

## **Planning Design and Access Statement**

**Heydon End, 87 Chishill Road**

**Heydon**

**SG8 8PN**

### **The Site**

The site is Heydon End, which is 2 ha. in total. Of this area, half would be used for the actual house building for from 8 to 16 homes, depending upon how flexible the windfall sites policy becomes in the new local plan following the current review. This would include 2, 3, and 4 bedroom homes. Nearly half of the area would be retained as buffer greenspace; and a small portion retained for the existing house, a wide existing driveway as an internal road, and an existing barn made available as a community facility for the parish of Heydon.

The site lies to the southern boundary of Heydon; to the rear of Heydon End, 87 Chishill Road, SG8 8PN. The existing house and garden would remain largely unchanged, bordering a neighbouring property. The new residential area would have the buffer green space between it and the neighbouring arable field to the north. To the south, there is a footpath, the other side of which is a research and experimental station owned by Bayer. Great Chishill lies immediately to the south of the Bayer site, comprising first a development of 11 affordable dwellings (S/0113/05/F) on a rural exceptions site built on the land, Lime Farm, owned by Bayer, and then the old village of Great Chishill.

So the proposed development is in keeping with the most recent development, 2006, in the area on the other side of Bayer site. It would provide for some current needs for lower priced market housing in the 2 bedroom units, given that the last "affordable" housing development nearby in Great Chishill is now over 10 years old.

The Heydon End site is not visible from any public road at any distance. It is visible from the footpath which runs alongside the site, and indeed from another footpath which runs from Heydon to Chrishall some distance away to the north of the proposed site. Views from this footpath, and views from the few back gardens of the houses closest to the site and the rear of the animal shelters in the nearby Wood Green Animal Shelter, would be screened by a proposed tree planting of native species on the northern boundary of the proposed site, incorporated into the buffer green space on its northern boundary. The existing land is typical horse paddock, with rye grass paddocks, and maintained for uniform grass cover so as to make it most suitable for horses. This means that there will be an opportunity to increase biodiversity when the greenspace can be set up for that purpose whilst still providing a valuable area for residents to use for health and well-being purposes.



## **Design**

The design and appearance of the houses would be carefully chosen to fit in with the area so that there is an inherent logic to the development, (even though it could not actually be seen by any external view other a limited view from the footpath on the southern boundary). A good starting point for that design is the general appearance and scale of the aforementioned affordable housing development just south of the proposed site in Great Chishill, since that was carefully designed to fit in with the area following lengthy consultation. Note that the Heydon End site is outside the conservation area of Heydon.

The newer ideas on sustainable development and the desirability of zero carbon impacts of new housing will be built in to the housing design. The east-west line of houses will lend a good aspect to the resulting southern facing roofs for solar panels. There will be provision for electric car charging points. There is also sufficient space between houses to easily incorporate ground source heat pumps which of course require an area of permeable ground to operate properly.

The buffer green space on the northern boundary (see map) will provide for informal activities for families in the proposed development, creating a sense of community and encouraging outdoor living for health benefits. Native tree species planting to create a screening and shelter belt will also aid biodiversity enhancement.

The mix of market and affordable housing will accord to whatever parameters are required in the emerging planning framework.

The whole site is low density development, in keeping with the rural character of the location and maximises the sustainability of proposals by ensuring social benefits through facilities for the parish of Heydon, health and wellbeing benefits for residents of the houses through the provision of considerable greenspace, environmental benefits through biodiversity enhancements and siting and spacing of houses to enhance renewable energy options to achieve zero carbon impact. Also the limited views of the proposed site from the ten back gardens lying to the north, the back of the animal shelters in the nearby Wood Green animal shelter, and distant footpath to the north of the site, will all be effectively screened from any view by the tree planting incorporated in the buffer area on the north side of the proposed site.

## **Access**

There will be room for car parking in accord with the planning framework parameters. There is currently a bus service from Heydon to Cambridge, so public transport is available, but allowing for car parking space would still be important and useful. In the longer term, with changes in car ownership and availability of more efficient and flexible transport options, the dependence on individual ownership of cars requiring onsite parking will change as it will for any proposals in the future. Access will be from the existing road access, with the existing driveway, all expanded to 8 m width and with wider entrance providing good sightlines, the whole forming an internal road to serve the site.



## Planning

### **NPPF and Sustainable Development**

In terms of planning, the overall context is currently set by the latest National Planning Policy Framework. The Greater Cambridge Partnership Local Development Scheme (October 2018) describes this in the following quote;

*"The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 and continues to include a strong expectation that Local Authorities will prepare plans which positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and that are sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for a number of key land uses. These are housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development, infrastructure for transport and other key utilities, community facilities, and the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment."*

The proposal for this site meets the development needs of the local area by providing a suitable pattern, scale and quality of housing development, and community facilities.

In addition, planners should take on board the need to be flexible to adapt to rapid change. This means that there should be a case for not completely freezing all development in smaller centres currently restricted to infilling. This argument has long been made by informed commentators. An example of this is the highly regarded review of rural housing needs made in the Taylor review. For information, some of this is quoted below; [ - From *Living Working Countryside The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing* Published by: Department for Communities and Local Government 2008 and available at [http://www.wensumalliance.org.uk/publications/Taylor\\_Review\\_Livingworkingcountryside.pdf](http://www.wensumalliance.org.uk/publications/Taylor_Review_Livingworkingcountryside.pdf)

*"Outside the market towns the picture will be much more mixed. Some villages will grow substantially. Others risk seeing little or no development. These villages, "protected" from development, face becoming increasingly exclusive communities of the retired and of wealthy commuters travelling ever longer distances to work, losing their services like schools and shops, and with local jobs either lost, or serviced by people commuting in from larger towns.*

*Throughout the course of this Review no one has argued for the substantive relaxation of planning controls in the countryside to allow a development free-for-all. Equally, it is clear that over-zealous or ill-thought through restriction of development in rural areas has already had unintended consequences in holding back rural economies and making rural homes increasingly unaffordable – consequences which make the countryside less, not more sustainable.*

*This is not a sustainable future for rural England. We need to better balance social and economic sustainability with environmental sustainability. For these reasons, those who want to protect the countryside need the planning system to better recognise the people and living communities within it."*



### **Current Spatial Strategy**

The spatial strategy currently allows for 23 % of new development sites to come from villages in rural areas, and hence positive consideration for this proposed site will help to reach this target and indeed any increase in target for this category in the review.

### **Specific Current Policies**

**Policy S2 Objectives of the local plan set out in c), d) and e) below**

*c. To provide land for housing in sustainable locations that meets local needs and aspirations, and gives choice about type, size, tenure and cost.*

*d. To deliver new developments that are high quality and well-designed with distinctive character that reflects their location, and which responds robustly to the challenges of climate change.*

*e. To ensure that all new development provides or has access to a range of services and facilities that support healthy lifestyles and well-being for everyone, including shops, schools, doctors, community buildings, cultural facilities, local open space, and green infrastructure*

This certainly accords with the quality and location of the proposed site given the local needs, type and size, distinctive character, healthy lifestyles and community buildings.

### **Policy S/3: Presumption In Favour of Sustainable Development**

The presumption in favour of sustainable development would be for planning approval unless;

*a) Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*

*b. Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted*

As pointed out above, there are no specific policies applying to this proposed site which create a designated constraint, and the benefits to the local community and new residents would clearly outweigh any theoretical costs given the very low impact on views, biodiversity, health and well being, and community facility advantages which have been outlined above.



### **Policy S/11: Infill Villages**

Whilst Heydon is currently classified as an infill village, the proposal made would accord with a more flexible approach to spatial strategy in the next review, with suitable sites being selected beyond the minor rural centres.

The number of houses on the proposed site can be adapted from the current maximum for similar proposals of 8 to the sustainable capacity of the site which is around 16.

### **Policy S/6: The Development Strategy to 2031**

*4. Development in the rural area will be limited, with allocations for jobs and housing focused on Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, and rural settlement policies providing for windfall development for different categories of village consistent with the level of local service provision and quality of public transport access to Cambridge or a market town.*

This policy establishes the windfall rural area concept, and the proposed site has direct access to public transport, and with the rural exceptions site with affordable housing so close to the proposed site it is clear that this area has sufficient access to service provision, the nearest main area being Barley. Barley is less than a mile away and provides shops, GP surgery and a high level of connectivity to public transport. which whilst being across the border in Hertfordshire, is nonetheless available for all these services - a factor recognised in agreeing to the 11 affordable houses in Great Chishill close to the proposed site.

### **THE OXFORD CAMBRIDGE ARC and SPATIAL STRATEGY**

There is an urgent need to amend spatial strategy in response to the Government's support for the growth area of the Oxford Cambridge Arc. This includes Cambridgeshire and its constituent districts. The government responded to the proposal in the following way; *"The government supports the National Infrastructure Commission's ambition to build up to one million high quality homes in the Arc by 2050 to maximise its economic potential. To achieve this ambition, a step change in housing delivery will be required, including engagement on how this can be accommodated through vibrant new and expanded settlements."* See Government response to 'Partnering for Prosperity: a new deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc' available at

[://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/752040/Government\\_response\\_to\\_Partnership\\_for\\_Prosperty\\_a\\_new\\_deal\\_for\\_the\\_Cambridge-Milton\\_Keynes\\_Oxford\\_Arc.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752040/Government_response_to_Partnership_for_Prosperty_a_new_deal_for_the_Cambridge-Milton_Keynes_Oxford_Arc.pdf)



The vision of the Arc is given by the report of the National Infrastructure Commission entitled *PARTNERING FOR PROSPERITY: A new deal for the CambridgeMilton Keynes-Oxford Arc*  
Available at; <https://www.nic.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Partnering-for-Prosperty.pdf>

This vision is described in the report as follows;

*"The Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford arc contains some of our most productive and innovative places, delivering growth and prosperity for the whole country. But the continued success of these places is not guaranteed. Without swift and determined action to overcome the area's housing crisis, it will fall behind its international competitors and fail to attract and retain the talent and skills it needs."*

It is also noted that -*"But there can be no blueprint for effective placemaking. Good placemaking requires judgements that balance physical, economic, social, historic and cultural factors – each of which will be specific to the local area. These judgements are best made locally. However, structured advice from independent experts in different fields of design, in architecture, sustainability and engineering, alongside representation from communities, can help inform local judgements and – when given weight within local planning processes – help shape development to maximise positive outcomes. Maintaining attractive, liveable places over the long-term will require a positive approach to stewardship. The most powerful mechanisms place responsibility – and resources – with the community itself."*

There is a clear call for flexible and innovative thinking with respect to housing solutions, which favours consideration of well planned local appropriate scale development proposals such as the Heydon End site proposal.

There is also a call for flexibility in terms of cross border issues;

*"Developing a fit-for-purpose vision and supporting plans will require local authorities and LEPs to work across administrative boundaries and to deepen existing collaborations. It will require them to put in place new governance structures to enable collective decision-making and signal their long-term commitment to the success of the arc"*

Hence in the planning design and access statement for this proposal, the plea to consider the very close proximity of Barley as the service centre relevant to this development is supported by the approach suggested by the National Infrastructure Commission.

