

Application Number :
S/2010/0332/MAO

Parish : Brackley

Case Officer : Peter Bateman

Applicant : Providence Court Investments (Brackley) Ltd

Location : -
Brackley Sawmills Northampton
Road Brackley

Description : -
Residential development of 130 dwellings
(outline)

Recommendation - Approval

Conditions :-

1. Application for the approval of all the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission and the development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of two years from the date of this permission or before the expiration of one year from the date of the approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved whichever is the later.
2. No development shall take place until approval of the details of the layout, appearance, landscaping and scale of the development (referred to as the 'reserved matters') has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
3. The landscape works required by condition 2 above shall include planting plans; written specifications; schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate; tree protection measures; existing and proposed finished levels or contours and all hard landscaping.
4. Prior to the approval of the reserved matters, a plan showing the details of the finished floor levels of the proposed dwellings in relation to existing ground levels on the site and adjacent dwellings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
5. No more than 130 dwellings shall be accommodated on the site.
6. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first occupation of any of the dwellings or in accordance with any other program of landscaping works previously approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any trees and shrubs which within a period of five

years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent for any variation.

7. Prior to the approval of the reserved matters full details of the means of enclosure along all boundaries and within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and such means of enclosure, shall be erected prior to the first occupation of those dwellings.
8. Prior to first occupation of the first phase of the development hereby permitted the following highway works shall be completed in accordance with full engineering, drainage, signal, and constructional details, to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Southern access junction (Trade Counter) – Ghost Island Right turn priority junction on Northampton Road, to include pedestrian refuges on Northampton Road. Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311- SK014 (Rev.B). Northern access junction (Residential) – 50m ICD, 4 arm roundabout access on Northampton Road. Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B). Link Road from Northern Access Junction to northwest boundary of the site to be 7.3m wide, with 2 simple priority junctions for residential access. Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B). Revised priority junction (as per extant 2007 permission) at Northampton Road/Turweston Road, required if a roundabout in this location has not already been provided by others. Footways adjacent to Northampton Road and new link road, Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B), including a connection to the existing petrol filling station to the north of the site. A signal controlled pedestrian crossing on Northampton Road, and any footways required to tie in to existing footways, south of junction with Turweston Road, Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B). Two Bus stops located between the two site access junctions on Northampton Road, one either side of Northampton Road, shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B), to include the provision of shelters, bus boarders, truform poles, timetable information, real time information, and appropriate road markings.
9. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted full engineering, drainage, signal, and constructional details, of the internal highway layout, including roads, junctions, driveways, garages, parking, and footways etc shall be submitted to and agreed by the local planning authority, and no work is to begin on site until full technical approval has been granted by the local highway authority. Once agreed the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.
10. Prior to first occupation of the first phase of the development hereby permitted all highway crossovers, other than those shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B), must be reinstated as

footway in accordance with details to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. Once agreed the reinstatement shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

11. Prior to the commencement of any part of the development hereby permitted, a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The construction of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.
12. No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
13. No dwelling shall be occupied until any approved remedial works to mitigate any potential site contamination, have been carried out and a full validation report has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The developer shall draw to the attention of the Local Planning Authority the presence of any unsuspected contamination found during the development. In this event, no development shall continue until a programme of investigation and/or remedial work to include methods of monitoring and certification of such work undertaken has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No dwelling shall be occupied until the approved remedial works, monitoring and certification of the works have been carried out and a full validation report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
14. The mitigation measures identified in section 4 of the ecological report received by the Local Planning Authority on the 16th March 2010 (and any subsequent updated ecological reports which form part of the application submission) shall be fully implemented and the precise management plan submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed in writing. No dwelling shall be occupied until the approved management plan and works have been carried out and a full ?.....?and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
15. All site clearance (including vegetation removal and work to existing hedgerows) should be timed so as to avoid the bird nesting/breeding season. If this is not possible, then a pre-works check and if necessary mitigation methodology should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist in accordance with details to be submitted and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before such works commence.
16. No new 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 approved works shall be implemented prior to the occupation of any buildings within the relevant phase(s) of the development.

17. Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be in accordance with the principles as set out in the Flood Risk Assessment by Cannon Consulting Engineers, reference CCE/B311/FRA, dated March 2010. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.
18. Notwithstanding the submitted details, Piling or any other foundation designs using penetrative methods shall not be carried out other than with the express written consent of the Local Planning Authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to groundwater.
19. No infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground shall be carried out, other than with the express written consent of the Local Planning Authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to controlled waters.
20. F31 Prohibited working hours during construction
21. K2 Samples of materials - single or few buildings
22. Prior to the approval of the reserved matters, details of the proposed location and method of bin storage shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
23. I14 Floodlighting/security lighting prohibited without consent
24. Prior to the approval of the reserved matters, the siting, design and colour of any external meter boxes, external oil or LPG tanks, or other similar structures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter so retained.
25. Notwithstanding the submitted details the dwellings hereby permitted shall achieve a minimum of Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. No dwelling shall be occupied until a final Code Certificate has been issued for that dwelling certifying that Code Level 3 has been achieved.
26. Prior to the approval of reserved matters a detailed noise assessment indicating any proposed mitigation measures and monitoring methodology (as a follow on to the submitted noise report) shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed in writing. Once approved the mitigation

measures shall be fully implemented, maintained and monitored in accordance with the agreed details. Any variation shall require the written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons :-

1. RA1
2. This permission is in outline only and all these matters are reserved.
3. To define the landscaping requirements.
4. In the interests of visual amenity and to protect the character and appearance of the area and the amenities of adjoining neighbours.
5. To define the permission and for the avoidance of doubt.
6. RC5
7. In the interests of visual and residential amenity.
8. RE1
9. RE1
10. RE1
11. RE1
12. RF12
13. To ensure that any ground and water contamination is identified and adequately addressed to ensure the safety of the development, the environment and to ensure the site is suitable for the proposed use.
14. To ensure the development will not cause harm to protected species or their habitats and to ensure the mitigation and management of the ecology recommendations are satisfactory, precise and carried in a sustainable manner.
15. To ensure the development will not cause harm to protected species or their habitats.
16. To prevent flooding, pollution and detriment to public amenity and biodiversity.
17. To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, improve habitat and amenity, and ensure future maintenance of the system.
18. The site overlies principal aquifer. The EA recommend that piling on contaminated sites underlain by aquifers is avoided where possible, and that

non-invasive methods, such as rafts, should be used instead.

19. To prevent the pollution of controlled waters.
20. RG3
21. RK1
22. In the interests of visual amenity.
23. To preserve the amenities of the locality and prevent adverse light pollution.
24. In the interests of visual amenity.
25. To define the permission.
26. To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of the properties and those in the surrounding area from the adverse effects of noise.

S/2010/0332/MAO

WARD : Brackley East

WARD MEMBER : Cllr Geoffrey Nuelle & Cllr Blake Stimpson

The application was subject to a Pre-Committee Members site visit, which took place on Tuesday 25th May 2010.

The applicant also undertook a Pre-Submission Presentation followed by an open Questions and Answer Session to Members at the Council Offices in March 2010.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This triangular-shaped site, historically known as Brackley Sawmills, has a total area of some 7 ha although this application relates to only 5.62 ha. The site is relatively flat although the design and access statement states that the site slopes gently eastward and there is a fall in height of approximately 10 m across the site's width. This equates to a gradient of approximately 1:23.
- 1.2 There are a number of disused and recently demolished commercial buildings which were the former Hawkins and Salmon sawmill. A wholesale builders' merchant (Gibbs & Dandy) and a mobile catering facility are located on the northern part of the site, with gated access from Northampton Road.
- 1.3 The site is bounded by the Northampton Road to the east, with a long-disused railway cutting to the west, beyond which is residential development including John Clare Close and Wordsworth Close which are modern housing developments of brick construction. To the south west are older industrial buildings which are occupied by H. Bronnley soap works. To the north of the Sawmills site is a parcel of land referred to as 'Robson Land'. This is a greenfield location identified for residential use in the emerging Brackley Master Plan. To the north west is Radstone

Fields where there is a current application for a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) for 1000 houses, site for primary school and local centre currently being considered by this Council. To the north east is a BP petrol filling station incorporating a Marks & Spencer shop. To the east is a parcel of land referred to as 'Smyth Osborne land' which is greenfield, but has a committee resolution (and master plan support) for commercial use. Beyond this is the A43 dual carriageway, the main trunk road linking the M40 and M1 motorways.

- 1.4 Vehicular access to the site is currently possible at four different points along the Northampton Road although to secure the site (as a large proportion of it is disused and in the process of being dismantled) and to prevent unauthorised access three have been blocked up. This is because the buildings are structurally unsound and some contain asbestos. Many views into the site from the Northampton Road and from the existing residential development, adjoining to the west, are screened by mature trees and shrubs. There is a pavement from the site all the way down Northampton Road into the town centre around 1.6 km to the south.
- 1.5 The site has been subject to contamination in part due to its previous use as a saw mill where tanalising of timber has taken place over a long period of time and also from the infilling of the former railway cutting to the western edge of the site.
- 1.6 The very northern end of the site is within the area of land identified as the preferred route for Central Government's proposed High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) which was released earlier in the year.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 S/2007/0824/PO Demolition of existing buildings and development of a business park comprising uses within Class B1, Class B2 and Wholesale Builders' Merchants/Trade Counter uses (sui generis uses comprising mainly of B8 with ancillary offices and trade counter), new roundabout access, internal roads, alterations to public highway, structural landscaping, surface water balancing facility and open space. Approval (30/08/2007)
- 2.2 S/2006/0440/PO Demolition of existing buildings and development of a business park comprising uses within Class B1 (light industry, offices, research & development), Class B2 (General Industrial) and Wholesale Builders' Merchants, plus new roundabout access, structural landscaping and open space. Approval (17/05/2006)
- 2.3 S/2005/1503/PO Demolition of existing buildings and development of a business park comprising uses within Class B1 (light industry, offices, research & development), Class B2 (General Industrial) and Wholesale Builders' Merchants, plus new roundabout access, structural landscaping and open space. Refusal (23/02/2006)
- 2.4 S/2005/0814/PO Demolition of existing buildings and development of a business park comprising Class B1 and B2 employment uses together with a hotel, leisure and conference centre, residential care home and crèche, car show rooms, wholesale builders merchants, plus new roundabout access, structural landscaping and public open spaces with other ancillary works. Withdrawn (13/09/2005)
- 2.5 S/1998/0793/P Change Of Use To Storage And Refurbishment Of Portable

Buildings Approval (05/10/1998)

- 2.6 S/1997/0247/P Use Of Land For Storage Of Pallets (Retrospective) Approval (10/04/1997)
- 2.7 S/1997/0208/P Use Of Part Of Land For Trailer Storage (Retrospective) Approval (10/04/1997)
- 2.8 The current application was subject to some pre-application discussions under reference P/2010/0019/PRE although these had not been fully concluded at the point of submission.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks outline residential development of 130 dwellings including the construction of a roundabout on the Northampton Road and the formation of public open space.
- 3.2 The application is an outline application in which the matters of principle and access are applied for with the following aspects reserved for later consideration: Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale. The application shows a link road coming off the Northampton Road and travelling across the site to access the Radstone Fields SUE and Robson Land.
- 3.3 The application site is the northern end of the Sawmills site only i.e. 5.62 ha. The southern end is the site identified as a possible hospital site for Brackley in the master plan. There have been extensive pre-application discussions with the Primary Care Trust and the relevant developers, but this aspect of the site is not related to this application. However, for information and to ensure the scheme is considered in a holistic manner a plan has been provided showing the hospital and care home indicatively as well as the Robson Land to the north in an attempt to show how the Sawmills site (subject of this application) would fit in with the strategic vision for the development of the northern part of Brackley.
- 3.4 The application has been submitted with a number of technical reports and other information including: A Design and Access Statement, Transport Assessment, Travel Plan, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Cultural Heritage Assessment, Air Quality Assessment, Noise Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment, Contamination Report, Ecological Assessment, A Statement of Community Involvement, an Employment Land availability study, Green Infrastructure Strategy. A number of these reports have been amended following requests from Statuary consultees during the application process. One such example is the draft heads of terms have been expanded to a full draft S106 legal agreement which is nearing completion at the time of writing this report.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 BRACKLEY TOWN COUNCIL: No observations
- 4.2 BRACKLEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION: Not received
- 4.3 TURWESTON PARISH COUNCIL: Expressed concern about traffic management and the scheme needs to ensure further traffic does not go through Turweston where existing problems exist.
- 4.4 ADJOINING LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

- AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL: No objection
 - BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (adjoining Local Highway Authority LHA): Not received
- 4.5 NCC HIGHWAYS: The LHA has no objection to this application, subject to conditions and S106 Heads of Terms being imposed to accompany any subsequent planning permission. The conditions relate to the following elements of the development: Highway mitigation; internal layout; construction management and S106 contributions towards public transport; travel plan and implementation. A financial contribution of £200,000 is to be provided to the Local Highway Authority to enhance the existing Brackley Buzzer bus service to provide an hourly service to the site utilising the proposed bus stops on Northampton Road, Monday to Saturday, for a 5 year tender period. The Brackley Buzzer is a local bus route which links the following locations in Brackley - Tesco via Oxford Road, Bridge Street, Market Place, High Street, Halse Road, Pavillons Way, Springfield Way, Leisure Centre (for Surgery), Springfield Way, Pavillons Way, Martial Daire Boulevard, Stuart Road, Pavillons Way, Banbury Road, Westhill Avenue, Waynflete Avenue, Manor Road, Banbury Road, Bridge Street, Churchill Way, Bridge Street, Oxford Road, Tesco's Store, Oxford Road, Bridge Street to Market Place. The service operates Monday to Friday only and is subsidised by Northamptonshire County Council and Brackley Town Council.
- 4.6 HIGHWAYS AGENCY: Originally raised some concerns with the scheme as submitted, subject to some alteration stated the following: A43 Contribution We do not consider that the contribution of £12,000 offered is consistent with the nil detriment costing methodology that has been used to determine contributions for other applications. It is our view that the Brackley Sawmills development would warrant a contribution of between £25,000 - £30,000. If your client is willing to make an offer in line with this, such an offer be accepted with no further justification. However, you are free to undertake a full nil detriment costing exercise (in line with the nil detriment costing methodology) to determine the exact amount that a nil detriment scheme would cost.
- 4.7 Travel Plan I note that the revised Travel Plan has been modified, and is now generally acceptable. However, the word 'should' at 5.1.2 should be replaced with 'will'. Following this amendment, the Plan will be acceptable. I would conclude that once the A43 Contribution and Travel Plan issues identified above have been resolved, I will be in a position to remove the holding direction, subject to the necessary wording being inserted into the Section 106 agreement for the development.
- 4.8 SNC STRATEGIC POLICY (including Economic Development): No objection to the principle of change of use subject to the applicant contribution to offsetting the loss of an employment site. If we are to accept the argument from the applicant that employment land is not a viable option at this time, we are allowing the applicant to take a short term view which was at odds with the view taken by both the applicant and SNC in 2007 when planning permission was granted for employment use. Given the Councils remit to consider longer term implications, if employment use is now to be lost in favour of housing, then there needs to be some form of financial contribution to other employment projects to enable the Council to invest in projects that will bolster existing employment in the town which has an under provision of

employment within it.

- 4.9 SNC LEISURE SERVICES: In terms of the contributions guide it's laid down as £1255 per dwelling i.e. $130 \times 1255 = \mathbf{£163,500}$ within the leisure contributions guide the threshold of 50 – 199 would trigger the need for a small community facility at level one as well as a commuted sum for strategic facilities 2-6 as described in paragraph 4.2. In terms of POS A commuted sum for the provision of new or improvements to, small community facilities (Level 1 of the Strategic Recreational and Leisure Facilities) and more strategic facilities (levels 2-6 of the Strategic Recreational and Leisure Facilities set out in paragraph 4.2. Types of provision could include a pocket park or play area.
- 4.10 Sites of 50 – 199 dwellings. On site provision of for the provision of new or improvements to small community facilities (Level 1 of the Strategic Recreational and Leisure Facilities) and a commuted sum for the more strategic facilities (levels 2-6 of the Strategic Recreational and Leisure Facilities set out in paragraph above). In terms of provision it would be anticipated that public amenity space as well as play space would be applicable, the maintenance figures are depicted below. Public Amenity Space maintenance costs £3 per dwelling per year x 15 years = **£5850** Equipped Play Area maintenance costs £44.60 per dwelling per year x 15 years = **£86,970** In addition £300 per dwelling for 'strategic facilities' will be requested. $£300 \times 130 = \mathbf{£39,000}$ Total contribution **£295,320**
- 4.11 SNC STRATEGIC HOUSING: Housing Needs - The West Northants Housing Market Assessment (2007) and the West Northants Housing Needs Estimates (2008) all highlight the increasing shortfall of affordable housing across the district. The most recent of these documents estimate an annual need for 191 affordable dwellings per year. A housing need survey in Brackley in September 2008 identified the following housing need for the town. This identified need from the existing local community and did not take into account households that wish to move to this market town.

48 units for rent

- 30 x 1 or 2 bed flat or house
- 5 x 1 or 2 bed bungalows or ground floor flat
- 1 x 2 or 3 bed bungalow or ground floor flat

- 5 x 2 bed house
- 7 x 3 bed house

4 units for shared ownership

- 1 x 1 or 2 bed flat or house
- 1 x 2 bed house
- 2 x 3 bed house

- 4.12 A further check of the housing register has revealed that there are currently 209 households expressing a preference to live in Brackley. This demonstrates that there is significant housing need in the town to be met and that this far exceeds the levels of need identified by the housing need survey. A variety of household types are in need, however, the largest need is among young single people, single people

over 60 years of age and small families. In terms of the council's current allocation policy this translates into a need for 2 and 3 bedroom properties. However further discussion on the appropriate affordable housing mix would be sought at early stage in this application.

- 4.13 With the current proposal for 130 dwellings, we would expect to achieve 40% affordable housing for this site (52 units) in line with the affordable housing SPG (2003), with a split of 75% rented and 25% as an intermediate product. The type of intermediate product will be dictated by the market conditions, however it is likely to be either NBHB or Rent to Homebuy.
- 4.14 Housing Mix - It is expected that the affordable housing provision be of a suitable size and mix. The applicant will need to satisfy the local planning authority that the mix of unit types address the local housing need based on up-to-date housing market intelligence. Due to their limited scope for sustainable living we would not encourage the development of 1 bedroom properties. We would want full input in discussions on this at an early stage should outline planning permission be granted.
- 4.15 Design Standards - All affordable housing is expected to meet as a minimum the Homes and Communities Agency 'Design and Quality Standards.' We would expect the units to meet, as a minimum, the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3. We would welcome design proposals that went beyond the minimum standards.
- 4.16 Funding - Affordable housing provided on development sites is secured through legal agreements under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Acts. The Council expects developers to have considered the financial implications of the affordable housing policy requirements when purchasing the land for development. It is expected that should an applicant consider they are unable to provide the required planning contributions (including affordable housing) then they would need to support their case with financial evidence. Where applicants submit evidence of non-viability the Council will expect to see the calculations set out in enough detail for viability to be properly assessed.
- 4.17 In terms of public subsidy for affordable housing, the availability of grants is likely to decrease in coming years. Developers should not expect as a matter of course grant financing from the Homes and Communities Agency unless added value is included and can be demonstrated. This applies to social rented and intermediate housing. Added value can include such things as higher standards of development, unusually high elements of social rented development and extra energy efficiency measures, which would meet a higher level of the Code for Sustainable Homes. If the applicant can demonstrate that levels of grant funding are required for the development to be delivered then the Strategic Housing Team will utilise the Three Dragons South Northamptonshire Council's Development Economics toolkit to test varying grant scenarios and what added value grant would bring to the development.
- 4.18 NATURAL ENGLAND: Request additional information in the form of amended surveys and a Green Infrastructure. The applicant has provided a document following this request.
- 4.19 Biodiversity – We believe there is low impact to the Helmdon SSSI to the north with the current scheme but if access to the north is planned it should be in line with a management plan to prevent harm to the SSSI. Some of the surveys (newts and bats) are dated and need updating. Surveys in relation to Badgers are satisfactory.

Concurs with Wildlife Trust comments relating to the small blue species of butterfly. Landscape The site is not within a special landscape designation. Green Infrastructure improvements are needed which should be through a strategy or management plan.

- 4.20 NORTHANTS BAT GROUP: Further detail with regard to the bat survey is needed. Bats are known to be in the area. Comments concerning the revised bat survey have not yet been received – please await update
- 4.21 NORTHANTS WILDLIFE TRUST: Contributions to a Green Infrastructure network. By constructing a housing development in the proposed location, within the corridor route of a disused railway line, the potential for Green Infrastructure (GI) delivery, in the form of wildlife habitats connectivity, could potentially be significantly reduced. On the other hand, by constructing a housing development in the proposed location, the potential for GI delivery, in the form of corridor / habitat connectivity, will be a highly significant opportunity which we would recommend that your Authority capitalises upon to the full. Increasing connectivity of habitats is a priority for this location due to the concentration of both existing and potential designated wildlife site areas that lie either along, or adjacent to, its linear route.
- 4.22 Increasing connectivity of habitats should be a top priority for all areas of the county in order to provide for both sustainable and robust areas of the countryside under suitable ecological management and for a joined-up 'Living Landscape' that will allow species and habitats to better adapt to the effects of climate change. This Application Site lies right in the heart of a Sub-Regional GI Corridor. It also coincides with a GI route formed by the Great Central Railway disused line corridor too. These GI links will provide a valuable addition to this area of the county in terms of biodiversity along with the nearby SSSI and the other established areas of wildlife habitats. In light of this then, it is disappointing to note that the application does not appear to provide any real detailed treatment of, or precise information about, the Green Infrastructure element to its proposal.
- 4.23 Cumulative Impacts on local biodiversity and potential GI networks. The Wildlife Trust is of the view that this Application does not adequately deal with the potential 'pinch-pressure' effect that this particular residential development scheme, taken together with the proposed urban extension at the 'Radstone Fields' site to the north-west of it and the proposed healthcare facility to the south of it, will cumulatively have upon the potential to deliver a high-quality, sustainable GI network link north-to-south along the route of the disused railway line. Of particular concern, is the depiction, on the 'Illustrative Landscape Masterplan' Drawing, Ref. P.0245_17-2, dated 8th March 2010, of a potential access route, for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, from this proposed residential development here at the Sawmills across the width of the disused railway line GI link and on into the proposed 'Radstone Fields' site. This potential 'locking-out' of strong GI linkages and biodiversity resources goes against the policy and guidance given within national (PPS9).
- 4.24 Mitigation, enhancements and future management. The Wildlife Trust is of the view that, with reference to the ecologists' recommendations made throughout Section 4 of their report within the E.S. document; all of the proposed mitigation measures therein must indeed be fully implemented. However, also of critical importance will be the requirement for an ecological management plan (EMP), incorporating a comprehensive Monitoring Programme, to be produced in order to inform and guide

the future delivery of all of the biodiversity enhancements across the whole site area and its environs. These objectives might be best delivered by the appending of strong, suitably-worded Planning Conditions and / or the insertion of relevant clauses into a S106 Agreement, as appropriate.

- 4.25 Additional Comments. Welcomes the proposals for the overall incorporation of open / green space within this housing development. Paragraph 3.48 of the ecologists' report makes a reference to the Small Blue Butterfly. This is now a very rare butterfly species in Northamptonshire – it is listed within the Red Data Book for our county – and the last known site for its presence is the Local Wildlife Site known as 'Brackley Railway Embankment' which lies not far to the south of this Application Site along the route of the Great Central Railway disused line GI corridor. The Wildlife Trust has a vision that aims to support this particular butterfly species and to try aid its re-establishment and spread within this local area of the county. In order to explain some of the background to this situation, we have included here with this letter a schematic leaflet all about the Small Blue Butterfly Project. Therefore, the Small Blue's situation simply adds greater importance and significance to the strategic need here to join pieces of habitat together and to create high-quality GI network linkages. For instance, why not positively set out to make provision for the food plant of the Small Blue Butterfly – Kidney Vetch – to be planted / sown into an area of suitably-created habitat running through this proposed development site.
- 4.26 SNC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY OFFICER: No objection. Given the size of the site and the lack of an overarching strategy for the district / area I think this document covers the main issues. I would suggest the document is a GI Plan for the site rather than a strategy but that just semantics. I can't really comment on the appropriateness of their proposals not being an ecologist and will defer to the specialists. I note the S106 covers the land transfer of the open space and recreation, does this include all the GI area and how will the land be management in perpetuity, we need a Management Plan as well either through condition or S106.
- 4.27 NCC GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY OFFICER: No objection. GI Linkages and Impact on Brackley to Helmdon Disused Railway SSSI. At present there is a contradiction within the document in that it rightly indicates that access from the site to the SSSI to the north is obstructed by dense vegetation making it hard to access. However there also seems to be an ambition to use the site to provide improved green infrastructure links for north Brackley and open up access to the SSSI. The application needs to decide which of these options it wants to achieve as at present it come across as confused thinking. Using this development to open up new access and thus improve the GI network of the town is fine in terms of the overall strategy, however such an approach needs to be carefully managed to ensure that new access towards the SSSI is well controlled to ensure it does not result in a deterioration of the habitat for which it has been designated. At present the SSSI is in poor condition in places and increased use should not contribute towards further deterioration. A financial contribution from the development in the form of a S106 agreement could potentially be provided to facilitate good management of the link between the site and the SSSI and provide interpretation for walkers using the new linkage explaining about the biodiversity and history of the old railway line.
- 4.28 Bat Barn. The provision of a bat barn will be a useful addition the site; however appropriate advice should be sought on the form and construction of this building to ensure that it is appropriate for use by bat species that are known to be using the

site. Bat barns have been used on sites in other counties and advice could be sought from Northants Bat Group and the Bat Conservation Trust. It should be well constructed and built in such a way that it is difficult to vandalise and gain access to. This should include being constructed from materials that are less susceptible to arson attacks (e.g. limited use of combustible materials within the fabric of the building). The condition of the building should be managed over time as part of the Ecological Management Plan (see below) to ensure that vegetation is not allowed to engulf the building over time and disrupt entry points to the building. The barn should be located such that it is not overlooked by any existing lighting which may affect any bats using it. A night time check of the location should be carried out to ensure it is not encroached on by lights from nearby houses in Wordsworth Close e.g. from security lighting.

- 4.29 Grassland Creation. The intention to create new areas of grassland along the route of the old railway is a good use of this area, which could provide potentially high quality habitats. Notwithstanding this, consideration should be given to the character of the grassland. At present it is suggested that a neutral mix would be used but given the nearby habitats and the potential underlying soils in this area it would perhaps be better to aim for a calcareous grassland mix that mirrors the species found on the nearby SSSI. Not only does this extend the potential habitat linkages in the area but also has the potential to contribute in the longer term towards the calcareous grassland creation targets in the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 4.30 Ecological Management Plan (EMP) The suggestions and recommendations in the GI strategy for the site such as the planting of kidney vetch for the small blue butterfly all seem sensible subject to a few minor amendments. The strategy suggests an EMP should be produced to guide the management of the site and my suggestion would be that all of the various suggestions from the strategy should be included more formally within the EMP and that a fully enforceable condition should be included with the permission to ensure its production and that the works and ongoing management are carried out. I would suggest that the EMP needs to be produced within 6 months of permission being granted and should be available to various stakeholders such as the Wildlife Trust for comment.
- 4.31 NCC RIGHTS OF WAY: No objection or comments.
- 4.32 RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION: No comment
- 4.33 NCC ARCHAEOLOGY: The applicant has submitted a Cultural Heritage Assessment produced by Cotswold Archaeology (2010) with the application which aims to provide information regarding the nature and extent of the cultural heritage resource within the development area. The assessment concludes that the area has potential for Iron Age and Roman activity. The site is currently predominately hardstanding and as such it is reasonable to assume that it is likely to have had an impact on any archaeological deposits present. However although this may have resulted in truncation of some shallower deposits there is still the potential for significant remains to survive below the hardstanding.
- 4.34 I note that Cotswold Archaeology recognise the need for a mitigation strategy and also that this should be undertaken in consultation with the County Archaeological Advisor. In most occasions a site of this size in a landscape of identified archaeological potential would require pre determination evaluation. However in this

particular occasion due to the extent of the hardstanding within the greater area of the site I would agree that the archaeological evaluation would be best undertaken post determination. In order to allow the best opportunity to identify archaeological deposits the removal of the hardstanding will need to be undertaken in conjunction with the archaeological contractors. The proposed application will have a detrimental impact upon any archaeological deposits present. This does not however represent an over-riding constraint on the development provided that adequate provision is made for the investigation and recording of any remains that are affected as per the guidance within PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment to any permission granted in respect of this application.

- 4.35 I suggest the following condition: 'No development shall take place within the area indicated until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.'
- 4.36 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY: Environmental Infrastructure - Thank you for forwarding the 'Suggested Informative Statements and Conditions Report' sent by Anglian Water, reference 1106/SP10(003), dated 18 May 2010 in relation to the above development. We did consider that the forthcoming Brackley master plan could provide a strategic solution to Brackley's environmental infrastructure issues, as opposed to looking at individual applications in isolation. However, subject to Anglian Water confirming both sufficient water resource capacity and that the water supply network system has adequate capacity to serve this development we would be prepared to withdraw our previous objection on environmental infrastructure grounds, subject to the imposition of conditions.
- 4.37 Flood Risk I can confirm that we have now reviewed a Flood Risk Assessment produced by Cannon Consulting Engineers, reference CCE/B311/FRA, dated March 2010. We consider that the details in the FRA have been undertaken in line with Annex E of Planning Policy Statement 25 'Development and Flood Risk' (PPS25), and these are considered appropriate for the scale and nature of the proposed development. Accordingly, we are prepared to withdraw our previous objection on flood risk grounds, subject to the imposition of conditions on any subsequent planning permission granted:
- 4.38 Contamination - The recommendations made for further groundwater investigations to identify and delineate the extent of the groundwater contamination present at the site, followed by remediation if necessary, are generally acceptable. However, further investigation of the identified soil contamination to delineate its vertical and lateral extent, followed by a quantitative assessment of the risk to controlled waters posed by this soil contamination will also be necessary. It will be necessary to determine acceptable remedial targets, (protective of controlled waters) for soils remaining at this site. Under no circumstance should contaminated material be left in the ground without satisfactorily demonstrating that it does not pose an unacceptable risk to controlled waters. Proposals to replace 500mm of soils with clean soils in gardens only may therefore be insufficient for the protection of controlled waters.
- 4.39 A remediation strategy for the whole site will be required following the further investigations and controlled waters QRA. In accordance with the Environment Agency Groundwater Protection Policy, direct discharges into groundwater of

surface water run-off are not normally acceptable except where the prior written consent of the Environment Agency has been given under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991. Such consent may be withheld. As part of our Groundwater Protection Policy all infiltration structures (permeable pavements, infiltration trenches, soakaways, etc.) should be constructed to as shallow a depth as possible to simulate natural infiltration. The base of infiltration structures is to be at least 1.2 metres above the highest seasonal water-table as direct discharges to groundwater are unacceptable. No infiltration structures should be constructed in contaminated land.

- 4.40 ANGLIAN WATER: No objection the site has adequate water supply capacity, foul flows and Brackley Sewage works has adequate capacity. Defers comment on Surface Water Drainage to the Environment Agency.
- 4.41 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: Air Quality, Noise and Contamination -
- 4.42 Air Quality – No objections or observations.
- 4.43 Noise - I am satisfied that the noise assessments detailed in the WBM Reports submitted in support of the proposed development has been undertaken in accordance with the relevant standards and procedures. No adverse comment regarding noise aspect of the proposed development subject to imposition of appropriate safeguarding conditions
- 4.44 Contamination - The report from the Nott Group confirms that there is contamination across the site and that further investigations are taking place. As mentioned in the report, on completion of all necessary site investigations a detailed scheme of remediation will need to be submitted, and approved in writing, to ensure the site is suitable for its proposed use.
- 4.45 PRIMARY CARE TRUST: Not received at the time of writing, please await update
- 4.46 NCC KEY SERVICES: The following contributions will be sought:
- 4.47 Libraries contribution: £ 29,770.00
 - 1 Bed = £116
 - 2 Bed = £155
 - 3 Bed = £229
 - 4 Bed = £290
 - 5 Bed = £ 326
- 4.48 Fire and Rescue contribution: £11,180.00 (£86 per dwelling)
- 4.49 Education contribution: Depends on the final dwelling mix at reserved matters stage, but using the usual multipliers would be based on the following amounts.
 - 1 Bed = £0
 - 2 Bed = £588
 - 3 Bed = £2,756
 - 4 Bed = £5,010
 - 5 Bed = £ 9,828
- 4.50 ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER: There are a number of TPO trees and a great

number of unprotected trees on what appear to be the highway verge to Northampton Road which seems to disappear under an enormous roundabout on the indicative layout. This includes a row of ash trees that have not been replanted after they were felled several years ago, shortly after the TPO was made (a tree replacement notice was served on 5th March 2007 and was never complied with)

- 4.51 Other than the TPO trees and other trees on the Northampton Road mentioned above there are no trees of any particular significance that could be lost. The proposed indicative layout shows plenty of landscaping provision and public open space that will more than make up for any loss of other trees on the inner part of the site. A comprehensive landscaping scheme will need to be agreed and this should include replacement trees to compensate for the amenity value of the trees to be lost.
- 4.52 NORTHANTS POLICE CRIME PREVENTION DESIGN ADVISOR: No objection in principle. I note and welcome the intention to adopt the 'perimeter block' arrangement for most of the development. However, this appears to be undermined by the inclusion of what appear to be 3 parking courts. These should be avoided if possible, as parking courts offer easy access to the rear gardens of dwellings, the preferred route for most burglars, and can be the site of vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour of many types. If the courts are retained, the effects can be mitigated by changing the orientation of some of the dwellings to directly overlook the courts, giving more of a 'mews' feel. This has been achieved at the new Bridleways development in Northampton.
- 4.53 Lighting should be specified to BS5489-1: 2003, and certification produced to verify this. Bollard lighting should be avoided, as it is ineffectual, casting light too low to be of value, and the bollards themselves are easily damaged, whether accidentally or deliberately. The proposed 'landscaped open space' at the western edge of the development needs careful treatment. In urban settings, any footpaths/cycleways which are separate from general movement corridors can be nuisance and anti-social behaviour generators. Brackley in particular, suffers from problems of this nature, and any new development should take this into account. The path must be in open space, and well overlooked. Soft landscaping in the vicinity of the path should be restricted to low-growing varieties.
- 4.54 There are particular concerns regarding the siting of the proposed play area in the north-western corner of the site. It appears to be stuck in a corner of the site, out of the way. Any such facility should be an integral part of the development and well overlooked by neighbouring dwellings. If parents of young children do not feel it is a safe environment, they will not allow them to use it, and it is likely to be 'taken over' by older children and youths. A number of such facilities have been destroyed and/or removed in Brackley, following misuse and serious vandalism.
- 4.55 THIRD PARTIES: One e-mail received from Gill Balloch (no address provided – comment submitted via e-mail) raising objection to the proposal.
- 4.56 ISSUES RAISED: Objects to the introduction of the play park, will attract unwanted visitors and is located behind gardens, anti-social behaviour will result. 130 houses are excessive given the area of the site. Queries the amount of parking with each house likely to generate the need for two cars to be parked.

5. POLICY

- 5.1 The application should be assessed in light of the following development plan policies and Government Guidance:
- 5.2 NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE: PSS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPS3 (Housing), PPS4 (Commercial/Employment), PPS5 (in respect of Archaeology), PPS9 (Biodiversity), PPG13 (Transportation), PPS23 (Pollution), PPS24 (Noise) and PPS25 (Flooding)
- 5.3 SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN: G2 (General), G3 (General Development Control), H3 (Housing in Brackley), EV1 (Design) IMP1 (Developer Contributions), EV21 (Landscape)
- 5.4 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: Planning Out Crime in Northamptonshire, Developer Contributions, Energy and Development
- 5.5 OTHER: Draft Brackley Master Plan (June 2010)

6. APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The main issues in consideration of this application are:
 - The principle including the justification for the loss of employment land to residential
 - Sustainability of the location
 - Indicative Layout and Design
 - The impact on the character and appearance of the area
 - The impact on the streetscene and northern approach to Brackley
 - Highways considerations (including local, strategic and linkages to adjoining sites)
 - Pedestrian and cycle linkages to the Town centre and Radstone Fields
 - Flooding and Drainage considerations
 - Environmental considerations including: Air Quality, Noise and Contamination
 - Wildlife, Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity considerations
 - Developer contributions
 - Landscape and Arboricultural considerations
 - Boundary treatments for the site
 - Leisure provision (On site and off site)
 - Historic Environment and Archaeological considerations
 - The impact on neighbouring properties
 - Other matters including - High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) implications and Brackley Hospital
- 6.2 PRINCIPLE: The application site was last in employment use and as can be seen from the planning history contained in section 2 of this report has recent planning permissions on the site for further employment uses. National Guidance promotes the principles of sustainable development. This policy approach is embodied in Paragraph 3 of Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) (February 2005) which states that '*Sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning*'. Paragraph 5 advises that the planning process

should *'facilitate and promote sustainable/inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:*

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;*
- contributing to sustainable economic development;*
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;*
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and*
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.'*

6.3 This policy approach is an important consideration in respect of this application. Since 2001 there have been 428 houses built in Brackley and 7.42ha. of new employment development. According to the Councils 2004 Household Survey out commuting to work from Brackley was estimated at approximately 75% and there is no reason to suggest that this has changed. There is a need for this imbalance to be addressed with both the development of additional employment sites in the town and by the protection of existing opportunities.

6.4 Paragraph 10 of Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth sets out the Government's objectives regarding the achievement of sustainable economic growth. These include:

- building prosperous communities by improving the economic performance of cities, towns, regions, sub-regions and local areas, both urban and rural
- reducing the gap in economic growth rates between regions, promoting regeneration and tackling deprivation
- delivering more sustainable patterns of development, reducing the need to travel, especially by car, and responding to climate change, and
- promoting the vitality and viability of town and other centres as important places for communities.

6.5 The PPS (Policy EC1.3) states that, at the local level, the evidence base should assess the detailed need for land or floorspace for economic development, including for all main town centre uses over the plan period. The evidence base should also assess *'the existing and future supply of land available for economic development, ensuring that existing site allocations for economic development are reassessed against the policies in this PPS, particularly if they are for single or restricted uses. Where possible, any reviews of land available for economic development should be undertaken at the same time as, or combined with, strategic housing land availability assessments'*

6.6 As part of the work underpinning the emerging Local Development Framework a number of studies have been prepared that consider the need for economic development related activities. The main 'saved' local plan policies that need to be considered are policies H3 and E4. Policy H3 allows for the principle of housing development within Brackley and therefore this proposal accords with that Policy. It

is also accepted that the principle of allowing residential development within Brackley is consistent with the urban orientated focus of the Local Plan and most notably Policy G2. However it is important to note that Policy G2 applies to all forms of development including industrial and commercial that are needed to create sustainable communities. Furthermore it is accepted that the principle of residential development in this part of Brackley is consistent with the Local Plan as long as it is on suitable sites.

- 6.7 Paragraph 3.14 of the Local Plan considers that the Council will seek to maintain as far as possible all existing employment uses except where an established or proposed industrial or commercial use is not particularly well suited to a site. In such cases, there may be a significant gain to the local environment in allowing an alternative use.
- 6.8 Policy E4 states that *'planning permission will not be granted for the change of use or redevelopment of a site or building currently or last used, and which remains suitable for, industrial or commercial purposes to a non-employment use. Exceptions may be made where the proposal is in accordance with Policy R1 or where the existing use can be shown to be in significant conflict with the criteria set out under Policy G3.'*
- 6.9 The planning policy context of the Environmental Reports Compendium accompanying the application actually highlights the potential supply situation in Brackley itself which states Table 10.8 of the SELA (Strategic Employment Land Availability) indicates that the sites at Brackley considered to have the potential to deliver enhanced employment opportunities have the capacity to accommodate approximately 95,600sqm of new floorspace. The utilisation of the SELA employment land typologies for Northamptonshire suggests that this potential capacity could accommodate some 3,290 extra jobs at Brackley. The portfolio of sites evaluated by the SELA has the capacity to provide new employment opportunities far in excess of the new housing the light of this assessed future supply, the applicant does not consider it necessary, in planning policy terms, to maintain the planning application site for economic development.
- 6.10 In terms of specific sites, the SELA portfolio of sites with potential for 'next stage' evaluation at Brackley includes 2 hectares of land within the wider definition of the Brackley Sawmills site and new jobs will be created on the southern part of the Sawmills site through the development of the proposed community health care facility. Paragraph 6.7.4.1 of the Emergent Joint Core Strategy describes the preferred spatial strategy for Brackley, incorporating Brackley North (providing approximately 1,600 dwellings) and Brackley East (assumed to deliver approximately 650 jobs). Paragraph 6.7.4.5 of the EJCS states that Brackley East will deliver 25 hectares of mixed B Class employment. Table 10.8 of the SELA contains sites for 'next stage evaluation', including two locations off Turweston Road at Brackley. Those two sites (S9 and S13) contain 24.2 hectares of land for new economic development. These two sites fall within the definition of Brackley East contained in the Emergent Joint Core Strategy. The Northamptonshire SELA considers that this location has the capacity to accommodate some 82,800sqm of new floorspace. By utilising the employment densities for Northamptonshire described at Appendix G of the SELA, it can be calculated that Brackley East could deliver approximately 2,820 jobs, an outcome significantly greater than that described in the EJCS.

- 6.11 There is no need to maintain the existing employment use conferred by the present planning permission as the SELA identifies a significant supply of potential employment land at Brackley. Furthermore, the Council has resolved to grant planning permission for an industrial/business park on 10.2 hectares of land between Turweston Road and Northampton Road, Brackley (application no. S/2008/1648/PO). This is site S13 assessed in the Northamptonshire SELA. The amount of floorspace accepted by the Council on this site could accommodate between 1,145 and 1,205 jobs. SNC's report regarding application no. S/2008/1648/PO states that the total amount of gross floorspace on the site shall not exceed 38,000sqm. B1(a) shall not exceed 8,000sqm (400 jobs), B1(c) could cover 15,000-20,000sqm (470-625 jobs) and B8 could occupy 15,000-10,000sqm (275-180 jobs).
- 6.12 The Brackley Employment Land Demand Study (BELDS) suggested that there was a need to provide 12 hectares of employment-generating land at Brackley in the period up to 2021. The Brackley Sawmills site was deemed to contribute 5 hectares of that overall requirement. The four sites proposed in the Northamptonshire SELA for '*next stage evaluation*' collectively encompass an area of 28.2 hectares, a potential supply substantially in excess of the requirement described in the Brackley Employment Land Demand Study. That suggested potential supply anticipates only 2 hectares of land being used at Brackley Sawmills for new employment-generating development. Crucially, paragraph 5.3 of the BELDS contends that it is not just the quantity of employment land that should be considered. The Study concluded that, in order to attract value-added employment opportunities to Brackley, it is '*essential*' to have a range of quality employment sites available. The Study categorically observes that the Sawmills site does not fulfil this qualitative need and that the Council should seek to provide a range of sites.
- 6.13 The Savills/White Commercial report that accompanies the planning application quantifies the potential increase in job opportunities at Brackley itself (1,993 jobs). The report refers to the contribution that Silverstone will make to local employment provision but does not suggest that those proposed job opportunities constitute any justification for the present planning application regarding the Sawmills site. The calculations contained in the report need to be viewed in the context of the comments at paragraphs 4.1 and 4.29 of the BELDS.
- 6.14 In conclusion, the applicant has demonstrated that there is no viable way of redeveloping this site for employment uses and that Brackley and the surrounding area has sufficient employment land to meet immediate and future needs adequately without the need to retain the part of the Sawmills site relevant to this application. In this instance the Council's policy and economic development officers have thoroughly considered the applicant's case that the site is not viable for economic use and that Brackley and the surrounding area has an overprovision of employment land rendering this site unnecessary as outlined in the preceding paragraphs. In addition the cost of decontamination due to the extent of contamination and resultant expense for clearing the site and making good and the desirability of delivering the master plan objectives such as the hospital and access to Radstone outweigh the conflict with policy E4.
- 6.15 Mitigation - Given the Council's remit to consider longer term implications, if employment use is now to be lost in favour of housing, then there needs to be some form of financial contribution to other employment projects to enable the Council to

invest in projects that will bolster existing employment in the town which has an under provision of employment within it.

- 6.16 Officers note that while Silverstone is within the Travel – to – Work area of Brackley (a large area given the rural character of the District) and the applicant has made the argument that its projected employment generation needs to be taken into account when considering the proposed loss of potential employment on the Sawmills site we note Government and Council planning policy remains to try to reduce travel between home and work and the loss of this potential employment site will exacerbate existing travel problems.
- 6.17 But, given the additional land value of housing over employment, officers feel the case for a contribution to Council projects that will bolster employment within Brackley is reasonable without affecting the viability of a residential development. There are 2 main existing employment opportunities in Brackley that the Masterplan process has identified as priorities which the Council will pursue. These are the renewal of the town centre (non-B use) and Buckingham Road Industrial Estate (B use). Both have their own issues, Buckingham Road Industrial Estate has issues around environmental health, crime and appearance and the Town Centre has issues around appearance, high vacancy rates and low footfall.
- 6.18 Strategic Policy have suggested a contribution towards projects which help improve these issues and protect and generate new employment which will support the viability of the town. There are a number of related options to which a contribution is sought;
- Contribution to the new Brackley Town Fund which SNC agreed to establish in January 2010 (see draft SPD on Developer Contributions recently consulted upon which sets out full details). It is proposed that a Town Manager post is created and filled to improve co-ordination between business, local agencies and landlords within the centre of the town, to drive down the current high vacancy rate. This post would also undertake a proposed shop front improvement scheme that will improve the appearance of the high street. It is also proposed the Town Manager would co-ordinate work within the town centre and takes over support to the recently established Buckingham Road Industrial Estate Group which lies to the east of the town centre please see paragraphs 6.19 to 6.23 below. Post cost - £35,000 per annum including on-costs x 3 years = £105,000 total
 - Contribution towards marketing of the town centre retail (building on the recent Try Brackley First retailers initiative to improve footfall and town centre vitality = £10,000 x 3 years = £30,000 total
 - Signage, road marking and security initiatives on Buckingham Road Industrial Estate = £100,000 total
 - Total - £235,000 over 3 years**
 - The above contributions will be discussed shortly with the applicant and the results of these discussions will be updated to Committee.
- 6.19 Buckingham Road Industrial Estate Group - The Buckingham Road Industrial Estate was set up in June 2010. It is currently co-ordinated by Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd with the active support and involvement of South Northamptonshire Council and attended by businesses on the Estate and Northamptonshire Police. There are 16 such groups around the County covering a number of industrial

estates.

- 6.20 The main concerns that have been identified by the group are;
- Crime levels and security
 - Concerns over parking on / blind spots on some of the T Junctions – in particular Buckingham Road near Faccenda – possible introduction of yellow lines on this section of road
 - Lorries parking overnight and longer
 - Scrap metal thefts
 - Issues with people gaining access to the estate from the bottom of the railway track (this would be solved by having CCTV)
 - The estate has been used as a race track at the weekends
- 6.21 These issues are common to many industrial estates. The Buckingham Road group is in its infancy and is undertaking further work to identify more specific issues and translate these into achievable actions. A separate contribution from an off-site developer would help tackle some of the more immediate issues identified by the Buckingham Road Businesses to ensure the estate is improved in terms of security and appearance.
- 6.22 The estate is identified in the draft Brackley Masterplan as in need of improvement, to drive down rising vacancy rates and the preparation of a Development brief for redevelopment. This priority will be retained into the final version of the Brackley Master plan.
- 6.23 The Buckingham Road group has discussed the long term option to form a Business Improvement District (BID) as has been the case at the Brackmills Industrial Estate in Northampton. Although much larger the Brackmills BID currently raise £400,000 per annum to tackle issues such as security, transport access, appearance of the estate and group buying. Due to the nature of BID's being a legal partnership which all must pay into if the majority votes in favour, so it is not a quick option.
- 6.24 **SUSTAINABILITY OF THE LOCATION:** The application site is located within the settlement boundary of Brackley and is adjacent to a major route into the town. In this sense it can be considered a sustainable location. In terms of specific key local facilities, the following is within reasonable distance of the application site:
- Lake Field Nursery School at a distance of 1.8 km from the site;
 - Brackley Church of England Junior School at a distance of 1.7 km from the site;
 - Magdalen College School (providing secondary and sixth form education) a distance of 1.3 km from the site;
 - A health centre is located within the Town Centre 800 m from the site on Halse Road;
 - In terms of employment, there is a large industrial estate (Buckingham Road) situated on the south-eastern edge of Brackley a distance of 1.3 km from the site;
 - Major employment development is planned on the opposite side of Northampton

Road on the Smyth-Osbourne site.

- The Town Centre which has a range of shops and services is situated at a distance of approximately 1 to 1.6 km south of the site.
- 6.25 **IMPACT ON THE STREETSCENE AND NORTHERN APPROACH TO BRACKLEY:** At present the application site is a prominent site which forms part of the northern approach to the town as it links onto the A43 dual carriageway. The current state of the site does not make for a particularly attractive approach to the town (reflected in the draft master plan which identified the site as an important gateway to the town) and therefore a priority of the draft master plan to improve the situation.
- 6.26 On site at present are a series of dated and largely dilapidated commercial buildings. Many of the former buildings have now been demolished, but those which remain have fallen into disrepair and will be demolished. The applicant has for a considerable period of time struggled to secure the site and to this extent parts of the site have been subject to anti-social behaviour, unauthorised stripping of materials, informal recreational uses such as skateboarding and tipping of materials.
- 6.27 The Council's Arboricultural officer recognises that the existing trees which form the boundary to Northampton Road offer some amenity value. Concern was expressed by him about the loss of a number of trees at the point of the proposed roundabout as it would potentially open up the site visually. However, he was unable to sustain an objection due to the fall back position of existing permissions and due to the potential for the reserved matter of landscaping to provide a replacement scheme of planting. The details of this would need to be agreed and the intention would be to soften the visual impact of the development and enhance the existing streetscene which is characterised by a largely green approach to the town.
- 6.28 The area of public open space occupying the former dismantled railway along the western edge of the site will be planted so as to enhance the opportunities for wildlife habitation in this area; especially for bats and bird life. A special landscape treatment will be afforded to the nodes or key spaces in the form of paving surface treatments and street trees. This will assist in providing a sense of place within these key spaces. The main boulevard running through the centre of the scheme will benefit from having new planting, whilst the landscape strip along the southern boundary of the site with the potential healthcare development south will also receive tree planting. In terms of children's play areas, it is currently intended that play space or facilities (Local Landscaped Area of Play) will be provided at the northern end of the western area of public open space. This will allow pedestrians to access the play space for most parts of the site by walking through the public open space along the western edge of the site. An appropriate separation distance will need to be provided between the play area itself and any intended buildings.
- 6.29 In summary, the proposal seeks to clear the site and compensate the loss of vegetation with a comprehensive scheme of landscaping as a reserved matter and in this sense the proposal would accord with the aims and objectives of the draft master plan along with adopted local plan policies G3 and EV1.
- 6.30 **IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA:** The application has for a number of years been an intensively used commercial use which generated significant traffic, noise and other disturbance to the immediate locality. To the west are

residential properties in relatively close proximity to the site (separated only by the former railway cutting) and in this sense the development of a residential use should prove more in keeping with the character of the area. There is a commercial use proposed for the Smyth-Osbourne site to the east, but this will be separated from the Sawmills site by the Northampton Road which at this point is wide with two sets of hedgerow which should be a sufficient barrier to prevent either use impacting on the other. To the north is the potential Robson land which is very likely to come forward as a residential use in the future and the current proposal would complement it. The hospital to the south would not detract from the character of the area and the precise linkages and separations between the two sites would be subject to agreement at a later date.

- 6.31 The Sawmills site has been in industrial use for many years and has a functional character which includes large areas of hard-standing and large buildings. The site vegetation is sparse and confined largely to the boundaries of the site by necessity, to allow the site to operate efficiently. In both visual and character terms, the Sawmills site does not relate well to the surrounding area. The site is industrial in character, in contrast with the surrounding areas to the north and east. The proposals to change the character of the site from industrial development to residential would have a beneficial effect upon both the character of the site and the surrounding area, particularly given the high standard of design which would be implemented at this new gateway to Brackley.
- 6.32 INDICATIVE LAYOUT AND DESIGN: The application, based on the site area and assuming a density approach of 45 dwellings per hectare, will deliver 130 dwellings. The Design and access statement states '*It is likely that the majority of the housing provided will be in the form of family housing i.e. semi-detached or detached dwellings with their own amenity space*'. The development includes 1 hectare of public (Landscaped) open space. This incorporates a play area to meet the needs of the younger children likely to be accommodated in the development. The built development and associated pattern of streets need to achieve a good residential layout whilst avoiding the in-filled former railway cutting which is contaminated. Within these constraints the developer has proposed a series of perimeter blocks whose size and arrangement allow suitable separation distances for dwellings as well as allowing permeability between the new area of public open space and Northampton Road. The developers have created two nodes or key spaces within the built development itself, to provide variety and a focus for the new development.
- 6.33 In order to ensure that the proposed development responds appropriately to its context, the Design and Access Statement suggests an arrangement of three character areas as follows:
- The 'Green Edge' character area along the western and northern edge of the site;
 - The 'Suburban Core' character area located within the scheme itself; and
 - The 'Northampton Road Gateway' character area located primarily along the Northampton Road frontage.
- 6.34 Although appearance is a reserved matter the Design and Access Statement suggests the following approach may be appropriate '*Architectural Style- Given the site's position at a gateway location into Brackley, Brackley's association with high technology, Formula 1 motor racing, and the site's position in relation to forthcoming employment development across Northampton Road; a contemporary architectural*

approach may be most appropriate within the Northampton Road Gateway character area. Within the Suburban Core character areas and especially the Green Edge character areas, a more traditional approach would be more appropriate albeit we suggest with contemporary features. This would help to ensure a sense of cohesion within the development as a whole. The site's relationship with the open countryside lying to the north suggests a more traditional architectural response for the Green Edge character area intended for these locations'.

- 6.35 In terms of scale it is anticipated that the majority of the residential buildings on the site would be two storeys, occasionally rising to 2.5 storeys around the key spaces or nodes. The maximum height will be 3 storeys fronting Northampton Road where the character of the scheme is intended to reflect the gateway setting. Although there are some concerns in respect of the layout, design and scale, these matters can be dealt with adequately at the reserved matters stage.
- 6.36 **HIGHWAYS CONSIDERATIONS:** There are three important issues. Firstly consideration needs to assess the impact on the strategic highways network. Secondly the impact on local route. Thirdly the issue of the link road to Robson and Radstone Fields as well as the related issues of Travel Plan, Public Transport and sustainability.
- 6.37 Strategic Highways considerations: The Highways Agency (HA) have raised no objection to the proposal having originally raised some concerns with the scheme. Subject to increased contributions towards highways improvements and some alterations and contributions to the submitted Travel Plan the application is acceptable in terms of its impact on the strategic highways network. The travel plan will need to form part of the finalised S106. The Highways Agency also requires that the Strategic Highways Contribution (SHC) be held for a 10 year period and the developer is agreeable to this. The wording within the S106 will be redrafted accordingly and also incorporate a start date for that 10 year period.
- 6.38 Local road network considerations: The engineer from the County Council (LHA) raises no objection to the application as submitted subject to a number of conditions, informatives and contributions which need to be included in the legal agreement. For clarity these can be summarised below:
- 6.39 Highway mitigation
- Southern access junction (Trade Counter) – Ghost Island Right turn priority junction on Northampton Road, to include pedestrian refuges on Northampton Road. Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311- SK014 (Rev.B).
 - Northern access junction (Residential) – 50m ICD, 4 arm roundabout access on Northampton Road. Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B).
 - Link Road from Northern Access Junction to northwest boundary of the site to be 7.3m wide, with 2 simple priority junctions for residential access. Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B). Revised priority junction (as per extant 2007 permission) at Northampton Road/Turweston Road, required if a roundabout in this location has not already been provided by others.
 - Footways adjacent to Northampton Road and new link road, Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B), including a connection to the existing petrol filling station to the north of the site.

- A signal controlled pedestrian crossing on Northampton Road, and any footways required to tie in to existing footways, south of junction with Turweston Road, Shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B).
- Two Bus stops located between the two site access junctions on Northampton Road, one either side of Northampton Road, shown indicatively on Cannon Consulting Engineers drawing B311-SK014 (Rev.B), to include the provision of shelters, bus boarders, truform poles, timetable information, real time information, and appropriate road markings.

6.40 Construction Management

- Prior to the commencement of any part of the development hereby permitted, a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Construction Management Plan shall include and specify the provision to be made for the following:
 - Dust mitigation measures during the construction period;
 - Control of noise emanating from the site during the construction period;
 - Hours of construction work for the development
 - Contractors' compounds and other storage arrangements;
 - Enclosure of phase or sub-phase development sites;
 - Provision for all site operatives, visitors and construction vehicles loading, off loading, parking and turning within the site during the construction period;
 - Arrangements during the construction period to minimise the deposit of mud and other similar debris on the adjacent public highways;
 - Routing agreement for construction traffic.

6.41 Public Transport

- Prior to occupation of the first dwelling a financial contribution of £200,000 (two hundred thousand pounds) is to be provided to the Local Highway Authority to enhance the existing Brackley Buzzer bus service to provide an hourly service to the site utilising the proposed bus stops on Northampton Road, Monday to Saturday, for a 5 year tender period (£40,000 x 5).

- Parking: There will be parking provision in the form of the following:
 - Courtyard parking bays and coach houses;
 - On street parking;
 - On plot parking bays and garage parking.
- The detail of the parking arrangements will be resolved at the Reserved Matters Application stage.

- 6.42 Scale, Size and Capacity of the Link Road. Northants County Council (the LHA for Northampton Road) are satisfied with the access provision made in the Sawmills planning application. This is concluded in their response to the application. This also differs little in terms of design and capacity from the extant employment permission in 2007 which updated the 2006 permission. In both cases, and since, the developers have been asked to make provision for connection to potential

development in North Brackley. The provision made in the 2007 application was designed on the basis of there being employment on the Sawmills site and the adjacent Robson land. The scale of the roundabout is related to the capacity assessments carried out in the absence of detailed proposals for Radstone Fields but making robust assumptions in respect of likely traffic generation and assignment to the network. This was accepted and consented in 2007. Other than updating the development assumptions for Radstone Fields and the Robson Land now as residential, little has changed. The capacity of the roundabout and dimension of the access road at 7.3m is consistent with the requirements of NCC and agreed with them. If this were to reduce in width, the applicant could accommodate this within the wider access corridor that has been allowed for. It has been suggested by the applicant's transport consultant that the dimension of the road will vary little given that it will almost certainly become a bus route from the Northampton Road to Radstone Fields and NCC's own design guidance would seek a carriageway of at least 6.0m. If the road reduced further in width within the Radstone Fields master plan, then the transition could be redesigned within the detailed proposals in due course.

- 6.43 In terms of layout of the road and connection with Radstone Fields, NCC has confirmed that this is preferable to that which was previously consented in 2007. The Radstone Fields applicants have also made provision for this connection in their masterplan and are concerned that a change now will affect their recently submitted application. The road layout also makes provision for connection to the Robson's land through a side hung priority junction. This is supportable and accepted by NCC. The road connection is only illustrative in the BMP and not definitive.
- 6.44 The applicant was made aware that discussions were ongoing with the Radstone developers and the two highway authorities and that the scale of the road and its final position may be subject to change. As the application does not list this as a reserved matter should the needs on the adjoining sites change the applicant will need to formally reconsider this aspect as by this application being approved the road layout and scale are being granted planning permission and therefore any variation will necessitate a new application. The alternative would have been for the applicant to keep the road link a reserved matter, but this was not considered suitable particularly since the highway authority had requested the applied for specification since early discussions commenced in 2005.
- 6.45 **PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKAGES:** The application proposes to provide linkages from the site onto Northampton road, into the proposed hospital site, to the Brackley SUE, to the future Robson Land and to the BP filling station. The only direction it is not intended to link the site to is the existing residential development to the west. This is because there is no available space between the properties to formulate such a link and the Northants Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor has suggested such a link may be inappropriate. The precise details of pedestrian and cycle linkages within the site are unknown at present as these are details reserved for later consideration. The applicant has however identified a number of possible methodologies for improving permeability and direct linkages in their Travel Plan which has been out to consultation and agreed and will form a key part of the S106.
- 6.46 The Council initially requested financial contributions towards improving cycle

linkages to the new employment opportunities being developed at Silverstone. It is difficult, to consider and determine a level of contribution to a scheme without any form of scheme definition. The developer's transport consultant has confirmed with the Highways Engineer at the County Council that NCC is not aware of such a proposal and it forms no part of their comprehensive response to the application consultation dated 7 June 2010. The engineer has confirmed that this is considered to be their final and full response and clearly includes for all the various requirements of highways, access and transport infrastructure required by the development. There is also no mention of such cycle linkage in the Brackley masterplan or the Silverstone Draft Development Brief. The developer (through their transport consultant) would respectfully suggest that Silverstone is beyond any acceptable or attractive cycle distance. Indeed, the Draft Brackley Masterplan has clearly considered this and places the burden for such sustainable linkage on public transport, to which the Sawmills is contributing as an outcome of the consultation with Northants County Council.

- 6.47 The Highway Authorities (both HA and LHA) intention is to support improvements to a variety of bus services from this collective pool of contributions. NCC Highways has indicated some of these monies will be used on inter-urban services including those that connect Brackley with Towcester and conceivably via Silverstone. The contribution is in part justified on making the Sawmills more sustainable and for 'loss' of employment. The developers transport consultant would suggest that such a concept is more attuned to making Silverstone more sustainable and as such the burden of such provision should lie with Silverstone. On this basis they would not agree that there is a requirement for such a cycle link contribution from the Sawmills, or any development in Brackley. Given this robust argument the Local Planning Authority upon further reflection as there was no formal scheme being pursued by the Local Highway Authority or NCC Rights of Way this was discounted in favour of an increased contribution towards public transport linkages. To this effect a £200,000 contribution has been sought.
- 6.48 **IMPACT ON EXISTING RIGHTS OF WAYS:** There are only a limited number of public rights of way in the form of footpaths and bridleways in the vicinity of the site. Immediately to the west of the site and south of the existing residential area of Brackley, there are no public rights of way within a kilometre from the Town. The closest bridleway to the site is on land near to Ilett's Farm approximately 600m to the north. Within the countryside to the north of the site, there is a bridleway which links Radstone Road with the A43. From most of this bridleway, the proposed development would be obscured from view due to topography and vegetation in the intervening distance, both during construction and in the operational phase.
- 6.48 In conclusion from a strategic highways, local road network impact, master plan compliance, rights of way impact and sustainability perspective the application accords with the aims and objectives of PPG13 relating to transportation.
- 6.49 **FLOODING AND DRAINAGE CONSIDERATIONS:** Both the Environment Agency and Anglian Water raise no objection to this proposal on water capacity, drainage or flood risk grounds. The EA reviewed a Flood Risk Assessment produced by Cannon Consulting Engineers, reference CCE/B311/FRA, and confirmed that they consider that the details in the FRA to have been undertaken in line with Annex E of Planning Policy Statement 25 'Development and Flood Risk' (PPS25), and these are considered appropriate for the scale and nature of the proposed development.

Accordingly, the EA withdrew their previous objection on flood risk grounds, subject to the imposition of conditions and informatives.

- 6.50 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS: The main areas of environmental concern relate to Air Quality, Noise and contamination. Air Quality – The application was submitted with a full assessment of air quality which concluded that the operational impacts of increased traffic emissions arising from the additional traffic on local roads would result in concentrations of nitrogen dioxide would remain below Government requirements and therefore in accordance with PPS23. The data provided in this report has been considered by the Council's Environmental Protection Officer who raised no objection or comment.
- 6.51 Noise - The assessment details indicate that the proposed development site falls and can be zoned within a number of 'Noise Exposure Category's' as defined for road traffic in PPG24. It goes on to conclude that any subsequent noise sensitive development should be provided with an adequate and commensurate level of protection against noise in order to achieve any necessary internal or external ambient design standards as recommended in BS8233 Sound Insulation & Noise Reduction for Buildings – Code of Practice. The report advises that a range of noise mitigation packages could be applied to the development and which will depend on the degree of exposure and nature and extent of measures applied. The report also advises that noise from the construction phase of the proposed development would need to be controlled and that a range of measures could be used to do this. It goes on to recommend that a more comprehensive assessment should be undertaken to determine the necessary measures once the necessary detailed construction schedule, methodology equipment has been determined. Some consideration will need to be given to subsequent development of the adjacent employment sites in order to ensure that the respective layout of the separate developments are sympathetic to each other. Overall, Environmental Protection Officers make no adverse comment regarding noise aspect of the proposed development subject to imposition of appropriate safeguarding conditions.
- 6.52 Contamination- Both the Environment Agency and the Council's Environmental Protection Officer have assessed the contamination report produced by the Nott Group and agree with its findings and recommendations. In short the report concluded that the site will need to avoid building on the former railway cutting and that due to high levels of arsenic and chromium clean topsoil to 500 mm depth will be needed across the site. Gas protection measures are needed on the railway cutting and gas protective membrane is recommended for sensitive buildings. A further groundwater assessment is needed to assess the effects of the tannelising. The report has been considered and the Environment Agency raises no objection subject to a series of related conditions and informatives. Subject to the requirements of the conditions being met the proposal is considered to accord with the aims and objectives of PPS23.
- 6.53 WILDLIFE, GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY: The application was submitted initially with a wildlife survey which concluded that overall the proposals would result in the direct loss of habitats low in intrinsic value and consequently low ecological value. The report did identify that bats and common lizards were present on the site and that mitigation measures were to form part of the development strategy.
- 6.54 The report did identify that the site had potential to be developed in a manner which

would create suitable habitats and in effect increase the biodiversity benefits of the site and linkages to the wider area. The wildlife trust local records also identified a rare species of Blue Butterfly being present on the railway SSSI to the north and at certain points within the site. To this effect a revised assessment and mitigation strategy linked to an assessment of the Green Infrastructure with a view to developing a clear GI Strategy for the site were requested by officers.

- 6.55 The revised strategy (which includes updated ecological assessments) has been out for consultation with the relevant bodies and ecological experts who have provided feedback whilst not objecting in principle. The recommendations of Natural England, The Wildlife Trust, The Northants Bat Group, NCC's GI officer as well as SNC's GI Officer can be included in the GI management plan which will form part of the S106 and then the reserved matters. In this sense the proposal accords with the aims and objectives of PPS9.
- 6.56 **LANDSCAPE AND ARBORICULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS:** The loss of the existing trees on the boundary is a shame and was a concern to the Council's arboricultural officer as they provide a green approach to the northern end of Brackley and help to screen the site. However, the fall back position is that the position of the roundabout has been agreed under past planning permissions and there is an opportunity to secure a strong scheme of landscaping through the site which will more than compensate for the loss of any existing vegetation on the site.
- 6.57 Landscaping is a reserved matter, but the indicative layout plans show adequate new planting and this principle of soft landscaping throughout the site can be secured at the outline stage so that it forms a central component of the reserved matters application. To this effect conditions to secure a suitable landscaping scheme including species and a maintenance plan are recommended. In summary, subject to conditions the proposal is considered to accord with policies EV1, EV21 and G3 of the Local Plan.
- 6.58 **BOUNDARY TREATMENTS:** At present the application fails to identify boundary treatments due to its outline status with the precise details to be reserved for later consideration. In terms of the edge of the site it will be important to provide a strong boundary to the west where there are currently fences to the existing residential properties. Some of these have unauthorised access points onto the site as members may recall from their site visit which needs addressing. To the north the boundary of the site needs careful consideration to ensure the future Robson Land can link adequately to this site, the future hospital and the wider town. To assist members in considering this issue the applicant has provided an indicative plan showing how the two sites could interact (this does not however form part of the application). To the east and the boundary of the site onto Northampton Road the boundary treatment will need to soften the visual impact and provide an attractive approach to the town. This will form a key aspect of the future reserved matters and overall landscaping scheme. However at this point in time the Local Planning Authority must secure suitable conditions for the outline and therefore it is recommended to impose a condition to agree the boundary treatments throughout the site in addition to the more general landscaping scheme.
- 6.59 **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS:** The applicant has submitted a draft S106 which at the time of writing is in the process of being edited and redrafted. The agreement will need to cover the following developer contributions:

- Affordable Housing at 40%
 - Education, Libraries and Fire and Rescue
 - Leisure including Public open space, off site leisure facilities and maintenance
 - The provision of an access road through the site to the Robson Land and Radstone Fields SUE
 - Strategic Highways contributions
 - Public Transport and Travel Plan contributions/strategies
 - Green Infrastructure implementation/management plan
 - Town centre contribution
 - Bucking Road Industrial Estate Management/enhancement contribution
 - Unrestricted access at zero cost to the adjoining landowners for the road scheme to secure access to neighbouring sites
 - Recycling contribution
- 6.60 Subject to the above being finalised in accordance with the best practice required under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations and Circular 05/2005 the application accords with policy IMP1 and draft SPD 'Developer Contributions'. As it has not been possible to finalise a full S106 agreement prior to committee it is recommended to delegate authority to approve the application to the Head of Environment and Development Services subject to the applicant completing the S106 and paying the relevant legal costs of the County Council and SNC.
- 6.61 LEISURE PROVISION (ON SITE AND OFF SITE): The Council's Lead Leisure Services Officer has been involved in the consideration of this application and has formally requested the contributions outlined, justified and broken down in paragraph 4.9 of the report. As stated above these will need to form part of the S106 agreement. Discussions have been ongoing concerning the possibility of the applicant donating a section of land of 0.18 ha which is disused to the community as a possible skate park facility. However at the time of writing nothing has been formalised in this regard and it remains an option only.
- 6.62 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY: The application site does not contain any Listed Buildings or any heritage designations such as Conservation Areas nor is the site adjacent or within the setting of any heritage asset. The County Council archaeologist has assessed the application and concluded that the site is currently predominately hardstanding and as such it is reasonable to assume that it is likely to have had an impact on any archaeological deposits present. However although this may have resulted in truncation of some shallower deposits there is still the potential for significant remains to survive below the hardstanding. Due to the extent of the hardstanding within the greater area of the site the archaeologist considers that the archaeological evaluation would be best undertaken post determination and therefore a condition is recommended. This approach is considered compliant with the advice contained in PPS5 relating to archaeology.
- 6.63 IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES: The application site has a modern housing development to the west. There will however be no impact on the residential amenity of the existing properties on account of the separation distance achieved by the railway cutting which is to be left as Public Open Space. The Crime

Prevention Design Advisor has expressed concern about anti-social behaviour from the POS and has requested that at the reserved matters stage the issues of boundary treatments and natural surveillance be considered to ensure that there is overlooking of the POS.

- 6.64 In terms of other impacts on existing residential properties surrounding the site given the separation distances involved and the fact that design and scale are reserved matters and therefore issues such as loss of daylight and overlooking are impossible to consider fully at this juncture. Indeed the applicant's landscape assessment summarises the positioned well '*The residential properties located to west of the site are in the main visually unaffected by the proposals as views towards the proposed development would be interrupted by adjacent residential properties in the neighbourhood. Only those which directly back onto the disused railway line and the site will have the opportunity to observe the construction phase and the completed proposed development. However, these currently have first floor level filtered and glimpsed views of the existing industrial sawmill premises and associated compounds and timber yards which detract from the visual amenity of the area. With the removal of this built form during the construction phase, and the creation of a residential development as envisaged, the visual amenity for these properties would be improved*'. These would be some of the major design considerations that would come out of the discussions over the reserved matters. In summary the proposed scheme will not harm the amenity of any neighbouring land use and will be a significant improvement over a commercial use of the type previously utilising the application site. In this sense the proposal accords with Policy G3 of the Local Plan.
- 6.65 OTHER MATTERS - HS2 AND BRACKLEY HOSPITAL: On 11th March 2010 the Government published the HS2 report. This report summarises the findings of the work carried out last year to consider a high speed railway line from London to the West Midlands and identifies the options that were considered. The report also examines the case for extending the line further north. The 'preferred route option' if adopted, would pass through South Northamptonshire. The 'preferred route option' if adopted would run very close to Brackley and could have a major impact on the future development of the town. The draft Brackley Masterplan illustrates these potential impacts in detail. The consultation on the proposed route and on the Government's overall strategy for high speed rail was to have begun in October and to run through to April 2011.
- 6.66 The application at its northern end is impacted by the aforementioned route and it does form a material consideration. However at the time of writing it is simply a consultation and does not carry status as a safeguarded route. In this sense at the end of the consultation period the route may change. It is not therefore considered that there is sufficient justification to warrant refusal on this basis.
- 6.67 In terms of the possible hospital development all calculations and designs have been derived on the assumption that the site will deliver a hospital and care home facility at the southern end. The site is identified in the draft master plan but again until such time as a planning application is approved there is no absolute guarantee that this will be the ultimate land use for the adjoining parcel of land.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 It has been demonstrated robustly that there is sound justification for the Local Planning Authority permitting a change to its adopted policy of safeguarding employment sites and allowing a change of use to residential development.
- 7.2 In summary the applicant has shown that there is an over supply of employment land in and surrounding Brackley to render the 5.62 ha on this site as unnecessary. The extent of contamination and the need to secure a holistic approach to the northern gateway site are also contributory factors.
- 7.3 The development of this site in the manner applied for will secure the future hospital and care home site becomes accessible, will secure access to Radstone Fields and the Robson Land to the north.
- 7.4 Developer contributions will enhance travel links, leisure provision; as well contribute towards compensating existing services. Biodiversity and the visual approach to Brackley will be significantly enhanced as result of the development.
- 7.5 Subject to the applicant completing the outstanding issues contained in the S106 legal agreement and the conditions outlined at the beginning of the report the application is recommend for approval to be delegated to the Head of Environment and Development Services.

8. REASON FOR APPROVAL

- 8.1 In this instance the Local Planning Authority considers that there are substantive and technically sound reasons to depart from the adopted policy of the development plan as outlined at length in this report.
- 8.2 The application is therefore recommended for approval to be delegated to Head of Environment and Development Services subject to the applicant completing the outstanding issues contained in the S106 legal agreement and the conditions outlined at the beginning of the report