

**ERECTION OF A THREE-FORM ENTRY PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH ASSOCIATED
INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING NEW PUBLIC HIGHWAY AND PEDESTRIAN
FOOTPATHS**

AT: LAND NORTH OF CAM DRIVE AND SOUTH OF KING EDGAR CLOSE, ELY

LPA REF: E/03005/14/CC

FOR: CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

To: **Planning Committee**

Date: **9 October 2014**

From: **Acting Head of Growth and Economy**

*Electoral
division(s):* **Ely North and East**

Purpose: **To consider the above planning application**

Recommendation: **It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject
to the conditions set out in paragraph 8.1**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application seeks permission for the development of a new primary school with associated infrastructure, including a new public highway and pedestrian footpaths, on land to the north of Cam Drive and south of King Edgar Close, Ely.
- 1.2 East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) has chosen Ely as the focus for future growth and development in the East Cambridgeshire area.
- 1.3 The Ely Masterplan, adopted by ECDC in 2010, established the concept for the growth of an area of 200 hectares of land to the north-west of Ely, as an urban extension to the city. The Masterplan makes provision for, among other things, the development of 3,000 new homes, two new primary schools, as well as supporting infrastructure and facilities in North Ely by 2031. Endurance Estates Strategic Land has been appointed to promote this land.
- 1.4 The North Ely Development Framework, adopted by ECDC in September 2011, and the Draft North Ely Supplementary Planning Document, which will be adopted on the adoption of the emerging Local Plan, set the guiding principles for the development of the North Ely urban extension.
- 1.5 ECDC is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan (the “draft Local Plan”) in which the land in North Ely will be allocated as a major urban extension. The draft Local Plan is nearing the end of its public examination and ECDC is currently considering the Inspector’s Interim Conclusion Report of 14 July 2014.
- 1.6 Policy ELY 1 of the draft Local Plan allocates the North Ely site for a housing-led sustainable mixed-use urban extension, comprising:
 - up to 3,000 dwellings;
 - 2 primary schools;
 - sufficient employment uses to deliver approximately 1,300-1,500 jobs, including an extension to Chettisham Business Park;
 - a neighbourhood centre, providing retail and community uses;
 - two small local centres, providing top-up shopping and community facilities; and
 - an extension of Ely Country Park.
- 1.7 ECDC at a Special Planning Committee on 28 March 2014 resolved to grant planning permission (ref. 13/00785/ESO), subject to conditions and Section 106 agreement, for a residential-led development of up to 1,200 homes with associated employment and community uses including a new primary school, care home or extra care home, supporting infrastructure and open space/landscaping on land to the west of Lynn Road and land north of Cam Drive, Ely. This forms part of the North Ely allocation.
- 1.8 There are currently four permanent primary schools in Ely that serve the entire community; these are Ely St John’s Primary School, St Mary’s Junior School, Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School and the Lantern Primary School. The new primary school is needed to meet existing demand for pupil places within the catchment area and will also provide additional capacity to meet the demand for new places generated by the development of North Ely.

- 1.9 The proposed primary school will be the first development to be commenced within the North Ely urban extension and it will also implement infrastructure associated with this development.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposed development is a three-form entry 630 pupil primary school with early years centre, including car and cycle parking, hard and soft school outdoor play areas/sports pitches, hard and soft landscaping, refuse facilities, plant and a sprinkler tank.
- 2.2 The proposal will also provide the following infrastructure:
- a new public highway along the southern and western boundaries of the school and access to the school site from Cam Drive;
 - a pick-up/drop-off area (35 spaces) adjacent to the new public highway;
 - a new roundabout at the site's north-west boundary;
 - pedestrian and cycle ways to provide safer routes to school; and
 - two pedestrian crossing points and associated traffic calming, on Cam Drive and Lynn Road.
- 2.3 The proposal will provide 21 classrooms, large and small halls, a library/ICT suite, kitchens, toilets, staff room as well as office, administration and other associated school areas. When completed, the school will employ a total of 68 staff members, 60 full-time and 8 part-time.
- 2.4 The 'C-shape' school building will comprise two single storey wings, which accommodate the classrooms, linked by a two storey building containing the large and small halls. The building will be orientated to take advantage of daylight and natural ventilation, and will be built around a central court yard with outdoor classroom facilities/playground.
- 2.5 The public/visitor entrance, at the south-west corner of the site, will provide the main public focus in the form of a school square. Two separate pupil/cyclist entrances will be provided at the northern end of the new road, just south of the new roundabout, and the other to the south of the school adjacent to the vehicle access to the car park.
- 2.6 Non-teaching areas, including community facilities, are primarily located to the front of the site allowing safe easy access without the need to enter the school teaching areas.
- 2.7 The school has been designed to be constructed in two phases. The first phase will meet existing demand for pupil places in Ely providing the school's main core facilities, nine class rooms and two pre-school classrooms. The second phase will increase the school's size to the full three form entry to meet the demands arising from the North Ely Development.
- 2.8 The external finishes for the walls of the main building will comprise a mix of Ibstock Leicester Multi-Cream Stock bricks and cream-coloured render. The boundary walls use the same brick and will be punctuated with Ibstock glazed bricks in yellow, orange and bright red to add visual appeal. The west-facing

walls of the small and large halls will be finished in ceramic rainscreen cladding in a natural red colour. The roof panels, fascias and soffits will be finished in grey aluminium with window frames and door finished in the same grey finish.

- 2.9 The external space will include a variety of hard and soft play areas including two sports pitches, two netball courts, playground, landscaping/planting and a habitat area. The site's boundary treatments will securely enclose the school site with a mix of brick wall and chain link/weld-mesh fencing.
- 2.10 A surface water drainage attenuation area will be provided to the north-west of the school, which also forms part of the sustainable urban drainage strategy for the wider development of North Ely. Surface water drainage from the site will temporarily discharge into the ditch adjacent to the school with foul drainage connection along Cam Drive to the west of the new public highway.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The application site is 1.5km north of the centre of Ely, approximately 25km north-east of Cambridge and is accessed via the A10. The site comprises 5.8 hectares and is bound by Cam Drive to the south, Lynn Road to the east, and the rear gardens of King Edgar Close and Butts Drove to the north/north-east.
- 3.2 The application site is currently undeveloped agricultural land, which is designated as countryside under the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document, adopted October 2009 (the "adopted Core Strategy").
- 3.3 The surrounding area is currently agricultural and is proposed to be development as part of the wider North Ely development. There are currently no residential properties adjacent to the proposed school site and the closest neighbours are on King Edgar Close to the north-east of the proposal.
- 3.4 There is little vegetation on the site apart from several mature trees scattered around the site's boundary and a small number of hedgerows to the north of the site adjoining Butts Drove.
- 3.5 The proposal is located in Flood Zone 1 (Low Risk). As the application site comprises more than 1 hectare a flood risk assessment has been submitted in support of the application and the Environment Agency has been consulted on the proposal.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 The application was advertised in accordance with the *Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010* including site notices, a press notice and individual notification of neighbouring properties. The responses received indicated that further information was required. The applicant submitted supplementary information in August 2014 which was subject to reconsultation. The respondents' comments summarised below are from their most recent correspondence. Where no comments were received on the August reconsultation the earlier response has been taken as still being valid.

- 4.2 East Cambridgeshire District Council No concerns in principle as the proposal forms an integral part of the North Ely housing extension and ECDC has been heavily involved in the pre-application discussions regarding the new school. ECDC.
- 4.3 The overall design has improved considerably and should complement the development of the rest of the site:
- Pleased to see the main entrance is now more prominently featured, and the school sign now reflects the city's identity;
 - Details of tree planting/landscaping required. The Senior Tree Officer has concerns about the amount of space left for tree planting;
 - Pleased with railings and brightly coloured walls used for boundary treatments;
 - Does not consider that King Edgar Close residents access to the informal access along Butts Drove is compromised by footpath/cycle way but concerns should be carefully considered;
 - Proposal accords with the Draft North Ely SPD, which will be adopted on the adoption of the Draft Local Plan, and Policy ELY 1 of the ECDC Draft Local Plan Pre-Submission version (as amended June 2014), which is nearing the end of its public examination; and
 - Pleased to see the Toucan crossing proposed to enable children safer access from the houses on the other side of Lynn Road to the school site. However, the crossing should be ready for use at the same time as the school opens and should be secured by condition or S106 agreement.
- 4.4 City of Ely Council No concerns subject to ensuring pupils walking and cycling safely to school is a priority. Must also ensure there are sufficient car parking spaces available for drop-off and pick-up, especially if one is specifically for disabled parking. As the numbers to the school will grow, this future growth must also be allowed for within the allocated car parking spaces.
- 4.5 CCC Ecology The County Ecologist made the following comments in relation to landscaping and biodiversity:
- notes the site supports limited ecological value and the proposal will have a minor impact on boundary habitats;
 - notes the arable fields to be lost to the scheme are of low ecological value for nesting farmland birds (Skylark);
 - considers the minor adverse ecological impact of the proposals will be adequately compensated, if sufficient ecological enhancements are incorporated within the detailed landscape scheme; and
 - welcomes the inclusion of some biodiversity enhancements within the landscape scheme but considers these features to be disappointingly limited, apart from the provision of some boundary treatment and habitat area.
- 4.6 The County Ecologist seeks additional biodiversity features to be included landscape scheme and building design to maximise the biodiversity benefits of the proposed scheme, including the following:
- greater habitat connectivity along the entire eastern perimeter of the site through the provision of a native hedge & trees. This would provide an excellent foraging resource / shelter for wildlife linking between the school

- site and the off-site Linear Greenspace (to be created adjacent to the eastern boundary – ECDC planning reference 13/00785/ESO), including:
- inclusion of water feature(s), such as wildlife pond, bog garden or SuDS features (e.g. rain garden, swales). The biodiversity value of the current proposal is currently restricted by the lack of water source, which is essential to attract wildlife into an area
 - inclusion of biodiversity enhancement within the built environment, such as a green roof or artificial refugia (e.g. swift boxes & bat boxes positioned along unlit sections of the buildings).
- 4.7 CCC Highways Development Management The application is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impact on the strategic public highway network. However, the proposed use of the site has potential to engender drop-off and collection of children in the vicinity of the school with associated disturbance and potential detriment to residential amenity.
- 4.8 The use of private cars for short journeys should be discouraged and the use of more sustainable modes, such as walking and cycling, should be promoted through a travel plan, which identifies realistic targets and measures, and an appropriate monitoring review process to achieve successful operation of the travel plan.
- 4.9 The highway authority also provided the following comments:
- the proposed highway layout provides the minimum requirement acceptable to facilitate the occupation of the school; and
 - the layout of the proposed adoptable highway is acceptable, subject to a detailed design.
- 4.10 The highway authority asked for the following conditions/informative to be attached to the permission to:
- ensure the manoeuvring area be provided as shown on the drawings and retained free of obstruction
 - provide a site management plan for the construction phase for approval prior to commencement; and
 - highlight the developer will need to contact the Highway Authority to seek separate permission for works to the public highway.
- 4.11 While the highway authority raised a number of concerns with the Transport Statement initially submitted with the application it considers the changes made by the applicant have made it fit-for-purpose.
- 4.12 CCC Archaeology No objection to the planning application. The site has been subject to an archaeological evaluation, the results of which indicate that evidence for late prehistoric and Roman settlement and agriculture survive in the area. Mitigation has been secured under the outline application for the residential development in the area and additional conditions on the school application are not considered to be necessary.
- 4.13 Environmental Health Officer No objections to the proposal but made the following comments:
- no problems regarding noise and dust during construction a condition to limit construction and delivery times is advised;
 - details of any piling to be undertaken should be provided;

- details of any external plant /plant noise condition is advised;
- the proposed lighting scheme is sufficient as the site will be located next to highways that will be lit, however;
 - the lowest level of lighting should be used and lighting to be positioned to reduce impact on surrounding properties
 - lighting should not operate between 22:00 and 06:00
- details of security lighting to be provided, if required;
- lighting to comply with Institute Professionals guidance notes for the reduction of obtrusive light; and
- satisfied with the submitted Construction Management Plan, compliance with which should be secured by condition.

Environment Agency

4.14 No objection on flood risk grounds to the proposed primary school and made the following comments:

- acknowledges no permanent attenuation capacity is required to be provided as part of the development as the strategic surface water drainage network provides all required attenuation capacity;
- the drainage strategy has also demonstrated that the temporary drainage strategy proposed has sufficient capacity to attenuate surface water run-off from the development while the strategic attenuation ponds and conveyance network is constructed;
- the scheme doesn't take advantage of all the benefits sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) could bring to the development;
- there could be significant benefits to the school if SuDS were better implemented onsite;
- acknowledges there are several constraints to the use of SuDS on site including poor infiltration capacity and the lack of un-utilised space;
- recommends past case studies are reviewed to determine whether there are any feasible options for this site;
- recommends a condition to ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and prevent flooding; and
- advises the level of maintenance for green roofs is dependent on the type chosen and provides examples where they have been used with solar panels.

4.15 Fire and Rescue Service No objection to the proposed development and is satisfied with the suitability of the site's access for emergency vehicles and the provision of sprinkler systems. A condition relating to the provision of hydrants is recommended.

4.16 Littleport and Downham Internal Drainage Board The site is outside of the Drainage District but within an area that drains into it. The Board supports the use of surface water attenuation for the site and makes the following comments:

- The Board has already been in talks with the consultant for the overall development project and has made representations to ECDC.
- It is important that the reservoirs are of sufficient capacity to receive water from a storm event; the attenuation scheme should be put in place early on in the construction process.

- With reference to the overall development scheme, the Board has already agreed in principle to accept a flow of 2.56 l/s/ha [litres per second per hectare].
- 4.17 Police Architectural Liaison Was involved in design of the security elements of the school at the pre-application stage and is happy with the crime reduction and community safety aspects of the proposal. While the Architectural Liaison Officer had no specific comments to making regarding the application, and considers a quality development is being produced, it is recommended the weldmesh fencing boundary treatment be grounded to prevent someone digging underneath.
- 4.18 Individual representations No objections. Residents at no's 2, 20, 24 and 28 King Edgar Close have made comments about the proposed cycle/footpath the south of King Edgar Close and have also requested that their historic informal access to Butts Drove is not compromised. These residents have also sought information about:
- who will adopt/maintain the shared access/proposed gate to Butts Drove;
 - what will the access arrangements for residents to Butts Drove be;
 - will additional fencing/landscaping be provided adjacent to the gate;
 - will additional parking restrictions be provided on King Edgar Close; and
 - are zig zag barriers proposed to be installed to slow cyclists.
- 4.19 Another resident at 6 King Edgar Close made a representation about the proposed lighting scheme to request a lamp post be relocated to prevent the light shining into the property's bedroom.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The relevant development plan policies are listed below.
- 5.2 East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document, adopted October 2009 (the "Core Strategy")

CS1	Spatial Strategy
CS2	Housing
CS6	Environment
CS7	Infrastructure
CS8	Access
CS9	Ely
S6	Transport impact
S7	Parking Provision
EN2	Design
EN3	Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency
EN4	Renewable Energy
EN5	Historic conservation
EN6	Biodiversity and geology
EN7	Flood risk
EN8	Pollution

5.3 East Cambridgeshire Draft Local Plan (2013) (Pre-submission version) (the “draft Local Plan”)

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
GROWTH 6	Renewable Energy Development
ENV2	Design
ENV4	Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy in Construction
ENV6	Renewable Energy Development
ENV7	Biodiversity and geology
ENV8	Flood risk
ENV9	Pollution
COM4	New Community Facilities
COM7	Transport Impact
COM8	Parking Provision
ELY1	Housing Lead Sustainable Extension, North Ely

5.4 Supplementary Planning Documents
Ely Masterplan adopted 23 February 2010
Draft North Ely Supplement Planning Document

6.0 LAND USE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s planning policies and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material planning consideration in planning decisions, which establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development as a key principle. In decision-taking, paragraph 14 requires that:
- proposed development that accords with the development plan should be approved without delay;
 - where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date permission should be granted unless:
 - any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted; and
 - proposed develop that conflicts with an up-to-date development plan should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 One of the NPPF’s 12 core planning principles (paragraph 17) is to “...*take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.*”
- 6.3 In relation to schools, the NPPF at paragraph 72 states that “*The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative*

approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- Give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools; and*
- Work with schools promoters to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”*

Departure

- 6.4 Policy CS 1 of the Core Strategy designates Ely as one of three ‘Market Towns’ where the majority of new housing and employment development will take place (approximately 70% of new housing and 60% new employment land) and the most significant service and population centre in the district.
- 6.5 The policy states that the majority of development in the district will take place in towns and most sustainable villages, depending on their role as employment, retail and service centres, their level of accessibility, and particular environmental and infrastructure constraints.
- 6.6 Outside of these towns and villages, the rest of the district is designated as countryside where development is strictly controlled and restricted to:
- that which is essential to the efficient operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, and outdoor recreation;
 - other uses specifically identified in the plan which:
 - support the rural economy;
 - help meet affordable housing or special housing needs; or
 - provide essential rural services and infrastructure.
- 6.7 The application site is located in countryside outside of the Development Envelope for Ely, therefore, the application is contrary to policy CS1 and constitutes a departure from the development plan and has been advertised as such. However, it does not meet any of the criteria set out in Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009, which would require, if the County Council is minded to grant permission, referral to the Secretary of State. The determination of the application rests, therefore, with the County Council.
- 6.8 While the site is currently designated as countryside under the Core Strategy, significant weight should be given to ECDC’s promotion of North Ely site as a major urban extension to Ely. The principles for the development of the urban extension have been established through the Ely Masterplan, the North Ely Development Framework and the Draft North Ely Supplement Planning Document.
- 6.9 Policy ELY 1 of the emerging Local Plan which is nearing the end of its public examination allocates the North Ely site, including the proposed school, for a housing-led sustainable mixed-use urban development. ECDC has also resolved to grant outline planning permission (ref. 13/00785/ESO), subject to a number of conditions and Section 106 agreement, for the development of the site.
- 6.10 With regard to the NPPF, it can be argued that the Core Strategy is out-of-date as ECDC is at significantly advanced stage in promoting the North Ely urban extension and there would be no adverse impacts that significantly and

demonstrably outweigh the benefits of granting permission for the development.

- 6.11 Further, the proposed development is a community facility for which there is a need within a growing settlement. The new primary school will ensure that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of the existing community in Ely as well delivering an integral community facility for the development of the North Ely urban extension.
- 6.12 There is a clear need for the provision of an additional primary school to serve Ely and this is a material reason which would influence whether or not to allow the site to be developed for the school.
- 6.13 For these reasons it is considered, in principle, a departure from the development can be supported provided the proposal is consistent with other development plan policies.

Design and Layout

- 6.14 Policy EN2 of the Core Strategy seeks to provide a high quality level of design in keeping with the surrounding area. The school's design was developed in consultation with ECDC and CCC planning officers, as well as a community engagement session held on 18 March 2014.
- 6.15 The proposed scheme was considered by CCC's Design Quality Panel on 14 March 2014 and the applicant made several changes to the proposal's design to respond to the Panel's recommendations. The changes include:
- pitched roofs to enhance and improve the roofscape;
 - steeper pitched roofs on the south facing elevations to allow photovoltaic panels to be added;
 - canopies on the Early Years centre to help visually break up the length of the elevation;
 - visually breaking up the main hall by using different materials, including rain;
 - screen cladding with horizontal slots of coloured glazing and the positioning of the Isle of Ely school name/logo;
 - a raised feature to the Key Stage 2 pupil entrance which is visible from the A10 approach road;
 - points of colour used externally through the building which are also referenced in the design of the boundary treatment; and
 - a revised landscaping/site plan.
- 6.16 ECDC considers the overall design has been improved considerably and should complement the development of the rest of the site. ECDC is pleased to see the main entrance more prominently featured and considers the school sign now reflects the city's identity. The proposal complies with policy EN2 in terms of its layout and design.

Highways and Access

- 6.17 Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy highlights there should be appropriate infrastructure, community services and facilities in place to serve the needs of new development schemes. Policy CS8 requires development and transport planning to be co-ordinated to improve accessibility for the whole community,

reduce the need to travel by car, and increase transport use, cycling and walking.

- 6.18 The access arrangements have been subject to detailed discussion with the highway authority who considers the highway proposals to be acceptable. The application complies with policies CS7 and CS8 as it will provide infrastructure to support the wider North Ely development scheme while also providing safe routes to and from the school for pedestrian, cyclists and vehicles.
- 6.19 The highway authority initially raised concerns with the applicant's Transport Statement, particularly in relation to how trips to/from the site had been calculated leading to an over provision of parking. However, the highway authority has assessed the additional information provided by the applicant and finds the revised Transport Statement fit-for-purpose.
- 6.20 Policy S6 requires development proposals likely to have significant transport implications to be accompanied by a Travel Plan. A baseline Travel Plan has been included in the Travel Statement which will be used to inform the preparation of a full Travel Plan following the first occupation of the school. It is reasonable and necessary to impose a condition requiring the full Travel Plan and a Parking Management Strategy to be in place within nine months of the school's first occupation.
- 6.21 The planning application initially proposed a pedestrian/cycle path between the junction of Lynn Road and King Edgar Close, and Butts Drove. However, this section has been revised and removed in response to concerns from the highway authority about there being insufficient carriageway width to provide it. Instead the footpath and carriageway on King Edgar Close will remain as existing.
- 6.22 Residents living on King Edgar Close have requested that their historic informal access to Butts Drove is not compromised, and have raised concerns about the proposed cycle/footpath and the shared surface access/gate to Butts Drove. While ECDC has advised it does not consider the informal access to Butts Drove will be compromised, as the footpath/cycleway runs to the south of this track, it has asked that the concerns be carefully considered.
- 6.23 The applicant has provided additional information to address the concerns raised by the residents and access will be fully-maintained by the proposal. A shared surface will be provided with a gated access to Butts Drove, which will be adopted and maintained by the highway authority after the development is constructed.
- 6.24 The gated access to Butts Drove will not be locked and will remain open to allow access at all times. No additional fencing or landscaping adjacent to the gate is proposed as the purpose of the gate is to direct users of the cycle path in the right direction and to delineate the end of the hard paved surface
- 6.25 Further parking restrictions/double yellow lines will be a matter for the highway authority to consider as part of a Traffic Regulation Order, which is separate to the planning application process and can only be considered after planning permission is granted.

6.26 Residents have also suggested a zig zag metal barrier be provided where the cycleway meets the shared surface between Butt Drove and King Edgar Close to slow cyclists down and prevent them from cycling straight out on to the road. However, barriers would impede access to Butts Drove and interrupt the safe operation of the foot/cycle path. In addition, the applicant advised that visibility in this location is good and signs will be erected so that all users are aware that it is a shared surface area. The gate can also include a notice so that it is clear that it is for private access.

6.27 The additional information provided by the applicant sufficiently addresses the issues raised and there are no outstanding concerns to be resolved.

Car and cycle parking

6.28 Car/vehicle parking will be to the east of the school building. Policy S7 of the Core Strategy sets out the parking standards for the district. For new primary school developments the parking standards are:

- A maximum of 1 car space for each member of staff;
- A maximum 1 car space per class for the public/visitors, up to a maximum of 8 spaces; and
- A minimum of 6 cycle spaces per class.

6.29 The school was initially designed with 76 car parking spaces. The highway authority raised concerns that the level of parking represented a significant over-provision as TRICS data (the national standard for trip data analysis) used to calculate trips to and from the school should have been based on staff trips only, as parent drop-off/pick-up is to be accommodated on the new access road, and not take place in the car park.

6.30 In response to the highway authority's concerns, the Transport Statement and parking provision has been revised to provide 67 car parking spaces in the school car park, including four Blue Badge spaces for people with disabilities. The revised Transport Statement estimates that the school will have approximately 68 employees and, based on that of existing schools, 67 spaces will be sufficient for the predicted number of staff.

6.31 The Transport Statement explains there will be 35 drop-off spaces provided on the new access road and that this is expected to be sufficient for the predicted demand, taking into account the sustainable access improvements provided to encourage walking and cycling to school and independent travel for older pupils. Further, the travel plan framework's mitigation measures, which included staggering start times, park and stride for infants, juniors and nursery pupils to minimise pressure on the surrounding highway network outside the school's entrance.

6.32 The City of Ely Council considers the proposal must ensure there are sufficient car parking spaces available for drop-off/ pick-up, and that because the numbers at the school will increase the future growth must also be allowed for within the allocated car parking spaces. While the council's comments are acknowledged, the highway authority is satisfied the revised Transport Statement is now fit-for-purpose. Therefore, parking provision at the site will promote more sustainable travel and ensure the provision of adequate levels of car and cycle parking in accordance with policies S6 and S7 of the Core Strategy.

- 6.33 Further, any impacts of undesirable travel to/from the school arising from parking and the pick-up/drop-off areas can be monitored through the Travel Plan and Parking Management Strategy, which will be required to be in place nine months from first occupation of the school.
- 6.34 The application proposes 130 cycle parking spaces and 30 scooter spaces for pupils in accordance with the minimum standards referred to in policy S7. The cycle spaces will be at the north-western and south-eastern corners of the school. Eight visitor and staff cycle spaces will be provided at the main school entrance as well as a buggy store outside the proposed early years centre. The scooter spaces will be next to the cycle racks at the southern pupil/cycle entrance.
- 6.35 The revised Transport Statement highlights pupil cycle parking provision will be provided in the form of covered Sheffield stands in the school grounds. In the interests of promoting sustainable travel and to ensure the development fully complies with policies S6 and S7 it is recommended that all cycle parking is provided under cover and this be secured by condition.

Sustainability, Renewable Energy and BREEAM

- 6.41 Policy EN3 states that *“All development proposals should seek to maximise energy efficiency and minimise energy demand and resource use through sustainable design and construction”*. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how proposals achieve these aims, and how they are located and designed to withstand the long-term impacts of climate change. The County Council expects that its schemes achieve a BREEAM rating of at least ‘Very Good’.
- 6.42 The applicant’s supporting Sustainable Design and Construction Statement, prepared by Building Services Design Consulting Engineers, highlights the development will achieve a BREEAM ‘Very Good’ rating and will comply with Part L (Conservation of fuel and power) of the *Building Regulations 2010*. The school is proposed as a single building using a predominantly natural ventilation strategy, where possible optimising the use of passive design approaches.
- 6.43 The building’s design will improve the energy efficiency of the building by:
- making use of passive solar design and natural ventilation;
 - the building fabric minimising heat loss and solar gains;
 - using energy efficient mechanical and electrical services to minimise energy consumption;
 - using controls to optimise the operation of mechanical and electrical systems and reduce waste; and
 - using low and zero carbon technology to further reduce carbon emissions.
- 6.44 Policy EN4 of the Core Strategy requires non-residential development with a floor space of 1000m² or more to provide at least 10% of its energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources unless their wider environmental, social and economic benefits would be outweighed by significant adverse effects on the environment, protected species and residential amenity.

- 6.45 To meet the requirements of policy EN4 the proposed development will incorporate 180m² photovoltaic panels on the south facing roof on the building closest to the site's southern boundary. The photovoltaics will achieve a renewable energy contribution of over 10% (estimated at 10.2%) and will not have any adverse on the environment, key views, protected species or residential amenity in accordance with Policy EN4.
- 6.46 The Sustainable Design and Construction Statement reviews the viability/feasibility of providing different low and zero carbon technology options at the site, including biomass boilers, ground/air source heat pumps, wind, photovoltaics, solar thermal, and combined heat and power. Other than photovoltaics the Statement explains that other low and carbon technologies are not viable/feasible for the proposal.
- 6.47 The proposal includes measures to minimise energy consumption and use, and expects to achieve BREEAM standard of 'Very Good' in terms of sustainability and the use of renewable energy. It is recommended planning conditions are imposed to ensure, as a minimum, the standards set out in policies EN3 and EN4 are met.

Archaeology

- 6.48 The site has been subject to an archaeological evaluation as part of the wider outline planning application (reference 13/00785/ESO), the results of which indicate that evidence for late prehistoric and Roman settlement and agriculture survive in the area.
- 6.49 The applicant has advised further trial trenching and archaeological investigations are to be undertaken in autumn following the harvest. The full scope of the archaeological requirements has been agreed with Cambridgeshire County Council archaeologists as part of the outline planning application. Mitigation has been secured under the outline application for the residential development in the area and additional conditions on the school application are not considered to be necessary.

Flood risk, drainage and pollution control

- 6.50 Paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires all forms of flood risk to be considered in relation to development. The site is in Flood Zone 1 (Low Risk) and as the application site area comprises more than 1 hectare a site specific flood risk assessment (FRA) was required.
- 6.51 The FRA, prepared by Michael Thomas Consultancy, advises that under the NPPF the proposed school is appropriate development in Flood Zone 1, which passes the Sequential Test and does not require the Exception Test.
- 6.52 The FRA highlights that the development will have no adverse impact on flood risk in the surrounding area or increase the risk of flooding off-site. Further, no flood resistant or resilient construction methods are required and minimum floor levels do not need to be set for flood risk-related reasons.
- 6.53 The Environment Agency (EA) has not objected to the development on flood risk grounds and acknowledges no permanent attenuation capacity is required as the strategic surface water drainage network provides all required attenuation capacity. Further, the EA considers the temporary drainage

strategy proposed has sufficient capacity to attenuate surface water run-off from the development while the strategic attenuation ponds and conveyance network are constructed.

- 6.54 The proposal, therefore, accords with the NPPF and policy EN7, as the proposal will not intensify the risk of flooding.
- 6.55 Policy EN7 also requires all applications for new development to demonstrate that appropriate surface water drainage arrangements for dealing with surface water run-off can be accommodated within the site. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are required for all new developments unless following an assessment of character and context, soil conditions and/or engineering feasibility indicates otherwise.
- 6.56 The EA is disappointed the scheme doesn't take advantage of SuDS which it considers could bring significant benefits to the school if they were provided. The EA acknowledged there are several constraints to the use of SuDS on site, including poor infiltration capacity and the lack of un-utilised space.
- 6.57 The applicant has advised that educational requirements, in terms of playing pitches and hard play areas outside classroom areas that need to be kept free from obstruction, mean the site is significantly constrained by its layout and this makes it difficult to effectively incorporate SuDS.
- 6.58 Further, the Drainage Strategy prepared by Peter Dann Consulting Engineers, dated August 2014, highlights that infiltration tests carried out at the site have shown that the underlying ground condition is not considered suitable for the use of infiltration techniques due to the cohesive properties of the soil. It is, therefore, proposed that surface water will be discharged to the local field drain network.
- 6.59 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF sets out a need to ensure a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities, and local planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create school new schools. Paragraph 173 also explains that development proposal also need to viable and deliverable. The applicant has identified that the cost of providing SuDS is significant and implementing them would mean the school would not be viable and could not be delivered within the available budget. The applicant considers the need for a high quality design and the educational importance outweighs the provision provide SuDS on site.
- 6.60 The applicant has also advised there are several non-material planning considerations it considers important to take into account, which are as follows:
- there have been problems with the use of SuDS at other sites in Cambridgeshire, which have led to complaints from parents;
 - attenuation basins have a perceived health and safety threat children drowning;
 - swales have been problematic due to periods where they are dry and children play in them and then the following day they are wet; and
 - at other schools it has been necessary to completely enclose the areas due to regards about the safety of children.

- 6.61 While the EA's comments concerning SuDS are acknowledged, it has not objected to the development and has confirmed the surface water drainage arrangements are appropriate. Given the site layout constraints, unfavourable ground conditions for the use of infiltration techniques, and that a SuDS strategy will be prepared for the wider North Ely development that surface water drainage from the school will feed into, it is considered the proposal complies with policy EN7.

Landscaping, planting and biodiversity

- 6.62 The County Ecologist has advised the site has limited ecological value which is adequately compensated by the proposal's ecological, biodiversity and landscape enhancements. While it will only have a minor impact on boundary habitats, the landscaping features are disappointingly limited aside from some boundary treatments and a habitat area.
- 6.63 The applicant has revised the landscaping and planting scheme, in response to the County Ecologist comments, to provide an additional hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the site to provide a foraging resource/shelter for wildlife. Two new bat boxes and two new swift boxes will also be provided on the school building. The request for additional water features on the site cannot be provided for the reasons given in the above section and a green roof isn't incorporated as the maintenance requirements will not be accepted by the end users of the school.
- 6.64 The proposals are considered appropriate for the site to comply with policies CS6 and EN6 but to be successful will need to be maintained. This can be secured by planning condition.

Lighting and noise

- 6.65 The EHO is satisfied the proposed external lighting layout is sufficient as the site will be located next to highways that will be lit but has raised some concerns that lighting from the school building may project away from the building. The EHO has requested use of the lowest level of lighting required and positioning the lights to reduce any potential impact on surrounding properties.
- 6.66 A condition is recommended to agree the exact details and locations of lighting prior to the implementation of the scheme. This will allow further discussions with the highway authority to agree the exact locations of lighting and also ensure the resident's concerns are taken into account. A condition restricting the operating hours of the lighting is also proposed so the lighting will not operate between 22:00 and 06:00. No lighting is proposed for the sports pitches.
- 6.67 As part of the outline planning permission for the wider development, a detailed noise assessment was carried out by Endurance Estates which includes measures to reduce noise within the site, including a new bund adjacent to the A10 to the north-west of the site.
- 6.68 The supporting planning statement highlights the timing of the delivery of the bund has been subject to detail discussions between Endurance Estates and ECDC. The bund will be required by ECDC prior to the occupation of the first residential development on the site. The planning statement explains that

while there may be some noise impact on the school in the first couple of years, because of the proximity of the A10, the noise impact is considered acceptable in planning terms.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 While the application constitutes a departure from the development plan, the principle of development has been established by ECDC's long-term promotion of the North Ely urban extension.
- 7.2 The guiding principles for the development of the North Ely urban extension, including the primary school site, have been provided by the preparation of Ely Masterplan, the North Ely Development Framework and the Draft North Ely Supplementary Planning Document.
- 7.3 Policy ELY 1 of the draft Local Plan, which allocates the primary school as part of the wider development site, is nearing the end of its public examination and ECDC has resolved to grant outline planning permission for the site. Therefore, significant weight can be given to the draft Local Plan, the outline planning permission and the overriding need for development to provide a community facility that meets demands for pupil places in North Ely.
- 7.4 There are no material planning considerations that preclude the granting of planning permission for the development. Further, there are no outstanding objections from consultees. The traffic impacts can be managed by the implementation of a robust Travel Plan and Parking Management Strategy.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:
1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2. Approved plans
The development hereby permitted shall not proceed except in accordance with the details set out in the application documents as amended by the conditions of this decision notice:
- P01 Rev A, Site Location Plan, dated 09/05/14
 - P02 Rev 1, Site Location Plan—showing housing development, dated 08/05/14
 - P03, Ground Floor and Roof Plans, dated 08/05/14
 - P04, Elevations and Sections, dated 15/05/14
 - P05, 3D Visuals, dated 13/05/14
 - HBL-LS01 Rev T4, External Works Proposals, dated 15/04/14
 - HBL-LS02 Rev T4, External Works Proposals, dated 15/04/14
 - HBL-LS03 Rev T2, Proposed Levels, dated 15/04/14

- HBL-LS04 Rev T2, Proposed Levels, dated 15/04/14
- HBL-LS05 Rev T3, Elevations – South, dated 07/05/14
- HBL-LS06 Rev T3, Elevations – West, dated 07/05/14
- HBL-LS07 Rev T1, Planning Proposals, dated 14/08/14
- HBL-LS08 Rev T1, Planning Proposals, dated 15/05/14
- 0316-GA-001 Rev P6, Highways Arrangement, dated August 2014
- 0316-GA-002 Rev P3, School Boundary
- 10-4430_XX-DR-D200 Rev P2, Drainage Arrangement, dated March 2014
- 14-2208-CBJ-R0, Street Lighting Highways Construction Plan, dated 9/05/14
- 131435/E/2601 Rev P2, Proposed External Lighting Layout, dated May 2014
- Lighting Proposal/Calculation Summary, dated 9/05/2014
- Planning Statement, dated May 2014
- Design and Access Statement, Rev E, dated 16 May 2014
- Transport Statement, dated 28 July 2014
- Statement of Sustainable Design and Construction Rev P1, dated April 2014
- Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan Rev A, dated June 2014
- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Preliminary Protected Species Survey, dated May 2014,
- Drainage Strategy, dated August 2014
- Flood Risk Assessment Rev A, dated May 2013
- BRE SMARTWaste Plan, dated May 2014
- Storage Assessment, dated 06/05/14
- Construction Management Plan, dated August 2014
- Ely Primary School - Site Setup Plan
- External Finishes Schedule Rev A, dated 11/08/14
- Ely PS Planting Schedule

Reason: To define the permission and to ensure that the development is carried out in compliance with East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy policies CS1, CS6, CS7 and CS9

3. Travel Plan

The development shall not be occupied until a Travel Plan incorporating a Parking Management Strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. The approved plan/strategy shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To ensure the safe and efficient operation of the highway and promote sustainable travel (policies S6 and S7)

Construction noise, vibration and dust

4. No construction work or construction collections from or deliveries to the site shall take place other than between the hours of 0800 to 1800 on Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 hours on Saturdays. No construction works or collection/deliveries shall take place on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.

Reason: To ensure the environmental impact of the construction of the development is adequately mitigated and to protect the amenities of nearby residential properties (policies CS6 and EN8)

Artificial lighting

5. Prior to the erection of any lighting at the development site the final locations and positioning of street lighting as shown on the Street Lighting Highways Construction Plan, drawing no 14-2208-CBK-R0, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the County Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and residential amenity impact (policies S6 and EN8)

Sports pitches and netball courts provision and use

6. The sports pitches and netball courts shown on drawings HBL-LS01 Rev T4 and HBL-LS02 Rev T4 shall be available for use prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure the school has sufficient sports pitch provision (policy CS7)

Highway safety and safer routes to school

7. The cycle/footways, pick-up/drop-off spaces, Toucan pedestrian crossings points and associated traffic calming on Cam Drive and Lynn Road, shown on drawing no 0316-GA-001 Rev P6, shall be available for use prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to provide safer routes to school (policies CS6, CS7, CS8 and S6)

Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

8. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) ref. 1439-FRA Rev. A prepared by MTC dated May 2014 and the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:

- The temporary drainage scheme shall not be removed until such time as the related permanent surface water conveyance and attenuation infrastructure has been constructed. It will need to be demonstrated that the final drainage scheme (that is related to this parcel) has been designed to safely convey and attenuate the surface water from all the catchments draining into it; and
- The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may be subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory method of surface water drainage and prevent flooding (policies CS6 & EN7)

Cycle parking

9. The cycle and scooter parking facilities shown on drawings HBL-LS01 Rev T4 and HBL-LS02 Rev T4 and in the Transport Statement, dated 28 July 2014, shall be covered and available for use prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To encourage use of bicycles and scooters by pupils and discourage the use of private cars (policies S6 and S7)

10. Plant noise

The specific rated noise level emitted from plant or machinery located in the site shall not exceed the existing background noise level or 35dB, whichever is the higher. The noise levels shall be measured and /or calculated at the boundary of the nearest noise sensitive property. The noise level shall be measured and/or calculated in accordance with BS4142.

Reason: To avoid unreasonable disturbance to nearby residential properties (policy EN8)

Landscaping and biodiversity enhancement and maintenance

11. If within a period of 5 years from the date of planting of any tree, that tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, or, in the opinion of the County Planning Authority, becomes seriously damaged or defective, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted in the same place during the next available planting season, unless the County Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interest of landscape character and nature conservation (policies CS6 and EN6)

Fire Hydrants

12. The development shall not be occupied until a scheme for the provision of fire hydrants has been submitted to and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority in consultation with the Fire and Rescue Service.

Reason: To ensure that there is a sufficient and accessible water supply for fire fighting (policies CS6 and EN2).

Renewable energy and sustainability measures

13. The photovoltaic panels shown on drawings P04 and HBL-LS05 Rev P3 shall be fully installed and operational prior to the occupation of the development and shall be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended maintenance programme. The photovoltaic panels shall remain fully operational in accordance with the maintenance programme for the duration of the development.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and the provision of renewable energy (policies EN3 & EN4)

14. Within 1 year of the first occupation of the development a certificate following a post-construction review shall be issued to the County Planning Authority by an approved BREEAM Assessor indicating that a BREEAM rating of Very Good or better has been met. In the event that such a rating is replaced by a comparable national measure of sustainability for building design, the equivalent level of measure shall be applicable to the proposed development.

Reason: In the interests of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and promoting the principles of sustainable construction and efficient use of buildings (policies EN3 and EN4)

Informatives

Your attention is drawn to the Environment Agency's letter dated 21 July 2014 in which it highlights its requirements for dealing with surface water drainage and sewerage at the site.

The granting of a planning permission does not constitute a permission or licence to a developer to carry out any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with, the Public Highway. A separate permission must be sought from the Highway Authority for such works. The developer should contact the Highway Authority, or its agent, to arrange construction of any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with, the Public Highway, and that all costs associated with such works shall be borne by the developer.

The developer should contact the Highway Authority, or its agent, to arrange construction of any works within, or disturbance of, or interference with, the public highway, and that all costs associated with such works shall be borne by the development.

The development will not be permitted to drain roof water over the public highway, or across it in a surface water channel, but must make arrangement to install a piped drainage connection.

No window or door will be allowed to open over a highway and no foundation or footing for the structure will be allowed to encroach under the public highway.

Compliance with paragraphs 186 & 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework

The County Planning Authority has worked proactively with the applicant to ensure that the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms. All land use planning matters have been given full consideration and the applicant has responded positive to the advice and recommendations provided by consultees. Proactive consultation took place with statutory consultees, which resulted in overall support for the development proposal.