

**Application Number :** S/2006/1655/PO    **Parish :** Harpole

**Case Officer :** Michael Warren

**Applicant :** English Partnership Redrow Homes (South Midlands)

<b>Location :</b> - Norwood Farm land bounded by Berrywood Road/Sandy Lane/Weedon Road/Upton Lodge	<b>Description :</b> - Development of housing and country park.
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**Recommendation - Approval**

**Conditions to follow**

**S/2006/1655/PO**

**WARD:** Harpole and Grange

**WARD MEMBERS:** Cllr Mrs Ann Addison and Cllr Mrs Janet Eliot

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **The development proposals and background**

- 1.1 Two outline planning applications for a major development proposal known as 'Upton Lodge', located on the western edge of Northampton and adjoining the existing urban area, were submitted by joint applicants: Homes and Communities Agency (formerly English Partnerships) and Redrow Homes. The proposed development area is about 150ha in total (i.e. for both applications).
- 1.2 The first application (the subject of this report) is for development on land at 'Norwood Farm' (approx. 66ha), and proposes providing up to 781 dwellings and part of a new country park (29ha) on land within South Northamptonshire District, bounded by Berrywood Road, Sandy Lane and Weedon Road. The application forms part of the 'Upton Lodge' development proposals, and will be determined by SNC, as it falls outside the 'WNDC Urban Development Area'. Should Members be minded to approve this application, it would first need to be referred to GOEM as a 'departure' (as the site is not allocated for residential development in the Development Plan), for the Secretary of State to consider whether he wishes to call the application in or not.
- 1.3 The second application, is on adjoining land at 'Upton Lodge Farm' (approx. 84ha), and proposes providing up to 1,784 dwellings, 22,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace, a 3.8ha site for community facilities (including a new primary school), a 1,000 space 'park and ride' facility and the smaller part of a country park (7.7ha). That site is bounded by the Princess Marina Hospital to the east, St Crispins to the north and Weedon Road to the south. That application relates to land within Northampton Borough for which WNDC is the local planning authority. WNDC's Northampton Unitary Development Area (UDA) Committee resolved to delegate authority to their Director of Planning to grant permission for the application in November 2008,

subject to: it first being referred to GOEM as a 'departure' (in respect of a small part of the site, only) for the SoS to consider whether he wishes to call the matter in or not; the resolution of outstanding highway and drainage issues; the completion of a S.106 Agreement; and conditions set out in the report, as well as any additional conditions or amendments to conditions as the Director of Planning may consider necessary to secure an acceptable form of development. The permission has not been issued, to date.

- 1.4 The applicants make the case that a large extent of 'greenspace' would be retained within the development and extensive public open space is offered in mitigation in the form of a Country Park, which would be mainly within this site (within South Northants) and a much smaller part on the adjacent application site, at Upton Lodge Farm (within Northampton Borough). The adopted South Northamptonshire Local Plan allocates the site at Norwood Farm, as an area of restraint and it is regarded in policy terms as open countryside (partly within a Special Landscape Area and all within an Important Local Gap policy area).
- 1.5 In 2004, the South West District (SWD) Strategic Planning Review was approved by Northampton Borough Council as the preferred strategy for the development of the SWD (not including 'Norwood Farm' site, within South Northants). Upton Lodge is specifically included in that Review as one of six sustainable communities that will make up the Northampton SWD. Around 6,000 new homes are planned to be built in the SWD, as a whole, along with about 120 hectares of employment/industrial land. Development has already started in parts of the SWD. A total of 1900 homes have been built, or have planning permission, at Upton, Berrywood Fields and Banbury Lane. Around 1200 homes will eventually be provided at St Crispin. About 35ha of employment land has already been developed at Swan Valley and planning permission has been granted for a further 70ha at Swan Valley and Pineham.
- 1.6 Upton Lodge (including the Norwood Farm application site) and Upton Park (to the south of Weedon Road) are intended to be the next two communities in the South West District of Northampton to be brought forward on land mainly owned by the HCA. A key element of Northampton Borough's SWD Strategic Planning Review has been the development of the Cross Valley Link Road (CVLR) and the Sandy Lane Relief Road (SLRR). The SLRR has planning permission which was granted in February 2008, and the southern section of this road (within Northampton Borough) has been constructed. The remaining northern section of the SLRR, which will cross this application site (i.e. Norwood Farm), has yet to be constructed. The CVLR (now called Upton Valley Way North) was granted planning permission in December 2006 and was completed and opened to traffic in December 2009. The SLRR will link the A45 Weedon Road with Berrywood Road, and will provide one of the primary points of access into the application site whilst, at the same time, relieving traffic from the existing Sandy Lane.
- 1.7 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES) which assessed the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed development and identifies appropriate mitigation measures. The ES has been independently assessed by consultants Entec. In addition, further specific site investigations have been conducted on land stability matters.
- 1.8 Until recently, there were three principle issues outstanding; that relating to transport planning, sewage infrastructure planning and the need for an additional landscaped area or belt at the northern end of the proposed country park. The Highway Agency (HA) and Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) as the local highway authority are still working with SNC, WNDC and the applicants to address the matters relating to the impact of the development on the strategic and local road network and the need to tackle modal shift. The parties expect that these matters

will require a S.106 planning agreement to enable their resolution, alongside an area based approach to transport infrastructure planning. Discussions with the respective parties to secure delivery of this approach are near finalization, and are not considered likely to involve changes to the design and configuration of the current proposed development.

- 1.9 The Environment Agency (EA) similarly had raised concerns regarding the impact of the development on water infrastructure planning, particularly foul water treatment and transfer. In particular, the need to consider this development alongside other planned and potential developments in and around Northampton. Discussions between SNC, WNDC, the Environment Agency and Anglian Water (as the water authority) have only recently concluded, to the satisfaction of all parties, and these did not have any implications for the form and layout of the proposed development as detailed in this application.
- 1.10 One of the key functions of the proposed country park would be to provide an effective 'buffer' between all of the proposed Upton Lodge development, on the edge of Northampton, and the adjoining countryside and Harpole village, to the west. Following negotiation with the applicants, they have provided an additional plan (Ref CBB-ALX-001 October 2009) showing a northern extension to the area of the country park, so that a landscaped belt with a minimum width of 10m would continue to the Sandy Lane / Berrywood Road junction, at the northern boundary of the application site. The overall effect would be to provide a continuous parkland area along the full extent of the western boundary of the application site.
- 1.11 In the event that any matter still outstanding cannot be resolved promptly, or that the resolution of the matter results in material changes to the form of the development or its potential impacts, this application would be returned to Committee for re-consideration.

### **Description of Site**

- 1.12 The application site is approximately 66 hectares in area and lies to the west of Northampton, close to the edge of the current urban area. The boundary between Northampton and South Northamptonshire runs broadly north south through the overall site. Of the total area of 150 hectares, 84 hectares lie within the UDA for Northampton and 66 hectares within South Northamptonshire. As previously mentioned, separate applications have thus been submitted to WNDC and South Northamptonshire Council, for the respective site areas within their jurisdiction.
- 1.13 The overall Upton Lodge site is bounded by the following: to the north by Berrywood Road and the community of New Duston; to the east by areas of new housing at St Crispin and Berrywood Fields, and by Princess Marina Hospital; to the south by Weedon Road and exiting residential development at South View, and beyond this by agricultural land (proposed Upton Park development area); and to the west by further agricultural land and then the village of Harpole.
- 1.14 The application site currently comprises agricultural land and is called 'Norwood Farm', with 'Upton Lodge Farm' adjoining to the east (within Northampton). This land is crossed by a number of hedgerows, field boundaries and ditches. Crossing the middle of the site (east/west) is a public bridleway (KP16). There are no significant buildings on the site, with the only built development consisting of four co-located agricultural barns/sheds, near the centre of the site. The whole site lies on the northern flank of the Nene Valley, although the lie of the land is such that many slopes face west rather than south. No part of the site lies within the River Nene flood plain.
- 1.15 When viewed from the west, it is clear that topography plays an important role in how to plan the site, as this is a very strong feature of it. The levels change

significantly across the site with changes of some 20 metres. The cross sections submitted with the application show clearly how the proposed development is intended to use the slopes and the changing levels throughout the site.

- 1.16 The site (the subject of this application), is not allocated for development in the 1997 South Northamptonshire Local Plan (SNLP), and is not, therefore, included as part of the adjoining proposed development in the Northampton South West District, but rather is identified as an area of 'restraint' in the open countryside (Special Landscape Area/Important Local Gap) on the SNLP Proposals Map.

## **2. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 2.1 **2007:** Planning permission was granted in November 2007 by WNDC for the southern part of the Sandy Lane Relief Road (SLRR), from the Weedon Road northwards (located within NBC's administrative area). Construction of this section of the SLRR has since been completed.
- 2.2 **2008:** NCC granted Planning Permission in February 2008 for the northern part of the SLRR, from Berrywood Road southwards (located within SNC's administrative area). Work on construction of this section of the SLRR has not yet started.
- 2.3 **November 2008:** WNDC resolved to grant planning permission for the 'Upton Lodge' development (Para 1.3, above, refers), within Northampton Borough, and which may be considered 'complementary' to the application being considered here. SNC was consulted on the scheme within Northampton, and Committee responded to WNDC as follows:

That the West Northamptonshire Development Corporation be advised that South Northamptonshire Council does not object to the principle of the development proposed on this site (which is located within Northampton Borough). However, the Council requests that the application not be determined by the WNDC Planning Committee before the following matters have been adequately addressed:

- The Environment Agency does not currently regard the flood risk assessment as providing sufficient basis for understanding how any flooding and drainage issues will be effectively dealt with. Existing sewerage infrastructure is inadequate and it has not yet been adequately demonstrated how this will be addressed prior to the commencement of any development.
- A number of the transportation solutions required to enable any development, including highways, currently remain to be fully resolved.
- Members wished to indicate their strong concerns that Northamptonshire County Council have stated that secondary school provision to serve this and other nearby development is not now intended to be made within the Northampton South West District developments (i.e. Upton, Upton Lodge, Upton Park, Pineham).
- Full details regarding the level of developer contributions to support the development, including the Heads of Terms for any Section 106 legal agreement, need to be adequately addressed before the application is determined.
- There is insufficient clarity on how and where open space will be provided in this development, in the event that planning permission for the development of the country park on the neighbouring Norwood Farm site, within South Northamptonshire, is not forthcoming.

- Great care will need to be taken to ensure that any floodlighting of the proposed 'Park and Ride' facility does not spill out of the site, adversely affecting the amenity of nearby residents.
- Any pedestrian and cycle crossings of the Weedon Road, required in connection with this development, must be made completely secure and safe.

### **3. PROPOSAL**

3.1 Upton Lodge is not seen as a standalone development; it is intended to form part of the wider growth of Northampton's South West District. In particular, it is intended to build upon the developments at Upton (Phase One), and the applicants propose that it will adhere to best practice urban design principles. The application suggests that many of the same sustainability features used at Upton (Phase One) would be implemented at Upton Lodge (incl. Norwood Farm), as well as the use of design coding, to ensure a similar high standard of development.

#### **This application:**

3.2 This application is effectively for part of a proposed mixed-use urban extension, and is in outline form, with all details reserved for subsequent approval. However, the applicants have submitted an illustrative masterplan and other drawings, sections and information (incl. Urban Design & Development Principles document) as part of the Design and Access Statement, and the Environmental Statement, to indicate the likely form of the development. Alongside this proposal for up to 781 homes and a new Country Park, constituting this application, would be employment, community and education uses, a new 'park and ride' facility, and up to 1784 homes (within the adjoining site – ie not part of this application). All of these together, are intended to form a cohesive and sustainable urban extension. It is expected that 40% of the new houses would be 'affordable' homes, in accordance with SNC's policies.

3.3 The site layout (illustrated in the updated Masterplan) has been informed by the topography of the site. The applicants development principles seek to:

- Work with the landform to minimise earth moving;
- As far as possible, align new streets along the existing topography lines;
- Establish a series of connected, open water features down the hillsides to form a SUDS network;
- Locate taller structures and highest densities along lower slopes to minimize visual impact;
- Orient buildings, with large glass areas, to the south and west to take advantage of natural daylight and solar heat gain, as well as views; and
- Plant open spaces with indigenous material and street trees along the streets to help preclude erosion.

3.4 The proposed residential development has been organised into three bands of density: Low to Mid-Density, Mid-Density and Mid to High-Density. The proposed density of development varies from lowest at the top of the slopes, adjacent to existing residential development in Northampton, to highest on the lower slopes and adjacent to the primary circulation routes. The Masterplan also locates a portion of

the highest density homes and flats along a proposed site spine road where residents will have easy access to local bus services, and buildings could incorporate local shops and services on the ground floors. The other locations identified for the higher density development are alongside the SLRR and Weedon Road frontages. Buildings along these roads are intended to provide a positive 'face' to the development and serve to define the eastern boundary of the proposed new Country Park.

3.5 Illustrative plans and sections to show intended typical house designs, have been provided, and are based on the following criteria:

- Single family detached homes to match the scale of adjacent properties at the Berrywood Fields and St Crispin developments.
- Semi-detached units are shown with a footprint of 6m x 8m plus off-street garaging. The typical plot is configured with a street frontage of 10m in width and includes a 12m deep rear garden. In simple arrangements this unit type could achieve a parcel density of approx 35dph (dwellings per hectare).
- Terrace units are shown with a footprint of 6m x 8m, and would incorporate ground floor car parking within the building and/or utilise on-street parking. The typical plot is 6m in width and includes a 12m deep rear garden. This arrangement could yield a parcel development density of over 50dph.
- Higher density flats would be located along the Spine Road and the SLRR frontage. As appropriate, these buildings would incorporate convertible ground floor space that could accommodate: flats, shops, offices and/or live-work units (not currently part of the application). Car parking would be provided at the rear of the building or on the ground floor, cut into the hillside.

3.6 With regard to the mixed-use and community facilities, some of the flats to be sited along the main Spine Road will incorporate convertible ground floor space that could accommodate flats, shops, offices and/or live/work units. This traditional building form is common throughout Europe, and has recently come back into favour in the UK, as sustainable, higher density housing development is required. The Primary School and Community Facilities will be designed to a similar high standard. The facilities will be visible to passing motorists and be an effective symbol of the new community. Along with the Employment uses and some of the adjacent flats, some of these buildings are likely to feature flat roofs that could incorporate 'green-roof' technology. As with the residential uses, a Development Framework and Design Code will be prepared to guide the design of these buildings. (Note: The development described in this paragraph is within the adjoining site, and is not part of this application, but information is provided for completeness.)

3.7 The only existing buildings on the site are four sheds/barns, located near the centre of the application site, with access off Sandy Lane. Some of these farm buildings could be retained for future use (eg as a 'Resource Centre') on the proposed Country Park.

3.8 A 420-place primary school would be located as part of the mixed-use community facilities (within adjoining site – ie not part of this application), and as required by NCC Education. Secondary school provision would be made off-site at existing and proposed schools (Campion School, Bugbrooke; Dallington, Northampton and New Duston, Northampton). Developer contributions would be required for this off site provision.

- 3.9 The proposed employment area comprises 4.5ha of land and is situated towards the south-western corner of the site, adjacent to the SLRR (within adjoining site – ie not part of this application). The uses proposed are B1 (Offices) and B2 (Industrial) uses only, with no B8 (Warehouse) uses. This could deliver about 22,500 sq m of building space and could mean space for creation of up to 900 new jobs. Opposite the employment area, to the west of the SLRR, would be a proposed 4.8ha ‘park and ride’ which would provide up to 1,000 car spaces, with access via the SLRR and off the Weedon Road (within adjoining site – ie not part of this application).
- 3.10 The proposed Country Park is split between the two applications, with the majority in the SNC area, and forming part of this application. The area is extensive, 36.9ha in total, and could provide a variety of roles and spaces from formal play areas to simple parkland. A pavilion could be included to provide changing facilities for the area. This park would also act as a permanent ‘buffer’ between the proposed development and the village of Harpole, and between the ‘park and ride’ and existing Sandy Lane/South View residents.

### Intended Phasing:

- 3.11 A table showing the applicant’s indicative phasing plan is set-out at Para 3.13, below. Broadly speaking, this plan shows development beginning at the site’s northern end, and continuing southwards along the SLRR. The four phases would be as follows:

Phase One comprises the northern third of Parcel A. This phase may be accessed directly from Berrywood Road (as per the SLRR extant planning permission), so would not necessarily require the SLRR to be in place.

Phase Two comprises the southern two thirds of Parcel A. This phase would be accessed from the SLRR, with a spur taken in the vicinity of the nursery on Sandy Lane. This spur would then connect to the access from Berrywood Road serving phase one.

Phase Three comprises Parcels B and C, with access taken from a spur off the SLRR (as per the SLRR extant planning permission) in the vicinity of the Norwood Farm barns.

Phase Four comprises Parcels D and E, using the same access provided for phase three. The intention is to connect this access road through to Upton Lodge, where it would join the spine road near the local centre. Should Upton Lodge not be delivered, or not be ready in time, the access road would need to connect back to the SLRR in the vicinity of the bridleway.

- 3.12 Indicative start and end dates for each phase are given below:

<b>Phase One</b>	110 - 140 dwellings	2012 - 2015
<b>Phase Two</b>	220 - 280 dwellings	2012 - 2017
<b>Phase Three</b>	55 - 75 dwellings	2015 - 2016
<b>Phase Four</b>	220 - 280 dwellings	2015 – 2020
<b>Total</b>	<b>605 - 775 dwellings</b>	<b>2012 - 2020</b>

- 3.13 The delivery and timing assume there would be two house builders on site. In addition, the phasing strategy takes into account that drainage will need to be provided from the south northwards. As such, advance drainage infrastructure will need to be provided on the southern part of the site. This approach has been agreed with the Environment Agency, who have recommended a condition requesting details of this infrastructure at the reserved matters stage.

## **Supporting Documents:**

3.14 The planning application comprises or is supported by the following documents:

- Environmental Statement, Technical Appendices and Non-Technical Summary (October 2006)
- Planning Statement (October 2006)
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (October 2006)
- Transport Assessment and Travel Plan - Vol. 1, 2 & 3 (October 2006)
- Statement of Community Involvement (October 2006)
- Phase I Geo-Environmental Audit (October 2006)
- Design and Access Statement (January 2007)
- Sequential Test (February 2007)
- Health Impact Assessment (October 2007)
- Technical Note on Open Space (November 2007)
- Urban Design & Development Principles (March 2008)
- Site Stability Assessment Report (March 2008)
- Revised Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy (March 2008)
- Energy Statement (March 2008)
- Waste Audit and Waste Management Facilities Strategy (March 2008)
- Ground Investigation – Final Report (June 2008).

In addition, the following documents were subsequently submitted:

### *Ground Investigation Reports:*

Norwood Farm Land - June 2008

St Crispins West - June 2008

Upton Lodge and Sandy Lane - April 2008

### *Halcrow Slope Stability Reports:*

Norwood Farm Stability Assessment - May 2008

St Crispins West Site Stability Assessment Report - July 2008

Upton Lodge Site Stability Assessment Report - March 2008

- Revised Flood Risk Assessment - March 2008
- Upton Lodge Sequential Test Exercise - February 2007
- Energy Audit - March 2008
- Waste Audit - March 2008
- Health Impact Assessment - October 2007
- Open Space Requirements - November 2007
- Revised Site Masterplan - March 2008 and October 2009
- Supplementary Landscape Proposals Plan – October 2009
- Norwood Farm Surface Water Drainage Strategy Assessment – May 2009
- Upton Lodge/Norwood Farm Transport Assessment - February 2010
- Upton Lodge/Norwood Farm Framework Travel Plan - February 2010
- Norwood Farm Traffic Noise Analysis – January 2010
- Various written responses to consultation responses, from applicants' consultancy team.

These documents have gone through further consultation and the various comments made have been taken into consideration. As the report indicates there may be further comments to take into account from the Highways Agency/NCC Highways, and negotiations with those organisations are now substantially complete. From representations made further work has been done on the highway

matters and specifically in relation to land stability, which has been the subject of three further reports from March to July 2008. Those reports have been given careful consideration and consultations undertaken. Any further representations have been taken into account.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 ANGLIAN WATER: Initially advised that there was insufficient capacity in the sewerage network, which would require a further detailed analysis of upgrades required to drain the site. However, the developers would, in any event, need to agree a drainage strategy with Anglian Water before any development could commence.

*Note:* Further discussions have taken place between Anglian Water and the applicants, and this matter has been resolved. Anglian Water have confirmed that WNDP commissioned a water cycle strategy, which provides a plan and programme of water services infrastructure implementation, and includes WNDP taking a lead on requisitioning a new foul sewer to serve the Dallington Grange, Upton Lodge (including Norwood Farm) and Upton Park proposed developments.

Anglian Water further stated that to achieve the Government's key aim of sustainable development, infrastructure needs to be in place alongside new development and combined with resource efficiency measures. Development proposed will take place over many years and by several different developers, and unless drainage and water infrastructure is fully funded and implemented in a timely manner, this could adversely affect the pace of growth or lead to environmental damage.

Reconsultation (March 2010): Anglian Water have confirmed that, having examined the additional documents submitted by the Applicants, the surface water drainage scheme relates to a SUDS scheme, which is not their area of responsibility or part of an Anglian Water public surface water system, and therefore have no comments to make.

*Note:* An appropriate 'Grampian' condition to ensure provision of the necessary SW and FW infrastructure to serve the development, should be attached to any permission granted.

- 4.2 BRITISH GAS TRANSCO: No response received.
- 4.3 BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY: No response received.
- 4.4 BROCKWATCH: No response received.
- 4.5 COUNCIL FOR THE PROTECTION OF RURAL ENGLAND: No response received.
- 4.6 CYCLING TOURING CLUB: No response received.
- 4.7 EAST MIDLANDS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY: Generally support the proposals, in respect of both the employment and housing development proposed, and commend that WNDP and SNC should ensure that adequate infrastructure requirements are addressed in good time, and that the whole development helps create a sustainable and integrated community.
- 4.8 NATURAL ENGLAND: Have stated that they are satisfied that no designated nature conservation sites would be impacted upon, as a result of the development proposed, and that the site is dominated by large arable fields and improved pasture, which are of low biodiversity value. There are no objections provided that the following issues are addressed by way of condition / obligation:

- Ecological management plan to be submitted and approved before any development begins.
- An agreement regarding future management and maintenance of the country park.
- Method statement regarding works to mitigate any undue adverse effects on badgers and bats to be submitted and approved.
- Removal or destruction of vegetation or buildings not to be undertaken during March to August, to protect breeding birds.

4.9 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY: The EA have withdrawn their initial objection over concerns over flood risk, following the submission of a revised Flood Risk Assessment in 2008. The EA have confirmed that the FRA and the suggested mitigation measures are proportionate to the scale, nature and location of development. However in the EA's letter of 24th October 2008, they maintained their objection due to a lack of a water cycle strategy. They sought further evidence to demonstrate that the development would be served by adequate water infrastructure and will not increase the risk of pollution or flooding.

*Note:* The applicants responded to the EA's objection regarding water cycle infrastructure. They advised that it is legally the responsibility of Anglian Water (AW) to provide the necessary infrastructure for the new development. The applicant has met with AW who have expressed their satisfaction with the proposal and confirmed that the sewage treatment capacity needed can be accommodated. AW will require improved sewer capacity to connect the development to the Northampton network and this would be prior to the development being occupied, but not prior to consent being granted. It is considered that this information should be sufficient to alleviate the EA's concerns, and further formal comments have since been provided by both the EA and AW to confirm this.

The EA's final concern related to the increase in the number of dwellings proposed and the increased demand for sewerage infrastructure. Again the applicant has met with AW and been advised that the increase in the capacity of the sewage treatment works required is likely to be minimal.

Reconsultation (March 2010): Following submission of additional information and reports in respect of drainage, the EA have withdrawn their previous objections, and now comment as follows:

The EA considers that the Halcrow Norwood Farm Surface Water Drainage Strategy, dated June 2010, has been undertaken in line with Annex E of Planning Policy Statement 25 'Development and Flood Risk' (PPS25), and that it is considered appropriate for the scale and nature of the proposed development. Accordingly, we are prepared to **withdraw** our previous objection, subject to the imposition of the following five conditions on any subsequent planning permission granted:

**Condition 1:** No building works which comprise the erection of a building required to be served by water services shall commence until details of a scheme, including phasing and future management and maintenance arrangements, for the provision of mains foul water drainage has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be implemented prior to the occupation of any buildings within the relevant phase(s) of the development.

**Reason:** To prevent flooding, pollution and detriment to public amenity and biodiversity through provision of suitable water infrastructure.

In order to satisfy the above condition, an adequate scheme would need to be submitted demonstrating that there is (or will be prior to occupation) sufficient

infrastructure capacity existing for the connection, conveyance, treatment and disposal of quantity and quality of water within proposed phasing of development. A review may be required depicting how the infrastructure operates within environmental limits and in light of forecast demand for these facilities.

**Condition 2:** Prior to the submission of Reserved Matters, a scheme for the provision, implementation, ownership and maintenance of the surface water drainage for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is occupied. The scheme shall also include:

- Full detailed surface water calculations to ensure adequate surface water drainage facilities on site;
- An assessment of overland flood flows; and
- Details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion.

**Reason:** To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, improve habitat and amenity, and ensure future maintenance of these.

**Condition 3:** All reserved matters application shall be submitted with a detailed (Stage 2) FRA, submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The detailed FRA for the individual sites/land parcels shall, as a minimum:

- demonstrate that the proposed development is compliant with the recommendations and constraints detailed within the outline/Stage 1 FRA; and
- include a Certificate of Compliance issued and authorised by a suitably qualified engineer, to demonstrate that the detailed FRA conforms to the strategy, constraints and parameters set out in the outline/Stage 1 FRA.

**Reason:** To ensure that future proposed developments comply with the strategy, constraints and parameters set out in the outline/Stage 1 FRA.

**Condition 4:** Prior to any development on the site as a whole, a phasing strategy shall be completed and submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The strategy shall detail the timing and phasing of the proposed development in relation to the provision and implementation of surface water runoff mitigation measures. The strategy shall be implemented as approved unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure that any proposed development does not increase flood risk whilst under construction.

**Condition 5:** Prior to the commencement of development approved by this planning permission (or such other date or stage in development as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority), a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority. That scheme shall include all of the following elements unless specifically excluded, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

1. A desk study identifying:
  - all previous uses
  - potential contaminants associated with those uses
  - a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways and receptors
  - potentially unacceptable risks arising from contamination at the site.

2. A site investigation scheme, based on (1) to provide information for an assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.
3. The results of the site investigation and risk assessment (2) and a method statement based on those results giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken.
4. A verification report on completion of the works set out in (3) confirming the remediation measures that have been undertaken in accordance with the method statement and setting out measures for maintenance, further monitoring and reporting.
5. Any changes to these agreed elements require the express consent of the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** To ensure that any potential sources of contamination present on site are adequately investigated and addressed with respect to the risk posed to controlled waters (including any risk that may be associated with SUDS).

As you are aware the discharge of planning conditions rests with the Local Planning Authority. It is, therefore, essential that you are satisfied that the proposed draft condition meets the requirements of Circular 11/95 'Use of Conditions in Planning Permission'. Please notify us immediately if you are unable to apply our suggested conditions, as we may need to tailor our advice accordingly.

- 4.10 HIGHWAYS AGENCY: The HA's initial review of the Transport Assessment (TA) indicated that trip generation from the development proposed was likely to be in excess of 2000 vph anticipated at peak periods. The TA predicts that this would have a significant impact on the M1 at Jct 15A and Jct 16, and that these junctions do not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the development traffic. Further, no mitigation measures were identified in the TA, which was incomplete, and the HA did not have sufficient information to make a substantive response.

*Note:* The applicants' consultants have responded to the above and the HA have commented further that an improvement will be required at Jct 16 in order to safely accommodate traffic from the wider Northamptonshire growth, particularly Daventry and Northampton. The impact from Upton Lodge (incl Norwood Farm) would be small and an improvement would not be required as a result of that development.

With regard to the Queen Eleanor Interchange, the HA are supportive of any measures that will reduce the impact of development traffic. The Queen Eleanor Interchange is currently being assessed as part of the HA's A45 study. This will identify what improvements need to be undertaken to the A45 corridor in order to safely accommodate future levels of traffic. A contribution to the resulting corridor strategy may also be required either financially through an appropriate 'ringmaster' or physically through the provision of part of the overall scheme. In any event, the agency may require that any permission granted for Upton Lodge be conditioned against the A45 improvements.

Regarding Jct 15a, discussions are ongoing around modelled outputs. In summary, the HA have advised that they have no objection in principle, but that there are three principal areas for their consideration:

- M1, Jct 15a - it has been agreed that improvements to the south bound on-slip would be based on DMRB criteria rather than outputs from the VISSIM model. The on-slip will still need remodelling.
- M1, Jct 16 – improvement will be required in order to safely accommodate traffic from wider Northamptonshire growth and there are discussions with WNDC

regarding the cumulative effect of development and they may have a view on possible contributions to the wider strategic highway improvement costs.

- Queen Eleanor Interchange – HA are supportive of any measures that will reduce the impact of development traffic.

Reconsultation (March 2010): The following further response was received from the HA, on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010:

You will be aware from my previous letter of May 2010, that we have been engaged in ongoing discussions with the applicants over the last few months which have been productive and which have led to resolution of a number of matters. At the time of writing, whilst we are not yet in a position to formally lift our existing holding direction, we are nonetheless confident that the outstanding matters are capable of resolution and are unlikely, in our opinion, to compromise the overall planning outcome in this case.

### **Access Management Strategy**

The Highways Agency has now completed its study of the A45/M1. Arising from this, we have also now developed an Access Management Strategy which is specifically intended to enable this, and other committed development sites in Northampton (including the wider Upton Lodge Masterplan area) to be satisfactorily accommodated on the SRN.

The principles of the Access Management Strategy have been shared with NCC, WNDC, the JPU and other partners and we are currently in the process of refining final details, including preliminary junction designs and relevant cost information to enable the Strategy to be completed. Once the Strategy is complete, this will be used to guide our responses to development proposals in and around Northampton and provide a consistent and clear reference for all developers and planning authorities in the area.

It is also envisaged that the Strategy will be embodied within the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the area and that, as such it will be integral to any future decisions in relation to the allocation of planning obligations, tariffs or CIL provisions, for example. We anticipate working in partnership with the District Councils, WNDC and NCC in this regard to enable the timely delivery of the defined infrastructure.

In the case of Norwood Farm, we have identified that the delivery of this site, as part of the wider Masterplan area, will require the whole of the Access Management Strategy to be in place, which includes specific improvements to 7 junctions along the M1 and A45.

Accordingly we are likely to be seeking the imposition of a 'Grampian' type of condition which restricts occupation of the site until such time as these improvements have been constructed and are capable of being fully operational. We consider that such a condition would be in accordance with circular 11/95 and be an entirely appropriate means of enabling this development to proceed.

At this stage, therefore we are seeking to conclude the A45/M1 Access Management Strategy at the earliest opportunity, which we anticipate could be towards the end of September. We will be seeking endorsement of the Strategy from the relevant planning and highways authorities at this time and will thereafter, anticipate being in a position to direct suitable conditions and to lift our existing holding direction on this application.

### **Framework Travel Plan (FTP)**

We have worked closely with the applicants over the past few weeks to provide input to a draft S.106 Agreement. We are now content that the agreement will incorporate detailed provisions for travel plan preparation, co-ordination and monitoring, including ongoing engagement with the Highways Agency to assist in its delivery. We are also content that adequate mechanisms have been incorporated to enable modal shift targets to be met and, in circumstances where these are not being achieved, for the implementation of additional 'Failsafe Measures'.

## Summary

In summary, subject to completion of the Highways Agency's A45/M1 Access Management Strategy and the imposition of a related Grampian condition in respect of the delivery of this Strategy prior to occupation – and also the completion of a S.106 Agreement incorporating the draft terms recently agreed with the applicants in relation to Travel Plans and Failsafe Measures, the Highways Agency are hopeful that the existing holding direction might be lifted.

(Note: On the basis of the above response, any recommendation for approval of this application should include a requirement that the HA's TR110 Holding Direction would first have to be lifted, before any permission could be issued.)

- 4.11 HARPOLE PARISH COUNCIL: Raise concerns about the effect the proposed development could have on the rural nature of Harpole village, particularly its rural setting and environment. They are however pleased to see that comments made about the Sandy Lane Relief Road and proposed country park have been taken into account, and agree about the importance of maintaining a 'strategic gap' to act as a buffer between the proposed development and Harpole village, that is referred to regularly by the applicants in their submissions.

Consider that too little attention has been paid to how the appearance and effect of the development on the special landscape area (within South Northants) and the wider Nene Valley will be adequately mitigated. Such mitigation should include retention of existing features (e.g. hedgerows), wherever possible, as well as extensive new planting (e.g. semi-mature trees). The long-term management of the country park and landscaped areas is of great concern too, and should be properly secured through a S.106 legal agreement.

Harpole PC does not see the need for more sports pitches, a pavilion or playing fields, given those existing at Harpole, Kislingbury, Upton and Duston. They are, however, supportive of proposed provision of youth facilities in the local centre, as well as the 'downgrading' of existing Sandy Lane, and are concerned that adequate provision should be made to mitigate run-off of rain water, as well as increases in noise levels, air pollution and light pollution, emanating from the new development.

Reconsultation (March 2010): No response received.

- 4.12 KISLINGBURY PARISH COUNCIL: Strongly object to the application as the PC sees the proliferation of an insidious urban sprawl, which will engulf villages within South Northants, such as Kislingbury and Harpole, and continue until it reaches the M1 motorway. Raise issues regarding the overall impact of the development on the natural beauty of the Nene Valley, and note that the Environment Agency objects to the application as not being fully compliant with PPS 25: Development and Flood Risk. The PC also does not consider that the flood model used has been based on the correct levels, which they consider to be the 1947 flood.

Reconsultation (March 2010): No response received.

- 4.13 BUGBROOKE PARISH COUNCIL: Have no objections, in principle, and comment as follows:

Proposal appears well thought-out with a good balance of housing, community facilities, green space, and transport links. 781 dwellings on this site would reduce pressure for (piece-meal) development on other villages in the district, which might not have the adequate infrastructure.

- 4.14 UPPER HEYFORD PARISH COUNCIL: No response received.
- 4.15 ROTHERSTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL: No response received.
- 4.16 DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL (N'hampton Borough): No response received.
- 4.17 UPTON PARISH COUNCIL (N'hampton Borough): Wish to raise strong objection to the development proposal, as a whole, for the following reasons:

- In the original plans a 'green corridor' was shown stretching from St Crispins to the Weedon Road, but this does not appear on the submitted plans.

- The increased numbers of houses, plus education and employment facilities etc, would result in a higher flood risk into the river, with the increased run-off of rainwater.

Reconsultation (March 2010): No response received.

- 4.18 NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL: The consultation was considered by NBC's Planning Committee at a meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008. This resulted in the following comments being made:

That the Council raise significant objection to this application in that significant issues remain outstanding and unresolved, which will have a marked impact on the success of the new community if not appropriately addressed at this outline stage. The following are the principle issues that are currently outstanding (not exhaustive):

- There is insufficient clarity on the extent of recreation space that will be provided in the development in reasonable proximity to residents, in particular local and neighbourhood play and playing pitches.

- The Environment Agency does not regard the flood risk assessment as a sufficient basis for understanding how flooding issues will be effectively dealt with. Existing sewerage infrastructure is inadequate and will not be up to the required standard prior to the commencement of the development. (*Note: EA and AW have since withdrawn their objections*).

- Transportation solutions, including highways, are unresolved.

- NCC have identified that insufficient primary school provision has been identified and there is also uncertainty about future secondary school provision as part of the southwest district. (*Note: NCC have since confirmed that they are satisfied with the primary school provision proposed, and have clearly indicated how they anticipate future secondary school provision would be made.*)

- There is insufficient detail of the level of Section 106 contributions to support the development, including whether a standard tariff will apply or the traditional approach will apply. Heads of Terms also need to be agreed.

- A waste audit is required. (*Note: A satisfactory waste audit has since been submitted.*)

It is therefore considered that it would be premature, to grant consent for the

proposal.

Reconsultation (March 2010): No response received.

4.19 DAVENTRY DISTRICT COUNCIL: No response received.

4.20 WEST NORTHANTS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION: No response received.

Reconsultation (March 2010): No response received.

4.21 NCC – GROWTH MANAGEMENT (Planning Policy): The County Council wishes to ensure sufficient services are provided within areas of new development, such as is proposed here. It is as important that these services are located and configured in a sustainable way that fully integrates with neighbouring existing and planned development. NCC has also made comments on a number of key areas, as follows:

- Health Impact Assessment required. (*Note*: This has since been submitted, and the PCT have confirmed that they are satisfied with it – refer Para 4.35, below).

- School provision – a development of this size will generate an overall need for primary school provision of 630 places - 420 to serve the Upton Lodge development (and 210 to serve Norwood Farm). A developer contribution will be required towards additional secondary school places.

- NCC has a statutory duty to ensure adequate pre-school childcare facilities and further discussions will be required regarding this issue.

- Fire & Rescue service is investigating the potential impact of the proposal.

- Northamptonshire Police will be seeking contributions, as a requirement for large developments, and details of these have been forwarded to the applicants.

- Waste Management - The proposal is currently contrary to the NCC Waste Local Plan and a Waste Audit has not been submitted as required by the adopted SPD. (*Note*: The Waste Audit has since been submitted (March 2008) and is considered satisfactory by NCC and raises no issues or implications for the Environmental Statement.)

- Library – A financial contribution will be required from the developers either to provide a facility on-site or to improve existing local and central library facilities. S.106 contributions will be required to support library provision.

- Public Art – A financial contribution towards the provision of some form of public art should be made by the developers. It is recommended that an Artist be included in the development design team.

- Residential areas should include areas of innovative playspace.

4.22 NCC – RIGHTS OF WAY: Recent response received, as follows:

I attach a working copy of the Definitive Map for the Bridleways affected. KP16 is the main one crossing the Norwood Farm site.

Please ensure that these are not incorporated into the street network, ref DoE Circ 1993/Annex D. I am happy to see from the masterplan that the bridleway routes have been retained, however I am a little concerned that these may be along a road network?

Does the park and ride facility allow for cyclists to park and cycle, this should be encouraged as part of the travel plan at the reserved matters stage.

It doesn't look like anything needs diverting but temporary closures (under S14 of Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984) will be required during construction of development and potential improvements for KP16, with alternative routes being available where possible. Can you confirm if they are proposing to improve the bridleways surfaces? Such improvements can be dealt with at later stages with drawings.

Awarded widths are as follows:

1. KP16 is 20 foot wide
2. LB1 is 3m and is part subject to previous Diversion Order in 2005, I would recommend the improvements widen where possible within this development.
3. LB8 has no awarded width, but would required 3m surfaced track for cyclists within a 5m corridor, which includes grass to 1 each side of the hard surface.

The standard advisory comments are:

With respect to construction works to be carried out in close proximity to and using Public Rights of Way as access, please note the following standard requirements:-

- The routes must be kept clear, unobstructed, safe for users, and no structures or material placed on the right of way at all times.
- There must be no interference or damage to the surface of the right of way as a result of the construction. Any damage to the surface of the path must be made good by the applicant, specifications for any repair or surfacing work must be approved by this office, under s131 HA1980.
- As a result of the development the Rights of Way, Bridleways KP16, LB1 and LB8 need to be closed by applying for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order. An application form for such an order is available via Northamptonshire County Council website, a fee is payable for this service and a period of six weeks notice is required. Please follow the link below:  
[www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/transport/row/legal/pages/temptros.aspx](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/transport/row/legal/pages/temptros.aspx)
- Any new path furniture (e.g. gates preferred over stile) needs to be approved in advance with the Access Development Officer, and standard examples can be provided.

At the reserved matters stages I would like to ensure that:

With reference to the supplementary planning guidance: Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire, NCC would like to make the following comments with regard to design. We would like to suggest a post and rail fence up to a height of 1.2m along the gardens of the new properties, which border the public bridleways KP16, LB1 and LB8, in relation to safety issues of enclosed Public Rights of Way between houses. It is best practice that streets and spaces should be well overlooked, lit and busy in order to reduce crime and access requirements comply with Disability Discrimination Act 2005 regulations.

Providing enough convenient and secure cycle parking at people's homes, schools, businesses and other locations for both residents and visitors is critical to increasing the use of cycles and achieving the 20% modal shift target published in the Local Transport Plan 2006/7 -2010/11. Please refer to the SPG on Parking for the recommended standard level of cycle parking provision for new properties.

This response is without prejudice to any Public Right of Way which may exist across the site, but whose presence is not recorded on the County Council's

## Definitive Map and Statement.

- 4.23 NCC – TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS: Initially expressed concerns because NCC was of the understanding that, in agreement with WNDC, SNC and the developers, that this application (and the associated Upton Lodge Farm application) was deferred pending a resolution regarding the growth areas for Northampton. This would allow for a more robust decision to be made in respect of highway infrastructure. Should this not be the case a package of transportation measures would be required in order for the development to proceed.

NCC have confirmed that this site (and the associated Upton Lodge Farm site) were not included in the original Multi-Modal Study carried out for Northampton, and that a package of transportation measures would be required to enable any development to proceed. This should include the following developer contributions:

- Provision of the SLRR (approx contribution £10million) (*Note: Section of SLRR within Northampton Borough constructed.*)
- The Cross Valley Link Road (£5million) (*Note: Now complete and open to traffic.*)
- Northern orbital route (SLIN) (£5million)
- Weedon Road bus corridor (£2million)
- Provision of new and extended bus services to support modal shift (£2million)

NCC further states that the total figure for the above (approx £24million) is broadly in line with the cumulative figure that would be sought in support of a development of 3,500 dwellings, and is set against the suggested transport infrastructure element of the 'standard charge' currently being considered by WNDC. NCC also expects to receive a comprehensive travel plan detailing the applicants' proposals towards achieving a 20% modal shift, as required by NCC's Strategy for Growth Policy. Highway Officer further comments that the applicants' consultants have been in discussion with the HA and NCC regarding supplementary transport information to finalise their consultation requirements. These requirements for Upton Lodge (incl. Norwood Farm) include the use of the new NCC multi-modal traffic model to determine traffic flows and junction capacity assessment for the development and impact on the local network. These flows will also be plugged into a separate HA model. The timing of the completion of work is subject to the completion/verification by both NCC and the HA of their models in order to enable the work to be complete. This work may take time, two to three months. EP (now HCA) has agreed to fund this additional work. Final discussions are taking place on the Travel Plan, which is already at an advanced stage.

Reconsultation (March 2010): No response received.

- 4.24 NCC – EDUCATION: Primary School Provision – A 420-place primary school (approx. 2ha) will be required to serve the adjoining Upton Lodge Farm site, within the Borough, with a further 210-places (approx 1.1ha) to serve the Norwood Farm site. Funding for the site and building costs will be required.

Secondary School Provision - Although a site for a secondary school is 'safeguarded' on the proposed Upton Park development site nearby (to the south of the Weedon Road), it is intended that provision to serve the Upton Lodge (incl. Norwood Farm) development will in fact be made in a proposed school at the Dallington Grange proposed development. In view of this, there will not be any requirement for a secondary school on the Upton Lodge site. However, a developer contribution towards funding the additional secondary school places that will be needed, will be required.

Childcare Provision - As of 2008, NCC has also had responsibility for ensuring an

adequate supply of childcare facilities for preschool and school-aged children. Some of this will be provided at the primary school(s). However, it is likely that other childcare services will be required, and further discussion between NCC and the developers is needed, to ensure adequate childcare places will be available.

- 4.25 SNC – PLANNING POLICY: Initial comments made in 2007 are now out of date, and a revised response has been made (see ‘reconsultation’, below).

Reconsultation (March 2010): In Development Plan Policy terms the application lies in open countryside and as such the proposed development needs to be assessed against ‘saved’ Policy H6 and EV2 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan. These policies state that development in the open countryside should be necessary for the reasons specified or involve a conversion; this application fails to fulfil the exceptions in these policies.

However, the Local Plan is ageing and in terms of housing requirements was superseded by the Sub Regional Strategy for Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area (part of the East Midlands Regional Plan). This set out a minimum annual requirement of 330 dwellings to be completed between 2001 and 2021 as well as a figure for the Northamptonshire Implementation Area that was aimed at meeting the growth requirements of Northampton. The Minister has now revoked the RSS including the housing targets. It is no longer a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. More information on the implications of this is set out below.

Whilst the revocation of the RSS removes the current housing targets in the RSS, advice provided to Councils from the Government’s Chief Planning Officer makes clear that the requirement for a five-year and 15 year housing land supply remains, and that the calculation of revised housing targets should be evidence based. In addition the Government has made very firm statements that it expects local authorities to cater for housing growth which it considers to be an important national issue. In the Minister’s view the inability to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land remains a relevant and important consideration in determining planning applications and appeals.

Local Planning Authorities will now be able to identify an appropriate annual housing requirement; but this will need to be robust, evidenced and defensible at appeal. The advice provided considers that this should be achieved through the LDF examination process.

The advice considers that local authorities may base revised housing targets on the level of provision submitted to the original Regional Spatial Strategy examination (Option 1 targets), supplemented by more recent information as appropriate. There are no ‘Option 1’ figures for Northamptonshire because the RSS housing targets were derived through the MKSM national growth area identified in the Sustainable Communities White Paper 2003 and subsequently the MKSM Study (2005). For this area the MKSM Study figures are the equivalent to ‘Option 1’ figures. For South Northamptonshire these are 330 dwellings per annum. The MKSM Study has also been revoked as part of the development plan.

At its meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup> 2010 Cabinet agreed that in the absence of robust revised housing targets for South Northamptonshire, and until such time that these revised figures have been prepared and agreed through the preparation of the Core Strategy, this Council would continue to provide for a housing target of 330 dwellings per annum based on the figure set out in the revoked RSS.

The requirement also remains within Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) to ensure a five-year supply of housing land within the District and this is a material consideration in the determination of this application. The 2009/2010 South

Northamptonshire Council Housing Land Availability Study shows a 4.1 - year supply of housing land. The study identifies those sites which are available, achievable and suitable for housing within the next 5 years (2010 – 2015). These identified sites include remaining allocated housing sites, sites with existing planning permission, other sites identified as being suitable for housing within documents approved by the Council and an allowance for windfalls. In April 2010 there was a shortfall of 326 dwellings.

Although the NIA was never defined in an LDF document, before the revocation of the RSS and MKSM SRS; for monitoring purposes it was agreed that most housing commitments on the edge of Northampton, but within SNC, formed part of meeting the NIA housing requirement set out in the RSS. However, the revocation of the RSS and MKSM SRS means that the NIA and its housing requirement no longer exists. It therefore follows that the NIA should not be referred to or used in the calculation of any new housing targets. Accordingly the issue of housing supply will need to be considered at district level.

The Council has argued at a planning Inquiry (August 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>) that housing approved within the administrative boundary of South Northamptonshire District must now be used in meeting its own requirement. It was argued that figures can no longer count towards Northampton Borough Council's figure as they are in this Council's administrative area and the NIA does not exist. If there is a need for joint working in the future between this Council and Northampton Borough Council (NBC) in respect of housing provision, then this will be done by agreement and co-operation and not by imposition as was the case with the RSS. Time will be needed to both determine new locally based housing targets and the implications thereof for the future planning of the area. This argument is due to be repeated before a second inspector at a second Inquiry on August 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 2010. In the meantime the approach set out in this response is considered reasonable and the only appropriate arrangement.

Clearly there are implications arising from the decision to revoke the RSS, and the consequential removal of the NIA from the Development Plan, on this Council's five year supply of housing land. This is set out below.

The latest Five-Year Housing Land Supply Report published by the Council was in June 2010 with a base date of May 2010. This showed the Council as having a 4.1 - year supply of housing land. It should be noted that the appellant at both the inquiries has questioned this figure and these issues are also being considered by the Planning Inspectorate.

The May 2010 Report did not include any sites that have approval for housing land as these were considered to lie within the NIA and should therefore contribute to the NIA housing target. As has already been stated the NIA no longer exists and the land therefore reverts back to meeting this Council's target that in the interim continues to be 330 dwellings per annum.

The following sites are affected:

S/2007/0813/PO	Wootton Fields	300
08/0208/DCNWS	Grange Park Saxon Avenue	450
	Sub total	750
		Pending:

S2006/1655/PO	Norwood Farm (781)	781
	Total	1531

There is no certainty that all of these will be developed within the next five years. Based on the phasing plan supplied by the applicants for Norwood Farm, some 275 dwellings could be developed within the next five years. It is estimated that 225 could come forward from Wootton Fields and 320 of the Grange Park (Saxon Avenue) (these are the figures used in the current NBC five - year housing land requirement, where these sites can currently be found).

This results in 545 dwellings that can now be included in the SNC five - year supply calculation from committed sites.

By including the two committed sites the Council would have a 5.5 - year supply of housing land based on the current housing target of 330 dwellings per annum. Whilst this is over the minimum five - year requirement it is important to note that the need to have a five - year housing requirement is a rolling process and it will be important that it is sustained over time. There is a need for some 30 new dwellings to come forward every month to sustain the supply. Also it is still unclear as to what the new 'locally derived' housing figure for South Northamptonshire will be. The only certainty is that there will be a housing requirement in the future.

Clearly the outcome of the appeals mentioned previously, will be a critical factor in how the Council will then need to approach IRHP applications. It is understood that the decisions on the appeals will be made available in approximately two months time. If the above housing calculations are accepted, then the IRHP can be revoked and planning policy will revert to the Local Plan. If it is not proven then the Council will need to continue with the IRHP for the short-term at least, until it has secured an adequate supply of housing land. Either way the approval of the Norwood Farm site would contribute to the housing supply, and further reduce the Council's need to rely on the IRHP.

If the Norwood Farm application were to be approved then this would make a significant contribution to this Council's housing requirement either now, if the Planning Inspectorate support the Council's case, or in the future once a revised locally based housing figure is derived and agreed.

In policy terms the Norwood Farm application is considered to in a sustainable location as it forms part of a larger development proposal within Northampton Borough and provides for a strong and permanent green wedge in the form of a country park. It will have less of an impact on existing communities than some of those developments currently being considered in villages.

In Policy terms the application is supported.

- 4.26 SNC – STRATEGIC HOUSING: Initial comments made in 2007 are now out of date, and a revised response will be made (see 'reconsultation', below).

Reconsultation (March 2010): Response awaited and will be provided in the Committee Updates or at the Meeting.

- 4.27 SNC - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: Generally support the proposal provided appropriate safeguarding conditions are imposed. Comments primarily relate to the development within the South Northamptonshire District (ie Norwood Farm). However, the close proximity of the 'park and ride' and employment land in Northampton Borough to existing and proposed sensitive receptors within the district, necessitates making observations regarding the whole scheme.

The submitted Environmental Statement rightly identifies contaminated land, noise and air quality as potential areas of concern. The actual location of proposed residential and other sensitive developments in relation to the approved Sandy Lane Relief Road and the existing Weedon Road will determine how significant the impact is. The master plan appears to generally avoid the adjoining of incompatible land-uses so inherently provides a reasonable environment for future occupiers.

#### Air Quality

Air quality has been considered and there are no observations regarding this issue.

#### Noise

The baseline survey was conducted during August 2006. The noise climate during school holidays is not characteristic of the predominant remainder of the year. Therefore, predictions could be under-estimated. However, it is accepted that the predominately rural setting is unlikely to have significant seasonal variation in its existing noise climate, so overall do not object to the reliability of the data. It is recognised that development along Sandy Lane Relief Road and Weedon Road could be adversely affected by traffic. A mitigation scheme is needed to protect the amenity of future occupants in these areas. The mitigation measures will only provide protection within the homes (and school and community facilities) so the use of garden areas will not have the same level of protection. The scheme for SLRR should include protection measures such as bunds, fences, screening and sacrificial buffer zones (such as amenity areas, landscaping etc) but the extent of this will depend on how much was known about this development when considering SLRR. It is therefore, incumbent of the applicants for this proposal to properly consider the effect of the measures with the SLRR approved scheme and how they can complement that with their own scheme.

A condition is needed for land development parcels A,B,D,H and I, (and N,O and the community/school area in NBC) requiring prior approval of noise mitigation measures to afford the necessary protection of amenity to the anticipated noise climate (day and night).

#### Contamination

Preliminary surveys have identified potentially contaminative former uses of the land as well as naturally occurring arsenic and radon. Standard conditions relating to the approval and implementation of a remediation scheme related to the sensitivity of the specific end use of the land, validation of remediation and a final report should be imposed. Radon protection measures should be addressed through Building Regulations but the LPA may consider it prudent to impose a condition requiring the submission and approval of a scheme, as proposed by the applicants. Particular care has to be given to any integral garages. Should they not be provided with radon protection then subsequent conversion to domestic occupation will have to be prohibited by way of condition. Similarly it is prudent that permitted development rights are lifted for conservatories and extensions in the affected area to control the risk of future alterations compromising existing protection measures or not providing the same standard of protection as the main dwelling.

#### Light

This gets limited attention in the Landscape and Amenity chapter. Whilst the layout and design does minimise the impact of the development and provide some protection of amenity to occupants I recommend that a condition is added in relation to the park and ride so that the lighting scheme is submitted and approved by the LPA. It should also be 'tested' after installation to ensure light spillage is minimised. This not only provides protection to existing development at South View (in SNC

area) but also ensures impact on biodiversity is minimal. There is increasing scientific evidence that large areas of artificial light interfere with nocturnal fauna as well as potentially causing nuisance to residents. The scheme can also ensure energy efficiency is properly considered.

### Waste

Council guidance on storage and access for waste collection should be considered in the subsequent detailed schemes for development. This is to ensure there is adequate provision for separation of wastes in the home and suitable storage areas for communal and commercial areas without affecting the amenity of adjoining properties. Road schemes need to be sufficient to allow safe and unhindered access for waste collection vehicles.

Reconsultation (March 2010): Response refers to consultation on the revised transport and drainage assessment for the proposed development of housing and Country Park at Norwood Farm land nr Harpole and makes no adverse comment regarding these.

- 4.28 SNC – HERITAGE & LEISURE: No response received.
- 4.29 SNC – BUILDING CONTROL: State that consideration should be given to potential geotechnical and foundation problems that are associated with hill slopes, particularly those greater than 7 degrees, in the Northampton area. In particular, all land of a greater than 7 degree slope should be considered as potentially hazardous unless a rigorous geotechnical report has proved otherwise.

The proposed development could be affected by the reactivation of ancient/relic slip planes following disturbances caused by the earthworks associated with the development. In essence a geotechnical report should be prepared that verifies that the land is stable enough to build on. (Note: An addendum to the Site Stability Assessment Report, specifically relating to the Norwood Farm Land, was submitted in May 2008.)

- 4.30 SNC - ACCESS OFFICER: Has no comments to make on the application at this 'outline' stage.
- 4.31 NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE/CRIME PREVENTION DESIGN ADVISOR: Wish to make observations relating to Policing, Community Cohesion, Community Safety and Secured by Design. This broad based policing response will be added to by more site specific response once the planners have given approved planning consent. Note that this response regarding Norwood Farm applies equally to the wider development incorporating Upton Lodge Farm, (1784 dwellings, school, employment area etc) which is being determined by WNDC

### **Executive Summary**

The following key policing and community safety issues need to be covered:

- The Norwood Farm Design and Access Statement should promote the principles of 'Designing out Crime' and 'Safer Places', through Secured by Design and Safer Car Parks.
- The Norwood Farm vision should include references to Community Safety.
- A stronger reference to actions to reduce crime, anti social behaviour, the fear of crime and improving road safety should be included.
- It is important to guard against too much permeability within the development.
- It is essential that appropriate youth provision be provided. Positive youth activity results in reduced anti social behaviour and crime.
- Police Safer Community Team accommodation, within a Multi-Use centre, will

put community safety at the heart of this new development.

- Ian Ledingham, Traffic Management Unit, Northamptonshire Police will make separate and specific comment relating to the highway proposals.

### **Background**

There is virtually no reference in the Design and Access statement to crime and disorder, and the potential effect on communities if poor design is permitted. Issues of community safety and crime and disorder are relevant to any development, and if due consideration is not made at the outset, the future residents of the development are left with the consequences. There needs to be a commitment to the adoption of certain security standards throughout the development to ensure these aspirations are achievable.

While design cannot be expected to eradicate crime, well-planned spaces experience lower levels of vandalism, violence and anti-social behaviour. Equally, sustainable neighbourhoods thrive in areas where communities have a sense of ownership over their surrounding spaces. Recognising this, the Government has made the creation of 'Safer Places' a core objective, highlighting the role that high quality design can play in reducing the occurrence and fear of crime.

The remainder of this response provides detailed comments on the design and access statement.

### **The Case for Action**

My major concern relates to the complete lack of reference to Community Safety and Designing out Crime from the Design and Access statement. I wish to see a much stronger commitment to these vitally important issues in the creation of 'Safer Places'. Please refer to the guidance contained in PPS1, the CABE publication, 'Design and Access statements – how to read, write and use them', and 'Safer Places'.

### **Community Safety**

Community safety is vital to the establishment of a successful environment in which people can live and work. This should be included in the pre-planning and design of business, retail and housing developments, bearing in mind, and where appropriate taking advantage of, their location and natural characteristics.

Reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime should be a high priority, with the realisation that low crime and low fear of crime will encourage potential new residents and businesses to view South Northamptonshire as an area in which they would want to live, work, invest and play.

### **Designing out crime**

A priority should be to design out crime – all new developments whether residential, commercial or educational should adopt Secured by Design (SbD) and Safer Car Park award principles for buildings, external areas and car parks. SbD is a police initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures in the design of developments to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, thus creating a safer and more secure environment.

The preferred approach of the Police towards issues affecting neighbourhood renewal is to have them addressed in the planning and designing of new developments and through the masterplanning process to avoid creating future areas of deprivation at the outset. A key feature of this is the community

development approach whereby the local communities are involved in the design process and ensuring that there are good community networks and facilities. The adopted SPG on 'Planning Out Crime' highlights spaces that could be used for anti-social behaviour and how these should be designed out of the development. Mike Scragg and David Lancaster can assist with the detail of the SPG, a guidance document that South Northamptonshire Council are signatories to, with NCC and the other districts.

### **Safer Community Team (SCT)**

All areas of Northamptonshire have Safer Community Teams (SCTs) dedicated to local areas, although few are based within the heart of the community, mainly accommodated within existing police premises. We are currently seeking multi agency accommodation within the heart of the new and the existing communities through Section 106 contributions towards multi use centres, housing a number of service agencies.

Effective policing relies on sound infrastructure. Policing teams should be locally based and readily accessible. This does not mean that every development should have its own police station but rather a local office, equipped with police systems and support from which staff can operate, thus reducing the need to return to police stations to complete routine administration.

The development of Norwood Farm and Upton Lodge will require additional police officers in order to provide an adequate service to the existing and the new local residents of the area. A Safer Community Team unit comprising 2 Sergeants, 4 Police Constables and 8 Police Community Support Officers, plus support staff will be required (currently 1 Sergeant, 2 Police Constables and 2 PCSO's).

The Safer Community Team base should ideally be provided in the first phase of the development. This facility should be part of a multi-use building, with shared facilities used by other services as well to both reduce the amount of space required by each service individually and reduce both capital and revenue costs for the building. The facility would need to be c. 140 square metres including showering and changing facilities that it is envisaged would be shared with other users of the building.

In addition to the building, there is a requirement for both an outside store and securing parking for police vehicles to enable them to be left on site over night.

### **The Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement**

#### **Delivering a Sustainable Community (1.11)**

I ask that you consider including an additional Community Safety bullet point, focusing on the role of the area Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership, within the list of what the development will provide.

We wish to work with the planners and developers to ensure the local centres, neighbourhood centre, extensive areas of public open space and mixed use area are designed to reduce the likelihood of youths congregating resulting in anti social behaviour, minor crime and fear of crime. In addition to the primary and secondary schools we would wish to see youth provision for out of school hours. This should not just be outdoor provision but all year round indoor provision as well.

### **Housing**

We strongly request Secured by Design full accreditation for both the owner /occupier and affordable housing elements so that we can ensure a level of security is delivered by the developers. Alternatively the housing should be built to Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 including the security elements so that Secured By Design part 2 accreditation can be awarded. Mike Scragg is available for discussions at any stage in the process to advise on all aspects of security and crime prevention.

We welcome the commitment to construct all dwellings to the Eco Homes Excellent rating, which I believe has been superseded by the Code for Sustainable Homes. We would expect to see a reference in any Master Planning documentation to a commitment to build 'all new homes in Norwood Farm to a minimum of the Code for Sustainable Homes level 3, including the crime prevention elements'. This would then allow the police to award a part 2 Secured by Design accreditation on all houses.

### **Car Parking**

I note that car parking will consist of a mixture of on street and courtyard parking. No mention is made of in-curtilage or garage parking, which are the preferred methods from a crime prevention point of view. Where courtyards are used the car parking will need to be in clusters of no more than 10 cars, visible from routinely inhabited windows (not bedrooms) and if Secured By Design is to be achieved then the courtyards will need to be gated. Courtyard parking areas give access to the rear of dwellings and this is not acceptable from a crime prevention point of view. We would be interested to know what form the 'discrete security measures' intended for the parking courts will take.

Communal car parking areas at the school and the local centre, and particularly the park and ride facility, should be designed to achieve Safer Parking standard.

### **Public Space/ Greenspace/Landscape/ Open space**

We have a major concern regarding the location of these facilities. The proposal places them on the opposite side of the Sandy Lane Relief Road from the residential areas, and away from any meaningful natural surveillance. This is contrary to good practice and guidance, and is particularly relevant to the Adventure Playground area, which is likely to be frequented by younger children. The open spaces will need careful design to prevent them from becoming havens for under age drinking, drug use and anti social behaviour including motorcycle nuisance. In addition, the rear garden security of the houses fronting Sandy Lane and Weedon Road will be compromised by the formalization of the area as a public open space. This can be ameliorated by the planting of thorny (defensive) species along the back fences of the dwellings.

Ongoing long term management and maintenance of the public realm will be required to ensure the sustainability of any new proposals within Norwood Farm. Some means of ensuring the revenue funding for this will need to be factored into any application to cover such issues as soft landscaping maintenance, rubbish clearance and street cleansing. There will need to be a very robust on going management and maintenance regime with employed 'green space' wardens to provide a capable guardian. Failure to do so has resulted in other newly developed areas becoming crime hotspots validating the 'broken windows theory' (Kelling and Wilson 1982).

### **Footpath and Cycle strategy**

Parking facilities, bus, taxi, cycle and pedestrian routes are all key to the success of this new area. However it is important to guard against too much permeability within the development.

Pedestrian routes should be clear and direct and reflect the needs of the neighbourhood. Unnecessary routes should be avoided especially when they create a low footfall, undermine defensible space, are too long, have little surveillance and where there is little community ownership of the route. Manual for Streets (DfT March 2007) states that footpaths should avoid access to the rear of dwellings, should not be segregated, and should be necessary - leading directly to where people want to go. Pedestrians and cyclists should generally be accommodated on streets rather than on routes segregated from motor traffic.

Segregated footpaths provide anonymity for the legitimate user and burglar alike and can provide a choice of escape routes for an offender. 'Crime Free Housing' Poyner and Webb 2006 concludes 'avoid networks of separate pedestrian footpaths to unsupervised areas. It is better to use the street network for most pedestrian movements'

I am concerned to see reference to pedestrian and cycle routes in the document. These are contrary to best practise advice detailed above.

### **Design Codes**

We would support the publication of a Norwood Farm site specific design code. The aim of design coding is to provide clarity as to what constitutes acceptable design quality and thereby a level of certainty for developers and the local community alike that can help to facilitate the delivery of good quality new development. The police, through Crime Prevention Design Adviser Mike Scragg, would be able to contribute much to this process. A recent local example of site specific design codes, including police community safety provisions, has been produced for Priors Hall, Corby.

### **Youth Facilities**

There needs to be further evidence that there will be appropriate youth provision within the development. Local youths should be consulted on their requirements. Failure to consider appropriate youth provision will result in an increase in anti social behaviour and an increase in the fear of crime by other members of the community.

### **Community Cohesion**

It is important to recognise the changing ethnic mix of the Northamptonshire population – particularly Polish, Lithuanian, Rumanian and Hungarian resulting from international in-migration to the area.

New communities, in our experience, are more likely to be the victims of crime than the perpetrators. A reference to international in-migration may be considered appropriate.

### **Conclusions**

The conclusions should have a strong reference to the importance of Community Safety provision making Norwood Farm a place where people really will want to live, work invest and play. The Local Strategic Partnership and the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership are very important in raising the profile of the area.

queries, which were responded to and dealt with by the applicants. The Wildlife Trust subsequently confirmed that, having read a letter dated 17/09/07 from the applicants, all of their issues and concerns had been addressed; and that, therefore, there were no outstanding points to be dealt with from their point of view.

4.33 NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PRIMARY CARE TRUST: The PCT is keen to see all new developments consider health as two main strands:

- 1) Health Services and
- 2) Healthy Environments

The PCT have reviewed this application (incl. Upton Lodge Farm) and their recommendations are outlined below:

#### Population Growth and Health Provision

The health service in Northamptonshire is operating at or above capacity in some areas. In order to expand this capacity the PCT will require substantially increased resources for all areas. The financial allocation to the PCT is based on historic estimates of population and consequently there is unavoidable lag between the need being generated and the resources being made available to meet it adequately. Given the rapid population growth occurring within the Local Planning Authority areas, because of the number of large and smaller residential developments, the PCT will inevitably experience serious funding gaps and workforce shortages leading to a growing and unsustainable difficulty in meeting patient need. The PCT will therefore need to be assisted with the means to meet this additional need for the region's NHS services.

#### Section 106 - Estimating the Health Needs of the Proposal

The PCT uses the NHS Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) Model as a basis for quantifying contributions. By calculating the new population over the phases of development and the usage of health services and facilities amongst the general community, the HUDU Model is able to estimate the need of the new population and the cost of meeting that need. The HUDU Model works out the capital and revenue finance required to provide the appropriate level of health care needed to service the new development, before NHS funding cycles catch up with the new population. The use of the HUDU Model and the assumptions behind it is supported by the ODPM Circular 5/05 on Planning Obligations (C5/2005), which is the justification for the provision of health facilities required by an increasing population, via Section 106 developer contributions. All the people from the proposed development will require a range of NHS services. Planning obligations (Section 106) would assist the PCT to satisfy the need in these areas during the funding-gap period. (*Note: The issues raised will be addressed through a S.106 Agreement and/or WND's 'standard charge', but this will only deal with capital costs and not revenue issues, which will be an issue for the PCT to take up with their own funding sponsors.*)

#### The Creation of Sustainable Communities

The PCT has reviewed the submitted Health Impact Assessment (HIA). English Partnerships (now HCA) and Redrow Homes are to be congratulated on providing an excellent HIA for this development, and this highlights their commitment to creating sustainable communities. We would wish to see all future HIAs submitted, to be of an equivalent standard. The PCT had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft HIA and since the changes suggested have been made, the

PCT does not require any further amendments to be made. However, the HIA rightfully scopes a number of different disciplines and agencies and therefore the PCT would require that the HIA be reviewed by all relevant parties. The HIA should be reviewed by all contributors, as this would enable cross agency ownership (see key contact list on page 39 and Table 5 and 6). The cross agency partners will need to discuss how to take the recommendations forward so that these are implemented on the ground. We are unsure at this stage who should lead on setting up the steering group suggested in the HIA (WNDC, SNC or the PCT public health department)? The set up of a group is backed by the PCT as this will help enable the creation of social cohesion within the new community and facilitate the implementation of the HIA recommendations on the ground. The PCT would be pleased to support this development if the above is addressed and the S.106 Obligation incorporates a fair share to mitigate against the impact of the new development.

- 4.34 RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION: No response received.
- 4.35 GOVERNMENT OFFICE EAST MIDLANDS (GOEM): No response received.
- 4.36 DEFRA EAST MIDLANDS REGION: No response received.
- 4.37 SPORT ENGLAND: Raise no objection to the proposals, subject to the following conditions, as well as requirements via a S.106 Agreement, being incorporated into any planning permission that might be granted:

Section 106:

A review of existing indoor and outdoor sports facilities, to establish current supply, capacity, quality and accessibility issues; to be undertaken within six months of any permission being granted. The results of the survey to be used to identify what new or improved facilities are required to meet the needs of the new development, and create a formula by which developer contributions towards providing appropriate indoor and outdoor sports facilities would be made.

Conditions:

1. Details of phasing of development with regard to provision of sports facilities to be submitted and approved before commencement of development.
2. A detailed assessment of ground conditions affecting the land proposed for public / school playing fields (including drainage / topography) to identify constraints that could affect playing field quality, and how any such constraints would be addressed, to be submitted and approved before commencement of development.
3. Before commencement of development, details of the construction, design and layout of all playing fields/facilities (indoor and outdoor) to be submitted, approved and then implemented, also to take account of the assessments submitted pursuant to Conditions 1 and 2, above.
4. A management and maintenance scheme for the playing fields and sports facilities to be submitted approved and implemented, prior to commencement of any use of these facilities.

- 4.38 THIRD PARTIES: The application has been advertised through a press release, by press notices, site notices as well as extensive notification of adjoining and nearby occupiers by letter. The proposed development was also subject to pre-application

community consultation, through local workshops held by the applicants. Copies of the application have been available at WNDK Offices, NBC Offices, SNC Offices, Duston Library and on-line.

Some 30 letters have been received from adjoining or nearby residents, raising numerous issues which are summarized below:

- Insufficient green space within proposed development.
- Insufficient detail regarding the design of the Weedon Road corridor.
- Concerns regarding deliverability of the community facilities.
- A more up to date framework for coherent development of the South West District of Northampton is needed.
- There are better (and allocated) sites within the NIA, more suited to development.
- An inaccurate assessment of increased traffic generation and road capacity has been submitted. This will exacerbate the situation on already-congested roads.
- Support the creation of a Country Park, but its location is wrong, away from the centre of the development and cut-off from the housing by the very busy SLRR. It could become little used and there would then be pressure for further development on this land.
- Support the realignment of Sandy Lane.
- Road safety on surrounding roads would be made worse by the increased traffic volumes generated by this and other development in the area.
- The pleasant approach to Northampton from Jct 16 of the M1 would be spoiled by building on this land. 'Brownfield' sites in the town should be regenerated first.
- No 'need' for more housing in this area, which would simply create an additional 'commuter-belt' of people living in Northampton and out-commuting for work.
- 'Park & Ride' location is misguided, and is not likely to be much used, as Northampton offers very little in the way of shopping attractions.
- Insufficient dedicated provision for cycling is proposed.
- No provision for secondary school accommodation and existing schools are already over-subscribed.
- The development would encroach onto the 'green-belt' around Northampton, and outlying villages such as Kislingbury and Harpole will become part of the town and lose their individual identities.
- Would be detrimental to wildlife and add to species decline.
- Too much development already going on in the area, and this proposal would be the 'last straw'.

- Building on this site will remove views into and out of the surrounding area (eg views of The White House listed building could be obstructed).
- Noise that will be generated by building works and additional traffic.
- Inadequate provision for infrastructure such as sewage treatment, flood defence, medical services, local shopping and transport, is proposed.
- Development would result in the loss of important green fields and countryside, when it would be better to build on 'brownfield' sites within the town first.
- Insufficient car parking proposed and the main routes in and around the site are already heading towards 'gridlock'.
- 'Park & Ride' facility would create an unnecessary further traffic burden on roads.
- 'Park & Ride' should make provision for station/terminal for a future 'Rapid Transit System'.
- Important to retain as many hedgerows and bridleways in any new development, as possible.
- Loss of green fields not compensated for by insufficient provision of open space in new developments, including this proposal.

4.39 DUSTON ACTION GROUP (DAG)/NORTHANTS RESIDENTS' ALLIANCE: Requested that additional independent reports be carried out, but fundamentally request that the application(s) be refused on the basis that the extent of the ground instability is far greater than reported by the applicant. Following a response to this letter by the applicant, a further letter was received from DAG dated 12th November 2008. Fundamentally DAG still questions the accuracy of the stability report and the provenance of the evidence produced. A combined site visit is requested to clarify arguments over pictures and maps contained within the report.

Reconsultation (March 2010): Respond as follows (Note: NRA/DAG have asked that references to 'WNDC' in these comments, should also be read as references to 'SNC'):

Northants Residents Alliance are acting on behalf of its members and also we are authorised to represent the Duston Action Group Limited in this matter.

We raise the following list of objections to this planning re-consultation. A number of the objections are technical and may require further detailed investigation by your officers to evaluate their importance and the likely effect that some of the issues will have on matters of public safety. The leaders of NRA are always prepared to engage and assist with such investigations wherever possible. We have access to properly independent qualified engineers and are willing to share their findings with WNDC.

**2. Re-consultation letter doesn't include all the revised subjects that are covered by new documentation from the applicant.**

WNDC's letter (undated and received by NRA as late as 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2010) suggests that the revision of documentation submitted by the applicant is confined to 'Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan' documents. However, looking at the documents listed on WNDC web site, we notice that revised documents have also been submitted in respect of a 'REVISED FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT'. It is our assertion that members of the public and consultees have been misinformed

about the extent of the revision to the original application and therefore the consultation exercise has not been properly conducted. In addition, we advised WNDP yesterday (via email) that the 'Submit Comments' pages of the WNDP planning website do not allow submission of comments at all in their present state – because of a design error. Northants Residents Alliance are of the opinion that members of the public can expect at the very least, accuracy and efficiency from Planning Officers and recommend that, to avoid a future legal objection on this point, the consultation should be re-run and the application hearing postponed accordingly.

### **3. Solifluction. Misleading figures in Halcrow's original submission have not been amended.**

#### **Inaccurate Slope Measurement**

In advance of the original application hearing in December 2008, Duston Action Group, advised that they had employed a surveyor to check the angle of slopes at Upton Lodge farm and discovered that the various Halcrow surveys had understated the angle of several slopes which were, by DAG's findings, at 7-8 degrees. Halcrow had earlier submitted slope surveys for this application as well as using the application for the unfortunate Sandy Lane Relief Road that contradicted each other, but which gave the impression that nearly all of the site's slopes were only at 6 degrees. (Experts agree that the critical angle where Solifluction becomes a real threat is 7 degrees). During the application hearing, Roger Kingston, representing DAG, raised this matter and the meeting was told by the Halcrow representative that they knew this was probably true and that Developers would just 'have to be careful' when planning construction. We note with disdain that this admitted inaccuracy was not minuted and has not been rectified in the Applicant's submissions. NRA take the position that since the currently available documents are misleading to the Planning committee, either by omission or intent, a valid and informed decision about the safety of the slopes for construction cannot be arrived at. The decision to award planning permission when these inaccuracies have been brought to the attention of WNDP would be 'Unreasonable'.

### **4. Sustainable Urban Drainage Designs and Their impact on Land Instability.**

Whereas Halcrow have now identified the extent to which the conditions for Solifluction exist across two-thirds of the proposed site, there is an omission in the Applicant's submissions regarding the deleterious effect of ground water being retained on the site and infiltrated into the ground. Indeed, it would appear that much of the drainage strategy for this site is based upon improved water retention and permeability of the site.

It will be seen from the Applicant's reports on Solifluction, the effect of groundwater; its presence, its quantity and pressure is likely to increase the possibility of land instability in ground that is susceptible to Solifluction. i.e. the Upton Lodge site. The NRA's qualified engineer has commented that the use of ditches to contain water on hillsides that are too steep for pools or lagoons, will cause water to permeate into the soil in a more concentrated manner, thus increasing the possibility of landslip conditions in thaw/freeze/thaw conditions. In his experience, landslip was caused in this way by the use of such water retention techniques at Cherry Orchard Farm, Hardingstone and, even though the engineers anticipated this problem by lining the ditch with impermeable material, in practice the water got behind the liner and caused the slope to collapse.

The imperative with sloping sites comprising Northamptonshire Sands and Whitby Mud (Lias Clay) is to reduce ground water to a minimum to improve stability. The concept of SUDS contradicts this requirement. Assumptions that SUDS water

retention measures will not affect the water content of the underlying soil are proven to be unsustainable in practice.

#### **5. Information provided by local historians has not been updated in the Applicant's submission.**

During the original planning application hearing, a local and well-respected Historian made strong representations to the Committee regarding the historical importance of the proposed site. Whereas the Committee took on board the news about the important status of the Upton Lodge farm buildings – a point which had escaped the Environment Agency's report. Following the meeting, we would expect to have seen a revised submission showing the listed status of the Upton Lodge Shire Horse Stud Farm buildings. However, the original document has not been revised, therefore making this item invalid for submission.

#### **6. Revised Transport Assessment**

Much of the report is obfuscated by reference to computer models, assuming that the data upon which their models are based are accurate. However, it seems from some of the resulting calculations that the number of vehicle movements expected per day per household has been significantly reduced from the manual models used prior to computerisation. Whereas we appreciate that computer models are capable of more sophisticated modelling of the likely impact of increased traffic under many different scenarios, we still question why the expected number of vehicle movements per dwelling appears to have been reduced from a familiar 7 per day (used by Northamptonshire County Council prior to computer modelling) to less than 4 per day. Especially at a time when Northamptonshire is reported in the press as having the distinction of being the County with the fastest growing number of car users in the country.

We prefer to use a common-sense approach to calculating the number of car journeys that are likely to be generated. For example, the majority of homes these days possess two cars. Some, with teenage children can have up to four cars. So, the modest case with one partner at work and one school age child, we can expect that one partner will drive to school and then to home in the morning. The same partner may drive to school again in the afternoon and return home once more = 4 journeys. The other partner may simply drive to work in the morning and return home by evening = 2 journeys. Notwithstanding deviations that would exceed this movement count such as: Children who can drive, people operating vans and cars from home as part of their business, it would seem that 6 vehicle movements per household per day would be a reasonable supposition upon which to base traffic movement calculations. Any less would be 'unreasonable'. Multiply the number of houses planned for this site by an average number of 6 vehicle movements per day per household and this results in 10,200 total vehicle movements per day. Since there is no provision for a Secondary school on this site and since the level of on-site employment to be provided is very small, it is unlikely that this figure can be easily reduced by computer modelling.

A point is made in the Transport Assessment about the much vaunted sustainable transport system reducing the need for personal transport by the achievement of a significant modal shift to other means of transport. The problem with this theory is it cannot be taken as fact when considered in relation to this application, because there is no evidence of successful modal shift anywhere in the United Kingdom achieving more than a 5% difference. Awarding planning approval on the figures provided would be both 'unreasonable' and irresponsible.

#### **7. Revised Transport Assessment and WNDC Tariff Funding for Infrastructure**

We are advised in the revised assessment that funding for the enormous amount of

additional infrastructure that will be required to support the increase in traffic from this large site will be by WNDC tariff. Northampton Residents and local politicians alike have made their feelings quite clear on this point through various protest meetings and a public march in Northampton last year. The statement they have collectively and firmly made is 'No expansion without Infrastructure first'. Of course, this applies to the lack of up-front funding for many of the essentials of supporting new developments such as secondary schools, medical centres, sewage, drainage and flood management, etc. But it also includes proper road networks that are strategically planned and in place just before new housing is occupied. Clearly the WNDC Tariff in this case does not fulfil the essential function required of any proper town planning, which is the provision of a strategic road network. We fail to be convinced that so-called 'affordable housing' loaded with an unaffordable £20,000 premium per house can in any way provide the funding for a strategic road network. Mysteriously, we are not supplied with any details in this revised application of what would be involved in such a network improvement. We can be certain, however, that with or without a Local Planned strategy, the roads will not be built until long after the houses are occupied. Therefore, unlike the way that Northampton Development Corporation operated during the extension of the town to the East in the 70's/80's where there was a natural understanding that roads were essential before houses could be built, this application seems to be 'fudging' around the issue that there is no funding for proper infrastructure before the housing is occupied. Given the heightened state of public feeling and the clarity of the wishes of the public, we feel that a decision to approve this retrospective funding of a piecemeal approach to road network provision will cause a general outcry and will also be considered as 'Unreasonable'. Evidence that may be used to support this belief is the failure of the 'West Northampton Orbital Bypass' that was proposed 5 years ago by WNDC, but has merely ended up being the 'Road to Nowhere' and has destroyed much agricultural land, without any improvement in traffic flows. Our members and the wider public have every reason to believe that the WNDC Tariff funding approach is inadequate as a protection for their current standard of living at would 'unreasonable' for the Planning Committee to award this application under this proposed arrangement.

4.40 NENE FLOOD PREVENTION ALLIANCE: No comments received.

## 5. POLICY

5.1 Following revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) by the Secretary of State in July 2010, the Development Plan consists of the 'saved' policies in the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (SNLP) and any adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents.

5.2 **South Northamptonshire Local Plan** – The following 'saved' policies are relevant:

G2 – General

G3 – General

H6 – Restraint Villages and Open Countryside

H7 – Affordable Housing

EV1 – Design

EV2 – Development in the Open Countryside

EV7 – Special Landscape Areas

EV8 – Important Local Gaps

EV21 – Hedgerows, Ponds and Other Landscape Features

EV29 – Landscape Proposals

RC10 – Amenity and Children's Play Areas

RC14 – Noisy Sports in Special Landscape Areas  
IMP1 – Planning Obligations

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents:**

The following are relevant to this application:

SNC Five-Year Housing Land Supply Assessment (June 2010)  
SNC Affordable Housing SPG (December 2003)  
SNC Developer Contributions SPG (August 2001)  
SNC / DDC Energy and Development SPD (March 2007)  
NCC Local Transport Plan (2006)  
NCC Planning Out Crime (2005)  
NCC Parking SPG (March 2003)  
NCC Planning Obligations and LEA Schools Provision (2003)  
NCC Draft Developer Contributions Document (2010)

### **5.3 National Policy – Relevant Planning Policy Statements and Guidance include:**

PPS1 - Sustainable Development & Climate Change  
PPS3 – Housing  
PPS4 – Economic Growth  
PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment  
PPS6 – Planning and Town Centres  
PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas  
PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation  
PPS10 – Planning for Sustainable Waste Management  
PPS 11 – Regional Spatial Strategies  
PPS12 – Local Spatial Planning  
PPG13 – Transport  
PPG14 – Development on Unstable Land  
PPG17 – Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation  
PPS22 – Renewable Energy  
PPS23 – Planning and Pollution Control  
PPG24 – Planning and Noise  
PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk

## **6. APPRAISAL**

6.1 Having regard to the development plan for the area and the location, scale, nature and type of application and representations received to the consultation exercise, the following are considered to be the principal matters for consideration:

- The principle of development and the development plan and the need for further residential development.
- Sequential test under PPS3.
- Design, visual impact and relationship to the surrounding area.
- Transport – including traffic capacity issues.
- Infrastructure provision (Sandy Lane Relief Road - SLRR).
- Sustainability issues.
- Environmental impacts including noise, air quality and light pollution.
- Flood-risk and drainage.
- Land stability issues.
- Housing, including 'affordable' housing.

- Employment.
- Local Centre.
- Education.
- Country Park & Open Space – including potential loss of open countryside.
- Phasing of development.
- Developer Contributions - Section 106 Legal Agreement - Heads of Terms

### **The principle of development**

- 6.2 The main policy considerations, particularly in relation to the issue of Housing land supply, are well-rehearsed and considered at Para. 4.25, above (to which Members are referred), and it is not intended to repeat these here.
- 6.3 In essence, if the Norwood Farm application were to be approved then this would make a significant contribution to this Council's housing land requirement either now (if the Planning Inspectorate support the Council's case), or in the future once a revised locally based housing figure is derived and agreed.
- 6.4 In policy terms the Norwood Farm application is considered to be in a sustainable location as it forms part of, and would complement, a larger development proposal within Northampton Borough. It would also provide for a strong and potentially more-permanent 'green wedge' in the form of a country park. It would have less of an impact on existing communities than some of those developments currently being considered in some South Northants villages.

### **Sequential test**

- 6.5 Consideration was given to this application in respect of whether the site is still a sustainable location to bring forward such a development, against current planning guidance. The site is well located to transport links, employment opportunities, public amenities and retail and would be well served by public transport into Northampton. In the absence of a core strategy for long term growth there are few alternative, available sites that benefit from support, to the level that this site does. Where such sites do exist (eg Dallington Grange, in Northampton), they may be considered to be no more sequentially preferable to that at Norwood Farm/Upton Lodge, at the current time. Clearly, in respect of other areas within South Northants (eg to the south of the district boundary and adjoining Northampton Borough), Norwood Farm may be seen as 'sequentially preferable' in meeting housing land supply and development needs.

### **Design, visual impact and relationship to surrounding area**

- 6.6 The application is in outline form and therefore little detailed information regarding the public realm and design is required to be included at this stage. It is, however, essential that this development contributes towards a high quality design throughout the wider area. It is anticipated that there will be design codes applied to the site, and these would need to be agreed before any reserved matters applications are submitted. The codes will relate to both residential and non-residential areas. Particular regard will need to be given to principal road frontages such as Weedon Road and the SLRR, as well as any areas of heritage sensitivity. The existing Masterplan and development principles outlined in the application documents, demonstrate an awareness of the design and development opportunities provided by the site.
- 6.7 With regard to density of development, higher densities are proposed:
- along the spine road within the site, to take advantage of the public transport corridor

- along the SLRR, to help provide a firm and definitive boundary to Northampton
  - on the lower slopes, where urban form will have less impact on long distance views
- 6.8 In other locations, and in particular on the higher slopes, densities will be lower. This, in turn, reduces the impact the new development will have on the existing buildings adjacent to site parcel 'A'. Views into, out of and around the site are all important, with views into the site perhaps being of most significance. Visual connections and sight lines to St. Crispin's clock tower and the White House former nurses' home are expressed in the Masterplan. Landmarks, which might include distinctive buildings, building features or public art, will assist in providing reference points and a hierarchy of place throughout the proposed development. These will need to be carefully considered with regard to the impact on existing views into the site, particularly as and when any reserved matters applications come forward.
- 6.9 With regard to scale and massing of development, a maximum building height of four-storeys is proposed. However, most development will be two or three-storey. Heights are likely to be lowest on parcels A, F and G where the development is adjacent to existing homes at Berrywood Fields and St. Crispin (within Northampton). The consequent impact upon those existing properties, some of which may suffer a loss of view will accordingly be determined by normal planning criteria applied at the reserved matters and design codes stage. There is nothing within the application documentation to suggest that the scale and massing of the development on these upper slopes will be incompatible with or unacceptably harmful to the amenities of neighbouring properties.
- 6.10 With regard to potential impacts on existing housing within South Northants, the only residents potentially directly affected, are those living at South View/Sandy Lane, immediately adjoining the south-western corner of the application site. However, as these properties all back onto the site, and as the proposed country park would adjoin them, they are unlikely to suffer any unacceptable loss of amenity.
- 6.11 Buildings up to four-storeys are most likely to be located close to the SLRR, where there is an intention to create a pronounced edge to the development, and where there is no other built development nearby. This would have a similar appearance to Upton (Phase 1) in Northampton, in terms of views from the south. Buildings up to four-storeys may also be provided along the spine road and adjacent to the local centre, consistent with the potential areas of higher density. Building heights, scale and massing will require careful consideration where the site borders the proposed country park / open countryside, and the St Crispin Conservation Area (within Northampton).
- 6.12 Any design codes will also need to include details of principles adopted for energy efficiency (as outlined in PPS 22 – renewable energy), although requirements for building to Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes as a minimum, and a minimum level of landscaping (including details of future maintenance) would apply. There are requirements too for seeking 10% of on site energy use to be from renewable sources. The design codes should further take a holistic view of the various development parcels, to ensure that adjoining parcels compliment each other and maximise the opportunities of the proposed development. A Section 106 Legal Agreement would require that reserved matters applications fulfil all the design principles identified in the codes. The application nevertheless demonstrates that the development proposed is capable of delivering an appropriate form and quality of built development, consistent with national and local planning policy aspirations. From the information provided, there are considered to be no reasons why the development, if permitted, should not achieve a good sense of place and a

quality environment that people would want to live and work in.

### **Transport (including traffic capacity)**

- 6.13 The street patterns and footpaths that characterise the masterplan should encourage walking and cycling throughout the community. The walking routes will directly link into the wider local footpath and bridleway network. The spine road intended to run through the centre of the development would form a logical route for local bus services. There is, however, limited detail on the frequency of bus services at this stage, and whether local bus operators have agreed that it is likely that the service will be sustainable in the longer-term and provide a commercially attractive route. This will need to be further addressed through any Section 106 Agreement via a detailed travel plan that sets out clear targets and addresses any failure to achieve a modal shift. SNC and WNDC Officers are working with the Highways Agency and the County Council to further-develop an effective green travel strategy, as part of the strategic planning of the wider area. This may, in turn, require further financial measures to be put in place over a number of years. This will be part of the S.106 process, which will seek to pool some contributions and then, in turn, monies can be available to address bus service frequency issues.
- 6.14 Park & Ride: (Note: This does not form part of the application being considered here, but the information is provided for completeness.) A site of approximately 4.8 hectares is proposed to accommodate up to 1,000 cars. This is to be located to the west of the proposed SLRR with an access directly off Weedon Road (intended to lessen traffic movement through the proposed controlled junction at Weedon Road/SLRR/CVLR). This prominent location will require very careful treatment to ensure that it does not undermine the appearance of the proposed employment site opposite. Careful consideration will need to be given to boundary treatment with the Weedon Road and other neighbouring sites (eg the residential properties that adjoin), on what is an important approach into Northampton, to screen any appearance of a 'sea of parked cars'. As yet, NCC has not confirmed the required phasing of the facility, which is provided for in the strategic plan for the Northampton SW District. The Section 106 Agreement would therefore need to ensure that the land is given to WNDC at an appropriate trigger point.
- 6.15 Access to the park and ride facility will also be available from the east-west spine road and SLRR. A bus lane is proposed for the eastbound carriageway of Weedon Road, to encourage use of the park and ride facility. Car parking levels throughout the development are proposed to be consistent with adopted guidelines and provided in a variety of ways depending on what is most appropriate for a particular use in the location proposed. The park and ride site could provide opportunities for shared parking facilities within the employment area and, to a lesser extent, the local centre, which would all be in close proximity.
- 6.16 Negotiations to finalise and fully-resolve outstanding transport and transport-related issues are ongoing with both the Highways Agency and NCC as Highway Authority, as part of a committed programme of works to examine and mitigate wider strategic impacts from this and other development proposals. These discussions have moved forward in a positive way and have focussed on managing impacts of traffic on the wider traffic network, alongside a strategy for modal shift to public transport and more sustainable modes of travel. Large scale off-site highway infrastructure provision will not be required solely as a consequence of this specific development.
- 6.17 The Highways Agency has previously reviewed the traffic assessment for the SLRR on the trunk road network at the M1 junctions 15a and 16. It had been concluded that the proposed road should not have a significant impact in terms of reassignment of flows on these junctions. The Highways Agency and County

Council had no objections to that proposal and accordingly it is considered that the principle accesses into the site via the SLRR (and the St Crispins site access on Weedon Road) are appropriate.

- 6.18 A further response was received on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2010, regarding the Highways Agency's stance in respect of highway and transport issues that they consider still need to be fully-resolved (refer Para. 4.10, Reconsultation - March 2010, above). On the basis of this more-favourable response, highway and transport issues are no-longer considered an obstacle to being able to recommend approval of the application, but any such recommendation should include a requirement that the HA's TR110 Holding Direction would first have to be lifted, before any permission could be issued.

#### **Infrastructure provision (Sandy Lane Relief Road)**

- 6.19 The proposed Sandy Lane Relief Road (SLRR) forms part of the site access to service the proposed development (incl. the rest of the proposed Upton Lodge development, adjacent). The SLRR is, thus, important in enabling full development of the Upton Lodge area. The approved SLRR forms part of the Northampton western route linking with the Cross Valley Link Road (CVLR) through Upton Park and Pineham, to the south, and the proposed northern link road - Sandy Lane Improvement North (SLIN).
- 6.20 The completion of the northern section of the SLRR currently has some uncertainty attached, due to land ownership matters (ie Norwood Farm). The applicants have stated that the landowner is not prepared to release the land needed for completion of the SLRR, until such time as planning permission for the development of Norwood Farm has been granted. Alternatively, completion of the road, which has planning permission, could be secured through other statutory processes, if required. Control of the phasing of development, to ensure that the northern link is completed may however still be required by the County Council.
- 6.21 It is considered through the Northampton Multi-Modal Model (approved by NCC for use in traffic modelling), that the proposed development of the wider South West District cannot be achieved without the SLRR, because the existing infrastructure will be unable to accommodate the likely traffic levels. As previously stated, there may be a delivery problem in that the landowner would apparently be unwilling to release land for the northern part of the SLRR (i.e. crossing the Norwood Farm site, within South Northants), should planning permission for the current application not be granted by SNC. In that event, this could result in a requirement for the use of CPO powers (in regard to Norwood Farm section of SLRR), but this, in turn, might result in significant delays in the delivery of the wider development and a key section of the West Northampton orbital route. However, the adjoining application which WNDG have already resolved to approve, could still be built out, as it is not dependent on the northern section of the SLRR being constructed first.
- 6.22 The proposed SLRR (which has planning permission) would be approximately 1.1 miles (1.7km) in length and link Berrywood Road and Weedon Road (A45). The road will be a 7.3m width single-carriageway, but with the potential for dualling in the future. The SLRR is also intended to form the western edge of the developed area of the application site, with the developed area being to the east of the new road, and the proposed country park (and park & ride facility) located to the west. The delivery of the SLRR is therefore a major concern as it affects the potential timing of delivery of other development. There will be a need to control the phasing of development to restrict the amount of development that could be built until the SLRR is built to the northern boundary of the application site. It should also be noted that agreed developer funding of the SLRR, is dependent on a resolution to

grant planning permission for the development of Norwood Farm. This would be secured via a S.106 Obligation.

### **Sustainability**

- 6.23 It is intended by the applicants that all homes will be built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3, as a minimum, in line with the applicants' current national development standards. Flood attenuation will be provided on site through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), primarily consisting of swales, wet/dry areas, soakaways and balancing ponds. These will occupy large areas of open space and, like the Upton Phase 1 development, nearby, are likely to help by bringing forward more green space and contributing towards biodiversity within the development.
- 6.24 A requirement for at least 10% of the development's energy needs to be provided from sustainable sources, should form part of a S.106 Obligation.

### **Environmental impacts (including noise, air quality & light pollution)**

- 6.25 The Environmental Statement assesses four potential scenarios for development. The options to be assessed are 'Do minimum' and three options of 'Do something'. These options consider the impact of the proposed Upton Lodge (incl Norwood Farm) development and other proposed development on the application site and surrounding areas. The scenarios are summarised as follows:
- *Option 1* – 'Do Minimum' - Assumes that the proposed development is not provided and the existing Sandy Lane is retained at present.
  - *Option 2* – 'Do Something 1' - Proposed Upton Lodge development (incl Norwood Farm) is provided with access from the existing Sandy Lane.
  - *Option 3* – 'Do Something 2' - Proposed Upton Lodge development is provided, and Sandy Lane Relief Road is assumed deliverable.
  - *Option 4* – 'Do Something 3' – SLRR provided as Option 3, together with Cross Valley Link Road, Sandy Lane Improvement North and Dallington Grange Development (within Northampton).
- 6.26 The submitted Environmental Statement has been independently assessed and reviewed by Entec, for SNC & WNDC. As a result of this review, and following further discussions with the applicants, recommendations were made in respect of the following areas: socio-economic effects, biodiversity, landscape and visual, ground conditions and contamination, water resources, noise and vibration, air quality, archaeology and cultural heritage and transport, movement and access, all as follows:
- 6.27 **Socio-economic effects:** It is recommended that planning conditions and/or S.106 obligations are put in place to require the implementation of:
- a medical facility to be included in the detailed design of the proposed development as this will avoid significant effects on the new residents and users of existing local medical facilities. (Note: This does not form part of the application being considered here, but would form part of the adjoining and associated development.)
  - The detailed design of the development to provide affordable housing in accordance with the needs set out in local authority local housing need studies.
- 6.28 **Biodiversity:** It is recommended that planning conditions and/or S.106 obligations are put in place to require the implementation of a number of elements of the schemes design and construction management measures, as outlined in the ES. Construction management measures should be incorporated into a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which should be approved by SNC (&

WNDC) prior to any development commencing.

6.29 **Landscape and visual:** It is recommended that conditions and/or S.106 obligations are put in place to require the implementation of the following measures:

- The planting proposals outlined as part of the scheme, as the mitigation of potential landscape and visual effects is dependent on planting and landscaping proposals being implemented.
- Planning conditions and/or obligations should also be used to implement an appropriate phasing plan. It is important that consideration be given to implementing elements of the landscape planting scheme from the very first phase of construction, particularly planting which will screen some views of the new development from existing receptors (eg as those along Berrywood Drive).
- The appropriate long term management and maintenance of landscape planting will be essential to ensure mitigation of the impact of the scheme. Therefore, it is recommended that a long-term planting management plan be produced, and if possible linked with the habitat management plan. This together with the funding of the long-term maintenance of the planting should also be ensured through planning obligations.
- In addition to the above recommendations, consultation responses received have recommended that a planning condition is developed to ensure that a lighting scheme is submitted and approved by WNDC for the park and ride facility and that the scheme should also be 'tested' after installation to ensure light spillage is kept to the minimum. In particular, this would be necessary to protect the amenity of residents of South View/Sandy Lane.

6.30 **Ground conditions and contamination:** It is recommended that planning conditions and/or obligations be put in place to require the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which should incorporate the mitigation measures outlined in the ES (see Section 8.5 of the ES). The CEMP should be approved by SNC (& WNDC) prior to any development commencing.

6.31 **Water resources:** It is recommended that planning conditions and/or obligations are put in place to require implementation of the following:

Ensure a CEMP, which incorporates the mitigation measures in relation to water set out in Section 9.5 of the ES, is implemented. Any measures set out in the CEMP should comply with the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines as well as their requirements for discharge consent procedures. Furthermore, the CEMP should include additional information on measures to prevent and minimize the mobilization of arsenic, which is naturally present within local soils. A detailed drainage strategy, based on the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) to be submitted as part of the application.

6.32 **Noise and vibration:** It is recommended that planning conditions and/or obligations be put in place to require the implementation of the following measures:

- A CEMP, which incorporates the measures set out in Sections 10.5.1 and 10.5.2 of the ES. The measures set-out in the CEMP should ensure that no working takes place during night-time hours and that there is a requirement for vibration monitoring and mitigation, should there be any need for piling activities to take place within 40m of residential properties.
- An appropriate scheme of mitigation for new residential properties and community and school buildings within the development. The mitigation scheme should set out the level of attenuation to be provided by glazing in order to achieve appropriate internal night-time and day-time noise levels. It should also consider appropriate

measures to protect external areas from undue noise.

- Noise limits for fixed building plant within the employment area (as specified in Table 10.16 in the ES), in order to avoid noise effects. If such plant is to be operational during night-time hours, appropriate limits should be set relating to night-time noise levels. (Note: This relates to the adjoining site, and does not form part of the current application.)
- Restrictions on the operating hours of employment development. This will aim to ensure that local residents are not disturbed by the operation of any employment development during night-time hours. (Note: This relates to the adjoining site, and does not form part of the current application.)

6.33 **Air quality:** It is recommended that planning conditions and/or obligations be put in place to require the implementation of a dust management plan during construction phases. This should be incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

6.34 **Archaeology and cultural heritage:** It is recommended that planning conditions and/or obligations are put in place to require the implementation of the following measures:

(i) The proposed and agreed archaeological evaluation;

(ii) a watching brief during construction work, where appropriate. Such measures should be incorporated into the CEMP, which should also outline measures regarding the excavation and recording of any archaeological remains, should any be found during the watching brief.

6.35 **Transport, movement and access:** That planning conditions and/or obligations are put in place to require the implementation of the following measures:

- Mitigation measures outlined in Section 13.5 of the ES in relation to increased traffic flows and pedestrian and cycle access.
- A construction traffic management plan, which should be incorporated into the CEMP.

6.36 A number of documents, which form part of the planning application, have been submitted since the Environmental Statement (ES) was first produced. These reports include further Ground Investigation and Land Stability reports. However it is not considered that these reports raise any additional or new material considerations that could result in any likely significant environmental effects that have not previously been assessed in the ES. Consequently it is considered that the ES satisfactorily covers all of the potential significant environmental effects and subsequent mitigation measures. The assessment of the Environmental Statement has been undertaken with full support of independent professional expertise. This has concluded that to mitigate the impacts identified provisions will need to be made in the Section 106 Agreement, and/or in the final planning conditions to be attached to any permission granted, in order to secure the necessary and relevant mitigation measures as explained above, and to secure the parameters of development assessed in the ES.

#### **Flood risk and drainage**

6.37 Discussions on these matters between the Applicants, SNC, WNDC, Environment Agency and Anglian Water have recently been successfully completed. From the discussions the EA had been raising issues surrounding strategic water infrastructure management rather than site specific matters relating to the form and

layout of the development. The principle issue raised related to not all of the site being 'allocated' in the local plan, and programmed improvements to capacity within the sewage system. The applicants have also provided a specific 'Norwood Farm Surface Water Drainage Strategy Assessment' (May 2009), and the EA have recently confirmed that they have withdrawn their objections to the proposed development, subject to requested conditions being attached to any permission granted.

- 6.38 The Environment Agency have indicated that they are satisfied with the updated Flood Risk Assessment details submitted (March 2008). None of the site falls within the River Nene Flood plain. In response to the EA's concerns with regard to a potential increase in proposed dwellings over the Local Plan allocation, the applicants have advised that HCA developments are required to reach Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, with regards to water consumption. This would lead to a reduction in water consumption and sewerage, when compared with the levels that were originally envisaged for a lower number of dwellings.

### **Land stability**

- 6.39 A Geo-Technical Report originally accompanied the application when it was submitted, but in view of the importance of the issues raised by SNC, WNDC and third parties with regard to slope stability, further Site Stability Assessments have been undertaken in accordance with the guidance in PPG 14 (and its appropriate companion guide). These include the sinking of trial boreholes and excavation of pits across parts of the site. Further site stability reports have been submitted during the application process and have been subject to limited consultation with the concerned parties. These reports arrived at the conclusions set out below.
- 6.40 The Upton Lodge site (incl. Norwood Farm) has been investigated by means of a Desk Study Interpretation, a Geomorphological Walkover Survey and a Ground Investigation. A stability analysis was undertaken, based on all relevant site information that has been derived from the above survey work. The results of this analysis indicate that certain slopes within the site will require remedial measures in order to create sufficiently stable slopes for the proposed development. Further, the development areas in the original Masterplan have been slightly adjusted to reflect the findings of the studies and to remove small parts of the site from future development. The reports conclude that in relation to the proposed development a number of more specific measures should be undertaken, to include the following:
- 6.41 The design of the estate road that crosses the Red Zone (Figure 4 in the Report) incorporates drainage measures to control groundwater, in order to ensure the slope remains stable, or a revised alignment is required. The road level and alignment should be designed to avoid undercutting of the 7-degree slope, unless compensatory retaining measures are provided. Where slopes are typically less than 5.5 degrees (i.e. Green Zone, on Figure 4 of the Report) the existing natural factor of safety for stability should be adequate (subject to further confirmation and mitigation of any adverse affects of the development) and housing development should be possible. Where development loads are exceptional (e.g. more than a 3-storey development) piled foundations should be provided.
- 6.42 Following the outline planning process, detailed ground investigations should be undertaken in the low to medium risk areas (Orange Zone; shown on Figure 4 in the Report), unless these are to be excluded from the development areas, to confirm where and what remedial works are required (if any). Groundwater monitoring of existing boreholes should continue on a monthly basis for at least a full cycle of seasons.
- 6.43 Any development on the site close to the Red Zones or Orange Zones should not

use soakaways as these could locally cause an unacceptable rise in groundwater levels. Piled foundations may be required in some areas within the Orange and Red Zones, in order to transmit loads to deeper strata.

- 6.44 Ponds/water attenuation features should be avoided within the Orange and Red Zones of the development site. It is understood that the water attenuation ponds for the site are to be located west of the proposed SLRR route (close to the existing brook/water channel) and at the toe of the Red Zone slopes. It is recommended that the proposed pond at the toe of the Red Zone slope be engineered to ensure that there is no reduction in slope stability (e.g. by reducing the excavation of the pond to a minimum and by engineering the base of the pond to provide an 'impermeable' base). Ground investigations should be undertaken within the proposed pond area to provide appropriate information to design the pond and to enable confirmation of measures required to ensure that the pond does not impact the stability of Weedon Road. Similarly, soakaway drainage should not be permitted in the development; the natural soils present are in any case poorly suited to this process.
- 6.45 PPG14 makes clear the requirement for development to have regard to land stability. Whilst confirming that LPAs owe no duty of care to individuals on this matter, the guidance outlines the LPA's responsibility to ensure that the following issues are addressed by the development:
- the physical capability of the land to be developed;
  - possible adverse effects of instability on the development;
  - possible adverse effects of the development on the stability of adjoining land; and
  - possible effects on the local amenities and conservation interests of the development and of any remedial or precautionary measures proposed.
- 6.46 The original geotechnical reports prepared by consultants on behalf of the applicants do not refer to the 'Tapsell Wade' report of 1983. The Tapsell Wade report was commissioned for a particular area of Northampton (East Hunsbury) and does not include the area within which the Upton Lodge site is located. Following the concerns raised by the Northampton Residents Alliance/DAG in relation to land stability, the applicants' consultants have reviewed the Tapsell Wade report against their own assessments. The applicant's consultants have confirmed that the Tapsell Wade report has no impact upon their conclusions on land stability matters affecting the development of the site, an investigation of which was carried out on behalf of the applicant to inform the design and construction process of the development site. Representations received from the Duston Action Group, continue to question the reliability of the applicants assessments of land stability and highlight concerns with regard to the impact upon existing properties at the tops of slopes. As the Local Planning Authority, SNC (and WNDC) have sought to establish from the applicants the stability of the slopes in line with advice in PPG14. Investigations and an appropriate technical report have been prepared by named specialist consultants, that seek to explain observed conditions on the site.
- 6.47 Officers are satisfied that, based upon the investigations carried out, the principle of development at Norwood Farm/Upton Lodge, in accordance with the planning application(s), remains acceptable. It is for the applicant to ensure that such development, if approved, proceeds in a way that does not cause harm to the interests of adjoining landowners. As a precautionary measure it is proposed that an appropriate condition be imposed securing a scheme for the on-going monitoring of land stability during the construction process and to ensure that all development drains by way of pipes rather than soakaways, unless otherwise approved.

**Housing (including 'affordable' housing)**

- 6.48 Residential development would cover approximately 35ha of the site, which would

give an average net density of development of about 22 dwellings per ha. The applicants suggest that a density of up to 35 dwellings per ha could be considered appropriate for the development, but this is unlikely to be achieved with the maximum number of dwellings proposed being 781.

- 6.49 The application proposes that the exact density of each developable parcel should be considered later, at reserved matters stage. However, it is considered that a proposed maximum number of dwellings should be established at outline stage, to allow a clear understanding of the infrastructure required to support the residents of the development, rather than run the risk of insufficient on-site infrastructure having been provided as the number of houses increases. Capping the total number of units (at 781) may therefore be considered essential, at this stage. Key factors such as topography, key frontages and sensitive neighbouring sites should be considered when deciding the density of the various parcels that make up the overall housing total (this would also happen at reserved matters stage).
- 6.50 A range of building types is proposed, including detached, semi-detached, townhouses and flats, with the different building types being mixed through the development. These will be expressed in the required design codes, to be submitted and approved prior to any consideration of reserved matters applications.
- 6.51 The affordable housing requirement of SNC is 40%, provided on site. The Strategic Housing team has advised of the required affordable housing tenure-split and requires this to be 'pepper-potted' (in small clusters rather than in large groups), throughout the development area. Strategic housing have requested that they be involved in negotiations with potential affordable housing providers. In addition 10% of the houses should be built to SNC's mobility standard, again 'pepper-potted' throughout the development. This would usually require the cluster sizes to be between 5 – 9 for houses and up to 12 units where any flats are involved, although recent development in the marketplace may justify a review of these arrangements, particularly in the early years, to ensure any development approved proceeds promptly. If required, some form of financial appraisal linked to a 'cascade' mechanism should be included, if the tenure split cannot be made to work and may require other financial assistance to make it work. This will need to be set out in detail in the S.106 Agreement.

### **Employment**

(Note: This section relates to development on the adjoining site, and does not form part of the current application, but details are relevant and included for completeness.)

- 6.52 An area of approximately 4.5 hectares is proposed for employment purposes at the junction of Weedon Road and the SLRR. The employment area is proposed for B1 (office/light industrial and research & development) and B2 (general industrial) uses – no B8 (warehousing) uses are proposed. The proposed inclusion of employment space is consistent with WNDC's objectives for sustainable urban extensions.
- 6.53 On-site car-parking requirements would be reduced, due to the proximity of the proposed park and ride facility. The employment area occupies a prominent location on a principal route into Northampton and it will be essential that a high quality of design for these buildings be achieved, reflecting the importance of the location.
- 6.54 The Use Classes Order specifies that changing a B1 or B2 use to a B8 use is a permitted change (not requiring an application), where the floorspace of a building is less than 235m<sup>2</sup>. To manage such changes and secure an appropriate balance of employment on the site, it is considered that a condition be applied preventing any future changes to B8 (warehouse) use, without an application first having been made and determined. Controls on mezzanine floors may also be appropriate at the

reserved matters stage depending upon building design, site coverage and parking provision.

- 6.55 Given the importance attached to making growth employment and not just housing-led, and in the interests of sustainability, it will be vital to ensure that employment development is delivered in tandem with any housing. This could best be promoted through specific phasing requirements included in any S.106 Obligation. There is a related issue to job creation and that being the provision of the required skills for the wider area. Therefore, the skills training is an essential part of the delivery of sustainable communities and will be picked up via the S.106 Agreement or conditions.

### **Local Centre**

(Note: This section relates to development on the adjoining site, and does not form part of the current application, but details are relevant and included for completeness.)

- 6.56 This would occupy an area of approximately 3.8ha located close to the centre of the development site. It is proposed that the local centre includes a primary school, shops (including a convenience store, A1, A2, A3 and B1 uses as well as a children's nursery) and other community facilities (which may include a community centre - Policy R11 of the Northampton Local Plan refers). It is essential that the long-term management of such a community centre be considered at an early stage and secured as part of any planning permission. The Northampton Local Plan sets out a minimum floorspace of 325m<sup>2</sup> for new community centres. Any S.106 Agreement should set out who will provide the facilities, to what specification, and the long-term management of the facilities. The local centre is not referred to in the phasing programme, which is considered a significant omission, but ideally such a centre should be provided in early phases of development and fixed via the S.106 Agreement.
- 6.57 The actual mix of the local centre would be determined at a later date, through the design codes and subsequent reserved matters applications, but it is suggested that the design be sufficiently flexible to accommodate future changes and needs. The precise schedule of uses will need to be determined through the design codes but the overall quantum will need to be controlled through the outline planning permission. To prevent unsustainable patterns of development and in the absence of detailed floorspace figures at this stage, conditions limiting the floorspace of any local centre uses are proposed.

### **Education**

(Note: This section relates to development on the adjoining site, that does not form part of the current application, but details are relevant and included for information and completeness.)

- 6.58 The application proposes the initial provision of a 420 place primary school, to be located in or adjoining the proposed local centre. NCC has identified a total need for 630 primary school places, of which 210 would be needed to serve the Norwood Farm development (ie this planning application). Whatever provision is required by NCC, this would be able to be met on (and adjoining, if necessary) the 3.8 ha site needed for the local centre. This will be further addressed, at the appropriate stage, through the submission of reserved matters applications, should outline permission be granted.
- 6.59 The closest secondary school was intended to be at the envisaged Upton Park development (south of the A45), requiring students to cross the busy Weedon Road. It had always been anticipated that a secondary school would be provided as

part of the Upton Park development, however, more recently, NCC has changed their position. The County Council now consider that the Dallington Grange development should accommodate a new secondary school, as an alternative location for the secondary school previously proposed at Upton Park. The development at Norwood Farm/Upton Lodge would now fall within the catchment of the existing Duston School (on Berrywood Road), Campion School at Bugbrooke and the proposed school at Dallington Grange.

### **Country Park / Open Space – including loss of open countryside**

- 6.60 The proposed country park has 37ha set out, in total, and could provide a considerable asset for the area, including nearby villages (eg Harpole and Kislingbury). The majority of the proposed country park would, be located within SNC's administrative area (29 ha), leaving 7.7ha within the adjoining site, in Northampton. The whole country park would be located to the west of the SLRR. It is proposed that the country park could incorporate sports provision and changing facilities, new wetland habitats, a network of footpaths and cycleways and improvements to landscaping. Any formal sports provision would be located in the south of the area, with the informal recreational opportunities located to the north where the topography is steeper. The precise extent of any pitches and the size and type of any sports pavilion would fall to be considered and determined at a later stage, through reserved matters applications.
- 6.61 Although this may be considered somewhat distant from a good proportion of the residential development proposed on the Upton Lodge site, it is recognised that the topography of the rest of the application site is such that it would require significant additional earth works for any sports pitch provision elsewhere. Open space requirements for residential developments are outlined in the Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy. For this requirement the Council analysed all the open space in the District and has split it into the following categories:  
Amenity Open Space  
Children's Play Space  
Outdoor Sports Facilities/Playing Fields
- 6.62 Each of these categories of space is expected to be provided in major housing developments, such as Norwood Farm/Upton Lodge. The following standards have been set per one thousand population:
- Amenity Open Space - 0.6ha
  - Children's Play Space - 0.4ha
  - Outdoor Sports Facilities/Playing Fields - 2.0ha
- 6.63 Children's play areas were factored into the development parcels when the Masterplan was drawn up. While this does mean it is not possible to give an exact area for this category, it can be confirmed that enough land has been provided to meet the Council's standards for play space.
- 6.64 The developers would provide the country park and arrangements for its future maintenance (for 30 – 40 years) and management would need to form part of the terms of a S.106 Agreement. Some 29ha of the park (the remaining 7.7ha being in Northampton, adjoining) constitutes part of this application. The long-term management of the country park is a potentially significant issue, but is one that needs to be addressed through the S106 agreement, ahead of any decision to approve being issued. It is possible that this country park would be jointly managed with the proposed Nene Valley Country Park (located to the south of the A45 Weedon Road), to which it would be linked by a controlled pedestrian crossing (details of which would be approved at reserved matters stage).
- 6.65 The development of this site would result in a loss of open countryside, with

Important Local Gap and Special Landscape Area designations in the Local Plan. This would be mitigated by the fact that about half of the application site, would consist of the country park and, therefore, be a key component in helping to maintain an effective Local Gap. It would also help to provide a transition between existing and proposed development on the western edge of Northampton, and the Special Landscape Area. Following negotiation, an agreement has been reached with the applicants to provide a northern extension of the proposed parkland area, up to a new roundabout junction on Berrywood Road. This should further enhance the country park's potential mitigating effect.

### **Phasing of development**

6.66 A potential phasing programme was included with both applications, when they were originally submitted to SNC and WNDC. Broadly speaking development was intended to commence in the south of the site, towards Weedon Road, spreading north along the proposed SLRR.

6.67 The applicants have recently provided updated forecast completion dates, specifically for the various phases of the Norwood Farm application, as follows:

<b>Phase One</b>	110 - 140 dwellings	2012 - 2015
<b>Phase Two</b>	220 - 280 dwellings	2012 - 2017
<b>Phase Three</b>	55 - 75 dwellings	2015 - 2016
<b>Phase Four</b>	220 - 280 dwellings	2015 – 2020
<b>Total</b>	<b>605 - 775 dwellings</b>	<b>2012 - 2020</b>

6.68 This shows that most of the housing should come forward between 2012 and 2020 and that even if Upton Lodge (incl. Norwood Farm) is fully built out by 2020, there may still not be enough housing land identified to meet local needs. The development of Norwood Farm is important if SNC is to continue to meet targets, even once these have been revised following abolition of the RSS, to the end of the Plan period in 2026.

6.69 The phasing programme does not include the provision of the Country Park, which is considered a principle omission. The country park should be included in the overall phasing programme and should be delivered at an early stage in the event that Members resolve to grant planning permission. The phasing programme also excludes the provision of the local centre / school, employment land and POS and the necessary links to the uses. Again, these important components of the development (many of which relate to the associated, adjoining site) would need to be secured through a S.106 Agreement.

### **Developer Contributions (Section 106 Agreement)**

6.70 The development is of a significant scale and raises on and off site infrastructure issues, alongside the future management of the development outlined throughout this report. The applicants have indicated that, in principle, they are prepared to make the necessary developer contributions, to enable the development to proceed.

6.71 It is proposed that a single S.106 Agreement be drawn-up, in conjunction with the adjoining WNDC site, which is complementary to the Norwood Farm element of the proposals. WNDC would be using their 'Standard Charge' to secure most of the developer contributions, and if it does not prove possible for SNC to be party to this type of legal agreement, then a separate S.106 Agreement between SNC, the developers and other parties, would have to be completed.

6.72 There will still be a requirement for site-specific issues to be set out in any S.106 and these are indicated below, based upon the current assessment and matters

identified through the consultation process, to date:

*Masterplan:* Submission and approval of a masterplan prior to the submission of any reserved matters applications.

*Transport Infrastructure:* To be determined following the conclusion of current modelling. Delivery of the SLRR across the site, required to facilitate development.

*Design Codes:* Submission and approval of Design Code prior to the submission of any subsequent Reserved Matters Application. Reserved matters applications must fulfil all of the design principles identified in the Code(s).

*Affordable Housing:* 40% of units to be affordable homes. The design of the affordable housing will need to be in accordance with local needs as established in local authority housing studies.

*Sustainability:* All residential units to be built at Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes as a minimum. All non residential buildings to be constructed to BREEAM very good standard. Sustainability Strategy including the provision of SUDS and the future maintenance and management of SUDS. Submission of a Green Travel Plan to set out clear targets and penalties addressing any failure to achieve a modal shift.

*Community Facilities & Recreation:* Provision of community facilities including school and medical facilities and their subsequent transfer to the relevant authorities. Phasing programme for the delivery of community facilities. Open space and play equipment provision, phasing and management. Review of indoor and outdoor sports facilities to be undertaken to inform the spending on S.106 contributions, to ensure the appropriate provision of facilities including sports facilities.

*Delivery of Green Infrastructure:* Provision of the country park, its maintenance (for 30-40 years) and management. Pedestrian link between Country Park and Weedon Road (leading to proposed Nene Valley Country Park).

*Employment:* Provision of employment facilities, restricted to B1 and B2. Phasing requirements within S.106 to secure the provision of employment in tandem with residential development, to secure a sustainable development. Local skills provision/training. (This relates to the application on the adjoining site.)

*Park and Ride:* Provision of Park and Ride facility and its completion following the occupation of a specified number of units. Subsequent transfer to NCC. (This relates to the application on the adjoining site.)

*Development Phasing:* A phasing programme will need to be submitted to restrict the amount of development that can be built until the SLRR is built to the northern boundary of the application site and to secure the provision of the country park. Lastly, the phasing programme does not include the provision of the local centre / school, employment land and POS and the necessary links to the uses. Again, a S.106 Agreement should ensure the timely provision of all community facilities as the wider development proceeds, should permission be granted.

*Others:* Public art and place making. SNC monitoring and staff costs.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposed development would introduce new buildings onto the site. Through pre- and post-application discussions the applicants have attempted to respond to the visual impact of the proposals with a combination of landscaping, layout and building design changes. The environmental impact of the development has been subject to consideration as set out in the Environmental Statement. Further technical investigations have been provided in respect of matters raised through the consultation exercise.
- 7.2 The only matter not fully-resolved relates to strategic highway infrastructure, although a programme for resolution is clear and is unlikely to have implications for the detailed design or associated impacts of the planning application. The representations made are considered in the respective sections of the report. Although the matter of land stability appears to have prompted renewed or continuing concerns from a local residents group, this is considered to be adequately addressed, insofar as it is relevant to the grant of planning permission, through the provision of further reports by the applicants' consultants.
- 7.3 Subject to a S106 agreement and appropriate conditions and following the resolution of the outstanding issue on transportation, there are considered to be significant material considerations as set out in the report to justify a departure from Local Plan Policy in this case and the application should therefore be referred to the Secretary of State as a departure from the development plan with a recommendation for approval.

## **8. REASON FOR APPROVAL**

- 8.1 The principle of development in this location is considered to be acceptable having regard to the local housing need and the policy objectives for the area, set out in Local Plan Policy and Supplementary Planning Guidance and specifically, the planning objectives set out in relevant 'saved' policies of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan 1997 (Para. 5.2, above, refers).
- 8.2 The proposed development would introduce new buildings onto the site. Through pre- and post-application discussions the applicants have responded to the visual impact of the proposals with a combination of landscaping, layout and building design changes. The environmental impact of the development has been subject to consideration as set out in the Environmental Statement. Based upon all material planning considerations the impacts identified are considered to be capable of satisfactory mitigation by specific terms and conditions.
- 8.3 Whilst the proposed development is covered by Policies H6, EV2, EV7 and EV8 in the SNLP; in this case it is considered that assisting with the delivery of a sustainable urban extension together with the provision of new on-site landscaping and public open space provision, supports the delivery of other development plan policy objectives, so that development of the land covered by Policies H6, EV2, EV7 and EV8, as a departure from policy does not result in significant harmful impacts to the Development Plan policy objectives for the area or impacts upon other material planning considerations that cannot be mitigated through resolving to grant permission, subject to conditions being attached and an appropriate legal agreement being entered into.