is about ensuring conditions of planning are implemented and followed through.

“We therefore ask that consideration of the Hightown Drove application be paused until these issues are fully addressed, that they are built into robust and enforceable planning conditions and applied consistently to all current and future battery storage developments in and around Burwell.

“Our key concerns are:

- Fire safety conditions.
- Firewater containment and environmental protection.
- Noise.
- And Emergency Response Planning.

“Although planning documents reference an Emergency Response Plan, we can find no evidence of an operational plan shared between the operator, the Council, and Fire and Rescue Services.

“Local residents have no guidance on what they should do in the event of an incident. They need guidance directly or facilitated via the Parish Council as soon as possible.

“The officer referred to Condition 11 in her introduction, there is no evidence we can find for this existing for Weirs Drove.”

Julia Rogers made the following statement as an objector to the application: “I object to the scheme because the battery energy storage noise will be above background noise levels at the Reach 24 Acres which runs adjacent to that field.

“The Grenergy noise assessment claims that the predicted noise rating levels are sufficiently low to not cause adverse impact on the receptor. The receptor points used in their survey are the roads with traffic noise where there are some residential properties. No impact assessment in quiet Reach 24 Acres adjacent to the proposed site has been undertaken. Reach 24 Acres connects Hightown Drove in Burwell to Reach. Incorporating memorial benches, apple orchards and many native trees planted in memory of loved ones including those in the orchard. The community invested time and money with the National Trust to create this peaceful environment. Will East Cambridgeshire District Council reject this application on the basis of intrusive noise above background noise levels? And if approved, can a planning condition for an independent noise assessment using the noise level at Reach 24 Acres as a receptor point be undertaken before it goes to completion and before going live and can these receptor points be approved by East Cambridgeshire District Council?”

Members were invited to ask questions to the public speakers.

In reply to Cllr James Lay, Sara Phipps explained that as far as she was aware there was no plan in place for the event of a fire at the site. She understood that if there was a fire at the Weirs Drove site it would be three days before it was regarded as an emergency and this was a concern to residents.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, Julia Rogers explained that the noise from the Weirs Drove site had not been assessed in its four years of operation and residents were suffering from the noise. She was concerned that a peaceful area of the countryside would be lost due to the noise from the battery proposed in the application and she asserted that it needed an independent assessment.

In reply to Cllr Lavinia Edwards, Sara Phipps stated that Burwell was a densely populated area and she were concerned about the battery at Weirs Drove and the fact that BEAT could find no evidence that the annual noise report agreed in the planning conditions had been carried out. She hoped that any conditions regarding this application under discussion would be enforced.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, Sara Phipps explained that the Weirs Drove substation was across the road from the site of the planning application and she reiterated that she could find no evidence that the noise had been monitored despite the fact that this was an agreed planning condition.

The agent Norome Campanile made the following statement on behalf of the applicant:

“Over recent years the UK has made impressive strides regarding renewable energy, with wind and solar power making an important contribution to our energy mix, but these sources are intermittent, without a way to store excess energy, we end up wasting it. In fact, in 2025, Britain spent close to £1.5 billion on curtailing wind power, paying to switch off turbines because we could not use the energy when it was generated. Instead, fossil fuel plants were turned on to meet demand. This is where battery storage comes in. Facilities, like the one we are proposing, store clean energy when it is abundant and release it when it is needed. This can save British taxpayers up to £40 billion by 2050, by cutting waste and enhancing grid reliability.

“Concerns regarding the safety of this technology have been raised, so I want to provide some reassuring information. There is a plethora of legislation and regulations, and guidelines are in place to ensure that developers build their projects to the highest standard. The industry is constantly innovating and we are seeing more efficient and safer battery technology coming out each year. Globally the amount of batteries being built is increasing rapidly. Conversely the number of fires are decreasing. The incident rate fell by 98% in between 2018 to 2024. Improvements in design and battery chemistry have resulted in this decrease in fires. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service have and will continue to be consulted at all stages of the project. We can also confirm that the project follows the latest guidance. In the unlikely event of a fire, the approach is not to put the fire out, but to carry out boundary cooling, where the unit is left to a controlled burn and water is sprayed on adjacent containers, where they will remain cool. The entire site is designed with a closed off drainage system and the water will run off into a lined basin to ensure that the water does not seep into the local system.

“The second point I wish to raise is the impact that this will have on the Wicken Fen Nature Reserve and residential amenity. We have had confirmation from all the statutory consultees that they are satisfied with our methodology and findings. They have endorsed our view that the site will not have a detrimental effect on the wildlife in the area.

“In conclusion, we have designed this application to meet the highest environmental and safety standards with minimal visual impact. It is a clean, quiet, local traffic facility that supports national goals and will provide real local benefit.”

Toni Hylton made the following statement on behalf of the applicant:

“Hopefully you have had a chance to visit the site and understand the project. We appreciate the support of the officer, which is an opinion shared by the Planning Inspectorate, as 80% of renewable energy appeals have been allowed. GROWTH 2 accepts renewable energy projects in rural areas on the basis that the proposals agree with policy ENV6. Therefore, the starting point is that the principle of development is acceptable. ENV6 states that renewable energy proposals should be supported unless it will have significant adverse effects, listing seven considerations. Three of these can be discounted, as

there are no protected views, there are no airfields and there are no heritage assets that would be affected by the proposal. The proposal is in excess of 450 metres from the nearest residential property and in consultation with the EHO, no concerns in regard to noise have been raised. It is considered that the proposal will not create disturbance by way of noise or loss of light and so the amenity of the neighbours will be maintained. Whilst some residents may have sight of the proposal, as Members will know, this is not a reason to reject a proposal, particularly as there is no policy supporting a right to a view. Landscaping impacts are considered to be localised, given the mitigation strategy. However, any impact needs to be weighed against the benefits, particularly with regards to the provision of renewable energy and local carbon reduction. The proposal should also be read in context to its surrounding, against a backdrop of existing power installations. Whilst concerns from residents have been received, it is important to note that the application is supported by a number of technical reports which demonstrate that no significant adverse effects arise from this development, in accordance with ENV6.

“East Cambridgeshire District Council in 2019 declared a climate emergency and like the Government they have set a net zero target by 2050 and this proposal will help to meet that target. It is hoped that Members see the benefit of this scheme, aiding the Council to meet its own net zero target by 2050. Locating the proposal in an area where connectivity can be made, set amongst other power installations and it can deliver a significant increase in biodiversity, over and above the 10% required by the local authority.”

Councillors were invited to question those speaking on behalf of the applicant.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, Norome Campanile stated that the Cambridgeshire Fire Service had raised no objections to the application. She supported Cllr Goodearl's suggestion for annual inspections of the site.

In reply to Cllr Lavinia Edwards, Norome Campanile stated that no decision had been taken regarding the sourcing of the solar panels, but it was likely that they would come from China. In the unlikely event of fire, it would be contained and left to burn itself out with boundary containers being cooled. Measures were in place to minimise the risk of contamination. In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, Norome Campanile stated the water would not be used to put out the fire but to ensure that the fire was contained. There was an isolation valve that ensured that the internal drainage system was closed and that there would be no contamination.

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, Norome Campanile explained that the proposal was to build on 3A agricultural land and there had been no objections to the biodiversity plan to ensure no significant local harm.

In reply to Cllr Mary Wade, Norome Campanile stated that the plans had met the requirements of the Cambridgeshire Fire Service, who would be notified of any amendments made to the plans. If the guidance changed, then the plans

would be amended. Meetings would be held with the two parish councils to mitigate their concerns.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, Norome Campanile reported that UK Power Networks had noted the location of the overhead power lines and there was no evidence that this presented a risk. Fire vehicles could access the site if necessary and vehicles would be monitoring the site one or twice a week to carry out maintenance. In the event of a fire, up to 1,900 litres of water a minute could be discharged for two hours. The flooding and drainage consultants had recommended the location of the attenuation ponds due to natural run off.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, Toni Hylton explained that plans were in place to have discussions with the two parish councils and residents. The technology was changing and it was possible the development could reduce in size, with liquid cooling.

In reply to Cllr James Lay, Toni Hylton explained that the applicant had worked with the Cambridgeshire Fire Service to draw up an emergency response plan. It had been agreed that there was no need to have an evacuation plan for residents as any fire would be contained.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, Toni Hylton reported that the battery management system contained kill switches, which would automatically inform the Fire Service if activated. In the event of a fire, water run off would be contained and all containers had vents to minimise chances of explosion.

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, Toni Hylton confirmed that it would be necessary to power the battery from the national grid. Energy stored would be sold back to the national grid. Jonathan Cooper confirmed that Grenergy had no relation to existing development in the area.

Cllr Chika Akinwale left the meeting.

John Huges from the National Trust made the following statement:

“On behalf of the National Trust I am speaking to oppose the application. Our role is to protect special locations, so that people and nature can thrive. We fully recognise the need to address climate change and the importance of reaching net zero, however, we believe that this needs to be achieved without causing significant harm to landscapes and habitats. The proposed development sits in an area recognised as an important one for biodiversity. This landscape is already under pressure and its long-term survival relies on connected habitats, which is essential for wildlife movement. The remaining lowland fen habitats are scarce and scattered. Infrastructure such as deer fencing, security lighting and drainage risk creating new barriers, undermining existing and potential wildlife corridors, which are vital for nature recovery.

“With regards to noise, the site lies next to a project managed jointly by Reach Parish Council and the National Trust to connect people with nature and create habitats for turtle doves and other protected species. It is a big project,

aiming to connect people with nature and the tranquillity that is out there. Even a low continuous hum will permeate the areas that have been visually screened and undermine the tranquillity that defines this space. Levels of noise in planning regulations are based on those of an urban environment, not areas that are special for how quiet they are. Introducing industrial noise here would be intrusive and inappropriate.

“With regards to visual impact, policy ENV1 of the Local Plan requires development to conserve and enhance landscape character. Introducing a built form in an overwhelming rural area will noticeably affect the landscape character and affect the amenity for people who are walking and cycling nearby. It is not reasonable to argue that this development will simply blend in to the surrounding landscape. Containment is essential and without it, expansion becomes indefinite and the character of the wider landscape is gradually lost. I would also note that the screening on the western side of the site is our hedge on our land and it should not be our responsibility to screen their development.

“With regards to cumulative effects, within 4.5 kilometres of Wicken Fen, 6.5% of land is committed to solar power development, which will rise to 8% if this application is approved, whilst the UK average is 0.1%. We are already at saturation point and further development will intensify the cumulative effects.”

Neighbour Edward Hall made the following statement:

“I am a resident of Burwell Road, Reach and I am also representing other neighbours on this road. This is not nimbyism, we live next to a large regional substation which has battery storage, we can all see this. This is encroaching on the nature that we have. Fen land is very flat and any additional buildings block the view. There are only two fields between our road and the rest of the substation but if this application is agreed there will be only one field separating us. The animals, such as deer, will be funnelled into one very small space and that will become a problem.

“Residents have big concerns about smoke coming off the development. It is very windy and very flat. That will affect us constantly. The development is over a line. Hightown Drove is a cut off, with nature on one side and the development on the other. This is going over that line and we want to protect that. This could be the straw that breaks the camel’s back. Do we need the capacity in this area? Nationally yes, but in this area, maybe not.”

Councillors were invited to ask questions of the public speakers.

In reply to Cllr Lavinia Edwards, John Hughes from the National Trust explained that independent work on species recovery was being carried out.

In response to discussion on the south west hedge line, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that the indicative landscaping conditions had not been agreed.

In reply to Cllr Bill Hunt, John Hughes stated that any barrier between the two fens could have a negative impact on nature in the area.

Cllr Nick Aklam from Reach Parish Council made the following statement:

“I am a member of Reach Parish Council but am also here today with the express approval of Burwell Parish Council to represent their interests as well. There is a strong consensus within our collective communities in opposition to this scheme. It is important to say that the residents of both villages are not opposed to green energy development and as you have heard, the area already hosts a significant green energy presence. However, we see no contradiction in support for the principle of green energy but opposition to poor and inappropriate proposals, such as this one.

“The planning officer has recommended that on balance the application should be approved. I am here to attempt to persuade you to refuse the application and I want to do that by introducing evidence that is not in the planning officer’s report and to take a different interpretation of the evidence. Firstly, I wish to question the benefits of this scheme. The underlying assumption of the planning officer’s report and more explicitly paragraphs 7.5 to 7.10, is that the scheme is needed by the electricity supply system of the country, as it moves to decarbonise and accordingly the planning officer concludes that the application meets the criteria of ENV6, policy GROWTH 2 and PPF3. I wish to point out to you that on 3 December last year the National Energy System Operator (NESO), who governs who gets connection to the grid and when, presented the findings of its national review, attempting to bring a strategy to the energy supply distribution system in the UK. The report, and I have a couple of slides that I can show people if they wish to see the detail, reveals that there are way more best applications in the pipeline that are needed for the foreseeable future. The oversupply across the country to 2035 is a huge 62 gigawatts and to give you some idea of the scale of that, a gigawatt of electricity can power 700,000 to 1 million homes. In other words, there is 75% more capacity in the planning system than can be feasibly accommodated by the electricity supply system. The proportion of schemes that are forming this over capacity already have planning permission and may have previously been granted permission to connect to the grid. Grenergy is aware of this review and has informed me previously that it does not have a confirmed connection to the grid. It is thus somewhat down the list of best applicants hoping for a connection at some point in the indeterminate future. I would also point out that NESO, national grid and Ofgem are reviewing future development of the grid connections at Burwell, which adds uncertainty to the future viability and deliverability of the scheme. So the benefit of this scheme to the UK’s electricity infrastructure and to our locality is at best, very unclear.

“On issues of harm, colleagues have already pointed out a number of the issues. I wish to point out that the planning officer’s report failed to mention that all of the households of Reach live within 1 kilometre of the proposed scheme and some are much closer than that. A number of houses in Burwell are also within 1 kilometre of the site. In the absence of any firm regulations from UK central government, 1 kilometre might sound like an arbitrary

distance, but I mention it because there is a bill in the California state legislature, which is proscribing a distance of 1 kilometre from any scheme. I am not trying to draw direct comparisons between the Grenergy scheme and the Moss Landing scheme which drove that legislation forward but I think that the long term impact on public health and the environment are being assessed and I exhort the Committee to adopt a safety first approach and either reject the scheme or postpone making a decision, to wait for further information.

“I would also like to briefly mention the visual intrusion of this scheme, which should be seen in the context of all the other schemes that are in the pipeline or are actually being built. I think that the cumulative effect of these developments is impacting on the countryside and industrialising the southern end of Burwell Fen. In conclusion, I ask you to reject the scheme.”

Councillors were invited to ask questions.

In reply to Cllr James Lay, Cllr Nick Aklam explained that the fact that properties were within 1 kilometre was important due to the sound from the site, especially in the summer months, and due to safety concerns in the event of a thermal explosion.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, Cllr Nick Aklam explained that the NESO review showed that there was an emerging policy, whilst the BESS application related to the previous system.

Officers were invited to make any comments.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that the Government had announced a new national policy two weeks ago. This had given substantial weight to a net zero future. He added that the application met the planning guidelines regarding biodiversity and the Cambridgeshire Fire Service had raised no concerns with regards to fire safety. He concluded that any objections to the application had to be on planning grounds.

The Major Projects Officer explained that many of the concerns raised were addressed by planning conditions. Concerns regarding fire safety were covered in condition 11. There was also a noise management plan. Condition 27, included a standard concern on decommissioning.

Councillors were invited to ask questions to officers.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager reported that the Council did hold copies of emergency plans if it was relevant to the agreed conditions. He stated that the purpose of conditions was to mitigate harm and so it would not be possible to include a condition that lowered residents' energy bills.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that Condition 11 would ensure that the safety valve would shut off to prevent run off in the event of a fire. He reiterated that the Cambridgeshire Fire Service was responsible for the fire safety aspects of the project and they had raised no objections to the application. He also reiterated that he would look into report that there had been no assessment of noise generated by the Weirs Drove battery but Condition 11 would ensure that noise resulting from this application would be monitored. Environmental Services could rule on whether noise levels exceeded acceptable levels and mitigation could be put into place if this occurred.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager stated that a noise assessment had been undertaken and there was no requirement for the extra planting of trees to mitigate a potential noise nuisance.

In reply to Cllr Mary Wade, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager assured the Committee that wording in Conditions would be enforced.

In reply to Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that any decision made by the Committee to refuse an application had to be for evidenced planning reasons otherwise any appeal would be lost and this would be expensive. He added that the Council had to abide by the policies in its Local Plan.

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that the Council had the enforcement powers to ensure that the land was restored to agricultural land and the authority could add a step charge onto the land if a company went in receivership.

The Committee moved into debate.

Cllr Mark Goldsack stated that the Government had ruled that more green energy projects needed to be agreed in order to meet its targets. If the Council refused applications for these projects they would be approved on appeal, at a cost to the district's taxpayers. Whilst he recognised climate change, he questioned whether some of these projects could claim to be green when much of the materials had to be shipped from China. He hoped that residents understood the difficult position the Council was in. He was minded to abstain on this matter.

Cllr James Lay urged the Committee to make a moral stand on this issue and not agree an application because of the Government's policy.

Cllr Bill Hunt urged that if the Committee was to vote to refuse the application, it needed to give good planning reasons for this decision.

Cllr Alan Sharp proposed that the Committee oppose the application, as it was outside the development envelope and he did not consider it likely the land would be returned to agricultural use in 35 years. He expressed concern about the resulting noise and light pollution and the health and safety risks it would bring to residents. Cllr Lavinia Edwards agreed with Cllr Sharp.

Cllr John Trapp agreed to second Cllr Sharp's proposal, as he considered that the application would locate the battery too close to residents and the overhead powerline. He was concerned that any resulting fire could not be safely contained. He wanted evidence that the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service had considered all the fire safety concerns identified by residents and the Committee and he queried why there was no evacuation plan. He questioned whether the battery needed to be so close to the substation as modern powerlines prevented energy loss. He suggested that the application needed more details on these matters. He concluded that the Committee should not be obligated to approve all green energy applications and that this was not a good application, with significant risks and so he would not support it.

Cllr Mary Wade also opposed the application. She expressed concern that the concerns of local residents had not been addressed. She concluded that the Committee had the power to reject planning applications and should not feel compelled to agree all applications relating to green energy.

Cllr Martin Goodearl also opposed the application and expressed concern regarding reports that conditions imposed on the battery at Weirs Drove were not being enforced. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that the status of a condition relating to another application could not be used to justify refusing a different application.

Cllr Christine Colbert hoped that a condition could be added for an ongoing plan for safety issues and that any changes in the industry standards be reported to the parish councils.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that the Council's Local Plan allowed renewable energy development outside the local envelope. He advised that the Committee would need to quantify any adverse impacts of the application, which could not be mitigated by conditions, to justify refusal.

In reply to Cllr Mark Goldsack, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager advised that the Government guidelines defined what constituted green energy and this application met that definition.

Cllr Martin Goodearl opposed the application due to concerns regarding resident safety. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager advised that the Cambridgeshire Fire Service had not raised any objection to the application. He suggested that the Committee should consider mitigating its concerns through conditions.

Cllr Alan Sharp justified his opposition to the application by stating that it was contrary to policy ENV6, as it would have a significant adverse impact on the countryside and residential amenity. In his view the application would also create unacceptable noise and light pollution and it was clear that fire risks needed to be addressed. He added that he felt that the applicant had not addressed the concerns of the Committee. Cllr Mark Goldsack added that concerns regarding the impact on nature and the wildlife corridor between the two fens needed to be addressed. If agreed, the application would change the character of the area.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager urged the Committee to either agree additional conditions or provide good planning reasons for refusal.

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith recommended that the Committee defer the application to allow the concerns raised by members to be addressed. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager suggested that if the Committee was going to defer the decision, they should consider delegating power to him to liaise with Cllr Sharp and, if necessary, the applicant, to ensure that the Committee had the information it needed to make a decision. He added that if the Committee did defer the application, it should come back to the next meeting to avoid delaying this matter any further.

The Locum Planning Lawyer advised that members' concerns that the application had not been well prepared was not in itself a good reason to refuse the application. The application as submitted had been assessed by officers and the planning conditions proposed addressed most of the concerns raised by the Committee. He advised that if this matter was taken to appeal, the Council would struggle to justify its decision to refuse based on the arguments provided so far by the Committee. In that regard, any reasons for refusal would need to be robustly and precisely drafted. He suggested that if the Committee decided to defer then it would give time to properly consider the arguments for refusal and formulate reasons accordingly. Cllr Martin Goodearl supported this approach and suggested that the Committee could still vote to refuse the application and should not be fearful of the matter being taken to appeal.

Cllr Mark Goldsack asserted that the Committee needed to represent the views of residents from Burwell and Reach. He suggested that deferring a decision would give time to investigate concerns that had been raised at the Committee, in particular the safety matters raised by the public speakers. Cllr Mary Wade agreed and added that residents needed to be assured that conditions agreed by the Council, such as concerns regarding noise, would be enforced.

Cllr Alan Sharp proposed and Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith seconded that the decision be deferred for reasons already discussed. A vote was taken and with 7 votes in favour and four against the Committee agreed:

to resolve:

- (i) To **defer** this item to the next available Committee.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager in conjunction with Cllr Alan Sharp to review and construct potential reasons for refusal and to consider any further evidence or supporting documents should they be submitted by the applicants. To draw up additional conditions, in consultation with Cllr Alan Sharp and with the applicant providing further information if required to do so. With a further report outlining these to be presented to elected members at the appropriate time.

The meeting concluded at 6:55 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

DRAFT

25/00639/FUM

Land Southwest of Hightown Drove

Burwell

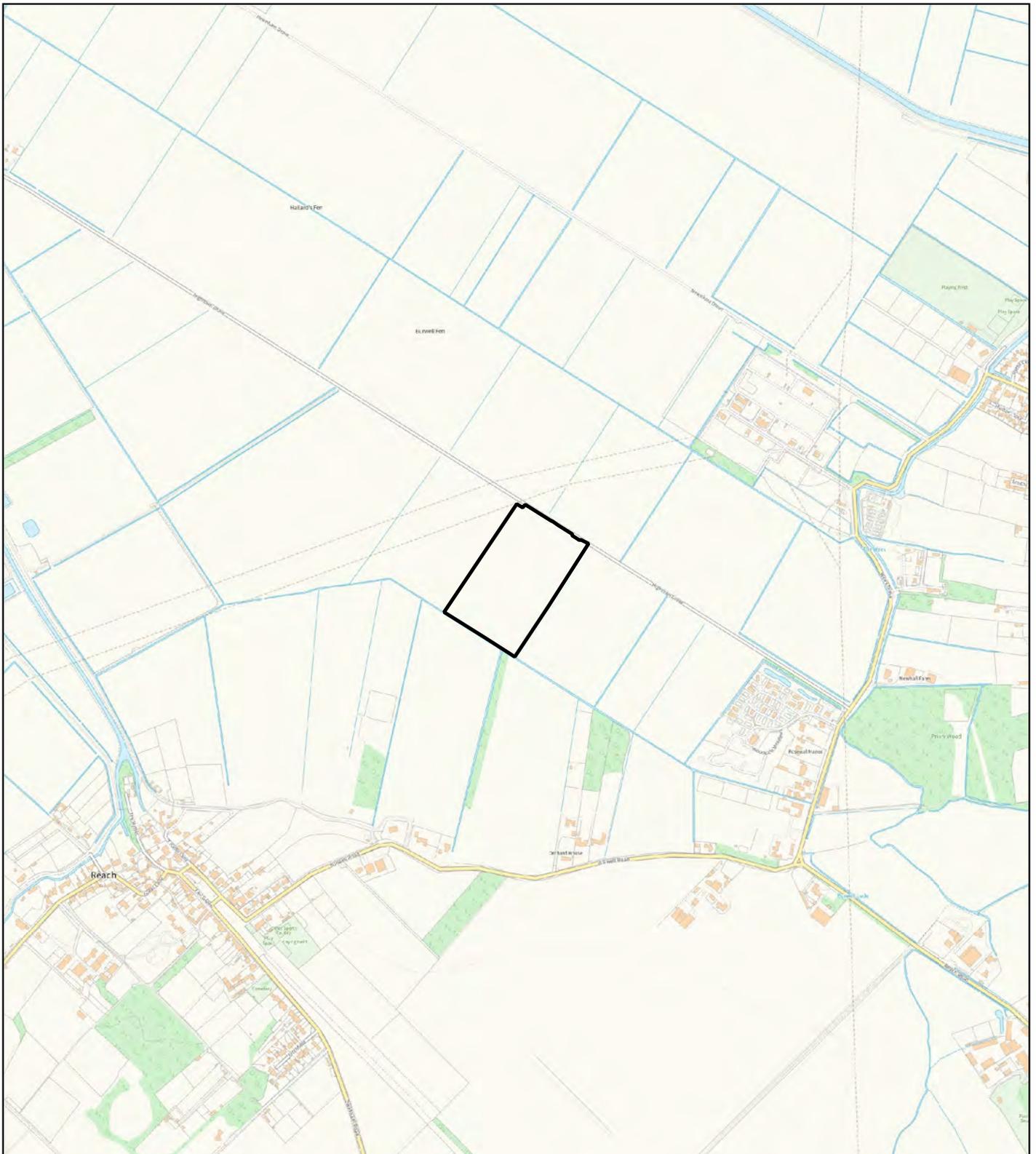
Cambridgeshire

To erect a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure.

To view all of the public access documents relating to this application please use the following web address or scan the QR code:

<https://pa.eastcamb.s.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SY08WUGGKR600>





25/00639/FUM

Land Southwest Of
Hightown Drove
Burwell

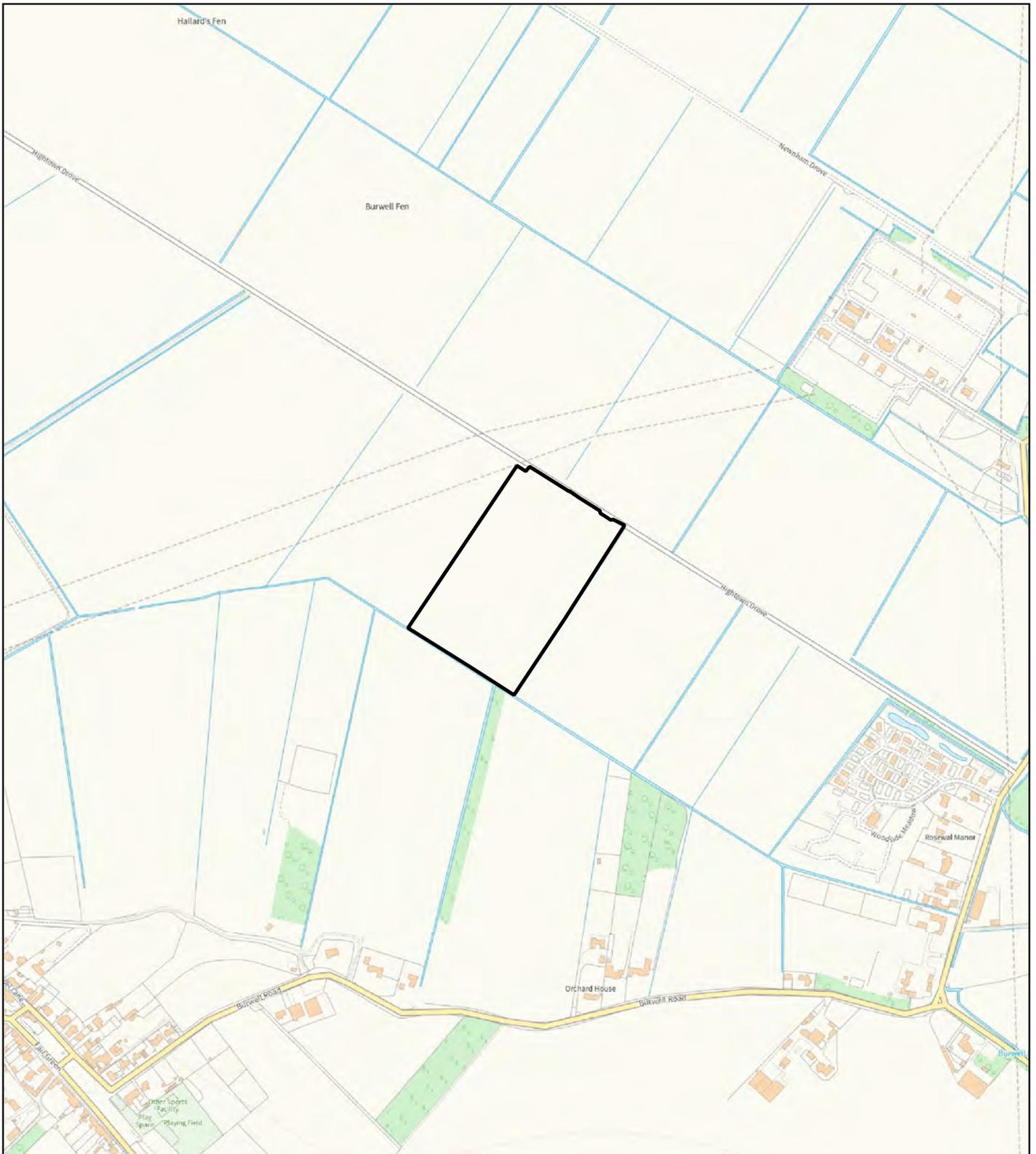


East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Date: 05/01/2026
Scale: 1:12,000



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25/00639/FUM

Land Southwest Of
Hightown Drive
Burwell



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Date: 05/01/2026
Scale: 1:8,000



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TITLE: 25/00639/FUM

Committee: Planning Committee

Date: 4 March 2026

Author: Major Projects Officer

Report No: AA148

Contact Officer: Gavin Taylor, Major Projects Officer
Gavin.Taylor@eastcambs.gov.uk
01353616348
Room No 011 The Grange Ely

Site Address: Land Southwest Of Hightown Drove Burwell Cambridgeshire

Proposal: Erection of a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure

Applicant: Greenergy Renewables UK Limited

Parish: Burwell

Ward: Burwell

Ward Councillor/s: David Brown
Lavinia Edwards

Date Received: 10 July 2025

Expiry Date: 9 October 2025

1.0 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 Members are recommended to APPROVE the application in accordance with the following terms:

1. The Committee delegates authority to finalise the pre-commencement conditions and terms and completion of the S.106 legal agreement to the Planning Manager; and
2. Following the completion of the S.106, application 25/00639/FUM be approved subject to the planning conditions at Appendix 1 (and summarised below); or,
3. The Committee delegates authority to refuse the application in the event that the applicant does not agree to any necessary extensions to the statutory determination period to enable the completion of the S106 legal agreement.

1.2 The application was previously considered by the Planning Committee on 14th January 2026, whereby it was resolved:

- (i) To **defer** this item to the next available Committee.
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager in conjunction with Cllr Alan Sharp to review and construct potential reasons for refusal and to consider any further evidence or supporting documents should they be submitted by the applicants. To draw up additional conditions, in consultation with Cllr Alan Sharp and with the applicant providing further information if required to do so. With a further report outlining these to be presented to elected members at the appropriate time.

1.3 A copy of the Planning Committee report for the meeting of 14th January 2026 ('the original committee report') can be found at Appendix 1. 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: <https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>

2.0 **UPDATE**

2.1 Further to the resolution set out at 1.1, the applicant submitted the following documents;

- Site Layout Plan - Drawing number 3 Rev 8
- Noise Impact assessment 51-705-R1-4
- Transport Assessment 211208-01 Rev C (which includes general arrangement and access plans as appendices)
- Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment V2
- Fire Strategy Plan - drawing no. 16 Rev 2
- Indicative Landscape Masterplan – A18 P0673Rev A
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Enhancement Scheme CIC v1.4
- BNG Metric V1.1
- Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment V2
- Firewater Management Plan Rev 2
- Fire Risk Emergency Response Plan 10607566-RMC-IE-02 Rev. 0
- Fire Risk Management Plan 10607566-RMC-IE- 01 Rev. 0
- Cover Letter

2.2 The above documents mostly respond to a site layout revision, which has moved some of the battery units further away from overhead power lines at the north-east corner of the compound and moved the associated infrastructure e.g., the substation, closer to Hightown Drove. Furthermore, the applicant provided a schedule of post-committee responses, which seeks to address some of the concerns and questions raised during the debate at the planning committee meeting of 14th January. In addition, a Fire Risk Management Plan and Fire Risk Emergency Response Plan has been submitted, along with recommended wording for a planning condition to secure this, further to proposed Condition 11 in the original committee report.

2.3 A 14-day consultation was undertaken on the amended/ further information with all previous consultees and contributors. A further Site Layout Plan (revision 9) and Fire Safety Technical Note was received 12th February. Whilst no consultation was undertaken with these latest submissions, they are not deemed to be significant amendments to the scheme, with the revised layout indicatively showing water tanks (in the event hydrants are not possible) and the fire safety technical note seeking to demonstrate compliance with the latest National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) advice on BESS schemes.

3.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

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

3.2 Burwell Parish Council – 12.02.2026

Burwell Parish Council confirms that its objection to the above development remains in place. The Council continues to have significant concerns regarding safety, particularly in relation to fire risk, and would wish to see a detailed response from the Fire and Rescue Service addressing these matters before any determination is made. The Parish Council also supports the response from BEAT (Burwell Energy Awareness Team) and considers that the detailed questions they have raised should be fully answered in advance of any approval of this development

3.3 Reach Parish Council – 12.02.2026

Seeks assurance that due process has been followed, in view of the additional information submitted and consulted upon, given the resolution at the previous planning committee meeting for this application.

Strongly objects on the following grounds;

- Public safety (Fire risk)
- Loss of amenity by significantly adding to the adverse noise and visual impact of energy developments in Burwell Fen. Would visually intrude into Reach 24 Acres and National Trust land with visual harm and noise impacts
- Considers that the officer has underestimated the harms
- Questions the benefits when there are more approvals for BESS than can be accommodated on the grid.

3.4 CCC Definitive Mapping team – 09.02.2026

No objections – subject to the PRow access being open

3.5 CCC LLFA – 06.02.2026

No objection in principle subject to conditions securing the drainage strategy

3.6 CCC Highways – 12.02.2026

The additional submitted documentation does not change the previous recommendation of the Local Highway Authority dated 17th December 2025, and it is requested that the conditions requested within the previous consultation response are appended to the application, if approved by the Local Planning Authority. The updated Transport Statement to looks to reflect the highway related amendments

made during the consultation process. This includes the access arrangements to the site during construction and operational phasing.

3.7 Historic England - 05.02.2026

Does not wish to offer comments

3.8 Cambs Police (Designing out Crime) – 02.02.2026

No additional comments to make (refer to previous recommendations)

3.9 ECDC Environmental Health 10.02.2026

Has read several neighbour objections citing noise issues from the existing BESS site. Is aware of these complaints but have not been able to verify the presence of problem noise despite numerous subjective monitoring visits and offers to install our sound level meter internally within complainant's properties.

Has read the AJA Limited 'Review of Noise Impact Assessment' document and also the rebuttal from E3P which addresses the concerns raised. The applicant has modelled predicted noise that this proposal will generate and if you are minded to grant approval to this proposal then suitably worded Conditions could be attached to ensure compliance with what has been modelled.

In initial comments made on the 23rd July 2025, a Condition for a noise management plan was recommended. If the LPA is minded to attach such a Condition, then a schedule for monitoring noise from the site and a procedure put in place for responding to any noise complaints from members of the public or the Local Authority could be secured as part of this noise monitoring. An initial noise survey, to be undertaken after construction has been completed and the site operational, could also be required to ensure the sound levels are within predicted levels.

3.10 HSE – 02.02.2026

This application does not fall within any HSE consultation zones. There is therefore no need to consult the HSE Land Use Planning (LUP) team on this planning application and the HSE LUP team has no comment to make.

3.11 National Trust – 12.02.2026

Notes the proposed additional screening to the eastern edge of the site, shown in the Indicative Landscape Masterplan. This will provide some visual screening from the National Trust managed nature reserve 'Reach 24/25' sited adjacent to the development.

The development sits within Burwell Fen, an area with significant solar schemes both in place and those with planning permission awaiting construction. These sites form a block of approximately 140ha which stops at Hightown Drove as its southern boundary. By permitting the proposed development, this block of industrialised landscape will move into a new, distinct section of the fen. One that still maintains its character. Policy ENV 1 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan requires proposals to 'conserve and enhance local landscape character.'

The development sits adjacent to land managed as part of Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve's 'Wider Wicken Fen Vision Project'. We are undertaking species recovery work here for turtle dove and other protected species and have, working

with Reach parish Council delivered trails and other community spaces. It has become a valued space for both wildlife and people, providing access that allows an immersive experience in nature away from the noise of urban areas and into one dominated by wildlife. Policy ENV 9 protects this tranquillity. It states that 'proposals should ensure no deterioration in air and water quality and not harm the natural environment, general amenity and the tranquillity of the wider rural area'. This development will undoubtedly damage the amenity of the wider rural area and have significant effects on the land that lays adjacent to it.

The National Trust has a duty to protect and care for special places, so people, nature, and culture can thrive. We believe that climate change poses one of the greatest threats to them. We understand that decision makers will increasingly need to give weight to the importance of reaching net zero, and that this could result in some effects to landscape and places of significance, however we believe this should be avoided where possible and this development would be better placed in a more suitable location.

3.12 **Cambridge Ramblers – 12.02.2026**

Concerned about the potential impact of construction and ongoing maintenance traffic on Hightown Drove, which runs along the northern boundary of the site. Although the County Council's Definitive Map Team states that there are no Public Rights of Way affected by the development, Hightown Drove is defined on the OS 1:25,000 map as an 'other route with public access'. It is also a clearly defined cycleway, linking to the Lodes Way cycle route which runs between Wicken Fen and Lode.

The Definitive Map Team also states that there are Definitive Map Modification Order applications for Hightown Drove to be formally recognised as a Public Right of Way, (both byway and bridleway), based on historical evidence.

All this means that it is necessary for construction and maintenance traffic to be kept separate from legitimate public users of Hightown Drove, should the application be approved. This may require fencing or other barrier treatment.

3.13 **Environment Agency – 16.02.2026**

Has reviewed documents submitted and have additional comments to make related to the submitted fire response strategy. Notes that their conditions relating to land contamination and comments related to flood risk in their previous letter referenced AE/2025/130733/01, dated 06 August 2025, remain the same.

Understands that the applicant's fire response strategy includes installing a Fire Isolation Valve that will automatically close during a fire, preventing runoff from the attenuation basin from entering the watercourse. Water used to cool adjacent units will be contained within the site drainage system and stored in the basin. After a fire, the isolation valve will remain closed until the firewater has been tested and removed from site by tanker for appropriate disposal. Burnt-out units will be removed, and the drainage system will be flushed. The applicant will liaise with the Environment Agency to determine when the valve can be reopened, based on monitoring results. Soil sampling around the basin will be undertaken to identify whether any further remediation is required.

Confirms they are in support of the fire response and firewater containment strategy. Should the applicant seek to discharge the condition for the containment and disposal of surface water in the event of a fire, the EA would wish to be consulted on this.

3.14 **Swaffham Internal Drainage Board - 16.02.2026**
Objects to the proposal

Advises the site is within Swaffham Internal Drainage District. The proposals indicate that surface water will discharge at greenfield run-off rate to the IDB main drain. This is satisfactory.

However, no information is provided as to the storage capacity of the attenuation basin, including freeboard level. Noting that firewater is directed to the attenuation basin, concerns are raised that the cumulative effect of 1-in-10 year rainfall plus fire water may not be adequately stored in the basin, in the absence of this detail. It is also noted that there has been no consideration of a submerged outfall to the surface water drainage system. This is suggested as being likely to occur and consideration needs to be given to its effects which could exacerbate the storage required should a fire occur.

No consideration of existing ground water levels and how this may affect capacity of the SuDS basin and the proposed drainage system.

3.15 **Neighbours**

All previously consulted neighbouring properties and contributors were notified and the responses received are summarised below. A full copy of the responses are available on the Council's website.

- Questions whether the applicant has a grid connection?
- Questions whether BESS renewable energy?
- Can lower Agri land be used?
- Visual impacts
- Adverse noise impacts
- Ecology impacts
- Water supply – will it be stored on site?
- How will it be regulated?
- Cyber security risks may undermine safety
- Lack of evidence to back up safety claims
- Negative impact on National Trust's 24 Acre Reach
- Chemical leakage
- Impacts on watercourses and waterways
- Inadequate public consultation/ public participation
- No alternative site assessment
- Damage to Hightown Drove surface

4.0 **THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

4.1 **East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023)**
GROWTH 2 Locational Strategy

GROWTH 3 Infrastructure requirements
GROWTH 5 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
ENV 1 Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2 Design
ENV 4 Energy efficiency and renewable energy in construction
ENV 6 Renewable Energy Development
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

4.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

- Developer Contributions
- Design Guide
- Flood and Water
- Natural Environment
- Renewable Energy
- Climate Change

4.3 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

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
15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

4.4 On 16 December 2025, the Government published a consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Whilst broad changes to the structure of the Framework are proposed as part of this consultation, these proposals could be subject to further change and can only be given very limited weight at this stage. Regard has therefore been had to the NPPF published in December 2024 in assessing the current application

4.5 Planning Practice Guidance

5.0 **PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND COMMENTS**

Principle of Development

5.1 As set out in the original committee report the principle of the development is established through development plan policies GROWTH 2 and ENV6 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023), unless their wider environmental, social and economic benefits would be outweighed by significant adverse effects that cannot be remediated and made acceptable in relation to:

- The local environment and visual landscape impact

- Impact on the character and appearance of the streetscape/buildings
- Key views, in particular those of Ely Cathedral
- Protected species
- Residential amenity
- Safeguarding areas for nearby airfields; and
- Heritage Assets

5.2 As such, only where significant adverse effects result from the development, is there a policy requirement to weigh the environmental, social and economic benefits of the proposal against these effects, taking into account mitigation.

5.3 The latest government agendas set out clear support for energy infrastructure schemes such as BESS, with an ambition to deliver 23-27 GW of battery storage, needed by 2030 to support its Clean Power 2030 Action Plan targets, up from 4.5 GW it said was installed in December 2024 (House of Commons research briefing: Battery Energy Storage Systems, 23 June 2025). In respect of national planning policy, in August 2023 the PPG was updated to include reference to BESS systems within the renewable and low carbon energy sections and the National Policy Statement for Energy discusses the need for storage as part of the energy infrastructure. In this regard therefore, there is clear local and strong national planning support for the principle of BESS schemes.

5.4 In respect of the above criterion of ENV6, matters of; impacts on landscape, streetscape/ buildings; heritage assets (including views of) and; safeguarding airfields have already been considered in the original committee report and debated, with officers concluding that no significant adverse effects would arise, taking into account mitigation, such as landscaping which can be reasonably secured through planning condition. As such these matters do not warrant further consideration in this update report. However, having regard to the material matters raised at the planning committee meeting, the representations made during it and subsequent representations made since the meeting, the following matters do warrant further consideration.

- Residential Amenity
- Fire Safety
- Ecology/ Biodiversity
- Other matters – resident comments
- Planning Conditions

Residential Amenity

5.5 The amended layout of the BESS infrastructure seeks to address concerns raised in respect of overhead lines and fire risk, rather than that of residential amenity e.g., through noise and disturbance as raised by some residents. It is noted that the nearest residential properties are around 450m (0.28miles) away to the east along Weirs Drove and around 500m (0.31miles) away along Burwell Road to the south. It is considered that the reconfiguration of the BESS infrastructure, which still remains within the original application area for the compound, would not be significantly closer to the nearest residences.

- 5.6 Paragraph 7.22 to 7.25 of the original committee report considered the impact of potential noise nuisance which can arise through BESS schemes and resident's concerns in this regard, ultimately concluding that the noise levels at the receptors would be no greater than background noise levels. This conclusion was supported by the Council's Environmental Health officers.
- 5.7 During the consultation of the amendments, the LPA received noise assessments which were commissioned by local residents and which challenged the methodology and findings of the applicant's Noise Impact Assessment, citing that low frequency noise had not been adequately considered and that this had potential to disturb residents. The existing BESS scheme at Weirs Drove was cited in the resident's noise objection.
- 5.8 The applicant provided a rebuttal argument, and the noise reports documents were provided to the Council's Environmental Health Officers (EHO) to consider. The EHO has confirmed that they are aware of previous noise complaints from residents located at Weirs Drove in respect of the existing BESS development – but their investigations have not been able to establish any discernible noise issues which would warrant an objection in planning terms, or any enforcement action via their powers under the Environment Act 1990. They maintain that the noise impact assessment as submitted is sufficient to understand the noise implications of the development and that they do not anticipate that any adverse impacts on residents through noise interference would result from the development. Notwithstanding, as previously proposed, a noise management plan is recommended to be secured by planning condition, to ensure that noise is monitored and managed in-line with predicted levels. A revised wording for this Condition can be found at Appendix A below (see condition 5).

Fire Safety

- 5.9 Paragraph 7.26 of the original committee report sought to address fire safety concerns that were raised by residents at that time, concluding that a planning condition could be reasonably imposed to secure further details regarding a fire management strategy.
- 5.10 Concerns raised in respect of fire safety and risk of fire from faulty or damaged batteries are also prevalent through comments received from residents following the latest consultation. It is therefore prudent to consider this in more detail, including the planning submission in respect fire safety measures, statistics in respect of known BESS incidents, the government's approach to BESS safety including the Secretary of State's consideration of fire safety in recent planning appeals and latest guidance.
- 5.11 The applicant has submitted a Fire Risk Management Plan and Fire Risk Emergency Response Plan, which seeks to demonstrate that the site layout would comply with latest guidance in respect of fire separation, battery cabinet design and mitigation measures in the event of failure and/or fire breakout, and an emergency response plan would facilitate emergency services to intervene to contain/ control fire spread as well as on-site suppressants and alarm systems. The document sets out that the developer will work with the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) to ensure that the most appropriate methods are employed. The applicant has also cross-checked their development for compliance of the latest NFCC advice on BESS development, which

was updated in February 2026 (<https://nfcc.org.uk/our-services/building-safety/grid-scale-energy-storage-system-planning-guidance-for-fire-and-rescue-services/>) and has set this out in a Fire Safety Technical Note (received 12th February 2026).

- 5.12 One resident has referred to other BESS sites, where fire or explosions have occurred, citing a case in Australia and in the U.S. In respect to the UK and statistics, the government's 'Renewable Energy Planning Database' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/renewable-energy-planning-database-monthly-extract>), identifies that currently there are 136 operational BESS sites in the UK, ranging from standalone schemes to ones supporting renewable energy and fossil fuel schemes.

Recorded Incidents

- 5.13 In respect of recorded incidents, the government has set out that there is no reliable, publicly accessible record of the number of BESS fires that have occurred in the UK or elsewhere. The House of Commons recent research briefing on BESS (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-07/29036>) does however cite the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) as a source for information, although caveats this with advising that the EPRI database relies on news articles and does not verify their validity, so the list may not be accurate or exhaustive. Notwithstanding, this source is cited in the government document and is therefore material to understanding where incidents may have occurred and the specifics of each incident.
- 5.14 The EPRI database (accessed 09.02.2026) identifies three documented incidents of BESS fires in the UK: a fire at a BESS site in Liverpool in September 2020; a fire at a BESS project under construction in Essex in February 2025, and one at a site in Cirencester in March 2025. (https://storagewiki.epri.com/index.php/BESS_Failure_Incident_Database)
- 5.15 A research paper on the Liverpool incident by EPRI (also referred to in the government's briefing and the latest NFCC advice) opines that BESS design has improved since the Liverpool BESS was installed in 2018: Some newer system designs use smaller, modularized cabinets with a few racks of batteries. The system layout limits damage because of thermal runaway and allows a more targeted first responder approach in the event of a fire. Indeed, whilst the Liverpool incident (the first recorded in the UK) took two days until the site could recommence operations, the Essex incident took one day, and Cirencester incident, seven hours until operations could resume, indicating a more controlled incident, therefore broadly supporting EPRI's findings.
- 5.16 Many battery fires recorded in the EPRI database occurred in South Korea. it estimates 38 fires between 2017 and 2022. The South Korean Ministry of Industry found that the fires were caused by errors during installation, a lack of protection from the environment and a lack of safety systems.
- 5.17 Despite this number of fires, reports by EPRI states that the global failure rate for grid-scale BESS has decreased significantly since 2018, from almost 10 failure events per GW of storage per year, to less than one failure event per GW per year since 2020. For context, this development proposes 90MW of storage (1000MW=1GW). As such, based on this evidence, risks of fires have decreased and can be reasonably considered to be uncommon, particularly in the UK. There is no

reliable, publicly accessible record of the number of BESS fires that have occurred in the UK or elsewhere.

Planning Appeals

5.18 Notwithstanding the above statistics, fire risk is a common concern with BESS schemes across the country and recent appeal decisions (appeals determined in 2025/ 2026) are helpful in understanding how the Secretary of State approaches this matter. Whilst appeal decisions do not necessarily set any precedent, they are capable of carrying material weight and in some instances, significant weight where clear comparisons are found. In a recent appeal for a BESS scheme in North-west Leicestershire (ref: APP/G2435/W/25/3370481) the Inspector acknowledged concerns over fire risk but concluded that conditions securing submission of a Battery Safety Management Plan, incorporating a risk reduction strategy and an Emergency Response Plan before the site became operational, would be reasonable and necessary to make the development acceptable.

5.19 In an appeal against the decision of Hertsmere Borough Council (APP/N1920/W/25/3368845), the Inspector concluded that evidence indicated that fires at BESS sites were rare and also concluded that a Battery Safety Management Plan and an Emergency Response Plan could be controlled by planning condition. The Inspector here notes that The NPPF makes it clear that the focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes), citing NPPF paragraph 201 which sets out that “Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively”.

Regulatory regime

5.20 On the matter of regimes, the Health and Safety Executive has a Grid-scale battery energy storage systems webpage (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/battery-energy-storage-systems.htm>), which sets out relevant health and safety legislation for BESSs in Great Britain as including:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which places legal duties on employers to manage risks to employees, other workers and the public.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which requires employers to identify potential risks to employee health and safety and appropriately manage them.
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, which requires all work activities that uses or might be affected by electricity to be done safely. All foreseeable risks must also be assessed and minimised as far as possible.
- The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002, which requires employers to identify the risks posed by dangerous substances (which are substances that may be explosive, flammable or oxidising) in the workplace. Employers must put in place measures to remove risks to the safety of employees and others or, if it is not possible to fully remove risks, mitigate them and limit the effects of potential incidents involving the dangerous substances.
- The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015, which sets requirements to ensure construction projects are carried out in a way that secures health and safety, from conception to completion.

- The Dangerous Substances (Notification and Marking of Sites) Regulations 1990 (NAMOS), which requires the operators of sites that hold 25 tonnes or more of a dangerous substance to notify their local fire and rescue service in writing, and to display signs.
- 5.21 The website states that “If you comply with these regulations you will manage the health and safety risks of BESS”. The Health and Safety Executive considers that the current regulatory framework is sufficient and suitably robust in relation to lithium-ion batteries and battery energy storage systems, as set out in the aforementioned House of Commons research briefing.
- 5.22 Furthermore, the government published guidance: Health and Safety Guidance for Grid Scale Electrical Energy Storage Systems in April 2024. Notwithstanding, the government’s Clean Power Action Plan (December 2024) stated that Defra would consult on including grid-scale batteries within the Environment Agency’s review of ‘Environmental Permitting Regulations’. This consultation was initiated in August 2025 and closed in October 2025, with feedback expected to be used to shape detailed proposals, which will likely be subject to further consultation.
- 5.23 It is clear that BESS developments and the technology within them is evolving and the government are seeking to review regulatory regimes to ensure that the safety of such operations is maintained as it evolves. Notwithstanding, at this present time, the current regimes and regulations as set out above, are considered to be sufficient in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive advice. Therefore, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 207, it should not therefore fall to the planning regime to control every aspect of BESS schemes safety. The LPA should assume that the regimes will operate effectively. This is also relevant where the matter of potential cyber-attacks could undermine the safety of the site which has been raised during the recent consultation. In this regard, the applicant would be expected to ensure that their systems are safeguarded as other potentially vulnerable operations. It is not for the planning system to address such matters and no evidence of such attacks undermining BESS systems has been presented.
- 5.24 Appendix 1 of the original committee report recommended a number of planning conditions. Condition 11, sets out a requirement for the developer to submit an Emergency Response Plan, which would seek to establish in the event of a fire breakout; potential chemical hazards; isolation of electrical infrastructure and measures to extinguish or cool batteries in the event of a fire; management of toxic gas release, and; measures to minimise environmental damage e.g., ground contamination, water run-off, toxic gases. The plan would also establish handling and disposal of damaged batteries and details of regular on-site emergency training exercises. The condition would be expected to be considered by the Local Fire and Rescue Service, to ensure that it meets with their standards and guidance set out within the ‘National Fire Chiefs Council: Grid scale energy storage system planning - Guidance for fire and rescue services’ (February 2026) and would likely be informed by the government’s aforementioned Health and Safety Guidance for Grid Scale Electrical Energy Storage Systems. There is no reason, based on the submission, that the development could not meet these standards.
- 5.25 Having regard to the latest site layout plans the development proposes two fire hydrants, adjacent southern access and along the northern access road within the

site. To be agreed by Anglian Water and demonstrated through the final Fire strategy Plan. Alternatives by way of on-site water storage, located at a suitable separation distance from the battery cabinets is also possible (as indicated on the latest site plan) and the final detail of this would be expected to come forward as part of the planning condition.

Paragraph 56 of the NPPF sets out that local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. It is considered that in this regard, the aforementioned planning appeals carry significant weight in advising the local planning authority that planning conditions securing final details of fire risk mitigation and management are appropriate. As such, a refusal on grounds of fire risk is not warranted, where the development could otherwise be made acceptable through planning condition(s) and would be capable of avoiding conflict with Local Plan policies ENV2 and ENV9.

Ecology

- 5.26 Further comments from National Trust, residents and the Parish Council have been received in respect of the potential adverse impact of the development on the Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), both in visual and acoustic impacts respects.
- 5.27 As noted above, the site sits outside of any LNRS “areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity” (ACB site) and subject to an appropriate landscaping scheme, the development would not significantly impact upon the ACB. In respect of acoustic impacts, as set out above, the development is not anticipated to result in adverse noise impact and a noise management condition can be reasonably secured through planning condition.
- 5.28 As per the previous officer recommendation, net gains in biodiversity are achievable, in excess of statutory requirements and a biodiversity net gain plan can be secured through S106 planning obligation.

Resident comments

- 5.29 The following matters, not already addressed above or in the original committee report, have been raised during the consultation.

There is no need for the development

- 5.30 Paragraph 168 of the NPPF sets out that when determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should: a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and a net zero future.
- 5.31 As such, and in view of the government’s net zero targets, a refusal on the grounds of need would not be recommended. Notwithstanding, the matter of the need to locate

the development where proposed is adequately set out in the original committee report, at paragraphs 7.17 and 7.18.

Unjustified loss of agricultural land

- 5.32 The development would accommodate around 5.3Ha of best and most versatile agricultural land (BMVL), with around 2.6Ha comprising the access road, substation and battery plant and equipment and 0.3ha for the attenuation pond. Whilst paragraph 168 of the NPPF indicates applicants should not be required to demonstrate need for renewable energy developments, the footnote to paragraph 188 requires that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.
- 5.33 There is no locally or nationally derived figure for what amounts to 'significant development' or loss of BMVL, but recent appeal decisions have concluded that 20 hectares is a sensible of what constitutes 'significant', given that Natural England, the government's statutory advisor, does not need to be consulted for proposals on lesser areas of agricultural land. (see appeals 3365001, 3347424 and 3278065). The main rationale for avoiding BMVL is to ensure that the nation's food security is not compromised. It is considered that, in view of the approach and explanation set out in the planning appeal examples and lack of evidence indicating food production would be adversely affected, that it is not necessary in this instance to justify loss of BMVL, notwithstanding that the loss would only be generational, for 35 years until such time that the planning conditions would require reinstatement of the land back to agricultural use.

Impacts to rights of way/ cycle/ walking routes

- 5.34 The development would not impede on any existing routes. Whilst concerns raised by the local Ramblers group are noted, any interference with established routes (legal or otherwise) would only be temporary during construction and would likely then be relatively infrequent during its operational phase, and would not therefore warrant refusal on these grounds, notwithstanding the uncertainty over specific access routes and associated rights. A construction management plan, as proposed at condition 4 would ensure that construction access and storage did not impede any established access routes.

Lack of Public consultation

- 5.35 Concerns have been raised over the adequacy of the Council's consultation process during this application. As set out in paragraph 5.2 of the original committee report, the council met its statutory duty by way of displaying a site notice, publishing a newspaper advertisement and notifying nearby residents, inviting public participation and considered those representations made. Furthermore, since that time further consultations have been issued as set out at 2.3 above. As such, officers are satisfied that the necessary statutory and public consultations were carried out.

Swaffham IDB concerns

- 5.36 The comments received from the IDB are noted. Whilst the IDB are not a statutory consultee, their comments are capable of carrying material weight, particularly where

matters of flood risk are concerned. Whilst the IDB are content with the surface water discharge rates, they raise concerns that the storage capacity of the attenuation basin is unknown and as to whether this would accommodate a 1-in-10 year rainfall event plus fire water in the event of an emergency. In this regard, the applicant has responded in their email dated 19th February 2026, setting out that in the circumstance provided by the IDB, the attenuation pond would have capacity, despite this being a very unlikely event. Notwithstanding, that if such rainfall did occur, there would likely be less need for water suppressant around the perimeter of the site, to add to the pond's capacity.

- 5.37 Additional concerns raised relate to consideration to the submerged outfall to the surface water drainage system. In this regard, the applicant has confirmed that a submerged outfall would not impact firewater containment, as the outfall route would be closed off (as detailed on the drainage plan). Furthermore, site observations and topographic survey data, indicate that the ditch is over 2 metres deep and the basin is at a higher elevation and 1.5m deep, and therefore the outfall will be able to be at least 0.5m above the base of the channel. The applicant has suggested that a tideflex valve or similar can be installed on the outflow to ensure discharge from the system is maintained.
- 5.38 Furthermore, the IDB raise concerns that no consideration of existing ground water levels and how this may affect capacity of the SuDS basin and the proposed drainage system has been considered. The applicant has confirmed that the attenuation pond relies on it being lined and therefore sealed to prevent any escape of water in the event of a fire. In this regard, condition 11 requires details how contaminants will be managed in the event of fire, including where it relates to site drainage.
- 5.39 As noted above, neither the LLFA or Environment Agency has raised objection to the scheme and it is considered that the details provided and recommended conditions are sufficient to address the IDB's concerns.

Planning Conditions

- 5.40 A schedule of planning conditions is set out at Appendix A of this report and superseded those of the original officer report as discussed above.
- 5.41 The conditions are considered to meet the statutory six tests of planning conditions as set out in the NPPF paragraph 57 in that they are;
- i) necessary,
 - ii) relevant to planning,
 - iii) relevant to the development to be permitted,
 - iv) enforceable,
 - v) precise,
 - vi) reasonable in all other respects
- Amendments/ additions to conditions*
- 5.42 Whilst a significant majority of conditions are recommended to remain as per previously reported, a number of conditions have been amended through further consideration of the comments and concerns raised and other material matters. These are as follows.

Condition 1	The listed plans have been updated to reflect the latest amendments and additions. Furthermore, some plans have been removed from the schedule previously set out as they are required purely for evidence base, rather than ongoing compliance
Condition 5	The Noise management condition has been update to reflect the latest noise impact assessment and also includes requirement to undertake a noise assessment within four weeks of the first receipt of energy.
Condition 6	This has been amended to reflect the last indicative landscape masterplan which the submission of the final landscaping scheme should follow.
Condition 11	The Fire management strategy condition has been amended to include additional preventative measures and to confirm the final battery technology and housing proposed.
Conditions 15, 16 and 17	These conditions have been amended to reflect the latest access and site layout arrangements
Condition 27	This condition has been amended to set out the end date of the development and requires written confirmation of the first export date for compliance monitoring purposes.
Condition 28	This condition is an extra condition to those set out previously and sets out the requirements for decommissioning of the development and the timescales for undertaking this.

Planning Balance

- 5.43 As set out in the original committee report, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.44 The application site lies outside of the development envelope and within the countryside. Policy ENV6 states that proposals for renewable energy and associated infrastructure will be supported, unless their wider environmental, social and economic benefits would be outweighed by significant adverse effects that cannot be remediated. The proposal has been assessed to not have a significant adverse impact on the prescribed criterion listed under ENV 6 and spatially, such schemes are supported though policy GROWTH 2. As such, no policy conflict in this regard occurs. This carries neutral weight.
- 5.45 The scheme has demonstrated that, subject to appropriate mitigation secured through planning conditions, it would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby dwellings e.g., through pollution or visual harm, protected species, key views or upon the landscape. This also carries neutral weight.
- 5.46 Naturally with all development, the character of an area will change. In this instance, the change to the character of the area will be notable, mainly in shorter-range views and only partially once the landscaping matures. Furthermore, the scheme is

appreciated with the backdrop of the solar farm and substation which has already affected the rural character of this area. The change to the character of the area would result in some conflict with policies ENV1 and ENV 2 and in this regard carries minor to moderate negative weight. In addition, there would be some short-term disruption during construction and then during decommissioning which also carries a degree of negative weight albeit this is very limited given its temporary nature.

- 5.47 The scheme would provide battery storage for electricity, lessening the pressure on the grid given the recent rise in demand for renewable energies and would assist toward energy security and management. The PPG identifies that Battery Energy Storage Systems enable the use of energy more flexibly and de-carbonise the energy system cost-effectively, deferring or avoiding the need for costly network upgrades and new generation capacity. The NPPF at paragraph 168(a) states that significant weight should be given to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposals contribution to a net zero future.
- 5.48 In applying the planning balance, the proposal is considered to comply with the development plan when taken as a whole. Notwithstanding, the identified benefits outweigh any limited adverse impacts. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement and the conditions set out below.

Human Rights Act

- 5.49 The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, and in particular Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property). Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority, such as East Cambridgeshire District Council, to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance. The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest and the recommendation set out below is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Equalities and Diversities

- 5.50 In considering this planning application due regard has been had to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to put an end to unlawful behaviour that is banned by the Equality Act, including discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. Account has been taken of the PSED and it is considered that the recommendation set out below would not undermine the objectives of the duty.

6.0 APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Recommended Conditions
- Appendix B – Plans
- Appendix C – Original Committee report and Update Report

APPENDIX A - 25/00639/FUM Recommended Conditions

- 1 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and documents listed below

Plan Reference	Version No	Date Received
Location Plan 1	Rev 2	17th June 2025
Site Layout Plan 3	Rev 9	12 th February 2026
Construction Management Traffic Plan: 211208-02	Rev B	10th December 2025
Monitoring room, office and warehouse 11	Rev 1	17th June 2025
Auxillary Transformer 10	Rev 1	17th June 2025
Storage Container 12	Rev 1	17th June 2025
Pallisade Gate and Fence 14	Rev 1	17th June 2025
CCTV and Lighting Pole 15	Rev 1	17th June 2025
Battery Unit 5	Rev 1	17th June 2025
Power Station SKID Bess 6	Rev 1	17th June 2025
Switchgear Building 7	Rev 1	17th June 2025
132KV Substation Side View 8	Rev 1	17th June 2025
DNO Building 9	Rev 1	17th June 2025
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment GON.0676.0429 Part 1		28 th January 2026
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment GON.0676.0429 Part 2		28th January 2026
BNG Metric	V1.1	28 th January 2026
Transport Assessment 211208-01	Rev C	28 th January 2026

- 1 Reason: To define the scope and extent of this permission.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 3 years of the date of this permission.
- 2 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.
- 3 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their use in the construction of the development. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 3 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.

- 4 Prior to any work commencing on the site a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority regarding mitigation measures for noise, dust and lighting during the construction phase and a Waste Minimisation Plan. These shall include, but not be limited to, other aspects such as access points for deliveries and site vehicles, site compound, waste and proposed phasing/timescales of development etc, The CEMP shall be adhered to at all times during all phases.
- 4 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. The condition is pre-commencement in order to ensure that the protection measures are implemented prior to any site works taking place.
- 5 Prior to the commencement of the development, a Noise Management Plan shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Noise Management Plan (NMP) shall include (but shall not be limited to) the following details;
 - A Noise Impact Assessment, based on the final plant equipment specification and not exceeding the predicted noise levels as set out in the submitted noise impact assessment ref 51-705-R1-4 dated January 2026.
 - Details for a schedule of regular noise monitoring, which shall include a commitment to monitor and report noise levels to the LPA (including low frequency with reference to NANR 45 low frequency criteria) within four weeks following the first receipt of energy to the batteries.
 - A noise complaint action plan, to include the timing, implementation and, reporting of investigations to the LPA, including contact details of an investigation officer should noise complaints be received. The action plan shall also detail a proposed response(s) to investigations.
- 5 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. The condition is pre-commencement in order to ensure that the protection measures are implemented prior to any site works taking place.
- 6 Prior to the commencement of the development, a full schedule of all soft landscape works, which follows the principles set out in the submitted Indicative Landscape Masterplan P0673 REV A, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The schedule shall include, tree and planting plans, a written specification; schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes, proposed numbers/densities; and a detailed implementation programme. It shall also indicate all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the end of the first planting season following occupation of the development.
- 6 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 7 All soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the first use of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting, or replacement planting, any tree or

plant is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

- 7 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 8 No development shall take place including any site clearance works until a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEcMP shall include the following:
 - a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
 - b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
 - d) The location and timings of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - e) The times during which construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
 - f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
 - g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
 - h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs if applicable.
 - i) The location for the storage of materials.

The approved CEcMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

- 8 Reason: To protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and the Natural Environment SPD, 2020.
- 9 No further development, including vegetation/site clearance, shall commence on site until a detailed 'Landscape and Ecology Management & Monitoring Plan' (LEMMP) for all soft landscaping and habitat creation within the application site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This plan shall cover the operational lifetime of the development and include long term objectives, management responsibilities, creation timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscaped areas of the development site. Thereafter, these areas shall be managed and maintained in full accordance with these agreed details unless first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the duration of the development's lifetime. The Plan shall include, as a minimum, the following:
 - a) Details on the creation and management of target habitats identified within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report and Metric for on-site net gain.
 - b) Monitoring details for all target habitats identified within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report and Metric, including targeted review years.
 - c) Details of any corrective action that will be undertaken if habitat delivery fails to achieve the requirements set out in the approved Biodiversity Net Gain Report.

- 9 Reason: To protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and the Natural Environment SPD, 2020.
- 10 Prior to works proceeding above ground level and notwithstanding the plans submitted, a method statement and plan for enhancing biodiversity throughout the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the biodiversity enhancement measures shall be carried out and retained in accordance with the approved details.
- 10 Reason: To ensure the protection of wildlife and the habitat which supports it and secure opportunities for the enhancement of the landscape value of the site in accordance with policies ENV 1, ENV 2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 11 Notwithstanding the plan submitted, no development shall commence until a detailed Fire Mitigation, Verification and Compliance Report and updated Battery Safety Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted strategy shall:
- Confirm the battery technology intended to be utilised and identify how any specific risk associated with this technology will be intended to be mitigated against.
 - Confirm the protection measures which will be implemented within the design of battery cabinets to mitigate against the risk of contaminant release to sensitive environmental receptors, notably underlying ground.
 - Provide details of water supply/hydrants to be utilised in the event of a fire.
 - Detail the specification fire detection system intended and its operation, including the specific operating parameters of the detectors and how they will be monitored.
 - Detail the specification and duration of fire protection provided by the partitions between battery cabinets and by the enclosure of the battery unit, offering justification as to why this is appropriate relative to risk posed.
 - Detail the intended fire suppression system specification and its operation, including detail of the suppression technology intended and product to be utilised for the purpose of suppression.
 - Detail the design methodology for the deflagration vents and/or explosion prevention measures.
 - Provision of an Emergency Response Plan (to include details of the emergency, environmental and recovery plan which would be enacted in the case of emergency event occurring, and details demonstrating how it will be ensured that potential release of adverse contamination to the surrounding environment, including through any drainage strategy will be prevented and mitigated against effectively, considerate to emergency water supply and discharge requirements). The Emergency Response Plan shall be maintained and reviewed on a regular basis (at least once every 2 years) and any material changes notified to Cambridge and Suffolk Fire and Rescue.

The development shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the approved details.

- 11 Reason: To ensure proper infrastructure for the site in the interests of public safety in that adequate water supply is available for emergency use.
- 12 No development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation

of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has first been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:

- a. the statement of significance and research objectives;
- b. The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;
- c. The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;
- d. The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.

- 12 Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any demolitions or groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely preservation and/or investigation, recording, reporting, archiving and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with national policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 13 The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as a scheme to contain and dispose of surface water in the event of a fire has been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.
- 13 Reason: To protect and prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs 187, 196, 197 and relevant Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Position Statements.
- 14 No use of the development shall take place until a scheme of hedgehog recovery measures has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the approved measures shall be maintained for a minimum of 10 years following their installation.
- 14 Reason: This is to protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and in accordance with policy SPD HR1 of the Hedgehog Recovery SPD 2024.
- 15 Access to the site during its construction phase shall be in accordance with the arrangement included on Drawing 211208-04, Sheet 2 of 8 (within Transport Assessment 211208-01).
- 15 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.
- 16 Prior to commencement of use, access to the site, following construction, shall be constructed in accordance with the arrangement included on Drawing 211208-04, Sheet 3 of 8 (within Transport Assessment 211208-01).

- 16 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambs Local Plan.
- 17 The turning and parking area included within Drawing 211208-04, Sheet 8 of 8 (within Transport Assessment 211208-01) shall be levelled, surfaced and drained and thereafter retained for that specific use during construction.
- 17 Reason: In the interests of highway safety to prevent construction vehicles from reversing onto Hightown Drove in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambs Local Plan 2015.
- 18 Prior to the first use of the development the vehicular accesses where they cross the public highway shall be laid out and constructed in accordance with Cambridgeshire County Council's construction specification.
- 18 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambs Local Plan.
- 19 Prior to first use, the proposed vehicular accesses shall be constructed so that their falls and levels are such that no private water from the site drains across or onto the public highway.
- 19 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambs Local Plan.
- 20 Prior to first use, the proposed vehicular accesses shall be constructed using a bound material, for the first 20 metres from the boundary of the public highway into the site, to prevent debris spreading onto the public highway.
- 20 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambs Local Plan.
- 21 Any gate or gates to the vehicular accesses shall be set back a minimum of 20 metres from the near edge of the highway carriageway. Any access gate or gates shall be hung to open inwards.
- 21 Reason: To prevent obstruction of the highway in the interests of highway safety in accordance with policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the adopted East Cambs Local Plan 2015.
- 22 Notwithstanding the approved plans, no external lighting shall be erected within the application site until details of the proposed lights, their specification, location, the orientation/angle of the luminaries, predicted light spill and hours of proposed use, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any external lighting that is installed shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme and thereafter maintained and retained as agreed.
- 22 Reason: This is to protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).

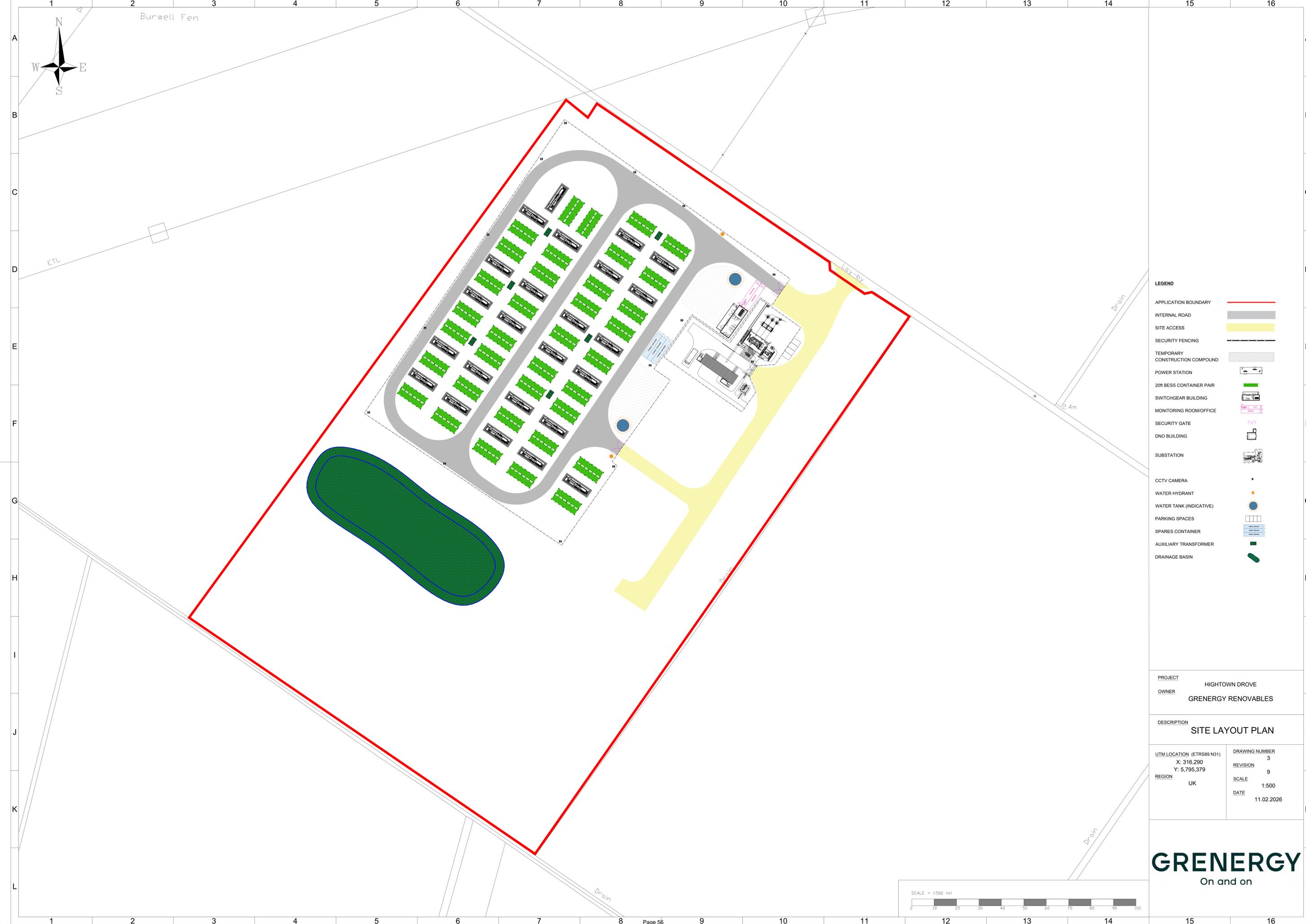
- 23 If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.
- 23 To protect and prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs 187, 196, 197 and relevant Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Position Statements.
- 24 No works involving piling shall take place until a report/method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, detailing the type of piling and mitigation measures to be taken to protect local residents from noise and/or vibration. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 24 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 25 Construction times and deliveries, with the exception of internal works, shall be limited to the following hours: 0730 to 1800 each day Monday to Friday; 0730 to 1300 Saturdays; and at no time on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays.
- 25 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 26 The surface water drainage scheme shall be constructed and maintained in full accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Report as submitted (ref: GON.0676.0429 version 2) dated 21st January 2026.
- 26 To prevent an increased risk of flooding and protect water quality in accordance with Policy ENV 8 and ENV 9 of the East Cambs Local Plan 2015.
- 27 The development hereby approved is for a period of no more than 35 years from the date when electricity is first exported from the Battery Energy Storage Scheme to the electricity network (the First Export Date). Written confirmation of the First Export Date shall be given to the local planning authority within 14 days of the First Export Date.
- 27 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and to reinstate the land to its original appearance following the expiration of the temporary consent applied for on the site, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 28 Decommissioning of the Battery Energy Storage System, comprising discontinuance and removal of all buildings, works, uses of land and other development hereby permitted and the restoration of the land to its former condition shall take place within 12 months of the expiry of this permission. At least 6 months before the planning permission is due to expire, a Decommissioning Method Statement (to include a timetable for implementation and a scheme to restore the land to its former condition) shall be submitted to and approved in

writing by the Local Planning Authority. The site shall be decommissioned and restored in accordance with the approved Statement.

- 28 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and to reinstate the land to its original appearance following the expiration of the temporary consent applied for on the site, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. In addition to ensure that the development is decommissioned out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors, in accordance with policy ENV9 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.

APPENDIX B - PLANS

The following plans are a selection of those submitted as part of the application and are provided to illustrate the proposed development. They may not be to scale. The full suite of plans can be found on the Council's website.



Burwell Fen

ETL

Lay-by

Drain

2.4m

Drain

Drain

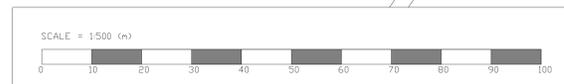
Drain

LEGEND

APPLICATION BOUNDARY	
INTERNAL ROAD	
SITE ACCESS	
SECURITY FENCING	
TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION COMPOUND	
POWER STATION	
20ft BESS CONTAINER PAIR	
SWITCHGEAR BUILDING	
MONITORING ROOM/OFFICE	
SECURITY GATE	
DNO BUILDING	
SUBSTATION	
CCTV CAMERA	
WATER HYDRANT	
WATER TANK (INDICATIVE)	
PARKING SPACES	
SPARES CONTAINER	
AUXILIARY TRANSFORMER	
DRAINAGE BASIN	

PROJECT	HIGHTOWN DROVE
OWNER	GREENERGY RENOVABLES
DESCRIPTION	SITE LAYOUT PLAN
UTM LOCATION (ETRS89 N31)	DRAWING NUMBER
X: 316,290	3
Y: 5,795,379	REVISION
REGION	9
UK	SCALE
	1:500
	DATE
	11.02.2026

GREENERGY
On and on





Existing recently planted hedgerow is contained within post and wire fencing. This will be protected during construction

Proposed hedgerow and scattered trees will line the western boundary and will provide enclosure and help to screen views from the nearby route with public access/cycle link and Wicken Fen Nature Reserve further to the west

Proposed line of poplars will line the southern boundary. They will provide a distinctive and characteristic landscape feature and sense of place and help to screen and limit the few glimpsed views from the fringes of Reach further to the south

Proposed line of native trees and shrubs will provide additional screening and enclosure as well as biodiversity benefits. Proposed tree and shrub species could include alder, birch, willow, field maple, blackthorn and guelder rose. Species, including diverse willows, to include those native to the locality with different growth characteristics to provide long-term screening as well as ecological benefits.

Field to the south will be kept free of development and provide separation from the nearby settlement of Reach. The field will be retained for agricultural use.

Proposed hedgerow and scattered trees will line the northern boundary and will provide enclosure and help to screen views from the nearby route with public access/cycle link. The proposed linear vegetation will also separate the proposed development from the nearby solar park to the north and provide an attractive vegetated route, where development will not dominate

Proposed line of poplars will line the eastern boundary and will connect to the existing line of trees to the south. They will provide a distinctive landscape feature, characteristic of the area as well as a sense of place and will also help to screen views of the proposed development for travellers along the adjacent route with public access/cycle link along Hightown Drive

Landowner field access retained (minimum 6m wide)

Key

- Proposed service buildings / equipment
- Proposed stone / gravel compound
- Proposed fence
- Proposed access track
- Proposed CCTV
- Proposed drainage
- Existing route with public access / cycle link
- Existing overhead power cables
- Existing underground services
- Existing post and wire fence
- Landowner access

Landscape

- Existing recently planted hedgerow protected and retained
- Proposed native hedgerow and scattered trees
- Proposed line of trees (poplar)
- Proposed line of native trees and shrubs
- Proposed rough/wildflower grassland
- Proposed drainage basin

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Scale 1:1500 @ A3

N

Drawn : PS	Checked : AJW
Ref : P0673	Revision : A
Date : 05/09/2025	

Indicative Landscape Masterplan
 Figure A18

Hightown Drive
BESS

T. 01275 627077
 E. info@amalgamlandscape.co.uk
 W. www.amalgamlandscape.co.uk



- NOTES**
1. TOPOGRAPHIC DATA TAKEN FROM DRAWING 10824CE0207 HIGHTOWN DRIVE PROVIDED BY SUBSITE SURVEYS.
 2. SITE LAYOUT TAKEN FROM DRAWING Fig A18 - Indicative Landscape Masterplan - Hightown Drive Area 'A' PROVIDED BY AMALGAM LANDSCAPE.
 3. DRAWING TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER SCHEME DRAWINGS.
 4. DESIGN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED PROVISIONAL. DESIGN TO BE REFINED AT DETAILED DESIGN STAGE.

LEGEND

	PLANNING BOUNDARY
	EXISTING MAJOR CONTOURS (0.5m INTERVALS)
	EXISTING MINOR CONTOURS (0.1m INTERVALS)
	EXISTING MINOR DRAIN
	EXISTING DITCH
	PROPOSED PERFORATED PIPEWORK
	PROPOSED CONVENTIONAL PIPEWORK
	PROPOSED FILTER DRAIN
	PROPOSED MANHOLE / INSPECTION CHAMBER
	PROPOSED HYDROBRAKE CHAMBER
	PROPOSED SUDS BASIN
	PROPOSED HEADWALL / RIPRAP
	PROPOSED GRADING DIRECTIONS (SUBSURFACE & SURFACE)

01	01/26	SITE LAYOUT UPDATED	GD	SD
00	04/25	INITIAL ISSUE	GD	SD
REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	CHK

CLIENT: GREENERGY RENEWABLES UK LIMITED

PROJECT: HIGHTOWN DROVE BESS

DRAWING TITLE: **PROPOSED DRAINAGE LAYOUT**

SCALE: 1:1,000 @ A2

DATE: JANUARY 2026

DRAWING NUMBER: **FRDA-005**

REV: **01**

DRAWING STATUS: **FOR PLANNING**

GONDOLIN LAND & WATER LTD
 100000 Street
 Edinburgh
 EH8 6EJ
 Registered Company No. SC709820

FILTER DRAINS TO CAPTURE ANY RUNOFF AND CONVEY TOWARDS SUDS BASIN

PROPOSED HERRINGBONE DRAINAGE SYSTEM, FINAL GRADING TO CONSIDER HERRINGBONE SYSTEM LAYOUT TO PROMOTE DRAINAGE OF SITE

INSPECTION CHAMBERS TO ALLOW FOR INSPECTION OF HERRINGBONE DRAINAGE SYSTEM AND MAINTENANCE PURPOSES (E.G. JETTING)

PROPOSED SUDS BASIN OUTLINE DETAILS:
 • STORAGE AREA = 3160.0m²
 • STORAGE DEPTH = 1.2m
 • SIDE SLOPE = 1:1
 • STORAGE VOLUME = 4092.0m³

HYDROBRAKE CHAMBER TO RESTRICT FLOWS TO 2.5 L/S (AS PER IDEF REQUIREMENTS) FOR UP TO 10 MINUTES DURING THE 1:100 YEAR PLUS 40% CLIMATE CHANGE

INDICATIVE DISCHARGE LOCATION INTO EXISTING DITCH



TITLE: 25/00639/FUM

Committee: Planning Committee

Date: 14 January 2026

Author: Harmeet Minhas -Senior Planner

Report No: AA119

Contact Officer: Harmeet Minhas, Senior Planner
harmeet.minhas@eastcambs.gov.uk
01353 616499
Room No 011 The Grange Ely

Site Address: Land Southwest of Hightown Drove Burwell Cambridgeshire

Proposal: Erection of a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure

Applicant: Greenergy Renewables UK Limited

Parish: Burwell

Ward: Burwell

Ward Councillor/s: David Brown
Lavinia Edwards

Date Received: 10 July 2025

Expiry Date: 14 November 2025

1.0 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 Members are recommended to APPROVE the application in accordance with the following terms:

1. The Committee delegates authority to finalise the pre-commencement conditions and terms and completion of the S.106 legal agreement to the Planning Manager; and
2. Following the completion of the S.106, application 25/00639/FUM be approved subject to the planning conditions at Appendix 1 (and summarised below); or,
3. The Committee delegates authority to refuse the application in the event that the applicant does not agree to any necessary extensions to the statutory determination period to enable the completion of the S106 legal agreement.

1.2 The application is being heard by committee because it was called in by Councillor Cane for the following reasons:

- Impact on neighbouring amenity
- Impact on water courses and local SSSIs
- Impact on residents/ecological harm resulting from fire event

2.0 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a battery energy storage facility and associated infrastructure. The application site comprises a parcel of land located on the south-western side of Hightown Drove which is currently open land and falls outside of the development envelope of Burwell and is therefore, considered to be within the countryside.
- 2.2 The application proposes the temporary use of the site for a period of 35 years following which the equipment is to be removed from site and the land restored to its former use.
- 2.3 The application is supported by a Construction Traffic Management Plan (211208-02 CTMP REV B). This report, in hand with supporting visibility splays and layouts, shows how the site would be accessed for both the construction phase and operational phase of the development. This details how the use of a temporary access for the construction phase ensures that construction vehicles are able to utilise the existing passing place, minimising the risk of obstruction on Hightown Drove.
- 2.4 During the course of the application, Officers expressed concerns relating to biodiversity net gain measures within the site as well as the significance of the site and wider area for archaeological importance. Subsequently, the applicant undertook an archaeological fieldwalk survey which was considered by County Councils Historic Environment Team (HET) who were satisfied with the content subject to the need for a condition to secure a further Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prior to the commencement of works. In parallel, the applicant instructed the Councils legal team to prepare a draft S106 to secure matters relating to BNG offsite contributions. This matter was not yet agreed by legal representatives on behalf of the Council and the applicant, at the time of drafting this report.
- 2.5 The application is supported by a technical memo review of battery fire and plume analysis of other 'BESS' (Battery Energy Storage System) sites within the UK as well as a Fire Safety briefing note. Officers consulted Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service on the proposal who provided a standardised response to how 'BESS' sites should consider actions and protective measures for fire service personnel, employees and the public in a fire event. Proposed condition 25 sets out a pre-commencement condition for the delivery of a fire plan for the agreement of the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 2.6 In 2021, planning permission was granted for the 'construction of a 30MW battery energy storage system facility and associated access, landscaping and other infrastructure works' under application 21/00816/FUL. Reference is made to this scheme, in relevant parts of this report, as it forms a 'material consideration' in the

assessment of this development. This is of relevance and 'material' to the assessment of this application as it is a similar form of development located within half a mile of the application site having been assessed against policies within the development plan.

- 2.7 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 [Simple Search](#).

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The application site has no relevant planning history bar an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) referenced below. However, there are other recent applications considered by the LPA which are relevant to the assessment of this application and these are laid out below.

- 3.2 21/00816/FUL- Construction of a 30MW battery energy storage system facility and associated access, landscaping and other infrastructure works **(Permitted- 10 December 2021)**

- 3.3 21/00816/DISA- To discharge condition 4 (flood emergency operations plan) of decision 21/00816/FUL dated 10 December 2021 for construction of a 30MW battery energy storage system facility and associated access, landscaping and other infrastructure works **(Permitted- 28 August 2025)**

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 The application site comprises approximately 5.3 hectares of agricultural land and is largely uniform in terms of its layout and appearance. The site is currently void of any development although it is noted that it is strategically positioned to the west of Burwell Electricity Substation, which the development would serve. To the north of the site lies a significant solar farm comprising arrays of solar panels set in and around Hightown Drove and Newnham Drove.

- 4.2 The settlement of Burwell is located approx. 1km away from the site with the surrounding development offering a variety of development forms, from renewable energy to open land with residential development and settlements set against the backdrop.

- 4.3 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agencies 'Maps for Planning'. Devils Dyke SSSI is located 1km to the south of the site and Wicken Fen SSSI located over 3km away from the site.

5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

- 5.1 Responses were received from the following consultees:
- Ecology
 - Highways
 - Environmental Agency
 - Internal Drainage Board

- Environmental Health
- Fire and Rescue service
- Trees
- UK Power Networks
- Natural England
- Historic England
- National Trust

and these are summarised below. The full responses are available on the Council's web site.

The Ely Group Of Internal Drainage Board - 30 July 2025

The proposed surface water discharge will also require the Board's consent, which is separate to the planning process. There will be a commuted sum charge for any consent issued. Any exceedance flows will have to remain onsite and cannot be allowed to discharge uncontrolled into our main drain.

Environment Agency (EA) - 6 August 2025

We consider that planning permission could be granted to the proposed development as submitted if the following planning conditions are included as set out below.

Proposed Conditions: If unexpected contamination is found then no further development shall continue until a remediation strategy is agreed. A scheme to contain and dispose of surface water in a fire event shall be submitted to the Council.

Planning Casework Unit - No Comments Received

Design Out Crime Officer - 1 August 2025

I currently have no additional comments.

Asset Information Definitive Map Team - No Comments Received

Cambridge Ramblers Association - No Comments Received

Minerals And Waste Development Control Team - No Comments Received

British Horse Society - No Comments Received

Natural England - 8 August 2025

Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Historic England - 1 August 2025

Historic England has no comments to make

Ambulance Service - No Comments Received

HSE (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects) - 18 July 2025

HSE is a statutory consultee for certain developments within the consultation distance of major hazard sites and major accident hazard pipelines. However, this application does not fall within any HSE consultation zones. There is therefore no need to consult the HSE Land Use Planning (LUP) team on this planning application and the HSE LUP team has no comment to make.

UK Power Networks - 18 July 2025

We note there are overhead cables on the site running within close proximity to the proposed development. Prior to commencement of work accurate records should be obtained from our Plan Provision Department at UK Power Networks, Fore Hamlet, Ipswich, IP3 8AA. In the instance of overhead cables within the vicinity, all works should be undertaken in line with GS6 guidelines as published by the HSE

National Grid - Electricity - No Comments Received

Environmental Health - 23 July 2025

No objection subject to the use of conditions to secure a noise report, lighting and hours of construction/works for the development.

ECDC Trees Team - 4 September 2025

No tree related implications but the tree species indicated on the soft landscaping masterplan will need some revision as the use majority use of Poplar trees is likely to be unsustainable in the long term due to their potential growth rate and weak structure, also as these trees will grow tall quickly they are unlikely to provide much screening lower down it would be better to use a mixture of native species trees such as Willows, Field Maple, Oak, Hawthorn native Black Poplar could still be included if desired. The use of a mixture of trees with different growth characteristics will provide better long-term screening and better ecological benefits.

It would be acceptable to confirm the soft landscaping proposals by condition if required.

The National Trust - 21 August 2025

We are supportive of renewable energy as a matter of principle and believe that appropriate development can play an important role.

With respect to the current application, the Trust wishes to object for the reasons outlined below:

- Visual Effect on Landscape Character
- Cumulative Effects
- Screening
- Multiple small-medium sized battery storage sites
- Fire Risk
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Fragmentation of Landscape and Habitats
- Wicken Fen Vision
- Development Traffic

East Cambs Ecologist - 5 November 2025

From the information provided the Ecologist has reviewed this application and, as of 05/11/25 supports with conditions applied with the information provided.

Lead Local Flood Authority - 13 August 2025

We have no objection in principle to the proposed development subject to conditions. The surface water drainage scheme shall be constructed and maintained in full accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Report as submitted (ref: GON.0676.0429) dated 29th April 2025.

Local Highways Authority - 17 December 2025

On behalf of the Local Highway Authority, I have no objections to the proposed development on the basis of the amendments made by the applicant, subject to inclusion of the conditions requested below.

Conditions proposed by Highways include accesses being constructed in accordance with the plans submitted. The accesses being levelled and surfaced and retained for their specific uses as well as ensuring that no water drains from the site to the public highway from the new accesses.

Cambridgeshire Fire And Rescue Service - 13 November 2025

Comments relating to BESS systems and the expectation of the Fire and Rescue Service were provided (Full comments available to view online). The response details how spacing between cabinets should be delivered as well as detection/suppression measures including the need for appropriate access. No objection was raised.

Reach Parish Council - 6 August 2025

The PC considers this proposed facility to be in the wrong location and strongly objects to this application. We judge that the application meets the criteria for refusing such an application set out in ENV9 of the District's Local Plan. The specific grounds for our objection are:

1. Public health in the event of thermal runaway
2. Threat to nature in the event of a thermal runaway
3. Adverse Impact on the landscape of Burwell Fen
4. Insufficient uplift for nature

Cambridgeshire Archaeology - 22 December 2025

The programme of archaeological fieldwalking undertaken at the site indicated a volume of prehistoric lithic artefacts as expected, notably with a high proportion of scrapers, a type of retouched stone tool. We are content that this was not in an unexpected quantity and within the scheme there are no particular clusters. We therefore do not object to development from proceeding in this location, however we consider that the site should be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation secured through the inclusion of a negative condition, such as the example condition below.

Burwell Parish Council - 31 July 2025

Burwell Parish Council object to this application due to safety and environmental concerns. There are no adequate methods of fire suppression and significant pollution risk. The Council are concerned about flooding and water table disruption. Wicken Fen and the National Trust do not appear to be in the consultee list despite having neighboring land. We would further request a full report on noise and light pollution from this development. The Council are keen to request that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue and the Environment Agency input this application to mitigate the concerns raised if possible. The proposed Site Layout Plan 3 REV 7 showing the Battery Containers and "Power Station" units appears to heighten risk, with Battery Containers either located next to each other or separated by the "Power Units". We would like feedback from the planning authority or developer on whether a staggered layout, where no two Battery Storage Containers were side by side, would you be a safer design in regard to minimising the spread of fire.

5.2 A site notice was displayed near the site on 13th August and a press advert was published in the Cambridge Evening News on 24th July 2025.

5.3 Neighbours – Over 30 neighbouring properties were notified and 46 letters of objection were received, which are summarised below. A full copy of the responses are available on the Council's website.

- Impact on visual amenity and landscape
- Risk to amenity from fire event
- Impact on amenity of properties (noise impact)
- Loss of agricultural land
- Impact on amenity of properties from construction works
- Impact on highway safety from construction works
- Impact on wildlife and ecology

6.0 THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 *East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023)*

GROWTH 2 Locational Strategy

GROWTH 3 Infrastructure requirements

GROWTH 5 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

ENV 1 Landscape and settlement character

ENV 2 Design

ENV 4 Energy efficiency and renewable energy in construction

ENV 6 Renewable Energy Development

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

6.2 *Supplementary Planning Documents*

Developer Contributions
Design Guide
Flood and Water
Natural Environment
Renewable Energy
Climate Change

- 6.3 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
 - 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
 - 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 6.4 Planning Practice Guidance

7.0 PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND COMMENTS

- 7.1 The main planning considerations relevant to the determination of this application relate to:
 - Principle of Development
 - Design and Character
 - Residential Amenity
 - Highways, Access and Movement
 - Biodiversity and Trees
 - Flood Risk and Drainage

Principle of Development

- 7.2 Policy GROWTH 2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 provides the locational strategy for development within the district and provides a hierarchy for the location of housing development. That hierarchy seeks to focus the majority of development on the market towns of Ely, Soham and Littleport. It provides for more limited development within villages within a defined development envelope. The policy states that outside defined development envelopes, development will be strictly controlled to protect the countryside and the setting of settlements and will be restricted to the exceptions listed within the policy.
- 7.3 Policy GROWTH2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 states that, outside defined development envelopes, renewable energy development may be permitted providing there is no significant adverse impact on the character of the countryside and that other Local Plan policies are satisfied, in accordance with Policy ENV6.
- 7.4 Furthermore, policy GROWTH3 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 states that key infrastructure requirements relevant to growth within the district includes upgrading electricity infrastructure.

- 7.5 Policy ENV6 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 specifically relates to renewable energy development. Policy ENV6 states that proposals for renewable energy and associated infrastructure will be supported, unless their wider environmental, social and economic benefits would be outweighed by significant adverse effects that cannot be remediated and made acceptable in relation to:
- The local environment and visual landscape impact
 - Impact on the character and appearance of the streetscape/buildings
 - Key views, in particular those of Ely Cathedral
 - Protected species
 - Residential amenity
 - Safeguarding areas for nearby airfields; and
 - Heritage Assets
- 7.6 Policy ENV6 also states that the visual and amenity impacts of proposed structures will be assessed on their merits, both individually and cumulatively, and provision should be made for the removal of facilities and reinstatement of the site should they cease to operate.
- 7.7 The application site is located wholly outside of the defined development envelope of Burwell and therefore the matter to be considered is whether the proposal would comprise renewable energy. The matter of impact on the aforementioned bulleted considerations would be assessed within a later part of the report.
- 7.8 The proposed development would allow electricity from the Grid to be stored in batteries at times of low demand and then exported back to the Grid at time of high demand. The proposed development would provide a 'balancing service' which would assist in balancing grid capacity at times of stress. The proposed development would support an increasing reliance on renewable energy forms by providing a quick and flexible back-up energy source to the grid at times of high energy demand, contributing to ensuring a reliable energy supply across the Grid. The application proposal is considered to comprise renewable energy; notably where in August 2023 the PPG was updated to include reference to BESS systems within the renewable and low carbon energy sections and the National Policy Statement for energy discusses the need for storage as part of the energy infrastructure.
- 7.9 The nature of the proposed development has been identified by the applicant to require specific location requirements, such as being located within close proximity to the point of connection to the grid which in this case is the Burwell substation to the east. The proximity of the BESS to the grid ensures energy is not lost during the transfer to the battery storage. It is evident that the proposed location of the development is strategically aligned with the proximity to the substation which is why this site has been chosen and presented.
- 7.10 In summary, the proposal relates to a renewable energy scheme outside the development envelope which does not conflict with the aims of GROWTH 2 and ENV 6 subject to other material considerations within the development plan.

Visual Amenity

- 7.11 Policies ENV 1 and ENV 2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) require new development to complement the existing built form and relate sympathetically to its surroundings in terms of location, layout, scale, massing, materials, and colour. Proposals must respond positively to local context and architectural traditions, enhance the character and quality of the area, and contribute to the public realm.
- 7.12 The application site comprises an open parcel of land used for agricultural purposes. To the west of the site lies Burwell substation and to the north of the site a substantial solar farm with a number of photovoltaic arrays arranged in a linear form. Whilst the general perception of the site and wider area may be of open land, this is not a prevailing form. The landscape of the site as well as views into the distances include the power grids, pylons and the solar farm, all of which break the notion of unincumbered open agricultural land being the prevailing form.
- 7.13 The proposed development notably incorporates the use of two thirds of the site for development which includes the battery storage elements and associated infrastructure. To the south-western side of the site, an attenuation pond is proposed to collect rain water and surface water for use in a fire event. The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment which was submitted in support of the application has considered the existing landscape and visual conditions, summarised as medium sensitivity which is defined as ***“Moderately valued or ‘everyday’ landscape elements and/or landscape character, with some ability to accommodate change. These are landscapes in good condition which could be appreciated by the community but has little or no wider recognition. A landscape or elements with a partial tolerance to change of the type of development proposed.”***
- 7.14 Whilst the report identifies the site as being of medium sensitivity in its current form, the report identifies high and medium-high sensitivity from local settlements (Burwell/Reach) and local network routes including a cycle path. The views from the settlements and nearby retirement home development to the south are considered to be enclosed by vegetation with some gaps and views towards the site including views of the pylons and existing operational solar farm. The existing national cycle routes are defined as high sensitivity owing to their proximity to the site running as close as 475m to the south of the site.
- 7.15 The topography of the site is one which is viewed as relatively flat which is consistent with the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Study assessment. The study also identifies the Chalklands landscape character area which identifies the chalkland as being devoted to growing cereal crops which woodlands and shelter belts breaking up long distance views. To mitigate any harm to the proposed character of the area as well as the visual impact on high to medium-high sensitivity settlements and views, the proposal seeks to incorporate landscaping features as part of the application proposal. This includes but is not limited to, the retention of existing hedgerows to the northern side as well as the planting of trees to the eastern and southern boundary which are considered to limit views of the proposed development forming a visual barrier/buffer. Officers also note that open buffers of land are retained around the development to create more green spaces. As part of the application proposal the tree officer commented on the scheme and raised

concerns with regards to the types of trees being used and recommended alternatives; this matter was considered to be appropriate to be secured under condition as part of a landscaping scheme should planning permission be forthcoming.

- 7.16 The use of landscaping features, through both planting and retention would offer a degree of shielding from long-distance views across the landscape which would limit the impact of the development on the setting. Furthermore, the battery units are shown to have an individual height of 2.89m and have been positioned proportionately located to one another to limit the spread of built form across the site ensuring the scale and massing of the development does not consume the extent of the site as well as ensuring they do not enhance the fire risk by being intimately located to one another. Similarly, the associated switchgear buildings are proportionately grouped to the eastern side of the site with the CCTV poles having a slimline vertical element but being less prominent owing to their size and scale. This weighs in favour of the scheme whilst the use of landscaping and planting to minimise views of the development across a relatively flat site would lessen the impact on the visual amenity of the site.
- 7.17 Officers also note that the premise of battery storage relies heavily on strategic location to the grid and in this particular case, the proximity of the site to the Burwell substation has been considered for this reason. The siting of the existing substation and other renewable forms being outside of the development envelope creates a degree of appropriateness for this scheme whereby it would not cause any greater visual harm to the setting than currently exists. Officers have had consideration for other recent forms of renewable energy approved within the vicinity which represent material considerations. This includes the Burwell Solar Farm which is in situ and operational, to the north of the site; Burwell substation itself which has substantial vertical emphasis and is bordered by landscaping features, which sits proud of and above the treeline; and a similar BESS scheme granted in 2021 which sits to the east of the substation and is operational. There is a general presumption of a changing landscape in and around Burwell substation which has commenced through the delivery of renewables; although these were assessed as stand alone applications to meet the development plan. There are degrees of similarities in the manner in which the justification for the neighbouring renewable energy schemes have been carried across to the proposal the subject of this application. Officers raise this as it is important that a consistent approach to decision making is made by the LPA when considering similar forms of development under the same development plan policies. In the absence of other significant adverse impacts it would be unreasonable to refuse the current scheme on visual impact grounds when considering these other decisions.
- 7.18 The operation of battery storage relies heavily on the strategic location to the grid and in this particular case, the proximity of the site to the Burwell substation has been considered appropriate, by the applicant, for this reason. The siting of the existing substation and other renewable forms being outside of the development envelope creates a degree of appropriateness for this scheme whereby it would not cause any greater visual harm to the setting than currently exists.
- 7.19 Having regard for other recent forms of development for renewable energy schemes within the immediate vicinity, it is noted that those schemes and the current

proposal seek temporary use of the land for the intended uses. In this instance the applicant sets out that the lifespan of the batteries are 35 years following which it is proposed to return the site to its former use (agricultural land). Whilst officers note that the period of 35 years is a significant window of time, appeal decisions have established that a period of up to 40 years can be viewed as temporary and the reinstatement of land following a set period must be considered. In this instance, the visual harm would be balanced against the proposed planting scheme and the removal of the equipment from site after a temporary period.

- 7.20 As such, there is no conflict with policies GROWTH2 or ENV6 when considering visual landscape impact of the development.

Residential Amenity

- 7.21 Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the residential amenity which would be enjoyed by both future occupiers of the development and occupiers of existing properties close to the site. LP Policy ENV 9 seeks to protect residential occupiers from noise, smell, vibration and other forms of pollution.
- 7.22 The application site is located north of the village of Burwell by approx. 0.6 miles. There are residential properties to the south along Weirs Drove (approx. 850m) and to the east along Burwell Road. These would be the nearest receptors of noise and associated activities that may impact on their amenity.
- 7.23 The application is supported by a noise impact assessment prepared by acoustic consultants. The report follows a 24 hour background sound survey which collected data over the period of 48 hours. The median measured background level was 26dB during the first day and 41dB during the second day. The report considers the proposed BESS equipment and references sound pressure levels of 65dB at a 1m distance from the machinery and 50dB at 10m. The report identifies that the noise at the point of the receptors (dwellings) would not be greater than the background sound levels recorded across the two days. The nighttime noise is considered to be marginally higher than the recorded background noise at Weirs Drove and Burwell Road by 1dB. The adjusted 1dB figure is considered to be of a very modest difference that is barely perceptible and referenced as the sound of rustling leaves which in officers opinion would not warrant a reason for refusal.
- 7.24 Residents have raised comments as to the accuracy of the information provided within the report, notably the noise emitted from the BESS. The literature within the report references the decibel reading being provided from the manufacturers of the units and there is no evidence before officers that this is incorrect/inaccurate. Officers take the information provided in good faith unless evidence clearly indicates otherwise; in this instance no evidence has been presented that the decibel readings taken on site were incorrect or not reflective of the site circumstance.
- 7.25 The noise report was also considered by environmental health officers who raised no objections but did consider that should the arrangement on site, or the BESS equipment to be used change then it would not be inappropriate to consider a revised noise impact assessment to be submitted to the LPA for their consideration.

- 7.26 Concerns have been raised by neighbours through written representations as to the impact of the proposal as a result of a fire event. The applicant has submitted a fire safety briefing note which identifies the measures in place to mitigate, prevent and suppress a fire. Officers consider this to be an overarching strategy to how such an event would be dealt with and it would be reasonable for more site appropriate information to be submitted to and agreed by the LPA, in consultation with the Fire and Rescue Service, prior to works commencing on site. As such, condition 25 seeks a fire plan to provide a detailed strategy specific to this site and how a fire event would be mitigated to minimise risk to nearby dwellings.
- 7.27 The supporting plans indicate that each CCTV pole would have a security light. Environmental health officers note that the lights point downwards, likely to face the direction of the CCTV at ground level. The angle of the lighting would be unlikely to diminish the amenities of nearby dwellings to the east and south of the site.
- 7.28 Further to the above, residents have raised concerns with relation to construction traffic and noise arising from this. It is considered reasonable for a condition to be introduced which restricts the construction phase of works to social hours which would mitigate any harm.

Highways, Access and Movement

- 7.29 Policy ENV 2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2015) requires development proposals to incorporate the highway and access principles set out in Policy COM 7, ensuring safe and convenient access for all users, minimising conflict between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists, and providing permeability to walking and cycling routes while protecting public rights of way. Policy COM 8 seeks adequate parking provision, while paragraph 115 of the NPPF requires “safe and suitable access for all users.” Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that development should only be refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where the residual cumulative impacts on the network would be severe.
- 7.30 The proposal seeks the creation of two individual accesses which includes a temporary access for the construction phase and a primary access for the on-going operation of the site. The application proposal was supported by a Construction Traffic Management Plan and associated site layouts.
- 7.31 During the course of the application, highways officers raised concerns over the proposed strategy within the CTMP and the access arrangement notably highlighting concerns over the access details and whether safe access and egress could be made without causing conflict with highway users. Concerns were also raised as to the use of the existing passing place as a means for construction vehicles to enter the site.
- 7.32 In response to the highway comments, the applicant prepared a revised access arrangement which retained the existing passing place and repositioned the temporary construction access. In doing so, highways officers were satisfied that the highway network would not be impinged upon while construction vehicles waited or ‘lay up’ waiting to enter the site. There was also the matter of egress from the site which was demonstrated through the delivery of adequate visibility splays. Whilst

officers note that Hightown Drove is a relatively moderately used road, the construction phase of the works had the scope to impact on highway safety and it was reasonable of officers to seek this additional information to address standing objections. The standing objections were withdrawn by highways officers once a satisfactory layout had been achieved, subject to the use of conditions which are referenced within Appendix 1 if this report.

- 7.33 Having consideration for the parking need within the site, officers note that the use of the site would be limited to operational circumstance which could include supervision or maintenance of the BESS. It is unlikely there would be daily movement to and from the site beyond a maintenance vehicle for which there is sufficient parking space within the lay-by and within the site itself to accommodate larger vehicles. As such, no concerns are raised as to potential overspill onto the highway of maintenance vehicles.
- 7.34 As previously touched upon, residents have shown concerns over the impact of the proposal during a fire event. Although officers are seeking a more detailed and comprehensive fire strategy to be submitted by the applicant, the matter of access to the site in a fire event must also be considered. The battery units themselves are positioned to the north-eastern side of the site which is the closest proximity to the operational access. It is reasonable for officers to conclude that the units and associated plant equipment would be accessible for the fire and rescue service from Hightown Drove.

Ecology and Trees

- 7.35 Policy ENV 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2015) recognises the importance of habitats such as trees, hedgerows, wetlands, and ponds in supporting biodiversity and ecological connectivity. Paragraphs 180 and 187 of the NPPF require development to minimise impacts on biodiversity, deliver measurable net gains, and contribute to resilient ecological networks. Policy NE6 of the Natural Environment SPD also requires applicants to provide clear evidence of how biodiversity impacts will be avoided, mitigated, and managed, supported by pre- and post-development biodiversity assessments.
- 7.36 The application proposal was supported by a preliminary ecological assessment (PEA) of the site. A holding objection was in place from the Council's ecologist owing to the date of the survey as well as the need for a survey regarding water voles given the site being a red zone for the species. Subsequently, the applicant submitted an updated survey and water vole survey which identified that the site had no evidence of protected species.
- 7.37 There was evidence that the features of the site had the potential to provide habitats for protected species, notably shrubs and features around the eastern and southern boundary of the site. In light of this, the conclusion of the PEA set out that enhancement measures could be presented as well as mitigation measures to ensure that the construction phase of works does not result in harm to habitats that may be in place post permission being granted. The enhancement measures shown within the report strongly tie into the proposed landscaping scheme that was submitted by the applicant which includes planting of trees and hedgerows around

the periphery of the site, as well as the retention of open land to the south which effectively creates a green buffer strip that transitions into the open land around the site.

- 7.38 As the matter of the landscaping provision remains to be agreed (see paragraphs 7.14 and 7.15 for detail) it is not unreasonable of the LPA to seek enhancement measures to be secured by way of condition prior to works commencing on site, thereby ensuring consistency in delivery of the landscaping scheme and ecological enhancement measures.
- 7.39 The application is supported by a BNG metric which identifies that the proposal has the scope to deliver the required net gain in BNG. Whilst the submission sets this out, to ensure delivery occurs on site, a S106 agreement will secure on-site habitat creation, off-site unit purchases (where required), and long-term management and monitoring for a minimum of 30 years, including an ECDC monitoring fee. At the time of drafting this report, officers had instructed the Council's legal team to prepare a draft s106. Should members of the committee resolve to agree with officers' recommendation then the S106 would need to be agreed by all parties before a decision could be formally issued.
- 7.40 The final Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and detailed habitat management strategy will be required prior to commencement, in accordance with the deemed conditions and Environment Act legislation..
- 7.41 The application is also supported by a landscape plan which reflects the commentary within the LVIA seeking the introduction of the planting of trees and hedgerows around the site. The information provided was reviewed by the Council's tree officer who raised no objection to the principle of planting but considered that more appropriate forms of species should be used for the overall strategy. Officers consider that it is reasonable for the landscaping strategy to be secured as a condition and the tree officers comments would not be sufficient to substantiate a reason for refusal.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.42 Policy ENV 8 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2015) requires all developments to contribute to an overall reduction in flood risk and to strictly apply the sequential and exception tests. Development should normally be located in Flood Zone 1 and will not be permitted where it would increase the risk of flooding on-site or elsewhere, compromise flood defences, or create unsafe access during flooding events.
- 7.43 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 which represents the lowest probability of flooding. As such, there would be no requirement for a flood risk assessment (FRA) to support this application although one was submitted by the applicant. The site sits within an area of the district which is protected by flood defences and updated modelling information which was requested by the applicant and provided by the EA indicated the development was within a 1 in 1,000 year flood event from the River Cam Lodes and therefore, by default, the site falls within a remodelled Flood Zone 1 which is less vulnerable to a flood event. As such, the development would be less at risk from a flood event unless the flood defences

were to fail. In the event the flood defences were to fail, this would pose a 'low risk' scenario as the site is unmanned with no personal likely to visit the site during a flood event.

- 7.44 Officers do note that the nature of development upon open land would give rise to increased hardstanding and built form which in turn increases the need for sustainable drainage measures which were presented within the application. The LLFA were consulted upon the proposal and raised no objections to the scheme, showing support of the use of an attenuation pond as part of the development to capture surface water which controls the rate of water leaving the site. The attenuation pond also provides water quality treatment ensuring that the collected surface water limits possible pollutants entering the ground.
- 7.45 The Internal Drainage Board (IDB) were consulted on the scheme and raised that the surface water discharge would require the Board's consent which would be a matter secured outside of the planning application between the applicant and IDB.

Other Matters

Archaeology

- 7.46 The application site falls within an area of recent evidence of archaeological findings notably to fields to the north and south of the site. This included identified Iron Age and Romano-Britishland allotments as well as post-medieval marling pits. The historical and recent findings around the site were reasonable evidence to require the applicant to prepare an Archaeological desk based assessment and follow up field walk. The historic environment team (HET) considered the information and requested that a programme of archaeological work is secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). This has been recommended as a pre-commencement condition.

Contamination

- 7.47 The Environment Agency were consulted upon this application. Comments were received with relation to ensuring contamination of surface water could be mitigated against and a condition is proposed relating to previously unknown contamination being found on site and the relevant actions to be taken by the applicant to cease works until remediation is agreed with the LPA.

Planning Balance

- 7.48 Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.49 The application site lies outside of the development envelope and within the countryside. Policy ENV6 states that proposals for renewable energy and associated infrastructure will be supported, unless their wider environmental, social and economic benefits would be outweighed by significant adverse effects that cannot be remediated. The proposal has been assessed to not have an adverse impact on the prescribed list of considerations. It would provide battery storage

for electricity, lessening the pressure on the grid given the recent rise in demand for renewable energies.

- 7.50 The scheme has demonstrated that, subject to appropriate mitigation, it would not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby dwellings, protected species, key views or upon the landscape. The identified benefits of the scheme to the local power network would outweigh any limited adverse impacts that have been identified or are the subject of conditions to mitigate that harm.
- 7.51 On balance, the proposal is considered to comply with the development plan when read as a whole. The identified benefits outweigh any limited adverse impacts. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement and the conditions set out below.

8.0 Cost

- 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 i.e. relating to the way a matter has been dealt with or substantive i.e. 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.

Human Rights Act

The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, and in particular Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property). Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority, such as East Cambridgeshire District Council, to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance. The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest and the recommendation set out below is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Equalities and Diversities

In considering this planning application due regard has been had to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which

means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to put an end to unlawful behaviour that is banned by the Equality Act, including discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. Account has been taken of the PSED and it is considered that the recommendation set out below would not undermine the objectives of the duty.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Recommended Conditions

Appendix 2 - Plans

APPENDIX 1 - 25/00639/FUM Conditions

1 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and documents listed below

Plan Reference	Version No	Date Received
Archaeological Fieldwalking Survey		4th December 2025
211208-02 CTMP	REV B	10th December 2025
211208-03a		10th December 2025
Hightown Drove Fire Safety Briefing		21st November 2025
NFCC Checklist		21st November 2025
BNG Metric Calc (6th Oct)		21st November 2025
Hightown BNG Enhancement	CIC V1.3	11th December 2025
Hightown Drove PEA	CIC V1.0	11th December 2025
BNG Metric	6.10.25	11th December 2025
Project specification for archaeological evaluation		24th October 2025
Indicative Landscape Masterplan		24th October 2025
ZTV and Viewpoint Locations - Fig A9		24th October 2025
Fig A15A-C Viewpoint 6		24th October 2025
Fig A17A-C- Viewpoint 8		24th October 2025
Hightown Drove BESS LVIA Rebuttal Final	Final	24th October 2025
211208-02 (tracking)		24th October 2025
Turtle Dove Technical Note CICV1		24th October 2025
Water Vole Survey and Assessment	CIC V1.0	24th October 2025
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	CIC V1.0	24th October 2025
Ecological Enhancement Scheme	CIC V1.3	24th October 2025
11	REV 1	17th June 2025
0824-OEE-007		17th June 2025
1	REV 2	17th June 2025
10	REV 1	17th June 2025
12	REV 1	17th June 2025
14	REV 1	17th June 2025
15	REV 1	17th June 2025
3	REV 7	17th June 2025
5	REV 1	17th June 2025
6	REV 1	17th June 2025
7	REV 1	17th June 2025
8	REV 1	17th June 2025
9	REV 1	17th June 2025
FIG10A-C - P0673	REV C	17th June 2025
FIG 11A-C P0673	REV B	17th June 2025
FIG 12A-C P0673	REV B	17th June 2025
FIG 13A-C P0673	REV B	17th June 2025
FIG 14A-C P0673	REV B	17th June 2025
FIG 15A-C P0673	REV B	17th June 2025
FIG 16A-C P0673	REV B	17th June 2025
FIG 17A-C P0673	REV B	17th June 2025
P0673		17th June 2025

P0673		17th June 2025
Agricultural Land Classification Report		17th June 2025
Construction Traffic Management Plan		17th June 2025
Consultation Statement		17th June 2025
Review of Battery Fire and Plume Analyses		17th June 2025
Archaeological Evaluation Report		17th June 2025
BNG and Enhancement Scheme		17th June 2025
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment Report - Part 1		17th June 2025
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment Report - Part 2		17th June 2025
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment Report - Part 3		17th June 2025
Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment Report - Part 4		17th June 2025
Preliminary Ecological Assessment		17th June 2025
Planning, Design and Access Statement		17th June 2025
Phase I Geo-Environmental Assessment		17th June 2025
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment		17th June 2025
Noise Impact AssessmentFinal		17th June 2025
Transport Assessment		17th June 2025
P0673	REV A	17th June 2025
P0673	REV C	17th June 2025

- 1 Reason: To define the scope and extent of this permission.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 3 years of the date of this permission.
- 2 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.
- 3 Prior to works proceeding above ground, the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 3 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015.
- 4 Prior to any work commencing on the site a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority regarding mitigation measures for noise, dust and lighting during the construction phase and a Waste Minimisation Plan. These shall include, but not be limited to, other aspects such as access points for deliveries and site vehicles, site compound, waste and proposed phasing/timescales of development etc, The CEMP shall be adhered to at all times during all phases.
- 4 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. The condition is pre-commencement in order to ensure that the protection measures are implemented prior to any site works taking place.

- 5 Prior to the commencement of the development, a Noise Management Plan shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority, The Noise Management Plan shall include details for a schedule of regular noise monitoring and any mitigation of noise levels to ensure compliance with the original assessment.
- 5 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. The condition is pre-commencement in order to ensure that the protection measures are implemented prior to any site works taking place.
- 6 Prior to the commencement of the development, a full schedule of all soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The schedule shall include, tree and planting plans, a written specification; schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes, proposed numbers/densities; and a detailed implementation programme. It shall also indicate all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the end of the first planting season following occupation of the development.
- 6 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 7 All soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the first use of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting, or replacement planting, any tree or plant is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
- 7 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 8 No development shall take place including any site clearance works until a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEcMP shall include the following:
 - a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
 - b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
 - c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
 - d) The location and timings of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
 - e) The times during which construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
 - f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
 - g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
 - h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs if applicable.
 - i) The location for the storage of materials.

The approved CEcMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

- 8 Reason: To protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and the Natural Environment SPD, 2020.
- 9 No further development, including vegetation/site clearance, shall commence on site until a detailed 'Landscape and Ecology Management & Monitoring Plan' (LEMMP) for all soft landscaping and habitat creation within the application site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This plan shall cover the operational lifetime of the development and include long term objectives, management responsibilities, creation timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscaped areas of the development site. Thereafter, these areas shall be managed and maintained in full accordance with these agreed details unless first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority for the duration of the development's lifetime. The Plan shall include, as a minimum, the following:
 - a) Details on the creation and management of target habitats identified within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report and Metric for on-site net gain.
 - b) Monitoring details for all target habitats identified within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report and Metric, including targeted review years.
 - c) Details of any corrective action that will be undertaken if habitat delivery fails to achieve the requirements set out in the approved Biodiversity Net Gain Report.
- 9 Reason: To protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and the Natural Environment SPD, 2020.
- 10 Prior to works proceeding above ground level, a method statement and plan for enhancing biodiversity throughout the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the biodiversity enhancement measures shall be carried out and retained in accordance with the approved details.
- 10 Reason: To ensure the protection of wildlife and the habitat which supports it and secure opportunities for the enhancement of the landscape value of the site in accordance with policies ENV 1, ENV 2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 11 Prior to commencement of development an Emergency Response Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include:
 - o Details of the hazards associated with lithium-ion batteries;
 - o Isolation of electrical sources to enable firefighting activities;
 - o Measures to extinguish or cool batteries involved in fire;
 - o Management of toxic or flammable gases;
 - o Measures to minimise the environmental impact of an incident, including containment of fire water run-off, prevention of ground contamination and water course pollution and the release of toxic gases;

- o Handling and responsibility for disposal of damaged batteries; and
- o Establishment of regular onsite training exercises.

The Emergency Response Plan shall be maintained and reviewed on a regular basis (at least once every 2 years) and any material changes notified to Cambridge and Suffolk Fire and Rescue.

- 11 Reason: To ensure proper infrastructure for the site in the interests of public safety in that adequate water supply is available for emergency use.
- 12 No development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has first been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:
 - a. the statement of significance and research objectives;
 - b. The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;
 - c. The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;
 - d. The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives.
- 12 Reason: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any demolitions or groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely preservation and/or investigation, recording, reporting, archiving and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with national policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 13 The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as a scheme to contain and dispose of surface water in the event of a fire has been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.
- 13 To protect and prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs 187, 196, 197 and relevant Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Position Statements.
- 14 No use of the development shall take place until a scheme of hedgehog recovery measures has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the approved measures shall be maintained for a minimum of 10 years following their installation.

APPENDIX C

- 14 Reason: This is to protect and enhance species in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and in accordance with policy SPD HR1 of the Hedgehog Recovery SPD 2024.
- 15 Access to the site during its construction phase shall be in accordance with the arrangement included on Drawing package 211208-03A, Sheet 2 of 8.
- 15 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 16 Prior to commencement of use, access to the site, following construction, shall be constructed in accordance with the arrangement included on Drawing package 211208-03A, Sheet 3 of 8.
- 16 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 17 The turning and parking area included within Drawing package 211208-03A, Sheet 8 of 8 shall be levelled, surfaced and drained and thereafter retained for that specific use during construction.
- 17 Reason: In the interests of highway safety to prevent construction vehicles from reversing onto Hightown Drove in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 18 Prior to the first use of the development the vehicular accesses where they cross the public highway shall be laid out and constructed in accordance with Cambridgeshire County Council's construction specification.
- 18 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 19 Prior to first use, the proposed vehicular accesses shall be constructed so that their falls and levels are such that no private water from the site drains across or onto the public highway.
- 19 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 20 Prior to first use, the proposed vehicular accesses shall be constructed using a bound material, for the first 20 metres from the boundary of the public highway into the site, to prevent debris spreading onto the public highway.
- 20 Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure satisfactory access into the site in accordance with Policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).

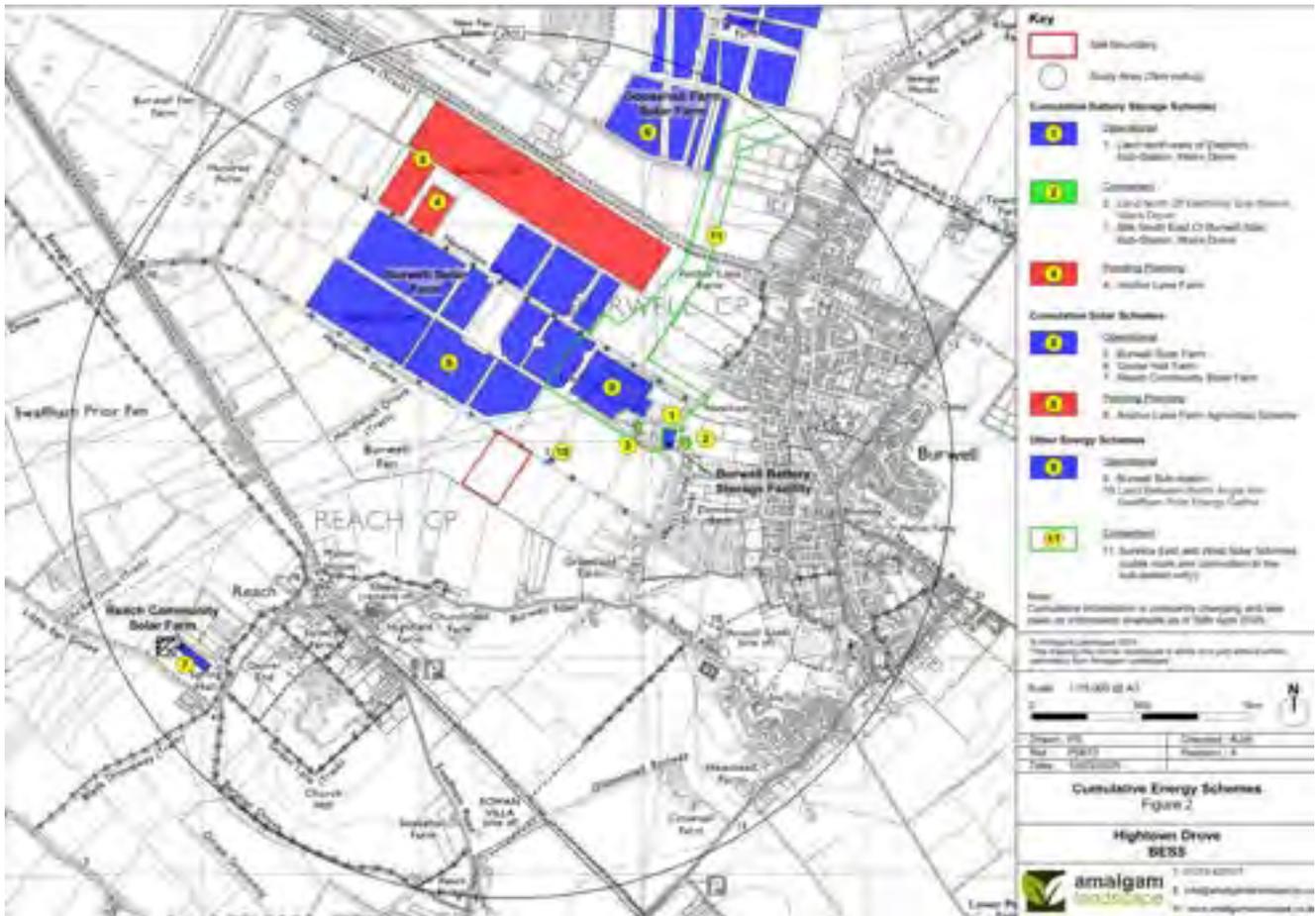
- 21 Prior to first use, any gate or gates to the vehicular access shall be set back a minimum of 20 metres from the near edge of the highway carriageway. Any access gate or gates shall be hung to open inwards.
- 21 Reason: To prevent obstruction of the highway in the interests of highway safety in accordance with policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the adopted East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 22 Notwithstanding the approved plans, no external lighting shall be erected within the application site until details of the proposed lights, their specification, location, the orientation/angle of the luminaries, predicted light spill and hours of proposed use, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any external lighting that is installed shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme and thereafter maintained and retained as agreed.
- 22 Reason: This is to safeguard protected species and their habitats in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 23 If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation strategy detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.
- 23 To protect and prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs 187, 196, 197 and relevant Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Position Statements.
- 24 No works involving piling shall take place until a report/method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, detailing the type of piling and mitigation measures to be taken to protect local residents from noise and/or vibration. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 24 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 25 Construction times and deliveries, with the exception of internal works, shall be limited to the following hours: 0730 to 1800 each day Monday to Friday; 0730 to 1300 Saturdays; and at no time on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays.
- 25 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 26 The surface water drainage scheme shall be constructed and maintained in full accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Report as submitted (ref: GON.0676.0429) dated 29th April 2025.

- 26 To prevent an increased risk of flooding and protect water quality in accordance with Policy ENV 8 and ENV 9 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 27 Not later than 35 years from the date on this decision notice, the development including all associated containers and infrastructure shall be removed from the site in their entirety and the land shall be restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme of work that shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the expiration of this permission.
- 27 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area and to reinstate the land to its original appearance following the expiration of the temporary consent applied for on the site, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. In addition to ensure that the development is decommissioned out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors, in accordance with policy ENV9 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).

APPENDIX 2 - Plans



Proposed Site Layout



Energy Schemes (Within vicinity of the site)



Landscaping Masterplan

Appendix C

Agenda Item	Application Reference	Additional Info Received/Updates to Committee
5	25/00371/FUL	<p>As set out in the committee report, The Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was published on 23rd December 2025. The LNRS is a spatial strategy which plans, maps and creates priorities for nature in a given area. It is a statutory document produced under the Environment Act 2021. Local authorities must have regard to any relevant LNRS through the exercise of its functions, including as a local planning authority (see S40(2A) of the NERC Act 2006).</p> <p>Amongst other matters, the LNRS identifies on a map (the ‘habitat map’) “<i>areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity</i>” (ACB sites). Typically, such sites will be farmland with limited, if any, current significant interest for biodiversity, but it has been determined to offer the potential to become important if measures were taken to improve the habitats on that particular site.</p> <p>For this particular application, it has been determined that a LNRS ACB site does align with the planning application site area. As a local planning authority, we therefore have a duty to determine to what degree this alignment is a material consideration and whether such a consideration is positive or negative in the planning balance. For the avoidance of doubt, a site allocated in an LNRS does not automatically override any local planning policy for that site, nor act as some form of automatic blocking of development. Put simply, it is one of the many issues in need of consideration when considering a planning application.</p> <p>Specifically for this planning application, the LNRS allocates the planning application site for Action Wo3A which is as follows:</p>

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		<p>Improve biodiversity by creating mixed deciduous woodland consisting of appropriate native or climate change tolerant (European only) species to increase resilience and diversity. Such newly created woodlands are to be within 2.5 kilometres of existing woodland, though in practice should be much closer (ideally within 500 metres). Newly created woods would ideally form a woodland block (or group of woodlands within 200 metres of each other) which are at least 40 hectares in size. Woodland creation would be expected over approximately 80% of the site area mapped under this measure, with the remaining 20% a mosaic of other complementary habitats such as species-rich grassland, scrub, ponds, and individual trees.</p> <p>For this particular application, the application site is currently an arable field with no trees or woodland present. The application proposes (amongst other matters) some tree and hedge planting within the site and further tree planting proposed around the perimeter of the wider site. The scale of planting proposed is not to such a degree as to be classed as creating a Wo3A 'woodland' on site, but nevertheless there would be more trees present than without the development taking place. As such, it is concluded that the LNRS is weighted neutral in the planning balance for this planning application. More extensive tree planting could have raised that as positive in the planning balance (due to the closer alignment to the ambitions of the LNRS for this site). Had the applicant proposed very little or nil tree planting on site, then that would have resulted in a negative assessment in the planning balance (due to no alignment to the ambitions of the LNRS for this site).</p> <p>Overall, therefore, the degree of conflict or alignment with the LNRS is considered neutral for this planning application.</p>
6	25/01170/FUL	<p><u>Clarification regarding reasons for referral to Committee</u></p> <p>The application is made for a minor householder application with no objections raised following the consultation process. It is being heard by Committee because it has been made on behalf of a Member and is recommended for approval. Although exception is made within the Constitution for minor householder applications made by Members where there are no objections following the consultation process, following consideration for consistency, the Strategic Planning and</p>

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		Development Management Manger referred the application to Committee in accordance with his powers as set out at paragraph 5.9 of Part 3: C(ii) (Planning Committee) of the Constitution in the interests of transparent decision-making.
7	25/00309/LBC	<p><u>Clarification regarding reasons for referral to Committee</u></p> <p>The application is made for a Listed Building Consent with objections raised following the consultation process. It is being heard by Committee because it has been made on behalf of a Member and is recommended for approval. Although exception is made within the Constitution for minor householder type applications made by Members where there are no objections following the consultation process, following consideration for consistency, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manger referred the application to Committee in accordance with his powers as set out at paragraph 5.9 of Part 3: C(ii) (Planning Committee) of the Constitution in the interests of transparent decision-making. Cllr Bailey, the applicant, has complied with the protocols set out at Part 5, Section 2 of the Constitution (Codes and Protocols: Guidance on Planning for Members).</p>
10	25/00639/FUM	<p><u>NPPF (Consultation)</u></p> <p>In December 2025, a draft NPPF was published for consultation. Of particular relevance to this proposal is Section 10 (Securing clean energy and water), of which Policy W2 (1), sets out that <i>‘The development plan should support the transition to clean power by planning positively for the increased supply and use of renewable and low carbon energy and electricity network infrastructure. This means that the development plan, should, at the most appropriate level, seek to maximise the potential for suitable development by identifying:</i></p> <p><i>a. Areas which are suitable for renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure, including for future re-powering and life extension, where this would help secure their development; and</i></p>

Appendix C

	<p><i>b. Opportunities for development to draw its heat or energy supply from decentralised networks (such as district heat networks), renewable or low carbon energy supply systems, and for co-locating potential customers and suppliers of surplus heat or energy.'</i></p> <p>Section 10, Policy W3 (1) sets out that <i>'In considering proposals for renewable and low-carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure, substantial weight should be given to:</i></p> <p><i>a. The benefits of such development for improving energy security, supporting economic development and moving to a net zero future'.</i></p> <p>Section 10, Policy W3 (2) sets out that <i>'Applicants should not be required to demonstrate the need for renewable or low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure. Where proposals for this form of development come forward outside areas which have been identified as suitable for them they should be acceptable when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework, taken as a whole.'</i></p> <p>These Policies are considered to be relevant to the application proposal in light of the specific reference to electricity network infrastructure which the proposal would be. As the version of the NPPF remains in draft form and under consultation – and therefore potentially subject to further change - it should be afforded limited weight at this time. Nevertheless, it is indicative of the direction of travel of the evolving policy context.</p> <p><u>LNRS</u></p> <p>The Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was published on 23rd December 2025. The LNRS is a spatial strategy which plans, maps and creates priorities for nature in a given area. It is a statutory document produced under the Environment Act 2021. Local authorities must have regard to any relevant LNRS through the exercise of its functions, including as a local planning authority (see S40(2A) of the NERC Act 2006).</p> <p>Amongst other matters, the LNRS identifies on a map (the 'habitat map') "areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity" (ACB sites). Typically, such sites will be farmland with</p>
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		<p>limited, if any, current significant interest for biodiversity, but it has been determined to offer the potential to become important if measures were taken to improve the habitats on that particular site.</p> <p>For this particular application, it has been determined that no LNRS ACB site aligns with the planning application site area and there is no other apparent reason why the LNRS is an important determining factor for this application. As such, very little weight has been given to the content of the LNRS in reaching a recommendation for this planning application.</p> <p><u>Plan Ref</u></p> <p>Amendments to the plan reference list are made as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BNG Metric Calc (6th Oct) dated 21/11/25 to be superseded by BNG Metric dated 11/12/25. - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal CIC V1.0 dated 24/10/25 has been superseded by Hightown BNG PEA CIC V1.3 dated 11/12/25 - Ecological Enhancement Scheme dated 24/10/25 has been superseded by Hightown BNG Enhancement dated 11/12/25 - Amendment to plan references to include figure points below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P0673 Figure 3 • P0673 Figure 4a • P0673 Figure 5 • P0673 Figure 6 • P0673 Figure 7 • P0673 Figure 8 • P0673 Figure 9 • P0673 Figure 2 • P0673 Figure 18
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P0673 Location Plan - Inclusion of reference to Fire Strategy Plan (31/07/2025) - Preliminary Ecological Assessment 17/06/25 has been superseded by Hightown BNG PEA CIC V1.3 <p><u>Conditions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To include the word ‘reason’ to condition 13: <u>Reason:</u> To protect and prevent the pollution of controlled waters from potential pollutants associated with current and previous land uses in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs 187, 196, 197 and relevant Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Position Statements. <p><u>Report Corrections</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reference to condition 25 within para 7.26 of the committee report to be replaced with condition 11 - Para 7.43 correction: the development site is over 1 hectare and therefore requires a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) - Over 80 third party representations have been received, which raised the following concerns in addition to those listed in the published report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of EIA • Lack of public consultation • Impact on groundwater • Heritage Impacts • Contamination • Lack of attenuation
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		<p><u>Planning History</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Members attention is drawn to application 24/00690/SCREEN which determined the scheme was not an EIA development <p><u>Reach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Within the residential amenity assessment of the committee report, reference is made to Burwell Road. This is considered to be the nearest dwellings (habitable receptors) to the development within the settlement of Reach.
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Planning Committee Update –

25/00717/F3M

Land South of Princess of Wales Hospital

Ely

Cambridgeshire

Development of 13 new homes, including 5 apartments and 9 houses with access, parking and landscaping.

To view all of the public access documents relating to this application please use the following web address or scan the QR code:

<https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SYS0JDGGLO200>





25/00717/F3M



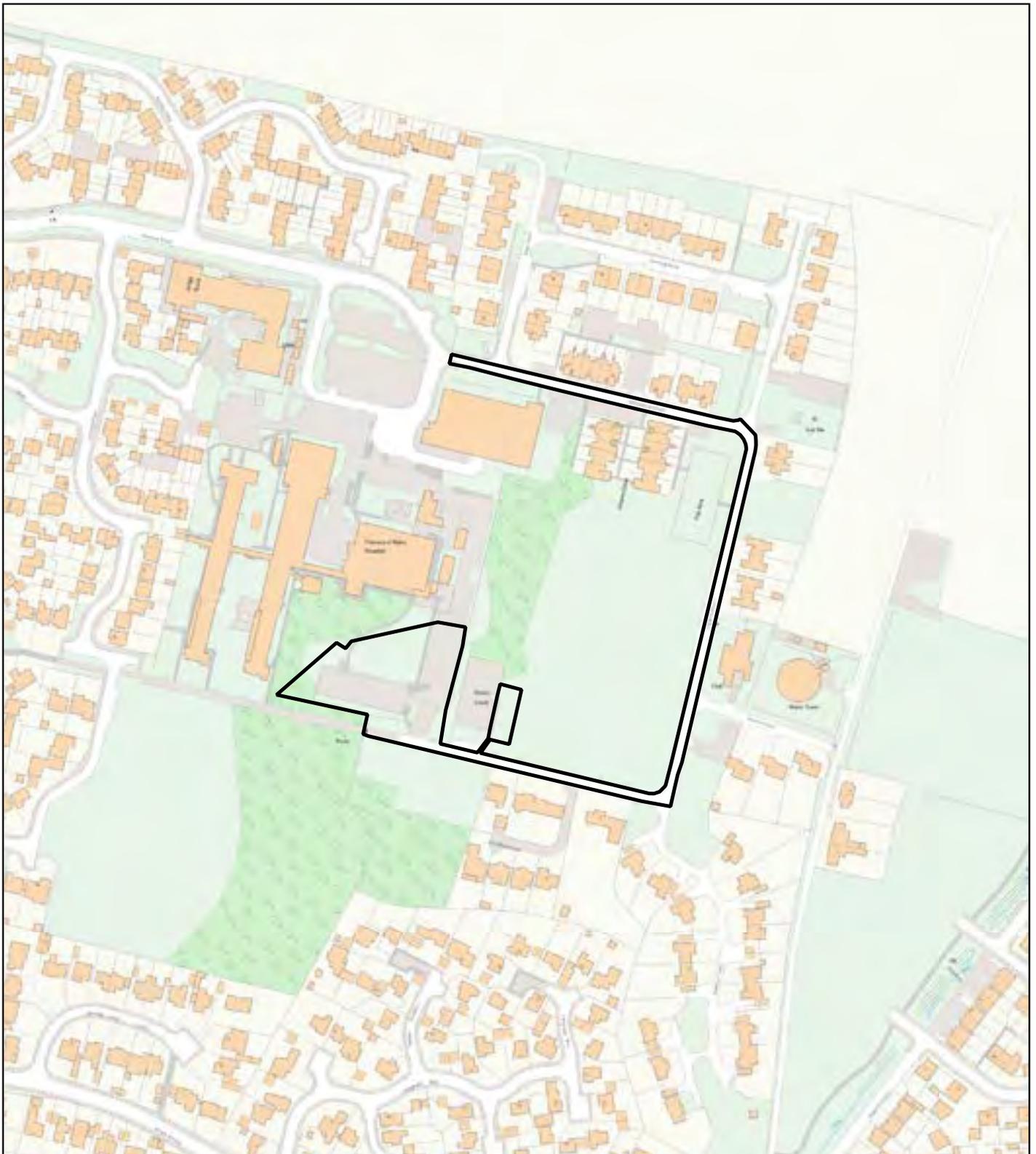
Land South Of The Princess
Of Wales Hospital
Ely

East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Date: 03/02/2026
Scale: 1:6,000



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25/00717/F3M



Land South Of The Princess
Of Wales Hospital
Ely

East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Date: 03/02/2026
Scale: 1:3,000



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TITLE: 25/00717/F3M

Committee: Planning Committee

Date: 4 March 2026

Author: Major Projects Officer

Report No: AA149

Contact Officer: Gavin Taylor, Major Projects Officer
Gavin.Taylor@eastcamb.s.gov.uk
01353616348
Room No 011 The Grange Ely

Site Address: Land South Of The Princess Of Wales Hospital Ely Cambridgeshire

Proposal: Development of 13no. new homes, including 5no. apartments and 8no. houses with access, parking and landscaping

Applicant: East Cambs Trading Company Ltd

Parish: Ely

Ward: Ely North

Ward Councillor/s: Chika Akinwale
Alison Whelan

Date Received: 18 July 2025

Expiry Date: 9 March 2026

1.0 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 Members are recommended to APPROVE the application in accordance with the following terms:

1. The Committee delegates authority to finalise the pre-commencement conditions and terms and completion of the S.106 legal agreement to the Planning Manager; and
2. Following the completion of the S.106, application 25/00717/F3M be approved subject to the planning conditions at Appendix 1 (and summarised below); or,
3. The Committee delegates authority to refuse the application in the event that the applicant does not agree to any necessary extensions to the statutory determination period to enable the completion of the S106 legal agreement.

- 1.2 The application is being considered by Committee in the interests of transparency, as it is an application submitted by East Cambridgeshire District Council's development company.

2.0 SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 13 dwellings, comprising 9 market homes; 1 x 2-bedroom (4 person) flat, 2 x 2-bedroom and 4 x 3-bedroom houses, and 4 affordable homes comprising; 2 x 1-bed and 2 x 2-bedroom flats (units 7-10).
- 2.2 The site is proposed to be accessed via an existing area of hardstanding thought to have been a turning area, off Redman Close and which abuts the former car park. Redman Close continues from the application site access, heading east where it joins Heaton Drive.
- 2.3 The dwellings are arranged around the single access road, generally facing toward the centre of the site, with rear gardens abutting the site perimeters. Each property is served by on-site parking spaces, with additional visitor parking spaces set along the shared access road.
- 2.4 The dwellinghouses are all 2-storey in scale with ridge heights of approximately 8.2m/ 27' (5.4m/17' eaves) and arranged in pairs. Each property is served with a private rear garden and bin storage areas.
- 2.5 The flatted development comprises 5 dwellings within a single building set along the eastern boundary. It comprises a 3-storey building (rooms in the roof space) with ridge height of approximately 10.3m/34' (6.1m/20' to eaves). The flats are served by bin storage and cycle parking area.
- 2.6 The dwellings are finished externally in buff facing brick, with vertical grey cladding (precise details yet to be specified) across the 1st floor element, with a slate tile roof finish.
- 2.7 The application also seeks permission for the relocation of four TPO trees and on adjacent land, to accommodate the development. However, these works have already been carried out under a separate TPO consent (25/00198/TPO). One tree (a 14m tall Norway Maple – Tree 15 on the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment) at the southern boundary is proposed to be removed.
- 2.8 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 link: <https://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 25/00198/TPO - Trees under TPO E/04/11 named T22, T23, T24 & T27 (three Silver Birch and one Whitebeam respectively) to be transplanted and relocated adjacent to Tennis Court as per plan. (Granted 09.04.2025)

- 3.2 25/00154/TPO - T12 Sycamore - Remove epicormic growth. (Granted 27.03.2025)
- 3.3 24/00700/TPO - T15 Horse Chestnut - Crown reduce by 1-2m x2 exposed branches on S/W side Historic branch failure has resulted x2 branches on S/W side becoming exposed. A sympathetic 1-2m reduction on these two branches and any other over extended branches would reduce likelihood of future failure, crown reduce any other over-extended limbs by 1-2m. No pruning to be carried out on upper canopy. (Granted 04.09.2024)

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 The site is in north Ely, south-east of the Princess of Wales Hospital. The site forms a parcel of land, formerly within the Hospital curtilage and provided staff and visitor parking. It is understood that the application site has become redundant to the hospital and has recently been transferred to the applicant.
- 4.2 The site is accessed via a surfaced road from the east. Westwards from the proposed access is a footway which is closed to vehicular traffic by bollards. This footway links to Williams Close and then to Orchard estate.
- 4.3 The site incorporates a number of mature trees and a TPO is imposed across the site.
- 4.4 The site is proposed to be developed in conjunction with 27no. New dwellings recently approved over a number of infill sites between Nigel Road and Redman Close (20/01006/FUM). As part of this development, 8 dwellings are currently being constructed to the south of the application site.
- 4.5 The site does not lie within any designated area of nature or heritage conservation. The site lies in Flod Zone 1 (low risk).

5.0 RESPONSES FROM CONSULTEES

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

Ely City Council - 5 August 2025

The Council recommends refusal due to the loss of a public amenity, loss of green space that is used by local people and over-development.

Ward Councillors – 18 January 2026

Cllr Alison Whelan has requested that the application is considered by the planning committee, due to residents' concerns.

ECDC Environmental Health (ground contamination) - 2 September 2025

Has considered the Phase I Geoenvironmental Desk Study and the Ground Investigation Report and accept the findings. Further investigation for contamination is not required. Recommends that the standard unexpected contamination is attached to any grant of permission.

ECDC Environmental Health - 8 August 2025

Construction times and deliveries during the construction phase are recommended to be restricted to the following:

07:30 - 18:00 each day Monday - Friday
07:30 - 13:00 on Saturdays and
None on Sundays or Bank Holidays

A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is required to include mitigation measures for the control of pollution during the construction phase.

If it is necessary to undertake ground piling, the methods of this are to agreed before any piling takes place.

ECDC Environmental Health – 19 February 2026

In respect of noise mitigation measures e.g., acoustic vents, MHVR to rooms affected by nearby plant equipment. This would be acceptable as it meets national guidance and policy. If alternative ventilation is viewed as acceptable then advises that Building Control are consulted on the proposed system to ensure that it is acceptable.

Plots 12 and 13 have been reorientated and so if the proposed acoustic fencing is installed as described in the Noise Impact Assessment, EH has no objections.

ECDC Ecologist – 26 August and 6 October 2025

No objections subject to conditions securing;

- Biodiversity enhancements
- Hedgehog protection/ enhancement
- Lighting condition
- CEMP for Biodiversity as per BS: 42020:2013

BNG – significant on-site enhancements required to be secured via S106 agreement.

ECDC Trees Team - 5 September 2025

All of the trees in proximity to this development are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). The proposal results in minimal impacts on the retained trees and results in the loss of only one low quality Norway Maple and the relocation of 4 early mature trees to the adjacent open space. The submitted plans indicate that nine new trees will be planted as part of the development.

Raises concerns over potential shadowing to properties and subsequent pressure on trees to be hard-pruned or removed to address amenity harm, which would be harmful to the trees and their public amenity value.

ECDC Strategic Planning - No Comments Received

ECDC Housing Section – 16.02.2026

In accordance with policy HOU 3 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan a minimum of 30% of the total number of dwellings to be provided will be required for affordable housing provision which is 4 number of units. The Council's preferred housing tenure mix is 70% Affordable or Social Rented Housing and 30% Intermediate Tenure Housing. This would mean a minimum of 3 affordable rent, the remaining 1 unit as rental or intermediate.

A proportion of dwellings should be provided that are suitable or easily adaptable for occupation by the elderly or people with disabilities (Building Regulation M4(2)).

The standards relating to design, space and layout should meet HCA standards.

CCC Education - 12 August 2025

Early Years/Primary and Secondary – there is sufficient capacity to meet the needs from this development.

SEND - Special Education Needs and Disabilities. Based on the multiplier this generates 0.07 children requiring SEND provision. £8,169.56 is requested to meet this provision.

Library - The development can be adequately served by existing library provision in Ely.

CCC Local Highways Authority – 12th August 2025

Following a review of the documents provided to the Local Highway Authority as part of the above planning application, no significant adverse effect upon the public highway should result from this proposal, should it gain benefit of planning permission.

[Further informal advice received 18th February 2026]

Comments provided in the officer's capacity as a highway engineer and do not constitute the formal position of the Local Highway Authority.

Has reviewed the information provided by a local resident in respect of street width Notes that this development is not proposed for adoption and would not be suitable for adoption in the future due to the constraints of the surrounding road network.

Advises that given the number of units proposed and the nature of the development, the proposed carriageway width does not raise any significant highway safety concerns. While a 5.0 m width is preferable, a 4.8 m width is considered acceptable in this context due to the limited length of the road. On this basis, would not have sufficient grounds under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to justify an objection to the application.

Also advises that, given the scale of the development, a Transport Statement would be an appropriate level of assessment. A full Transport Assessment or Travel Plan would not be required.

CCC Highways Transport Team - No Comments Received

CCC Lead Local Flood Authority - 29 July 2025

No objection in principle to the proposed development. The submission demonstrates that surface water from the proposed development can be managed through the use of infiltration.

Requests a pre-commencement condition to secure the detailed design of the and long-term management and maintenance of the surface water drainage system serving the development.

CCC Archaeology - 23 July 2025

Due to the archaeological potential of the site a further programme of investigation and recording is required in order to provide more information regarding the presence or absence, and condition, of surviving archaeological remains within the development area, and to establish the need for archaeological mitigation of the development as necessary. Pre-commencement condition required.

CCC Minerals And Waste Development Control Team - No Comments Received

Anglian Water Services Ltd - 14 August 2025

Assets Affected

Advises that there are assets owned by Anglian Water or those subject to an adoption agreement within or close to the development boundary that may affect the layout of the site or may require sewer diversion.

Wastewater Treatment

Ely Water Recycling Centre can accommodate the flows from the development.

Used Water Network

The sewerage system at present has available capacity for the anticipated foul flows.

Surface Water disposal

The proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water and the Planning Authority will need to seek the views of the Environment Agency.

Cambs Wildlife Trust - No Comments Received

Ely Cycle Campaign - No Comments Received

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service - 25 July 2025

A scheme for the provision of fire hydrants is required.

Cadent Gas Ltd - 24 July 2025

No objection

National Gas - 23 July 2025

No objection

The Ely Group of Internal Drainage Board - 4 August 2025

No objections

East of England Ambulance Service - 15 August 2025

This application for 13 dwelling development could generate another 13 residents and will generate an anticipated additional 7 calls per annum on already constrained ambulance services.

The capital required to create additional ambulance services to support the population arising from the proposed development is calculated to be £4,420 and are for the impact of this development only and will be used to support:

Relocation and expansion of existing Cambridge Ambulance Hub to meet the increased local demand arising from this housing development.

Cambs Police: Design Out Crime Officers - 5 August 2025

Generally appears to be an acceptable layout with dwellings overlooked by the neighbouring properties which increases a sense of safety and security, rooms are orientated to provide natural surveillance over the open space to the front. Each dwelling has been provided with defensible space to the front of the properties; parking is within curtilage to the front or side of each dwelling.

Considers the area to be low risk of crime

Provides advice in respect of;

- Door and window security
- Fencing
- External Lighting
- Cycle sheds and stores
- EV charging and vehicle parking
- Footpath links and surveillance
- Apartment block security
- External bin stores
- CCTV

ECDC Waste Strategy - 27 August 2025

Advises East Cambs District Council will not enter private property to collect waste or recycling, therefore it would be the responsibility of the owners/residents to take any sacks/bins to the public highway boundary on the relevant collection day. Provides RECAP guidance on expected standards.

Where a developer requires East Cambridgeshire District Council to collect waste and recycling from outside a new property and the road(s) are private and unadopted East Cambridgeshire District Council requires the developer to sign the developers indemnity agreement to mitigate against possible compensation claims.

5.2 A site notice was displayed near the site on 13th August 2025 and a press advert was published in the Cambridge Evening News on 31 July 2025.

5.3 Neighbours – 5 neighbouring properties were notified and the responses received are summarised below. A full copy of the responses are available on the Council's website.

- Road design inadequate to cater for shared use
- Highway safety concerns
- Lack of disabled access
- Construction traffic dangers
- Loss of/ harm to trees
- Loss of open space
- Benefits do not outweigh harm
- No need for housing
- Development to the south not shown on plans
- Noise impacts
- Affects a Right of Access/ right of way
- Pollution
- Impacts residential amenity
- No active Travel measures
- Contrary to Policy
- Affects street scene
- Landscape impacts/ affects views
- Loss of privacy
- Parking and turning issues
- Affects on Conservation Area
- Biodiversity impacts
- Loss of public amenity
- Overbearing
- Conflicts with the operational needs/ potential expansion of the hospital
- Services and facilities cannot cope with increase in population
- Blocks pedestrian access to the hospital
- Insufficient consultation

6.0 THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023)

GROWTH 1: Levels of housing, employment and retail growth

GROWTH 2: Locational strategy

GROWTH 3: Infrastructure requirements

GROWTH 4: Delivery of growth

GROWTH 5: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

HOU 1: Housing mix

HOU 2: Housing density

HOU 3: Affordable housing provision

ENV 1: Landscape and settlement character

ENV 2: Design

ENV 4: Energy and water 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

6.2 Supplementary Planning Documents

East Cambridgeshire Design Guide 2012
Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations 2013
Flood and Water 2016
Contaminated Land 2015
Natural Environment 2020
Hedgehog Recovery Design Guidance SPD
Climate Change 2021
Affordable Housing Statement (Oct 2019)
Trees Strategy Document 2018

6.3 Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste and Minerals Local Plan 2021

Policy 14: Waste management needs arising from residential and commercial development

6.4 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

2 Achieving sustainable development
4 Decision-making
5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
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
15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
16 Conserving & enhancing the historic environment

6.5 Planning Practice Guidance

7.0 PLANNING MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND COMMENTS

7.1 Principle of Development

Policy GROWTH 1 of the Local Plan 2015 sets out the levels of housing to be delivered in Local Plan period, expected to be of 5,400 dwellings in the district, with Policy GROWTH 2 setting out the overall strategy for the distribution of growth across the district. The Local Plan is up to date, and these policies aim to ensure that growth takes place in appropriate locations across the district. Within the defined development envelopes, housing, employment and other development to meet local needs will normally be permitted, provided there is no significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area and that all other material planning considerations are satisfied. The proposal is located inside the defined development

boundary for Ely as set out in the policies maps under the Local Plan. Ely is identified for significant (housing) growth over the plan period, to which this development would contribute toward, noting that the housing mix of both eh market and affordable dwellings proposed broadly aligns with the Council's latest housing needs assessment report (Housing Needs of Specific Groups, GL Hearn. 2021).

- 7.2 Furthermore, the site is previously developed, formerly used by the Hospital for staff and visitor parking but no longer required since the recent completion of the multi-storey car park at the front of the hospital. The former use is therefore not as employment land as set out under Local Plan policy EMP1, which otherwise seeks to retain land previously in use for B1(now class E(g)) B2 or B8 uses, which this use is not. Paragraph 125 of the NPPF sets out that substantial weight is to be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused.
- 7.3 It is considered therefore that the principle of the development is supported through Local Plan policies GROWTH1 and GROWTH2 and substantial weight afforded to it through the NPPF.

Access and Impact on Highways

- 7.4 Policy COM7 of the Local Plan states that development should be designed to reduce the need to travel particularly by car and should promote sustainable forms of transport appropriate to its particular location. Development proposals shall provide safe and convenient access to the highway network and be capable of accommodating the level/type of traffic generated without detriment to the local highway network and the amenity, character or appearance of the locality. Policy COM8 requires development proposals to provide adequate levels of car and cycle parking and make provision for parking broadly in accordance with the Council's parking standards (including parking for people with impaired mobility).
- 7.5 The access utilises an area of existing hardstanding and achieved adequate width and visibility splays to serve the development. The internal access road forms a 'Y' shape which provides ample area to safely enter and exit in forward gear, including refuse vehicles. It is understood that the Council's refuse vehicle currently reverses along Redman Drive to service existing dwellings and the ability therefore for the vehicle to enter and exit in forward gear is of wider benefit to users of the roadway in this area.
- 7.6 The development is served by appropriate levels of on-site resident and visitor parking and, reducing risk of occupiers and visitors parking on the highway which is used by cars, cycles and pedestrians.
- 7.7 Concerns have been raised that the highway along Redman Close is unsuitable as a shared surface street, in that vehicle to pedestrian conflict will occur and that the highway is too narrow. It is acknowledged that the section of road along Heaton Drive and Redman Close, to the footway adjacent to the parkland to the south west of the application site, is well used by cyclists and pedestrians. In this regard, the development will generate additional vehicle movements which the applicant's transport statement sets out will be in the region of 8 to 9 movements on the AM and

PM peak. This is not considered to be significant and would have very limited impact on the existing highway network. Notwithstanding, given the character of the road and its current use, vehicle speeds along Redman Close are generally low. Furthermore, whilst the highway is around 4.8 m in width, this is sufficient to accommodate a vehicle and pedestrian simultaneously without conflict.

- 7.8 In this regard, the Local Highway Authority have been consulted on the suitability of the road to serve the development. The LHA has considered the number of units proposed and the nature of the development and considers that whilst the road is generally 4.8 m in width, it is considered acceptable in this context due to the limited length of the road, being around 130m. The LHA considers that an objection could not be sustained having regard to the tests set out under the NPPF paragraph 116, which requires demonstration of unacceptable highway safety or severe cumulative impacts on the road network. Whilst the LHA's comments are provided on the basis that they would not be seeking to adopt the highway or the development access, nonetheless they are considered to carry significant weight in assessing the appropriateness of the access arrangements associated with this development.
- 7.9 The concerns raised have also referenced the Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (MfS) guidance, in respect of shared surface arrangements, the recommendation to consult communities and impacts on disabled access, particularly for the blind where shared surface streets are sometimes challenging. In response, MfS is a guidance document and therefore not statute and sets out that it "does not set out any new policy or legal requirements." MfS version 1 complimented the then 'Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing and Planning Policy Wales', which has since been revoked and replaced by the NPPF. Notwithstanding MfS is a material consideration when assessing the suitability of street layout. Whilst the existing highway does not necessarily follow the guidance in respect of its width and designated pedestrian infrastructure, it must be acknowledged that the development is attempting to retrofit a small housing scheme into an existing highway arrangement on a brownfield site, whereas MfS is intended to guide developers on new street design, which is not the case here.
- 7.10 MfS sets out that where a shared surface arrangement is proposed that communities should be consulted upon, to understand the impacts this may have on their access needs. In this regard, whilst MfS is not statute the LPA has undertaken consultation on the application in accordance with national and local planning requirements.
- 7.11 Concerns raised in respect of disabled access have been carefully considered and indeed MfS recognises that shared surface streets can be challenging for some disabled persons, particularly the blind or partially-sighted who may struggle to navigate such roads. In this regard, it does need to be acknowledged that Heaton Close and Redman Way are established shared streets which already accommodate vehicles and pedestrians simultaneously. Whilst this development would extend, to a small degree, the amount of highway trafficked by vehicles in that vehicle are unlikely to currently drive to the end of Redman Close at present, this is not significant having regard to the existing dwellings along these roads and the 8 dwellings currently under construction (see 20/01006/FUM). It is considered therefore that while the shared surface street arrangement may not be optimum, this arrangement is already established and the development would not exacerbate this to any severe or unacceptable degree, having regard to the tests of paragraph 116 of the NPPF. In

addition, Policy COM 8 requires developments to accommodate parking for people with impaired mobility. In this respect the development incorporates 11 wider parking bays across the dwellings and the houses have been designed to M4(2) standards.

- 7.12 Policy COM7 requires development to promote sustainable forms of transport appropriate to its particular location. In this regard, the development incorporated cycle storage and immediately west of the access is a pedestrian footway, which provides an attractive route and effective access to the main highway and pedestrian infrastructure along Orchard Estate, leading to Lynn Road. Therefore, residents could use this route to get to the main footways and cycleways leading to the services and facilities of Ely. It is considered reasonable to secure final details of the cycle storage to ensure this is appropriate and secure, having regard to advice provided by the Police.
- 7.13 Concerns have been raised over the dangers of construction traffic. As noted in the consultee comments a construction management plan is recommended and is a common requirement for developments and would seek to secure construction routes, storage compound locations, employee parking and other such measures to ensure that conflict is minimised. Concerns in respect of rights of way and access to the hospital being blocked have also been made. The site would not affect any public rights of way and the development would not be linked to the hospital and therefore access through the site to the hospital would not be appropriate, notwithstanding that the main entrances to the hospital to the west and north would not be affected by the development.
- 7.14 In summary, it is considered that the development would comply with the aims of policies COM 7 and COM 8, in that it would provide safe and convenient access to the highway network and be capable of accommodating the level and type of traffic generated without detriment to the local highway network and the amenity, character or appearance of the locality.

Visual Amenity

- 7.15 Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan requires that development proposals should demonstrate that their location, scale, form, design, materials, colour, edge treatment and structural landscaping will create positive, complementary relationships with existing development. Similarly, ENV 2 requires all development to be designed to a high quality, enhancing and complementing local distinctiveness and public amenity by relating well to existing features and introducing appropriate new designs.
- 7.16 The development is set within a network of established trees which will afford it considerable screening, particularly along the southern, western and north-eastern boundaries. Notwithstanding, the dwellinghouses are sympathetic in scale, massing and design to properties in the locality, particularly those closest currently under construction to the south-east. Furthermore, the backdrop of the hospital building which perhaps is not conducive to the predominant residential character of the area would be partially screened by the development when viewed from the approaching highway and footway to the south. Whilst the flatted development will be of greatest scale at around 10.3m/34', the use of vertical cladding to the upper storeys will add visual interest whilst reducing its impact, avoiding a stark appearance that facing

brick can otherwise result in. Notwithstanding, the eaves heights of the flats is modest, at 6.1m/20'. It is considered that the overall design of the dwellings would positively contribute to the character of the area, subject to securing an appropriate palette of materials via planning condition. Likewise, an appropriate soft landscaping scheme is recommended to be secured, to ensure that the development incorporates natural features, over and above those already in or adjacent to the development.

- 7.17 Concerns have been raised that the development would result in a loss of open space or public amenity. It is important to remember that the site formerly provided staff and visitor car parking and was not necessarily accessible to the public in the same way a public open space would be. Furthermore, the trees within the site are proposed to be retained (with exception to aforementioned the Norway Maple) and protected, thereby retaining the natural character as far as possible, with the trees acknowledge as having considerable amenity value. Other comments are concerned that the development would affect the conservation area. As set out above, the site is not within or adjacent to any designated heritage area or land and no buildings of any heritage status are located in proximity to it.
- 7.18 In summary, it is considered that, subject to final materials and landscaping details the development would create positive, complementary relationships with existing development, enhancing and complementing local distinctiveness and public amenity by relating well to existing features and introducing appropriate new designs, in accord with Local Plan policies ENV1 and ENV2.

Residential Amenity

- 7.19 Local Plan policy ENV 2 seeks to ensure there is no significantly detrimental effect on the residential amenity of nearby occupiers, and that occupiers and users of new buildings, especially dwellings, enjoy high standards of amenity. ENV 2 along with Policy 14 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste and Minerals Local Plan (CPWMLP) seeks to ensure that refuse strategies are built into new development schemes, to ensure that occupiers have adequate facilities to sort and present their waste for regular collection.
- 7.20 The development would be located around 55m to the nearest residential property and as such is not anticipated to result in any overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing of other properties in the locality. Its residential use is anticipated to be wholly compatible with the wider residential use of the area e.g., in respect of noise and other disturbance. As noted above it is prudent to secure a construction management plan due to the nature of the development and proximity to other residences and the hospital, to ensure that any pollution and disruption is minimised as practicably as possible, as per the requirements of Local Plan policy ENV 9.
- 7.21 In respect of future occupiers, the dwellings all exceed National Design Space Standards and occupiers of the houses would be provided with adequate private amenity space and, as noted above – onsite parking. Occupiers of the flatted development would have good access to open spaces in the locality, and all properties are served by appropriate refuse storage and collection facilities, inline with development plan policies.

- 7.22 The design of the development has undergone some revision, mainly to address concerns raised regarding the impacts of the trees on future occupiers and the daylight they would receive as a result of canopy shadow, and also to address potential noise impacts from the external plant equipment (air conditioning units and pumps) located alongside the southern boundary of the hospital.
- 7.23 In respect of tree impacts, the application has rotated a number of dwellings and moved them away from a majority of the tree shadow. The application is supported by a sunlight and daylight report which models the daylight/ sunlight anticipated to be received for each property at various times of the year, based on BRE guidelines (Building Research Establishment report 'Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight - A guide to good practice', 2022).
- 7.24 In summary, the modelling shows that the daylight amenity within the properties will be generally good, with an overall compliance rate of 82% in the summer months when the trees are in leaf, and 91% in the winter months. Furthermore, all occupants will have access to a well daylighted living space and access to good sunlight amenity. The majority of gardens will have access to good levels of sunlight, taking into account that some north facing gardens would be limited in any case at certain times of the year. In addition, it notes that all occupants would have access a large communal amenity area within the centre of the site which will receive very good sunlight amenity all year round. It is considered that whilst some properties will be affected by tree shadow, on balance this is not considered to be substantial. Furthermore, through the amended layout, this will reduce the pressure to hard-prune the trees, albeit regular maintenance including some pruning will be required to these trees in order to maintain their basic health, which will likely improve some of the shadowing which may otherwise affect some of the rooms.
- 7.25 In respect of noise impacts, the application is supported by a noise impact assessment (NIA) and the findings of this has also led to amendments to the layout, most notably to plots 12 and 13 at the north-eastern corner of the site. Along the south of the hospital are a number of air conditioning units and pumps which the NIA has identified as being a potential source of noise for future occupiers of these dwellings.
- 7.26 The NIA recommended reorienting the dwellings so that their gardens were not in line of sight of the plant equipment and to incorporate 1.8m/6' high acoustic fencing to back garden boundaries. Plots 12 and 13 now sit at a right angle to the hospital, with their principal elevations facing west and their rear gardens to the west, away for the direct noise source. Following advice from the Council's Environmental Health tea, it is recommended to secure a scheme of noise mitigation measures, to ensure that amenity of future occupiers is not compromised by the plant equipment. The scheme will include final specification of the recommended acoustic fencing (including detail of how this is to be construction where any tree roots may exist), and specification for noise mitigation to properties where required e.g., acoustic ventilation and upgraded glazing.
- 7.27 Subject to the above measures, the development is anticipated to result in a high-quality living environment for existing and future occupiers in accordance with policies ENV 2, ENV 9 and Policy 14 of the CPWMLP.

Historic Environment

- 7.28 As noted above, the site does not affect any buildings or land of above-ground heritage value. Notwithstanding, Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (CHET) note that their records indicate that the site lies in an area of archaeological potential, based on investigations in the surrounding area, with evidence indicating Bronze and Iron Age activity, with Roman and Anglo-Saxon remains potentially existing.
- 7.29 Given this context, CHET whilst not objecting to the proposal requires a condition to secure a programme of archaeological investigation, to ensure that any archaeological remains are not destroyed or damaged by the proposed development. This is in line with the requirements and aims of Policy ENV 14, and a condition is recommended accordingly.

Ecology

- 7.30 Policy ENV7 of the adopted Local Plan seeks to protect biodiversity and geological value of land and buildings and requires that through development management processes, management procedures and other positive initiatives, the council will among other criteria, promote the creation of an effective, functioning ecological network. The Natural Environment SPD requires that all development proposals would be expected to provide environmental enhancements proportionate to the scale and degree of the development proposed. In line with Policy ENV 7 and the Natural Environment SPD, the Hedgehog Design Guide SPD requires all residential developments that are not householders to provide a scheme of hedgehog recovery proposals, irrespective of whether hedgehogs are known to be on the site or not.
- 7.31 The application is supported by a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA), which has assessed the development site and surrounding for potential areas of habitat for protected species and other fauna. The PEA concludes that the site lies outside of any identified protected sites but within 2Km/1.2miles of Ely Pits and Meadows SSSI and Ely Cemetery CWS but is not anticipated to adversely impact upon these given the location and scale of the development.
- 7.32 The PEA also opines that with the habitats on and adjacent site being heavily managed and with a high human presence, these are unlikely to provide suitable habitat for the bird species of interest. The development will however result in some inevitable site clearance which is anticipated to result in some low scale loss of nesting habitat for hedgerow and tree nesting birds, and a low scale loss of foraging features for bats. The PEA therefore sets out precautionary mitigation in respect of (summarised);
- Soft landscaping to include native species-rich hedgerow and trees, and native species-rich wildflower in open spaces
 - Construction works to be carried out in accordance with latest British Standards in respect of tree protection
 - Lighting to be agreed
 - Trees (if removed) to be compensated for by erection of bat boxes
 - If using (non-bitumen coated roofing membranes (NBCRM)) in the roof construction, this must have passed the snagging propensity test (must be

supplied/installed with the necessary certification) to avoid entangling bats that might roost in loftspace.

- Vegetation on site to be cut and maintained short (maximum height of 10cm) until the start of works, to discourage animals from using these areas.
- Enhancements by way of integrated bat boxes.
- Management of hedgerows or trees to be undertaken outside of bird nesting season, or under watch by an ecologist.
- Swift and Sparrow boxes to be incorporated
- Creation of a log-pile on site
- Installation of bee bricks

7.33 The Council's Ecology officers have reviewed the PEA and the recommendations and raise no objections subject to suitable conditions to secure the mitigation and enhancement measures proposed and to address the requirements of the recently adopted Hedgehog recovery SPD. It is considered that compliance with such conditions would accord with the requirements and aims of ENV 7.

Biodiversity Net Gain

7.34 The development would fall under the statutory duty to secure at least 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) and the application is supported by a BNG metric which demonstrates this is achievable through delivery of 2.34 Habitat units and 1.14 hedgerow units. The BNG plan is to be secured through legal agreement which will also include details of a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

Flood Risk, Drainage & mitigating impacts of climate change

7.35 The application site is in an area at low risk of flooding, and not in an area of risk of surface water flooding. The application is supported by a flood risk assessment (FRA) which demonstrates that surface water can be adequately managed on site without causing flooding elsewhere. This would be subject to further demonstration via a final a detailed design which can be secured via planning condition. The Lead Local Flood Authority has accepted the drainage strategy, subject to condition.

7.36 Matters of foul drainage would also need to be secured via condition and there is nothing to indicate that the proposed mains sewer connection would not be available to the developer in achieving a satisfactory scheme in this regard, with Anglian Water confirming that the wastewater recycling centre has available capacity for the development.

7.37 It is considered that the proposal complies at this stage with the aims of Local Plan policy ENV 8 in respect of appropriate flood risk and drainage measures.

7.38 Local Plan policy ENV 4 seeks to ensure that developments incorporate energy and resource-efficient measures to assist with tackling climate change. In this regard the application is supported by a renewable energy and water consumption assessment report which sets out that the design of the development will aim to;

- reduce water usage below 110 litres per person, per day (at technical design stage)
- incorporate rainwater storage facilities
- include of solar PV and/ or air source heat pumps

- utilise passive fabric improvements/ passive solar design

7.39 The above measures are yet to be finalised and a condition securing the final detail can be reasonably captured via planning condition. Subject to this the proposal aligns with the aims of ENV 8.

Planning Obligations

7.40 Policy GROWTH 3 of the Local Plan requires developments to mitigate their impacts through infrastructure provision, by way of planning conditions and/ or S106 obligations.

7.41 The requirements for SEND education contributions sought by the County Council are necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development, meet the tests as set out under CIL Regulations and align with the Council's Developers Contributions SPD. The development is also required to provide 4 affordable dwellings and the mechanism for this again needs to be secured via legal obligation. Likewise, having regard to the Developers Contributions SPD, the scheme would also be liable for contributions towards off-site open space, to the value of £16,695.00. In addition, a wheeled bin contribution of £63.40 is required per household. Finally, the BNG plan and monitoring will need to be captured through legal agreement.

7.42 Subject to the completion of the necessary S106 agreement(s), the development would accord with the requirements of the Local Plan and SPD in respect of infrastructure.

7.43 Whilst the East of England Ambulance Trust (EEAST) has requested a financial contribution, it is not considered that the specifics of this request meets with the requirements of CIL 122(2) regulations and therefore cannot be secured through this development. Alternative means of securing this funding will therefore need to be sought by EEAST.

7.44 While resident concerns have been raised in respect of local services and associated pressures as a result of development in the locality, the above measures are considered to proportionately address this concern, having regard to CIL regulations and other contributions that would be made through CIL charging.

Human Rights Act

7.45 The development has been assessed against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, and in particular Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property). Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority, such as East Cambridgeshire District Council, to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. In arriving at this recommendation, due regard has been given to the applicant's reasonable development rights and expectations which have been balanced and weighed against the wider community interests, as expressed through third party interests / the Development Plan and Central Government Guidance. The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest and the recommendation set out below is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Equalities and Diversities

- 7.46 In considering this planning application due regard has been had to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to put an end to unlawful behaviour that is banned by the Equality Act, including discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not. Account has been taken of the PSED and it is considered that the recommendation set out below would not undermine the objectives of the duty.

Planning Balance

- 7.47 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.48 Having regard to the development plan policies, it is recognised that there is slight conflict with policy ENV 2, in that the development may result in some limited harm to the residential amenity of future occupiers where they may experience some overshadowing from trees, which may in turn reduce the amount of daylight entering some rooms. This accrues some negative weight. Furthermore, due to the scheme's reliance on the current streets arrangement, the shared surface nature may not fully assist some pedestrians, particularly those with impaired mobility or sight, albeit it is recognised that existing site constraints limit opportunities in this regard. This also carries moderate negative weight as there is some conflict with the aims of Local Plan policy COM 7. There are no other policy conflicts identified through this scheme.
- 7.49 The development would make an effective use of a brownfield site, in a location favoured for growth, particularly for housing. Paragraph 125 of the NPPF sets out that substantial weight is to be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused. It is not considered that, subject to the imposition of planning conditions which are set out at Appendix 1, any substantial harm would accrue through this development and there are no matters worth of sufficient weight to indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development plan should be made. Accordingly, whilst the NPPF directs that planning permission should be approved in this instance, the development is considered in any case, to accord with the development plan when taken as a whole and therefore should be approved.

8.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Recommended Conditions
Appendix 2 – Plans

APPENDIX 1 - Recommended Conditions

- 1 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and documents listed below

Plan reference	Version No	Date received
Site Plan 23-1030-3-050	F	18th February 2026
2 Bed House Proposed Plans 23-1030-062	D	6th February 2026
2 Bed House Elevations 23-1030-072	C	6th February 2026
3 Bed House Proposed Plans 23-1030-061	C	9th October 2025
2 Bed House Elevations 23-1030-071	B	9th October 2025
Location Plan 23-1030-3-001	C	11th July 2025
Apartments - Proposed Plans 23-1030-3-060	A	2nd July 2025
Apartments - Proposed Elevations 23-1030-3-070	A	2nd July 2025

- 1 Reason: To define the scope and extent of this permission.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 3 years of the date of this permission.
- 2 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.
- 3 No demolition/development shall commence until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has implemented a programme of archaeological work, commencing with the evaluation of the application area, that has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than under the provisions of the agreed WSI, which shall include:
- The statement of significance and research objectives;
 - The programme and methodology of investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works;
 - The timetable for the field investigation as part of the development programme;
 - The programme and timetable for the analysis, publication & dissemination, and deposition of resulting material and digital archives
- 3 Reason: To ensure that any archaeological remains are suitably recorded in accordance with policy ENV14 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023). The condition is pre-commencement as it would be unreasonable to require applicants to undertake this work prior to consent being granted.
- 4 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved (including demolition and all preparatory work), a scheme for the protection of the retained trees, in accordance with British Standard BS: 5837 (2012) Trees in relation to demolition, design and construction - Recommendations, including a tree protection plan(s) (TPP) and an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Specific issues to be dealt with in the TPP and AMS as relevant to the site:
- Location and installation of services/ utilities/ drainage.

- b) Methods of any demolition within the root protection area (RPA as defined in BS 5837: 2012) of the retained trees.
- c) Details of construction within the RPA or that may impact on the retained trees.
- d) A full specification for the installation of boundary treatment works within or adjacent RPA's.
- e) A full specification for the construction of any roads in relation to RPA's, parking areas and driveways, including details of the no-dig specification and extent of the areas of the roads, parking areas and driveways to be constructed using a no-dig specification.
- f) Detailed levels and cross-sections to show that the raised levels of surfacing, where the installation of no-dig surfacing within Root Protection Areas is proposed, demonstrating that they can be accommodated where they meet with any adjacent building damp proof courses.
- g) A specification for protective fencing to safeguard trees during both demolition and construction phases and a plan indicating the alignment of the protective fencing.
- h) A specification for scaffolding and ground protection within tree protection zones.
- i) Tree protection during construction indicated on a TPP and construction and construction activities clearly identified as prohibited in this area.
- j) Details of site access, temporary parking, on site welfare facilities, loading, unloading and storage of equipment, materials, fuels and waste as well concrete mixing and use of fires.
- k) Methodology and detailed assessment of any agreed root pruning.
- l) Details of Arboricultural supervision and inspection by a suitably qualified tree specialist.
- m) Details for reporting of inspection and supervision.
- n) Methods to improve the rooting environment for retained and proposed trees and landscaping.
- o) Veteran and ancient tree protection and management.

The development thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

- 8 Reason: To ensure that the trees on site are adequately protected, to safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 9 No works above slab level shall proceed until details and noise specification of the acoustic fencing, their locations and any necessary root protection measures required during its installation has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatments shall be erected prior to the first occupation of the respective dwelling(s) they serve.
- 9 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of future occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 10 Prior to works proceeding above slab level, a scheme of noise mitigation for the dwellings at plots 12 and 13, including but not necessarily limited to glazing and ventilation specification, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The noise mitigation measures shall be installed prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.

- 10 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of future occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 11 Prior to works proceeding above slab level, a refuse collection strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include;
 - i) details of waste collection points,
 - ii) a copy of the indemnity agreement where the Council's waste collection service are to collect from the development site, and;
 - iii) a copy of homeowner notices, which advises residents of the waste storage, sorting and collection strategy.

A copy of the agreed homeowner notice shall be provided to each property on occupation and the waste collection strategy shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

- 11 Reason: To ensure a satisfactory means of waste sorting, storage and collection in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and Policy 14 of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste and Minerals Local Plan 2021.
- 12 Prior to works proceeding above slab level, details of a secure communal bin storage facility to serve the apartments building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The communal bin storage facility shall be provided prior to the first occupation of the apartment building and thereafter retained in perpetuity.
- 12 Reason: To ensure a satisfactory design means of waste sorting and storage in accordance with policy ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and Policy 14 of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste and Minerals Local Plan 2021.
- 13 Prior to works proceeding above slab level, an energy and sustainability strategy for the development, including details of any on site renewable energy technology and energy efficiency measures, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved strategy with the agreed strategy being employed on each respective dwelling prior to its occupation.
- 13 Reason: To ensure that the proposal meets with the requirements of sustainability as stated in policy ENV4 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and the Climate Change SPD, 2021.
- 14 Prior to works proceeding above slab level precise details of external materials for the walls, roofs, rainwater goods and fenestration shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 14 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 15 Prior to works proceeding above slab level, an external lighting scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include

details of the means of lighting, the levels and direction of luminance and an assessment of how this will safeguard nocturnal fauna. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development and so maintained in perpetuity.

- 15 Reason: In the interests of protecting the character of the area, residential amenity and safety, and the protection of biodiversity in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023) and the Natural Environment SPD, 2020.
- 16 Prior to works proceeding above slab level, a scheme of biodiversity improvements shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The biodiversity improvements shall follow the recommendations as set out in section 7 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Greenlight Environmental Consultancy, 14 February 2025) and shall also include a scheme of hedgehog recovery measures. The agreed scheme shall be installed prior to the first occupation of the development and thereafter maintained in perpetuity.
- 16 Reason: To ensure that the proposal meets with the requirements to maximise opportunities for creation of habitats as an integral part of the proposal, as stated in policy ENV7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023), the Natural Environment SPD, 2020 and the Hedgehog Recovery Design Guidance SPD, 2024.
- 17 Prior to works proceeding above slab level, a scheme detailing secure and covered cycle storage serving the houses and apartment building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle storage shall be provided to each respective property prior to its first occupation (in the case of the apartment, prior to its first occupation).
- 17 Reason: To provide a satisfactory and safe means of cycle store, to facilitate and encourage sustainable travel modes in accordance with policies ENV 2 and COM 7 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 18 Prior to first occupation or commencement of use a full schedule of all soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The schedule shall include, planting plans, a written specification; schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes, proposed numbers/densities; and a detailed implementation programme. It shall also indicate all existing trees and hedgerows on the land and details of any to be retained. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the end of the first planting season following occupation of the development. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting, or replacement planting, any tree or plant (including retained existing trees/hedgerows) is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.
- 18 Reason: To assimilate the development into its surroundings, in accordance with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 19 Prior to works proceeding above slab level details of hard landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of

the development or in accordance with an implementation programme submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to first occupation.

- 19 Reason: To assimilate the development into its surroundings, in accordance with policies ENV1 and ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 20 No works above slab level shall proceed until details of the boundary treatments (not already addressed through condition 9), their locations and any necessary root protection measures required during its installation has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The boundary treatments shall be erected prior to the first occupation of the respective dwelling(s) they serve.
- 20 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of future occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 21 Fire hydrants shall be provided across the development in accordance with the following steps;
 - i) No development above slab level shall proceed until details for the provision of fire hydrants has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme for each phase shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plans.
 - ii) Prior to the first occupation of any dwelling, the applicant shall provide confirmation that they have notified Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue that the hydrants have been installed, are fully operational and available for inspection.
- 21 Reason: To ensure proper infrastructure for the site in the interests of public safety in that adequate water supply is available for emergency use.
- 22 Prior to the first occupation of the development, the access serving the development shall be completed in full as detailed on the approved Site Plan 23-1030-3-050 F. The access road shall be finished in a bound surface and drained within the site and thereafter retained as such in perpetuity.
- 22 Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with policies COM7 and COM8 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 23 Prior to the first occupation of the development, the parking and turning areas as detailed on the Site Plan 23-1030-3-050 F shall be provided and thereafter retained in perpetuity.
- 23 Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety, in accordance with policies ENV 2, COM7 and COM8 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 24 If it is necessary to undertake ground piling a method statement shall be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) before any such piling is undertaken. This document shall include the commitment to notifying nearby properties prior to the work commencing to advise how long the works will last. This notification shall also provide a contact number so that if there are any concerns while the piling is taking place, they can contact the contractor. If the method of piling involves impact driving,

works will be restricted to the hours (specifically for piling) between 09:00 - 17:00 each day Monday - Friday and none on Saturdays, Sundays or Bank Holidays.

If there is no intention to utilise ground piling, this shall be confirmed in writing and a condition which prevents it be attached until such time as a ground piling method statement is agreed with the LPA.

- 24 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of future occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 25 Construction times and deliveries, with the exception of fit-out, shall be limited to the following hours: 0730 to 1800 each day Monday - Friday, 0730 to 1300 Saturdays and none on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays.
- 25 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of future occupiers, in accordance with policy ENV2 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).
- 26 In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported to the Local Planning Authority within 48 hours. No further works shall take place until an investigation and risk assessment has been undertaken and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where remediation is necessary, a remediation scheme must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The necessary remediation works shall be undertaken, and following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 26 Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors, in accordance with policy ENV9 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (as amended 2023).

APPENDIX 2 - PLANS

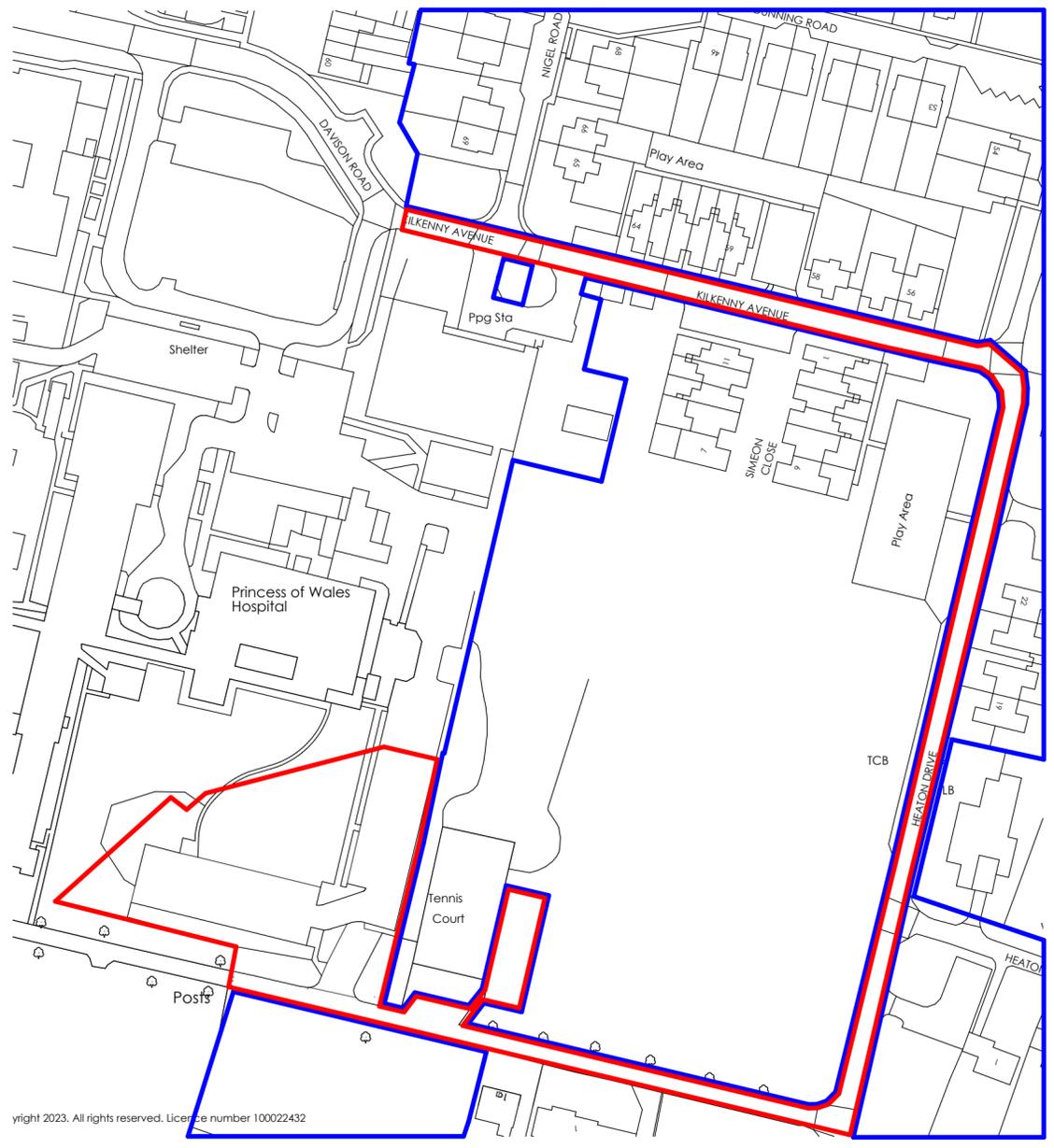
The following plans are a selection of those submitted as part of the application and are provided to illustrate the proposed development. They may not be to scale. The full suite of plans can be found on the Council's website.

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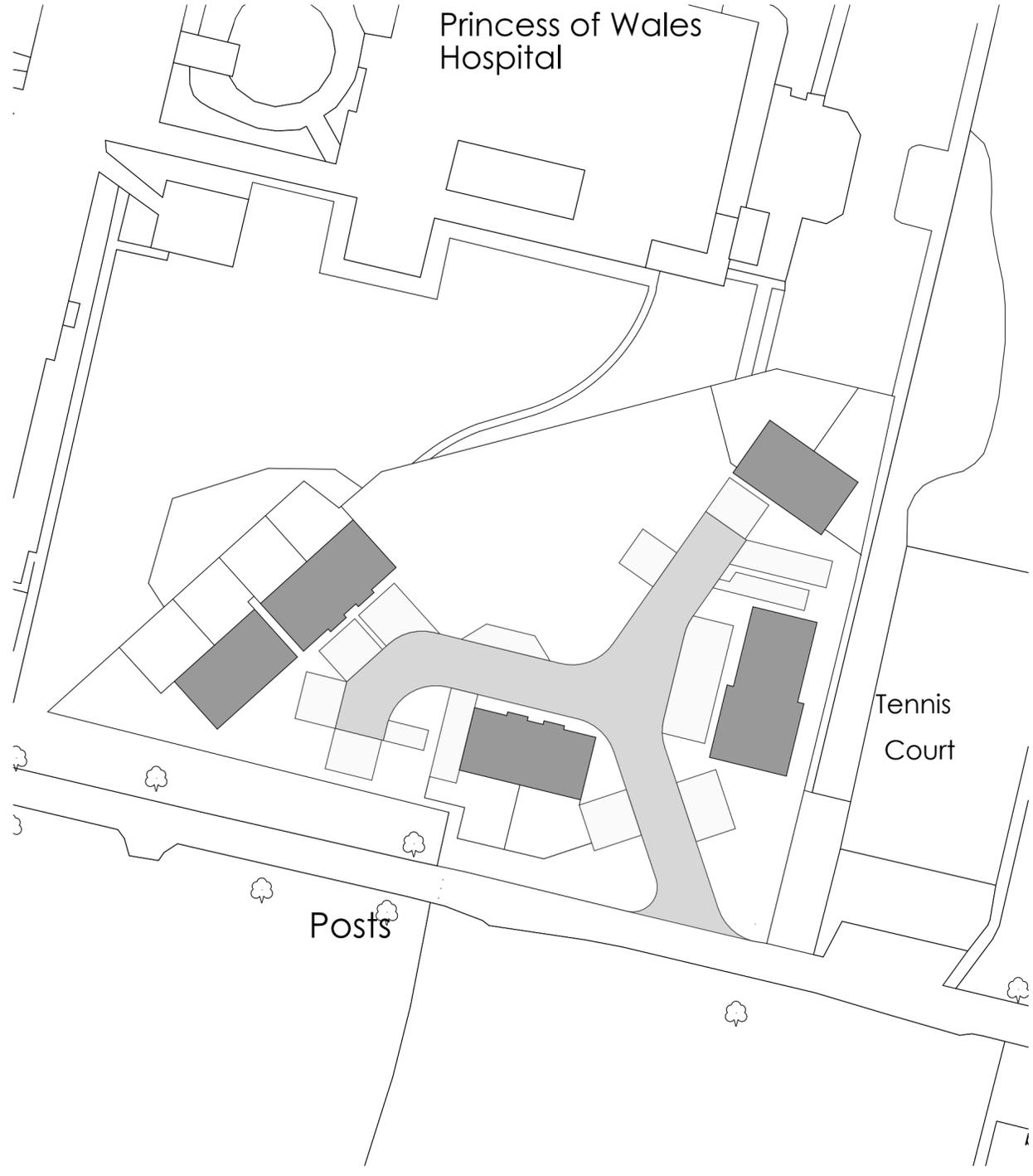
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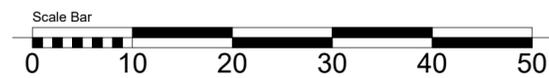
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Block Plan

1:500

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CLIENT
 Palace Green Homes

PROJECT
 Proposed development
 Princess of Wales Hospital

DRAWING TITLE
 Site Location and Block Plan

DRAWING STATUS
 Planning

DRAWING SCALE @ A2
 1:1250, 1:500

DRAWN BY
 JC

REVIEWED BY
 SR

DATE OF FIRST ISSUE
 21-01-24

PROJECT NUMBER	WORK STAGE	DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION
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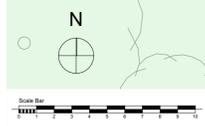


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Change ID	Change Description	Change Date	Checked

- Proposals:
- 13 dwellings,
 - 4no. 3bed houses - 100m/sq
 - 4no. 2bed houses- 83m/sq
 - 2no. 2bed flats - 72m/sq
 - 1no. 2bed flat - 78.9m/sq
 - 2no. 1bed flats - 50m/sq



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PROJECT	
Proposed development Princess of Wales Hospital	
DRAWING TITLE	
Proposed Site Plan	
DRAWING STATUS	DRAWING SCALE @ A1
Planning	1:200
DRAWN BY	REVIEWED BY
JC	SR
DATE OF FIRST ISSUE	28/10/2024
PROJECT NUMBER	WORK STAGE
23-1030	3
DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION
050	F

Proposed Site Layout

1:200

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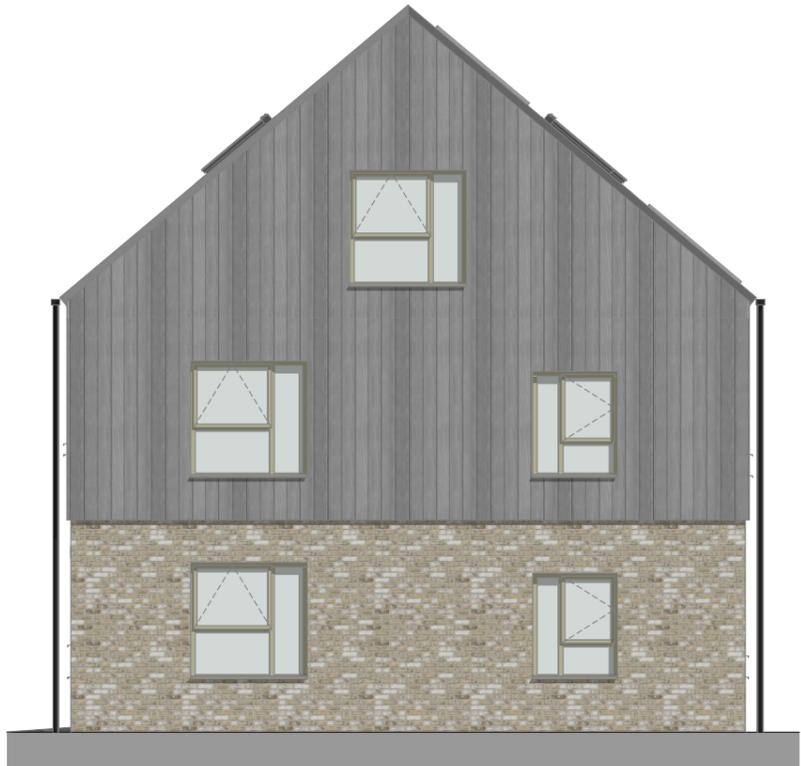
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E-11 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-10 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-12 Proposed Elevation 1:100



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DRAWING TITLE
 Apartments Proposed Elevations

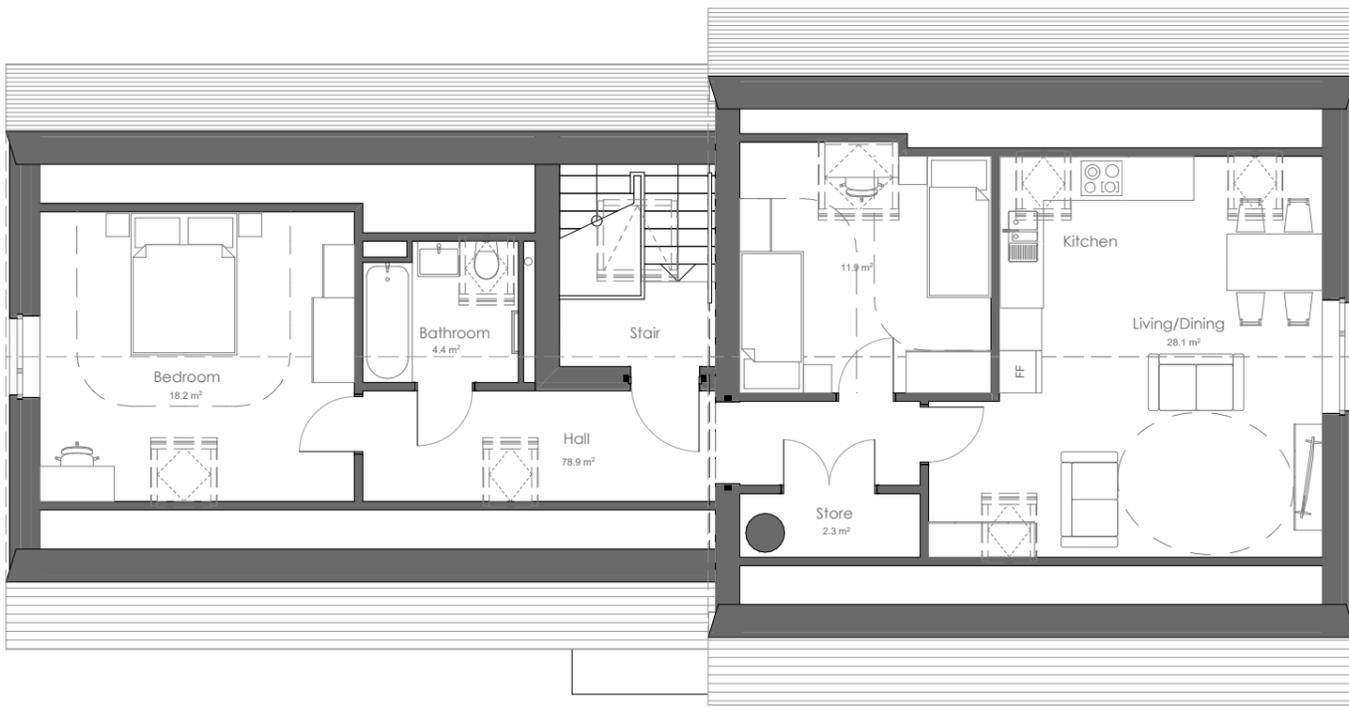
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DRAWN BY JC REVIEWED BY SR DATE OF FIRST ISSUE 08/01/24

PROJECT NUMBER 23-1030 WORK STAGE 3 DRAWING NUMBER 070 REVISION A



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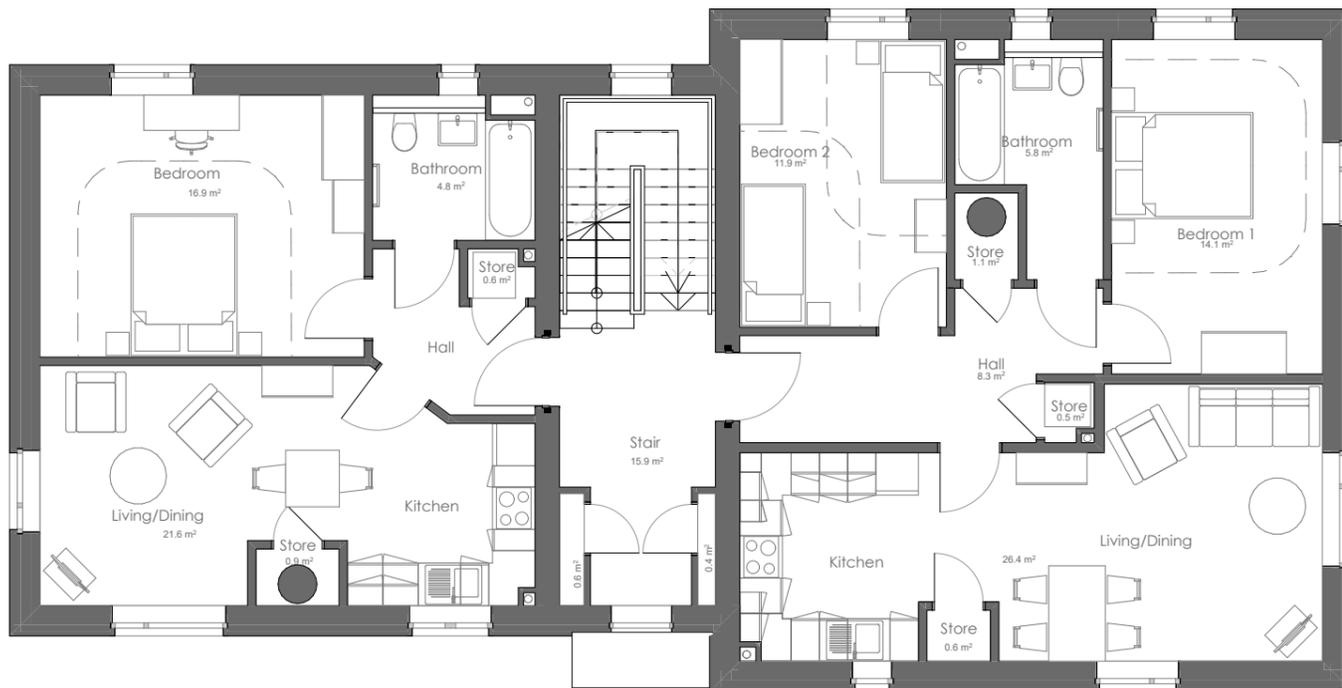
ID	Revision Description	Date	Checked	Reviewed

ID	Change Description	Date	Checked



Proposed Second Floor Layout

1:100



Proposed First Floor layout

1:100



Proposed Ground Floor Layout

1:100



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PROJECT
 Proposed development
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 #Site Address2

DRAWING TITLE
 Apartments - Proposed Plans

DRAWING STATUS: Planning
 DRAWING SCALE @ A3: 1:100

DRAWN BY: SR
 REVIEWED BY: GJ
 DATE OF FIRST ISSUE: 04/04/2025

PROJECT NUMBER: 23-1030
 WORK STAGE: 3
 DRAWING NUMBER: 060
 REVISION: A

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ID	Change Description	Date	Checked



E-05 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-07 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-06 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-08 Proposed Elevation 1:100



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DRAWING TITLE
 3bed House Elevations

DRAWING STATUS Planning | DRAWING SCALE @ A3 1:100

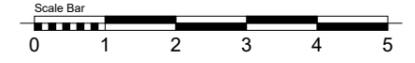
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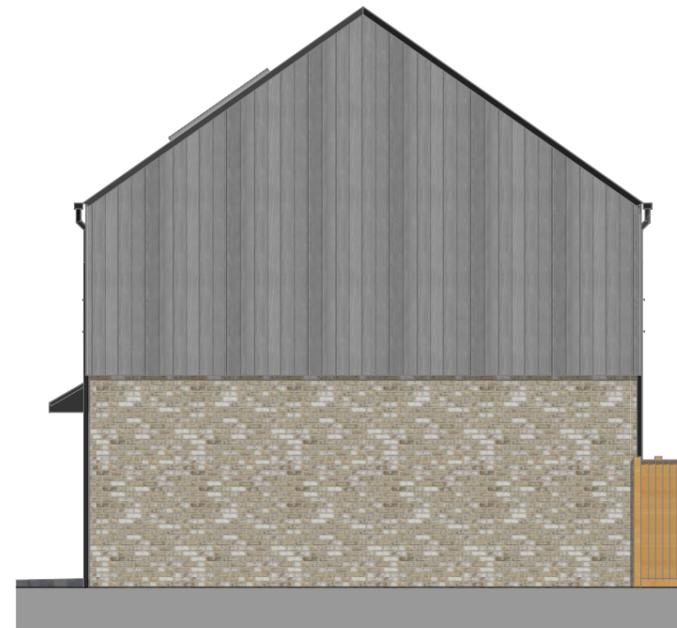
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E-01 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-03 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-02 Proposed Elevation 1:100



E-04 Proposed Elevation 1:100



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PROJECT
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DRAWING TITLE
 2bed House Proposed Elevations

DRAWING STATUS
 Planning

DRAWING SCALE @ A3
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DRAWN BY
 JC

REVIEWED BY
 SR

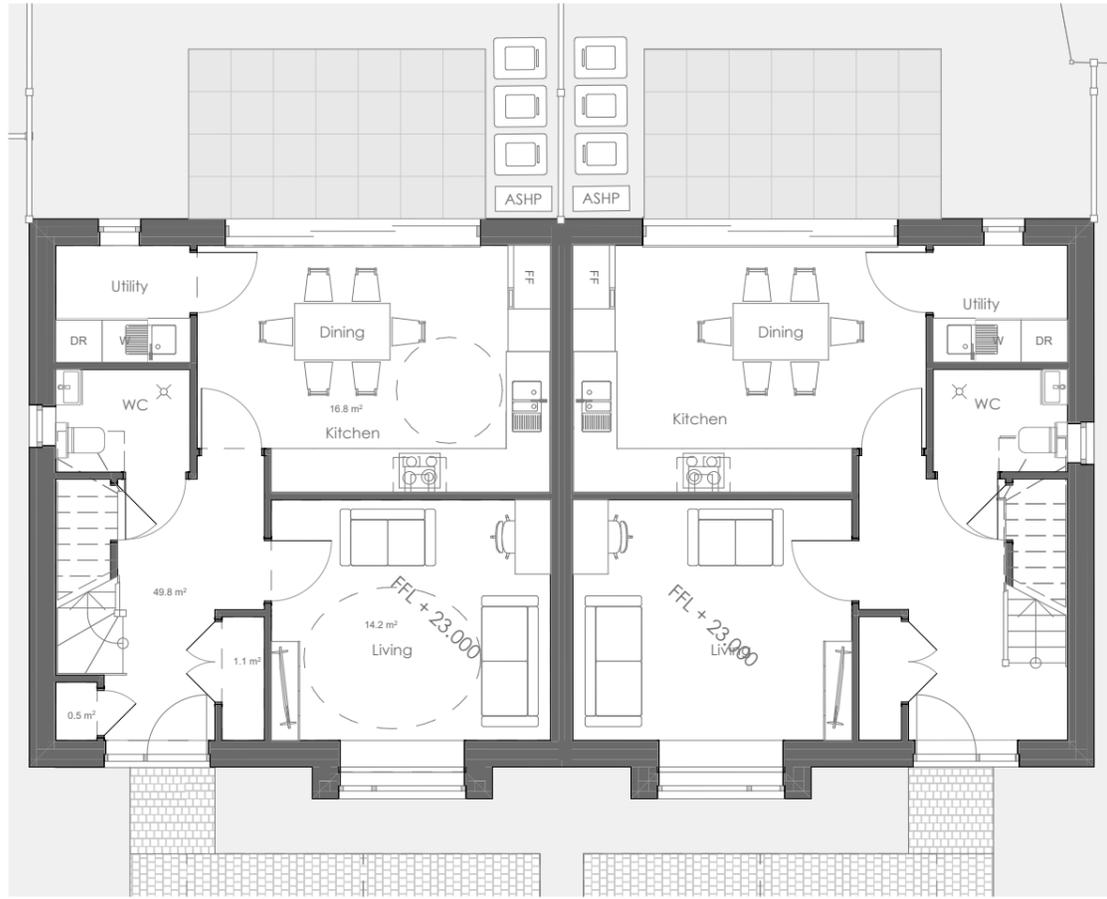
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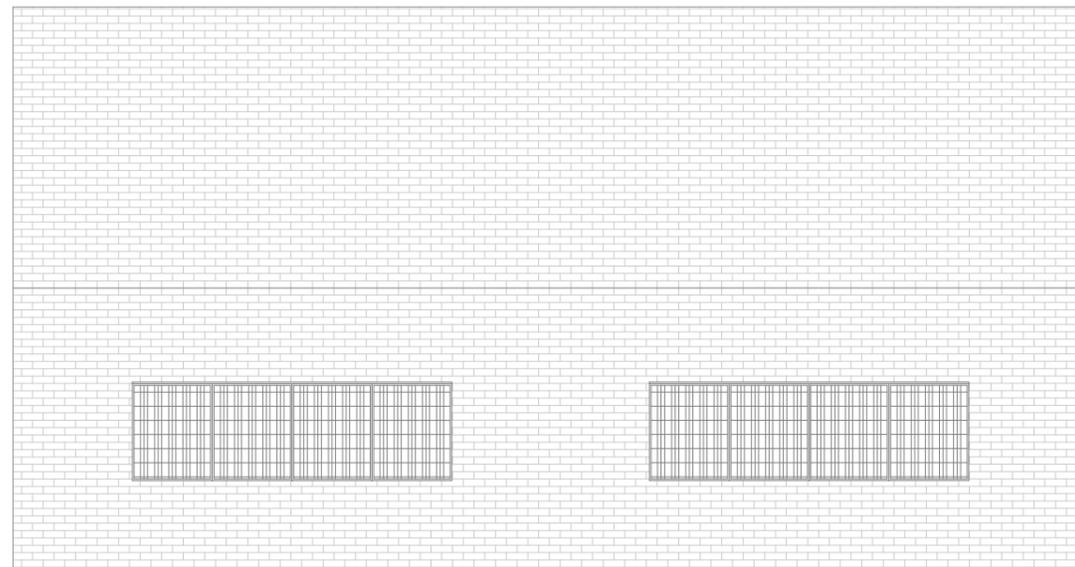
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Proposed Ground Floor Plan 1:100



Proposed First Floor Plan 1:100



Proposed Roof Plan 1:100



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PROJECT
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DRAWING TITLE
 3 Bed House Proposed Plans

DRAWING STATUS: Planning | DRAWING SCALE @ A3: 1:100

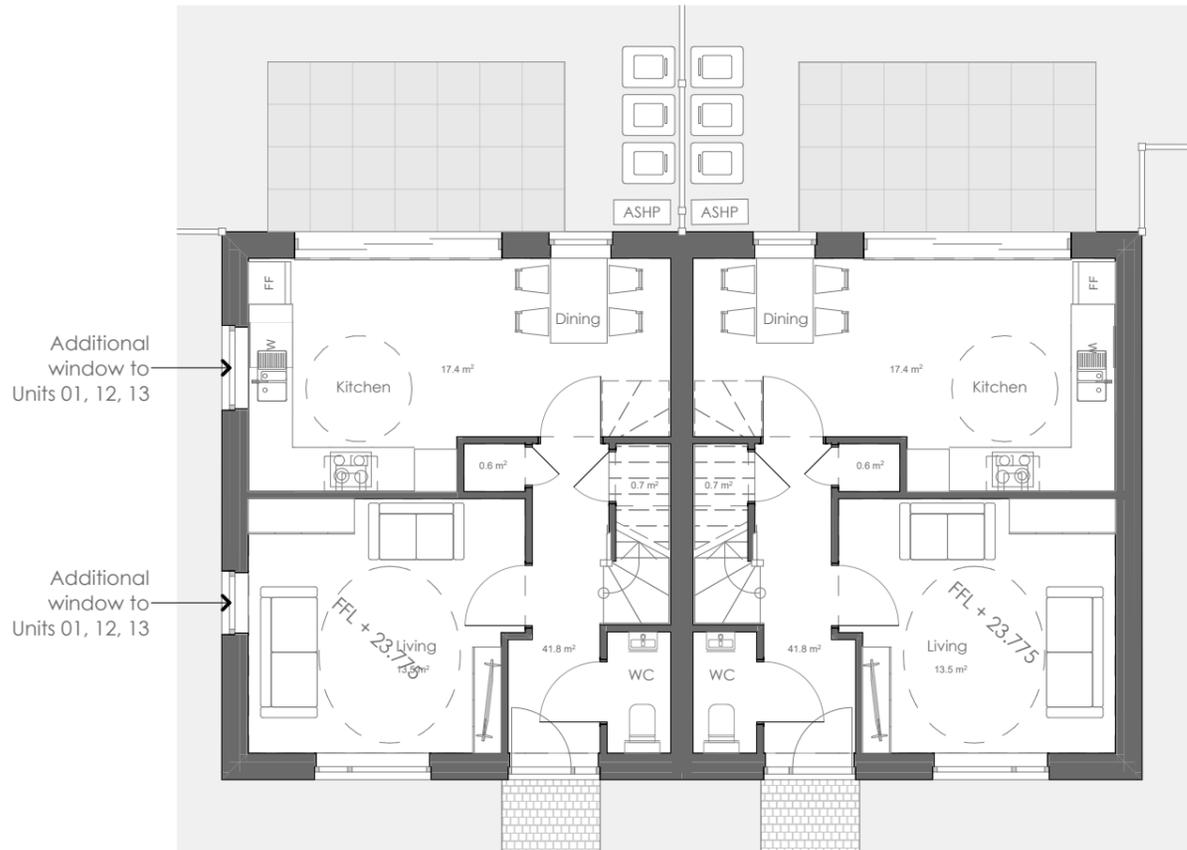
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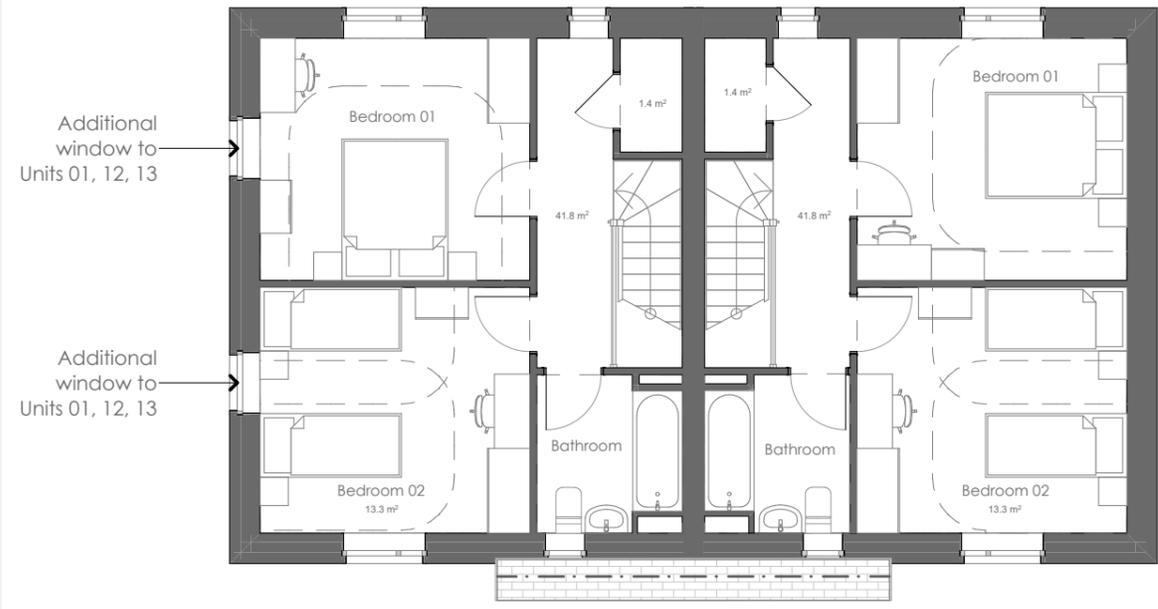
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ID	Revision Description	Date	Checked	Reviewed

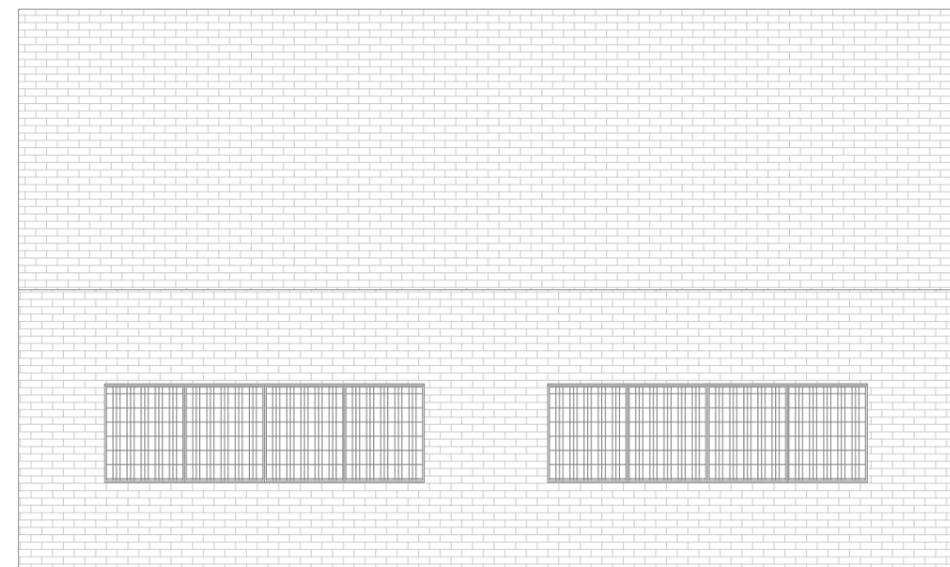
ID	Change Description	Date	Checked



Proposed Ground Floor Plan 1:100



Proposed First Floor Plan 1:100



Proposed Roof Plan Page 130 1:100



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CLIENT
 Palace Green Homes

PROJECT
 Proposed development
 Princess of Wales Hospital

DRAWING TITLE
 2 Bed House Proposed Plans

DRAWING STATUS: Planning | DRAWING SCALE @ A3: 1:100

DRAWN BY: SR | REVIEWED BY: GJ | DATE OF FIRST ISSUE: 04/04/2025

PROJECT NUMBER: 23-1030 | WORK STAGE: 3 | DRAWING NUMBER: 062 | REVISION: D

Planning Performance – December 2025

Planning will report a summary of performance. This will be for the month before last month, as this allows for all applications to be validated and gives a true representation.

All figures include all types of planning applications.

Determinations

	Total	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS /NMA	Trees	Pre App
Determinations	101	3	14	28	12	12	32	9
Determined on time (%)		66% (90% within 13 weeks)	100% (80% within 8 weeks)	100% (90% within 8 weeks)	100% (90% within 8 weeks)	85% (80% within 8 weeks)	100% (100% within 8 weeks)	n/a
Approved	90	3	11	27	9	11	29	n/a
Refused	11	0	3	1	3	1	3	n/a

Validations – 75% validated within 5 working days (ECDC target is 85%)

Please note that this was during the Christmas/New Year period

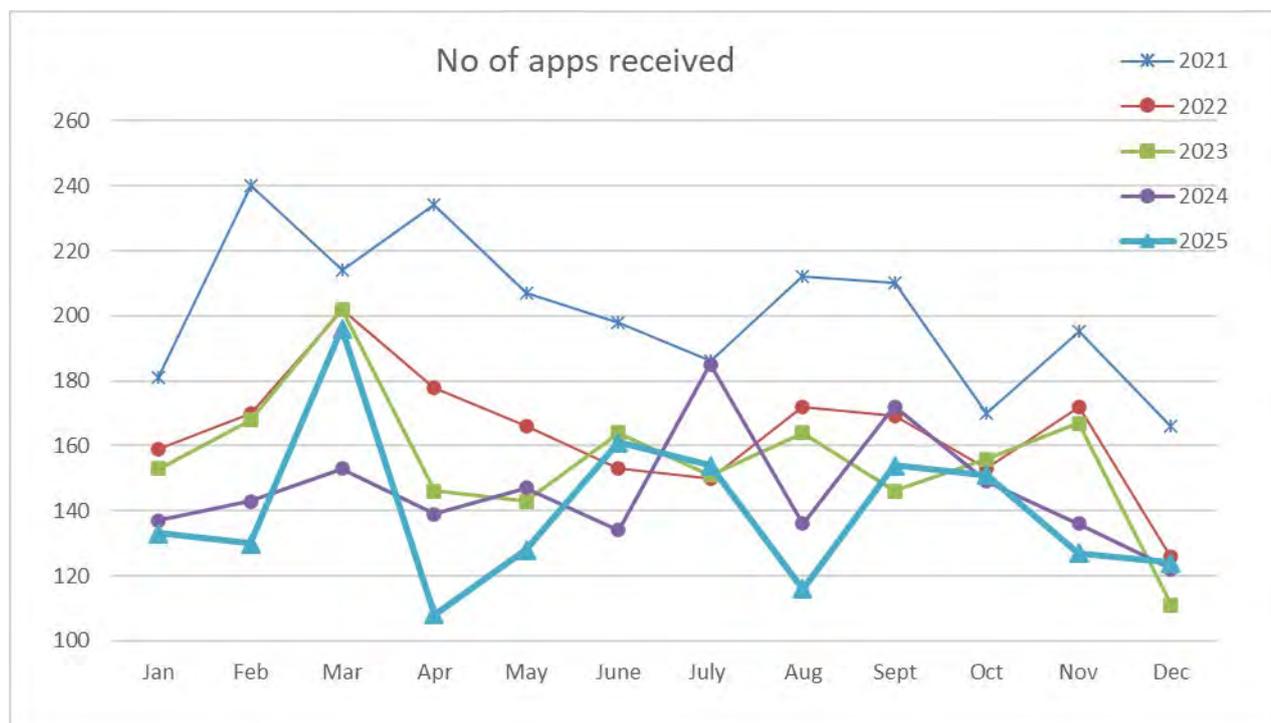
	Total	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS /NMA	Trees	Pre App
Validations	112	4	13	26	19	12	25	13

Open Cases by Team (as at 23/01/2026)

	Total	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS /NMA	Trees	Pre App
Team North (5 FTE)	138	11	28	23	24	40	0	12
Team South (6 FTE)	126	14	28	14	25	34	0	11
No Team (3 FTE)	29	0	0	1	5	1	23	0

(No Team includes – Trees Officer and Conservation Officer)

The Planning department received a total of 124 applications during December which is a 2% increase of the number received during December 2024 (122) and a 2% decrease to the number received during November 2025 (127).



Valid Planning Appeals received during December, currently with The Planning Inspectorate for decision– 2 Planning and 2 Enforcement

Appeal reference	Site address	Decision Level *
25/00036/REFAPP	The Barn Clare Farm 88 Main Street Witchford	DEL
25/00037/REFAPP	5 Newmarket Road Cheveley	DEL
25/00034/ENFAPP	Lazy Otter Meadows Cambridge Road Stretham	
25/00035/ENFAPP	Lazy Otter Meadows Cambridge Road Stretham	

Appeals decided – 0

Upcoming Hearing dates – 1

25/00021/REFAPP Land At Cambridge Road Stretham - 05/03/2026

Enforcement

New Complaints registered – 16 (1 Proactive)

Cases closed – 12 (0 Proactive)

Open cases per Officer (2.6fte) – 137 (15 Proactive)/2.6fte = 53 FTE

Notices served – 1

Comparison of Enforcement complaints received during November

Code	Description	2024	2025
ADVERT	Reports of unauthorised adverts	1	
COND	Reports of breaches of planning conditions	3	5
CONSRV	Reports of unauthorised works in a Conservation Area		
DEM	Reports of unauthorised demolition in a Conservation Area		
HEDGE	High Hedge complaints dealt with under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act		
LEGOB	Legal Obligation monitoring		
LEGOR	Legal Obligation report		

LISTED	Reports of unauthorised works to a Listed Building	0	
MON	Compliance Monitoring		
OP	Reports of operational development, such as building or engineering works	3	1
OTHER	Reports of activities that may not constitute development, such as the siting of a mobile home		2
PLAN	Reports that a development is not being built in accordance with approved plans		3
PRO	Proactive cases opened by the Enforcement Team, most commonly for unauthorised advertisements and expired temporary permissions	1	1
TRECON	No notice of tree works in a Conservation area		
TREHDG	Hedgerow Regulations breach		
TRETPO	Unauthorised works to TPO tree	1	
UNTIDY	Reports of untidy land or buildings harming the visual amenity		
USE	Reports of the change of use of land or buildings	2	2
TOTAL		11	14

* Code descriptions:

DIS	Discharge of Condition	DISMISS	Appeal Dismissed
NMA	Non material Amendment	ALLOW	Appeal Allowed
COMM	Committee Decision	NONDET	Appeal for non determination
DEL	Delegated Decision	APPWIT	Appeal withdrawn

Planning Performance – January 2026

Planning will report a summary of performance. This will be for the month before last month, as this allows for all applications to be validated and gives a true representation.

All figures include all types of planning applications.

Determinations

	Total	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS /NMA	Trees	Pre App
Determinations	86	1	10	22	16	15	22	11
Determined on time (%)		100% (90% within 13 weeks)	80% (80% within 8 weeks)	100% (90% within 8 weeks)	90% (90% within 8 weeks)	94% (80% within 8 weeks)	100% (100% within 8 weeks)	n/a
Approved	71	1	7	19	9	14	21	n/a
Refused	15	0	3	3	7	1	1	n/a

Validations – 55% validated within 5 working days (ECDC target is 85%)

Please note that this incorporates catching up from the Christmas/New Year period and a Tech Team member down

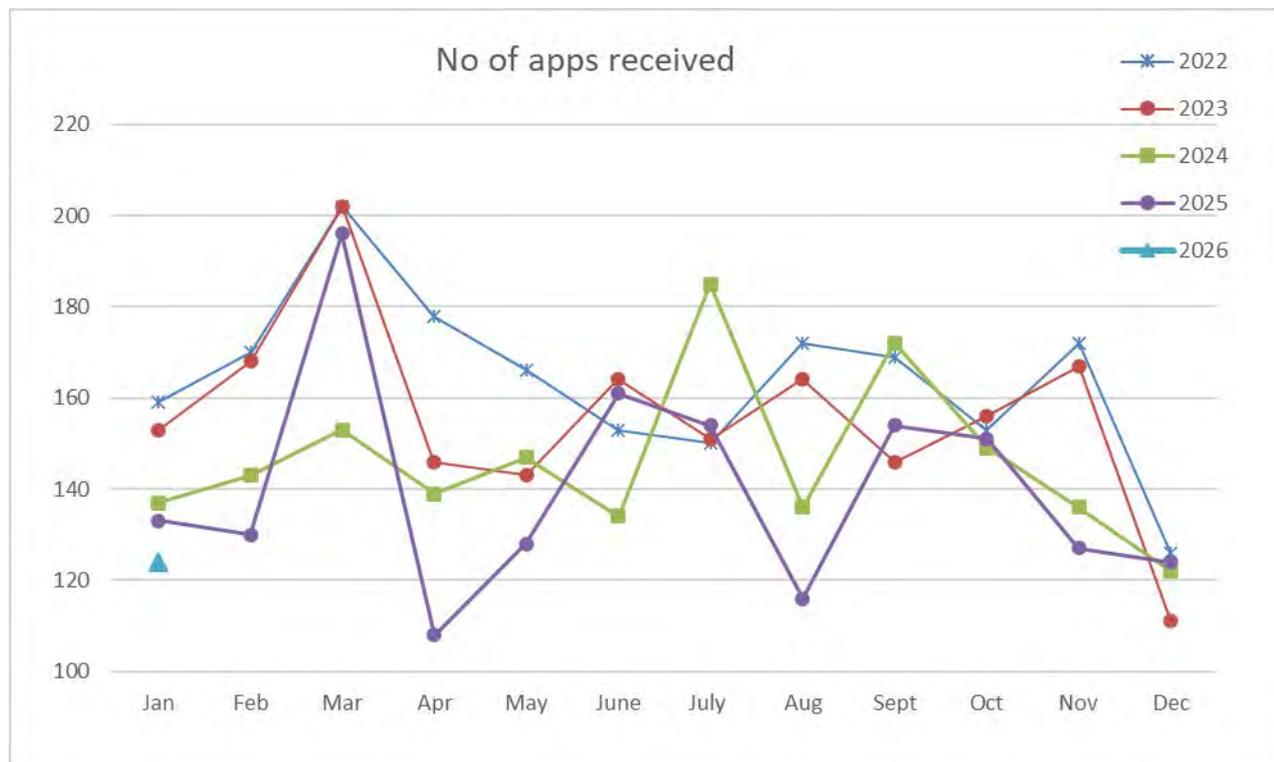
	Total	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS /NMA	Trees	Pre App
Validations	111	1	25	15	18	16	30	6

Open Cases by Team (as at 04/02/2026)

	Total	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS /NMA	Trees	Pre App
Team North (5 FTE)	153	12	28	22	37	45	0	9
Team South (6 FTE)	128	12	37	13	21	33	0	12
No Team (3 FTE)	39	0	0	1	3	1	34	0

(No Team includes – Trees Officer and Conservation Officer)

The Planning department received a total of 124 applications during January which is a 7% decrease of the number received during January 2025 (133) and equal to the number received during December 2025 (124).



Valid Planning Appeals received during January, currently with The Planning Inspectorate for decision – 1

Appeal reference	Site address	Decision Level *
26/00001/REFAPP	53 Teal Avenue Soham	DEL

Appeals decided – 0

Upcoming Hearing dates – 1

Appeal reference	Site address	Decision Level *	Hearing
25/00021/REFAPP	Land At Cambridge Road Stretham	COMM	04/03/2026
25/00006/REFAPP	Land Between 43 And 79 The Causeway Isleham	DEL	24/03/2026

Enforcement

New Complaints registered – 27 (0 Proactive)

Cases closed – 17 (0 Proactive)

Open cases per Officer (2.6fte) – 142 (15 Proactive)/2.6fte = 54 FTE

Notices served – 0

Comparison of Enforcement complaints received during November

Code	Description	2024	2025
ADVERT	Reports of unauthorised adverts	1	
COND	Reports of breaches of planning conditions	9	4
CONSRV	Reports of unauthorised works in a Conservation Area		
DEM	Reports of unauthorised demolition in a Conservation Area		
HEDGE	High Hedge complaints dealt with under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act		

LEGOB	Legal Obligation monitoring		
LEGOR	Legal Obligation report		
LISTED	Reports of unauthorised works to a Listed Building	1	1
MON	Compliance Monitoring	2	
OP	Reports of operational development, such as building or engineering works	2	1
OTHER	Reports of activities that may not constitute development, such as the siting of a mobile home	3	1
PLAN	Reports that a development is not being built in accordance with approved plans	2	2
PRO	Proactive cases opened by the Enforcement Team, most commonly for unauthorised advertisements and expired temporary permissions		3
TRECON	No notice of tree works in a Conservation area	1	1
TREHDG	Hedgerow Regulations breach		
TRETPO	Unauthorised works to TPO tree	1	
UNTIDY	Reports of untidy land or buildings harming the visual amenity		2
USE	Reports of the change of use of land or buildings	5	5
TOTAL		27	20

* Code descriptions:

DIS	Discharge of Condition	DISMISS	Appeal Dismissed
NMA	Non material Amendment	ALLOW	Appeal Allowed
COMM	Committee Decision	NONDET	Appeal for non determination
DEL	Delegated Decision	APPWIT	Appeal withdrawn

Planning Performance – 2025

Determinations – 2025 in comparison to 2024 and 2023, this includes all application types, excluding Pre-App.

		All Types	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS / NMA	Trees
		<i>Annual Total</i>	<i>90% 13 weeks</i>	<i>80% 8 weeks</i>	<i>90% 8 weeks</i>	<i>90% 8 weeks</i>	<i>80% 8 weeks</i>	<i>100% 8 weeks</i>
2025	Determinations	1430	25	201	358	197	299	350
	Determined on time (%)	91%	80%	88%	97%	96%	72%	99%
	Approved	1303	23	162	325	161	294	338
	Refused	127	2	39	33	36	5	12
	EOT	409	44	200	106	59	N/A	N/A
2024	Determinations	1415	33	214	349	155	307	357
	Determined on time (%)	89%	88%	84%	96%	92%	71%	99%
	Approved	1253	27	170	314	113	287	342
	Refused	159	6	43	35	41	20	14
	EOT	739	123	326	233	57	N/A	N/A
2023	Determinations	1586	44	249	415	153	351	374
	Determined on time (%)	91%	95%	90%	94%	92%	77%	100%
	Approved	1444	40	203	383	108	345	365
	Refused	138	4	45	32	43	6	8
	EOT	1114	140	420	482	72	N/A	N/A

Validations – 94% validated within 5 working days (ECDC target is 85%)

	Total	Major	Minor	Householder	Other	DIS /NMA	Trees	Pre App
Validations	1583	27	194	358	240	259	350	155

The Planning department received a total of 1685 applications during 2025 which is a 6% decrease of the number received during 2024 (1787)

Valid Planning Appeals received –31

Valid Enforcement Appeals received - 4

Appeals decided – 37 – 10 ALLOW, 1 APDVAR, 4 APPWIT, 21 DISMIS

Enforcement

Complaints registered 2025– 235 (14 Proactive)

Complaints registered 2024 - 219 (16 Proactive)

Cases closed 2025 – 293 (17 Proactive)

Cases closed 2024 – 195 (12 Proactive)

Notices served 2025– 8

Code descriptions:

DISMISS	Appeal Dismissed
ALLOW	Appeal Allowed
NONDET	Appeal for non determination
APDVAR	Appeal Dismissed – Enf Notice Varied
APPWIT	Appeal Withdrawn